ABSTRACT

TQM was initially applied as a management philosophy in the manufacturing sector. Following its enormous success, this philosophy is increasingly being applied in the service sector, including libraries. The purpose of this paper is to present an overview of total quality management (TQM) in the library and information sectors. Focusing on TQM implementation in the library and information sectors, the experiences of libraries adopting this method are also reviewed.

Key words: Total Quality Management, Library and Information Service

INTRODUCTION

Total quality management (TQM) becomes utmost important not only in manufacturing sector but also in service sector. TQM is a modern management philosophy and a journey, not a destination. TQM highlights the need to improve the quality of goods and services to better utilize the resources of organization. TQM is a system of enhancing and improving flexibility, and introducing an effective and efficient performance in organization. Libraries are the service-oriented and non-profit organizations. The main aim of every Library and Information centers are not only to fulfill the needs of the users but also to anticipate their demands and to fulfill the same. Libraries should always aim at providing quality services with the available resources.

Total quality management (TQM) is a management philosophy that empowers every member of the organization. TQM encourage each individual to participate, contribute and offers to present suggestions for improvement. It is intended to promote continuous and sustained improvement in quality and performance, and develops an attitude of quality culture. Its basic principle is that the cost of prevention is less than the cost of correction. TQM address overall organizational performance and recognizes the importance of processes. For TQM to be successfully adopted by an organization there needs to be a perceived need for change in that organization.

The TQM approach integrates three basic fundamental aspects: commitment, involvement and continuous improvement. Commitment in the sense to take pledge for never ending improvement in quality and services to the customer, involvement means involvement of all the team members in achieving a common goal, work as a single unit for better results and think about continuous improvement by looking any error and defects, and eliminating it on spot. TQM addresses the issues of customer satisfaction and guidance on implementing the marketing concept. In present world, the popular buzzword is 'Customer is the king.' 'Customers are our God'. Users of the library are defined as customers. Customers have become more and more aware of their rights. To provide quality services is the prime function of each and every library. Quality in service is a never ending journey. There is always scope for improvement continually. In journey, information provider can never say that they have reached the destination. However, with each improvement they will be crossing
important milestones in giving quality services to users. To improve the Quality of service given to the user, information provider must devise new methods of collecting feedback from the users of the library and information center.

**The Key Objectives**

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

**The Concept of Total Quality Management**

Total Quality Management (TQM) is both a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that represent the foundation of a continuously improving organization. TQM is the application of quantitative methods and human resources to improve the materials and services supplied to an organization, all the processes within an organization, and the degree to which needs of customers are met, now and in future. TQM integrates fundamental management techniques, existing improvement efforts, and technical tools under a disciplined approach focused on continuous improvement.

**Definition of TQM**

According to Jurow and Barnard TQM is “A system of continuous improvement employing participative management and centered on the needs of customers”

A cost effective system for integrating the continuous quality improvement efforts of people at all levels in an organization to deliver products and services which ensure customer satisfaction.

TQM includes maximum focus on customers, their satisfaction, leadership in setting values, fulfilling the organizational mission leading to goals and continuous improvement.

Definitions could differ but essentially, Total quality Management comprises following elements. There are its building blocks and required for it’s successes.

- Top Management’s Commitment.
- Customer focus.
- Process focus and improvement.
- Continuous improvement.
- Benchmarking.
- Employee involvement and empowerment.
- Quality assurance.
- Communication,
- Training.
- Time being.

**TQM In Library And Information Sector**

Libraries are the most ancient social and cultural institutions in existence, which have body of information recorded on some type of medium and that information could be retrieved when needed.
The basic concern is to create a structure of the organization where desired information is retrieved and made accessible efficiently and in a timely manner to the users. Creation and maintenance of such a structure and management of vast amounts of information stored in different formats—printed, audio, video requires use of the most modern management techniques.

TQM is a management philosophy that seeks to integrate all institutions functions to meet its needs and objectives. The implementation of TQM in library is a useful way to evaluate the quality of library services and provide goal for continuous improvement. Therefore, new approaches to library and information management systems was stimulated by the growing financial difficulties, problems connected with introducing new information technologies, staff problems and the increasing competitiveness on the information service market.

The Quality assurance initiative in Library Science sector primarily came from central or parent organization to which it provides services. However, in the later years, the quality assurance system has become as essential feature of Library and Information Services.

- Publicize new or changes services.
- Develop user and staff training materials
- Target services o specific groups.
- Offer electronic document delivery.

By applying TQM technique in libraries/information centers, the librarians can not only satisfy the users consistently according to their needs and requirements but also improve quality of their services frequently. TQM in Library & Information centers may help us in:

- Improved quality of services and user satisfaction
- Developing an inventory of all the documents available in the library
- Facilitating search through a number of tools which can provide access to universal publications
- Better library resources
- Higher productivity by efficient utilization of men, machines and materials
- Enhance skill and performance of end users to profitability interact with information systems and services.
- Better cost management
- Reduction in user grievances
- Elimination of bottlenecks and tension free work environment leading to good human relations and improvement of confidence among users
- Update and enhance the abilities of staff

Benefits of Total Quality Management

- Total quality management ensures the maximum effectiveness and efficiency of everything that is done with an organization.
- It provides market and sector leadership by the establishment of processes and system, which promote excellence, preventing errors, waste and avoid duplication.
- It ensures every aspect of the organization aligned to the needs of both the External and Internal Customers.
Better documentation, it gives quality awareness, positive cultural change and staff pride.

- Staff is motivated
- Better customer/usercare and Greater satisfaction.
- TQM implementation in the library enhances the image of a library

**Improvement of Library And Information Services With The Application of TQM**

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.

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

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

A number of barriers to the implementation of TQM have been encountered in all types of organization, including libraries some of them are listed below.

- Inadequate knowledge of TQM and improper understanding of the measurement techniques that are used to measure the effectiveness of TQM implementation.
- TQM requires a long term investment of time over several years as processes are analyzed and an organizational culture is changed. This can cause resistance and other difficulties in these days of increasing financial & other pressures.
- Lack of management commitment and management understanding on “Quality”.
- Lack of awareness on the benefits of TQM implementation in the organization.
- Lack of clarity in the guideline, implementation plan and implementation methods.
- Lack of understanding about the positive results of continuous improvement.
- Ignoring the importance of users.

CONCLUSION

Library and Information sector should focus on providing the best services possible and be willing to change to serve its users. The main aim of libraries and information sector is to satisfy the users, today’s libraries are pushed to a position where they have to provide quality services to its users, to justify their existence. So, now libraries are also started adopting TQM practices following other kinds of service industries. As TQM has become increasingly important, the philosophy has shifted from a pure statistical view of process control towards a systematic view. If TQM is to be successful it requires a culture that actively promotes users requirements, continuous improvement, creating problem-solving and a team ethos. Quality is the need of hour, and good quality service mean customer/user satisfaction. Thus library and Information Center should be involved in TQM to improve the library users’ satisfaction.

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. Every step of the process depends upon the constant support of the top management. Their role determines how far and how long the implementation can go. Therefore, once a decision is made to apply TQM, a strong leadership is required.

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