

Total Quality Management in Libraries: An Overview

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Abstract

This Paper aims to analyse and evaluate the TQM in Libraries with a view of examining the exposure of library professionals. Total Quality Management is the integration of all functions and process within an organization in order to achieve continuous improvement of the quality of goods and services. This paper focuses on how to implement TQM in library so as to improve the quality of library services through the use of different elements of TQM.

Keywords: Total Quality Management, Management, Elements of TQM, Barriers of TQM.

Introduction

In this changing scenario, library and information services have to adapt to the new paradigm. In the process of adaptation, in all services and facilities units, a good quality assurance system plays an essential and important role in gearing up the library to provide users satisfaction. But failure to provide information professionals with adequate training and to deploy them effectively represents one of the constraints on change and development in library and information provisions and can undermine its effectiveness.

TQM is the art of managing the whole to achieve excellence. The golden rule is a simple but effective way to explain it. TQM is defined

as both a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that represent the foundations of a continuously improving organization. It is the application of qualitative methods and human resources to improve all the processes within an organization and exceed customer needs now and in the future. TQM calls for the integration of all organizational activities to achieve the goal of serving customers. It seeks to impose standards, achieve efficiency, define roles of individuals within processes and the organization as a whole, reduce errors and defects by applying statistical process control, and to employ teams to plan and execute processes more efficiently. It requires leaders who are willing to create a culture in which people define their roles in terms of quality outputs to customers.

History of TQM

In the 1950s, the Japanese asked W. Edwards Deming, an American statistician and management theorist, to help them improve their war torn economy. By implementing Deming's principles of total quality management (TQM), Japan experienced dramatic economic growth. In the 1980s, when the United States began to see a reduction in its own world market share in relation to Japan, American business rediscovered Deming. Quality management experts, Joseph Juran and Philip Crosby, also contributed to the development of TQM theories, models, and

tools. TQM is now practiced in business as well as in government, the military, education, and in non-profit organizations including libraries (Juwon & Barnard, 1993).

TQM is "a system of continuous improvement employing participative management and centered on the needs of customers" (Juwon & Barnard, 1993). Key components of TQM are employee involvement and training, problem-solving teams, statistical methods, long-term goals and thinking, and recognition that the system, not people, produces inefficiencies. Libraries can benefit from TQM in three ways: breaking down interdepartmental barriers; redefining the beneficiaries of library services as internal customers (staff) and external customers (patrons); and reaching a state of continuous improvement (Juwon & Barnard, 1993).

Objective of the study

1. To propose guidelines for effective implementation of TQM in the Academic Library and Information Service organizations.
2. To present an overview of total quality management (TQM) in the library and information Service sectors.
3. To understand the need of TQM practices for its successful implementation in Library and Information service sector.
4. To find out the barriers in the applicability of TQM in Library and Information Service sector.

Literature Review

Earlier number of authors have been discussed about the implementation of TQM with special reference to the library:

Moghaddam & Moballeghi (2008) in their study on "Total Quality Management in Library and Information Sectors" found that to succeed in an organization there must be support at the very top and commitment at all levels.

Vyas (2009) defined best practices as an application of procedures to yield superior results which means way of doing things in particular organization as guidelines for good practices and quality management.

Dash & Padhi (2010) said that the ability to learn and to develop library activities from a customer's point of view as well as involvement of the library staff can help to improve the quality of library.

Juying (2011) revealed that enhancing Total Quality Management in the academic library is the way out of improving service quality, , the development of quality system documentation, the implementation of service quality system, and the auditing mechanism of quality system, etc.

Goel (2013) made a study on " Total quality management in academic libraries" and said that present circumstances in the library environment of change and uncertainly, growing demands, the influence of information of technology and reconstruction and

development, makes it essential that this process be arranged on a rational basis.

R. Kumar (2013) in his study on “Application of total quality management in engineering college library of Kurukshetra” suggests that there is need to develop standards/norms for accessing quality of information services with particular reference to engineering college libraries.

