

Total Quality Management in Librarianship

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ABSTRACT

The research paper focuses on the Quality Management tools, techniques, theories & their Applications to be implemented in various types of libraries, Technical Information Centers & other Knowledge Centers. 'Total Quality Management' is a continuous process of identifying, measuring and evaluating the quality norms, standards and cost wherein the ultimate goal is the customer's satisfaction. Any Total Quality Management program cannot be complete and gets over in a short span of time; similarly any individual cannot achieve the goals and objectives on their own. It requires thorough involvement of people or personnel at all the levels of the system. Team work brings synergy resulting in multiplying the benefits of Total Quality Management. With the latest innovations in the field of Information and Communication Technology and with the help of Total Quality Management techniques, it becomes the responsibility of the libraries, information centers as well as library professionals to satisfy the vivid information needs of their patrons until their satisfaction.

Keywords: Quality, Total Quality Management, TQM, Librarianship, Library Science

I. INTRODUCTION

Total Quality Management is seen as the most comprehensive approach towards the Quality thinkable enterprises and institutions; the pillars of **Total Quality Management:**

'T' stands for 'Total': It is the Integration of the staff, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders away from party-specific thinking to a more holistic approach.

'Q' stands for 'Quality': It is the Quality of the work and the process of the enterprise leading towards the quality of Products.

'M' for 'Management': It stresses the leadership task,

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"Quality" and the quality of leadership. From a scientific point of view 'Total Quality Management' can count as the School of Leadership and from the enterpriser's point of view the term 'TQM' means that totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (American Society for Quality).

Total Quality Management implies continuous improvement employing participative management and centered on the needs of customers (Jurov & Barnard, 1993). On the other hand Schonberger, R. J. defines "Total Quality Management is a set of concepts and tolls for getting all employees focused on continuous improvement in the eyes of the customer"; Whereas The American Society for Quality Control defines "The total features and characteristics of a product or a service made or performed according to the specifications to satisfy customers at the time to purchase and during use." Hence in nutshell it can be sum up that quality is the performance of the product or service as per the commitment made by the producer to the consumer.

The roots of the TQM dates back to the 19th century originated in Japan and later moved to the United States of America and United Kingdom (Moghaddam, G. G. and Moballeghi, M., 2008). Earlier TQM were restricted towards only manufacturing units to get control over quality, later the inceptions of quality control organizations such as American Society for Quality Control in USA and Confederation of Indian Industries i.e. CII had stressed quality on every aspect to achieve excellence and retain business competitiveness by keeping quality a routine practice in every vertical of business (Bhatt, S. 2012). During the development, the thoughts were put on and arrived at the 'Total Quality Management' system can be applied to any sector of business and economy, as library and information centers are an integral part of an education domain; provides various information services to its clientele. The main objective of any library is to satisfy the information needs of its patrons

with the help of available resources via reference as well as referral services. Even basic objective of accreditation agencies such as National Assessment and Accreditation Council i.e. NAAC and National Board of Accreditation i.e. NBA for the evaluation of academic institutions to inspect 'Quality'; hence many institutions imparting traditional as well as technical education are going also for ISO 9000 certifications to retain 'Quality' in vivid processes and for getting higher ranking and successful completion of accreditation process at their end.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives formulated for the present study are:

- i. To get known the terminological and conceptual understanding of 'Total Quality Management'.
- ii. To understand the various processes tools and principles of 'Total Quality Management'.
- iii. To identify the potential areas of librarianship where TQM can be applied.
- iv. To understand the benefits, challenges and critical success factor of TQM in library and information science domain.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following review of literature has been presented to support the TQM in education and LIS domain. According to Sayeda, B. and others (2010) around twenty seven critical factors of quality management at engineering educational institutes have been analyzed to find out the relation between institutional performance and TQM aspects/dimensions which had shown a positive relationship between the two variables. Whereas Thakkar, J. and others (2006) have reported that the stakeholders of self-financed technical education institute requires continuous improvement in competitive education and modern educational set up to explore their ideas more precisely. Singh, K. (2013) had reported that the TQM were in practice since the subject evolution but with different terminologies; she had laid down various aspects of TQM such as performance indicators, performance evaluation, evaluation of various information resources such as information retrieval, precision: recall, cost benefit, cost effectiveness, user surveys etc. for the betterment of the library and information centers. Negi, A. S. and Srivastava, J. P. (2015) had also insisted as a philosophy under big umbrella, and have enlisted