Elements of TQM

TQM has been coined to describe a philosophy that makes quality the driving force behind leadership, design, planning, and improvement initiatives. For this, TQM requires the help of those eight key elements. These elements can be divided into four groups according to their function.

❖ First Group: Foundation

As every building requires a foundation, every business philosophy requires some value to inform its approach to the world and its own organization. TQM institutes three foundational elements to its metaphorical building that foster productive attitudes and atmosphere.

1. Ethics: Ethics is an individual’s understanding of what is good and bad at the workplace. A thin line of difference does exist between good and bad, which is for you to decide. Ethics teach an individual to follow code of conduct of organization and adhere to rules and regulations.

2. Integrity: Integrity refers to honesty, values and an individual’s sincerity at workplace. You need to respect your organization’s policies.

Avoid spreading unnecessary rumours about your fellow workers. Total Quality Management does not work in an environment where employees criticize and backstab each other.

3. Trust: Trust is one of the most important factors necessary for implementation of total quality management. Employees need to trust each other to ensure participation of each and every individual. Trust improves relationship among employees and eventually helps in better decision making which further helps in implementing total quality management successfully.

❖ Second Group: Bricks

4. Training: Employees need to be trained on Total Quality Management. Managers need to make their fellow workers aware of the benefits of total quality management and how would it make a difference in their product quality and eventually yield profits for their organization. Employees need to be trained on interpersonal skills, the ability to work as a team member, technical know-how, decision making skills, problem solving skills and so on. Training enables employees to implement TQM effectively within their departments and also make them indispensable resources.

5. Teamwork: Team work is a crucial element of total quality management. Rather than working individually, employees need to work in teams. When individuals work in unison, they are in a position to brainstorm ideas and come up with various solutions which would improve existing processes and systems. Team members ought to help each other to find a solution and put into place.

6. Leadership: Leadership provides a direction to the entire process of Total Quality Management. Total Quality Management needs to have a supervisor who acts as a strong source of inspiration for other members and can assist them in decision making. A leader himself needs to believe in the entire process of TQM

for others to believe in the same. Proper downloads, briefs about TQM must be given from time to time to employees to help them in its successful implementation.

❖ **Third Group: Binding Mortar**

7. Communication - Communication binds employees and extracts the best out of them. Information needs to be passed on from the sender to the recipient in its desired form. Small misunderstandings in the beginning lead to major problems later on. Employees need to interact with each other to come up with problems existing in the system and find their solutions as well.

Three types of Communication takes place between employees:

Downward Communication: Flow of information takes place from the management to the employees

Upward Communication: Flow of information takes place from the employees to the top level management

Sideways Communication: Communication also takes place between various departments.

❖ **Forth group: Roof**

8. Recognition: Recognition is the final element of Total Quality Management. Recognition is the most important factor which acts as a catalyst and drives employees to work hard as a team and deliver their lever best. Every individual is hungry for appreciation and recognition. Employees who come up with improvement ideas and perform exceptionally well must be appreciated in front of all. They should be suitably rewarded to expect a brilliant performance from them even the next time.

Application of TQM in Libraries

Application of TQM is to identify service improvement techniques for an academic library systems and services. Implementation of TQM in library and information services requires change in the mental frame of the employees as well as the executives of the library; customer segmentation in terms of their needs; service strategy to each user segment within library constraints; and the last but not the least, support from the top management of the library is must without this the quality can't be improved. Thus, implementation of TQM requires a changed attitude of employees towards their work. Each employee has to contribute his or her best for achieving the objectives of the department which, in turn, are driven by the objectives of the library. Everyone has to work hard to meet and exceed the user's requirements for literature and information. Successful implementation of TQM requires deciding on the customers to whom a academic library aims to serve, assessing their needs, and deciding on the services, the academic library has to provide to each segment of user's, keeping in terms of finance, staff, documents, and databases.

Teamwork is important for the successful implementation of TQM. Every step of the process depends on the constant support of top management. Their role determines how far the implementation can go. Therefore, once a decision is made to apply TQM, strong leadership is required. TQM provides a model and a benchmark as guidelines in making new strategies in libraries facing today's great changes. It is arguable whether it is feasible to apply the principles without reservation, but it is reasonable to adopt the techniques with adaptations suitable to the library environment. The meaning of TQM is customer satisfaction through product or services. The customer in the academic library is user / reader / student. The primary purpose of academic library is to support the teaching, research and other academic programs of its parent organization. A academic library is a part of a service organization which delivers personally to the

customers. TQM is at present not emerging as one of the management technique, but also felt very essential by several organizations and disciplines.

Sirkin, suggests some ways a library might use the principles of TQM to enhance library and information services.

- Improve the physical layout of the library
- Simplify checkout of material
- Provide a more convenient material return
- Use flexibility in staff assignment
- Create inter departmental library advisory groups □
- Change hours of operation
- Create service brochures and information kits
- Co-operate with local government
- Develop user and staff training materials
- Give new staff a thorough orientation
- Ask vendors to give products demonstration
- Conduct a user survey about library and information services.

Implementation Barriers of TQM in Libraries

TQM in libraries are well acclaimed yet there are certain barriers to the understanding and acceptances of TQM in the libraries. These are vocabulary barriers, commitment barriers, professional barriers, etc.

Vocabulary Barrier : TQM uses a vocabulary which belongs to the discipline of trade and industry. Use of terms such as quality management, quality improvement, customer's

satisfaction, etc. have drawn objections from the academic environments. It has argued that reference to the students as customer gives impression that the teachers are in the business of selling knowledge, and the use of the term 'quality improvement' may mean that standards are never followed while imparting knowledge. Considering the benefits and strategies of TQM, it is suggested that too much should not be made of the vocabulary of TQM.

Resources Barrier: TQM demands long term commitment and the librarians are of the opinion that they cannot 'afford' to invest in the organization and implementation of quality programme.

Commitment Barrier: Adoption to TQM in libraries is a time consuming process as new areas have to be discovered and new models have to be developed for effecting total quality in various library operations. A considerable amount of time goes in leadership planning, understanding the customers, identifying the products and services to be improved and acquiring skills and training in implementing the plan. As has been put forward by various authorities that TQM is not a quick fix; it requires a long-term commitment especially in service sector.

Professional Barrier: They are averse to certain elements of TQM, as for example, its focus on customers. Library professionals have not taken kindly to the notion of submitting their services and practices which are based on sound tradition and standards to the whims and fancies of the not so informed customers.

Benefits of Implementation of TQM in Libraries

- TQM reduces bureaucracy, empower staff and create a team base culture, which is keenly desired for library.
- TQM implementation in the library enhances the image of a library.

- TQM helps to detect defects and focuses on practices that identify potential defects to prevent them from occurring.
- TQM helps in libraries improves the image of the library staff and helps in public relation.
- TQM helps for development the qualitative library collections.
- TQM help us to maintain qualitative library and information services.
- TQM help us for meeting users' needs and expectations in an appropriate way.
- TQM empower staff members to develop a sense of self determination.
- TQM breaks down inter sectional barriers in a library and promotes co operation and team work instead of competition.
- TQM reduces grievances among employees and increases general productivity.
- Quality of service ensures courtesy, attitude, helpfulness, and treatment of users with respect.

Conclusion

Libraries are ideal places to implement TQM. This paper has discussed the implementation of total quality management and its application to libraries. TQM demands time and persistence. To succeed in an organization there must be support at the very top and commitment at all levels. It is necessary that all groups of people in an organization are included in the process. TQM implementation requires patience and tolerance as it is a time-consuming process and, of course, it is not easy to change an organization. Therefore, implementation of TQM is not a guarantee of the highest quality but it is a step in the right direction. The process of implementing TQM in libraries involves a conceptual change in library

professionals and a cultural transformation in the organizational operations. Without a long- term thinking and commitment, it is not applicable. Teamwork is important for successful implementation of TQM. Therefore, once a decision is made to apply TQM, a strong leadership is required.

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