various applications of TQM in libraries with its benefits towards organization, towards customers i.e. patrons and benefits towards the staff i.e. library professionals. Sherikar, A. and Jange, S. (2006) in their study at research libraries have reported that majority of the patrons are fully satisfied with the outcomes of the TQM such as library professional's leadership qualities, cordial relationships, fast service delivery process etc.

IV. TQM @ a Glance

Total Quality Management is a managerial philosophy and which can be seen as a Leadership model. Following diagram (fig 1) can demonstrate the foundational pillars of Total Quality Management:

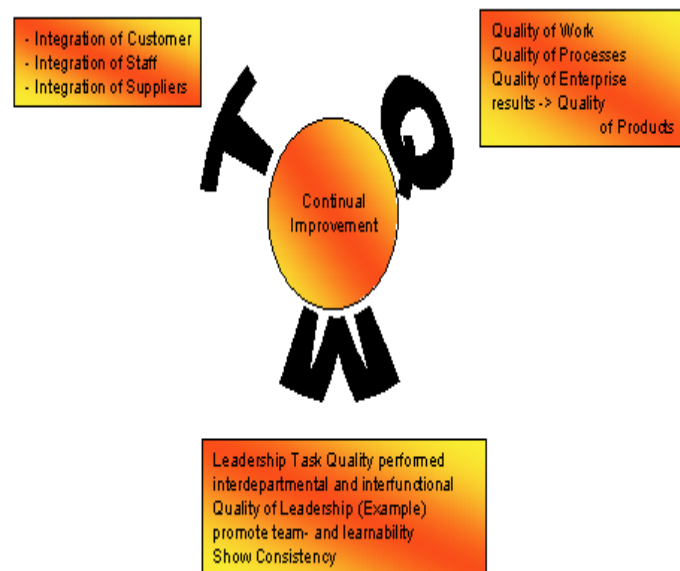
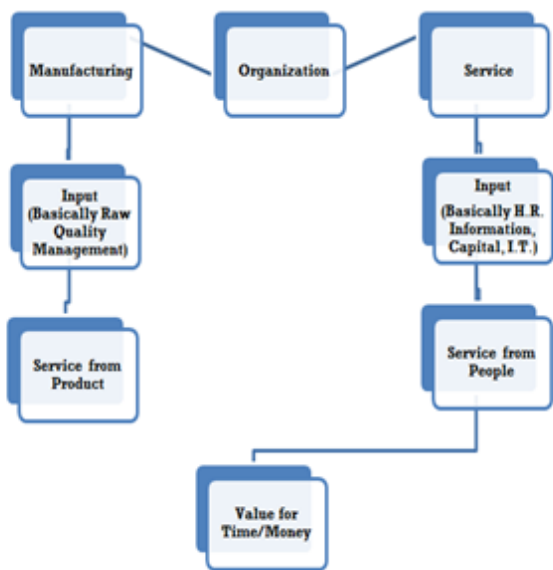


Fig 1: pillars of Total Quality Management

Source: <http://www.dreamtime.com>
As detailed 'Total Quality Management' is a continuous process of identifying, measuring, integrating and evaluating the quality norms, standards and cost involved in various processes. It can be said that TQM is the qualitative method applied with the help of human resources to improve on all the processes involved in the service delivery wherein the ultimate goal is the customer's satisfaction. Any Total Quality Management program cannot be complete and gets over in short span of time; similarly any individual

person cannot achieve the goals and objectives on their own. It requires thorough involvement of management, personnel's at all the levels of the system. Team work brings synergy resulting in multiplying the benefits of Total Quality Management.

V. PROCESS OF 'TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT'



In library and information centers there are various processes handled by various sections such as Acquisition, Technical Processing, Print Journals and Periodicals, E-Resources, Reference, Circulation, Reprographic, Administration etc. the work of any section is interrelated to each other; hence the quality should be the core motive at all the departments/sections to experience and achieve TQM. Bittel, L. R. and Muriel, A. B. (1978) described information technology and networking made the conventional libraries the 'Technological Institutes'. Library services have now been replaced with the help of computer and communication technology; here for the libraries the products are the various information resources, those are available in the libraries and libraries should focus on providing the quality information services within possible time limits to its clientele.

Here the library professionals may ask themselves:

- : -Why do the clientele come in library for?
- : - How can I improve the efficiency of the library?

: - How can I serve to fulfill the demands of the clientele/patrons/users?

: - How can a clientele be timely served with best possible resources?

: - How can he/she will be served with quality information services?

VI PRINCIPLES OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT TO IMPROVE LIBRARY SERVICES

Sirkin, A. F. (1993), has suggested some ways to improve the library services as well as to achieve and experience TQM:

- Create detailed library brochures for marketing of information resources and information services of the libraries.
- Conduct user surveys to understand the user's demands.
- Provision of convenient/Informative material to suite and fulfill the information needs of the patrons.
- Easy housekeeping to save the time of users and staff as well.
- Provision of user centric information and value added information services.
- Conduct of periodic library orientation/training programs.
- Conduct use and user studies for the analysis.
- Creation of Library Advisory Committee/Research Group.
- Improvement in physical as well as aesthetical layout of library.
- Invite suggestions and recommendations from management as well as from users.
- Develop user / staff training manuals/materials of library system.
- Target services to various groups or individuals.
- Offer electronic document delivery/bibliographic services.
- Use of new technologies/e-access to information.
- Resource Sharing/Co-operative agreements
- Participation of staff in various refresher/Staff Development/Quality Improvement Programs.
- User satisfaction analysis.
- Certification and periodic self-evaluation.
- Strategic Decision Making to reduce labor as well as cost.
- Revisit organizational structure.

- Periodic Feedback from users.

VII. TOOLS FOR EXPLORING TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Following are the tools suggested by Deming, A. E.(1982) to experience and achieve TQM in library and information centers:

- **Flow Charts:-**
It is a graphical presentation of a sequence of activities and decisions made by the libraries from time to time; it is a tool for planning, controlling, coordinating activities. It helps to control efficiency activities in cost and eliminating waste in the various library processes.
- **Cause and Effect Analysis:-**
This tool considers environment, material, human resources; methodology and actual output achieved either by mechanical or manual mode of operations. For e.g. during examination, the information needs of the users are more viz. more resources of information, increase in working hours, personalized reference services etc. can be provided to the users.
- **Histogram/Diagrammatic Representation:**
The chart shows the repeated measurement of a given quality characteristic confirming to a standard bell shaped curve. This tool reflects various library processes/activities in a diagrammatic way; which also reflects the quality aspects of the library and information centers to be exhibited to various inspection committees visiting periodically to the parent institution.
- **Benchmarking:**
It is the process of maintaining standards; the practice of benchmarking is for identifying, studying and building upon the best practices in one's library. It helps to improve the image of the library in the eyes of the patrons; every library professional should initiate the benchmarking process by comparing each process with the institute of highest rank in the same domain, will definitely help in upgrading the processes as well as its services.
- **Control Chart:**
Statistical control of repetitive operations in the library and information centers helps library professionals to keep quality

measurements with in an acceptable range. By avoiding the duplication and streamlining the processes will definitely help to align the new activities and so on.

VIII. QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTERS

As we see quality in every aspects of professional as well as personal life, so as to library and information science, library professionals and library laws as well, now it's the time to shift the gears towards the "Quality", to visualize and revisit those five laws of library and information science in the perspectives of 'Quality' accordingly:

- 'Quality Books for All' instead of 'Books are for All'.
- 'Every Quality User His/hers Book' instead of 'Every Reader His/hers Book'.
- 'Every Quality Book Its Reader' instead of 'Every Book Its Reader'.
- 'Save the Quality Time of the User' instead of 'Save the Time of the User'.
- 'Library's Quality is a Growing Organism' instead of 'Library is a Growing Organism'.

Even following functions may help library staff to achieve quality in their routine work and also while providing quality information services towards their clientele/patrons:

- **Staff Development:**
Library staff can be deputed to other libraries, institutions or universities to attend various seminars, conferences, workshops, and orientation as well as refresher programs of national as well as international repute. They can be supported to present a paper on new emerging trends/technologies in Library and Information Science.
- **Technology:**
Library staff must understand the impact of technological innovations in the field of library and information science, and also help themselves to get acquainted with the use and proper knowledge of the recent trends and information and communication i.e. ICT products and services.e.g.: Barcode,Smart Card, RFID, New emerging Software (commercial/open source),Online/Offline Research Databases, e-library, Digital Library

concepts, priced/open access e-resources or databases etc.

➤ **New Services:**

Library staff must be always motivated to start up new information services and continuously maintain them with the same courage viz. Current Awareness Service, Selective Dissemination of Information, Indexing, Translation, Digital Library, WEBOPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue), Discovery services, Document Delivery, Bulletin Board, Intranet based services, Internet based services etc.

IX. POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Libraries and Information Centers are the ideal places to implement Total Quality Management but during its implementation it can have challenges as well. Jurow & Barnard (1993) identified four barriers to adopt Total Quality Management in libraries:

➤ **Vocabulary:**

Terms used to describe the documente.g. "Total" "Quality" "Management", if the terms used separately states that the high Standards are not met, so the uniformity is the key for selecting vocabulary, subject headings or keywords for the various documents available in the library.

➤ **Commitment:**

Total Quality Management takes several years to implement and requires long term commitment by library managers. It means the exercise of authority based delegation and the promotion of user-oriented initiatives and framework.

➤ **Process:**

Our culture tends to be impatient and we try to solve problems quickly, contrary to Total Quality Management involves thorough and careful process analysis.

➤ **Professionalism:**

Professional staff can be resistant to turning over their practices and services to what they perceive as the "uninformed whims of the customer; Sirkin, A. F. (1993) also notes that it

isn't possible to satisfy everyone's demand, hence the choices will need to be made.

Benefits of Total Quality Management in Library and Information Centers:

Measuring the quality can have following benefits as justified by Jurow, S. & Bernard, S.B. (1993):

- It draws the attention of the management/governing bodies on the losses and Recurring costs because of poor quality management in various processes.
- It helps in identifying the problematic areas and consequently helps in taking the decisions to eliminate problems resulting in poor quality.
- It minimizes the waste and boost up the resource sharing.
- It helps in scheduling quality programs and corrects decision making process.
- It maximizes the usage of information technology products, access & services of the libraries and information centers.
- The Audits, Assessments, Accreditation processes becomes smoother which reflects the actual picture of the library as a unit of measurement.
- Total Quality Management practice enhances the image and reputation of library and information science professionals collectively.

X. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATIONCENTERS

Ramesha, D. R. (2009) have identified the following critical success factors of Total Quality Management:

- The focus should be on "User Demands/satisfaction"
- Every member of the Organization should be involved in the process of 'Total Quality Management'.
- The focus should again be on continuous improvement of library services & towards the satisfaction of the information needs with the help of proactive or need based information services.
- An effective performance measurement system that measures the continuous improvement from the user's perspective should be introduced.

- Existing rewards and performance measurements should be renewed to encourage quality improvement in the libraries and information centers.
- Appropriate and adequate training and education should be given to the entire library staff members, so that everyone should be aware of the aims and objectives of Total Quality Management system to experience as well as achieve the same.

XI.CONCLUSION

Being an information service provider, library and Information centers are proving as the boon for their stakeholders; with the advent of information and communication technology the expectations of the users have grown like anything; hence the proactive as well as need based information services needs to plan out for the patrons from time to time. By formulating a strategic and analytical plan or work flow and following it with the at most commitment will definitely leads to quality improvement in every vertical of the system; library managers can transform and should inform their organizations about quality aspects they follow. Total Quality Management isn't a "quick fix". It needs to be implemented gradually over the period of time.

To verify the performance of all the activities being implemented by libraries, information centers, the quality audit, a tool of management for determining the efficiency and effectiveness of the system is essential in order to achieve and assure customer's satisfaction.

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