Total Quality Management in Academic Libraries

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Abstract - **Quality was a management tool especially for non-profit organizations like libraries. Total Quality relates to the quality management system of this total library process across the organizational functions and processes. It is not simply the end-quality of the services. Among the service industries such as Airlines, Banking institutions, Insurance companies and Health care providers, Libraries are the last to adopt TQM practices. For a long time, Librarians saw themselves as keepers of knowledge rather than active agents in information transfer. Though the main aim/objective of libraries is to satisfy the users, the library professionals often forget that. This article explain about various implementation of Total Quality Management in the academic libraries.**

I.INTRODUCTION

Total Quality Management is now on influential concepts. It is a Japanese concept of quality and statistical measurement technique which focuses on effort of all employees on a day to day basis towards improving and maintaining the quality of the company's products and services. Its aim is to ensure complete customer satisfaction. Thus matters of quality have been at the forefront of changes in higher education also. Total Quality Management (TQM) is focused on the requirements of the customer. A library patron or user is a customer. He or she is demanding a service and expects that service. Total Quality Management offers an approach for an organisation to design processes, policies, and jobs so that they are the best, most effective methods for serving users' needs, eliminating inefficiencies and assuring quality service, TQM is an important strategic management tool and a systematic approach with strong internal and external customer orientation. "Quality as a management tool especially for non-profit organizations like libraries." Total Quality relates to the quality management system of this total library process across the organizational functions and processes. It is not simply the end-quality of the services. Total Quality Management therefore emerges as an integral part of strategic management of a library for excellence in performance and superior results. The essential approach to Total Quality Management is to promote a work culture that empowers people of the library and motivates committed action aimed at users satisfaction by providing targeted quality at lowest cost. In order to bring down cost of quality, TQM lays due emphasis on getting things right the first time….every time.

TQM is "a system of continuous improvement employing participative management and centered on the needs of customers" (Jurow & Barnard, 1993). Key components of TQM are employee involvement and training, problem-solving teams, statistical methods, long-term 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 stat of continuous improvement.

A library should focus on providing the best services possible, and willing to change to serve its customers. To determine if changes need to be made, a library administrator might ask: What are our niche markets? What do the customers come in for? How can I look at the efficiency of my library? How do we serve the current customers that exist today? (Total Quality Management, 1995). First learn about the customer, then solve the problems.

II. LIBRARIES WITH TQM

Many libraries have implemented TQM successfully. Few university is library created a task force which rewrote the library's vision statement, and considered changes that would have to be made in order to develop a new organization culture-one that "highlights the changing nature of staff roles and responsibilities in an era of pervasive change". With the help of consultants, Harvard learned about TQM, and found that its principles of service excellence, teamwork, ongoing training and skill building, focus, continuous improvement, and cooperation across boundaries could help them make the changes they needed.

It is suggested that some ways a library might use the principles of TQM to enhance library services:

a. Create service brochures and information kits
b. Conduct a user survey about library services
c. Improve signage
d. Change hours of operation
e. Provide a more convenient material return
f. Simplify checkout of materials
g. Use flexibility in staff assignments

h. Cooperate with local government
i. Ask vendors to give product demonstrations
j. Give new staff a thorough orientation
k. Create interdepartmental library advisory groups
l. Improve the physical layout of the library
m. Track complaints
n. Develop the physical layout of the library
o. Track Complaints
p. Develop an active outreach program
q. Open satellite offices
r. Publicize new or changed services
s. Develop user and staff training materials
t. Target services to specific groups
u. Offer electronic document delivery
v. Follow the mission statement
w. Smile

Jurow and Barnard (1993) identify four barriers to the adoption of TQM libraries:

1. Vocabulary: objections to terms such as "total", "quality", and "management" which improve that high standards are not already being met;
2. Commitment: TQM takes several years to implement and requires a long-term commitment by library managers:
3. Process: our culture tends to be impatient and we try to solve problems quickly, contrary to TQM's careful process analysis; and
4. Professionalisation: professional staff can be resistant to turning over their practices and services to what they perceive as the "uninformed whims of the customer". Also notes that it is not possible to satisfy everyone's demands; choices will need to be made.

III. TQM POLICY

1. **Pressures on Library:** TQM operations have always existed but mostly in parts. Organic linking of the parts to users-driven missions has been relatively a recent phenomenon.
2. **High-tech**: High-proficient library had captive markets for several years. It has become the global approach for restructuring library processes and seeking continuous improvements. The user has gained renewed focus; unprecedented competitive processes have become the norm.
3. **Positive Approach:** While on the one side the unsatisfactory service triggered many libraries to TQM implementation, many positively motivated managements launched TQM processes on their own to enhance users satisfaction, improve working and acquire leadership. These managements searched for contextual themes to rouse library wide interest and consciousness in moving towards their goals.
4. **Practical themes:** Winning national awards for excellence in performance and meeting all round regulatory safety and health requirements without

facing penalty/liability from the society at large, striving for international code recognitions and federal contractual obligations have provided convenient themes. Exhortations to employees to increase service, cut cost, improve quality and raise productivity have not always had an equivalent impact.

5. **Policy communication:** Upper managements have been designing and implementing motivational programmes by calculated employee-user linkages at various levels in the library hierarchy. That is why it is important to communicate the TQM policy and policy intentions to every one in the library. Every occasion should be utilized to demonstrate to the employee how his or her activity affects or promotes users interests. In library surveys have repeatedly brought out distressing gaps in the understanding of the user needs both in the vertical and the horizontal layers of the library.
6. **Professional change:** The quality profession itself has undergone a sea-change in its focus, magnitude and support. The profession no longer confined to product quality, has broadened to sub-serve the broader library mission. It is user-oriented and policy-driven. The broadened mission is also a professional booster.

IV. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Total Quality Management is the integration of all functions and processes with an organization in order to achieve continuous improvement of the quality of goods and services. The goal is customer satisfaction. A large number of organizations across the globe have adopted Total Quality Management to satisfy customer through quality products and responsive service in order to gain competitive advantage. TQM found its strongest root not merely in improving the quality performance of product, but in organizational transformation-specifically in bringing about a cultural change, in improving employees' morale and in facilitating an empowering working climate for attaining excellent human performance. TQM focuses on the integration and coordination of all activities in a work process and aims at continuous improvement in quality. Quality means not merely the quality of end products but the quality of all kinds of means such as data, information, decision, objectives, strategy, people materials, machinery, systems etc.

TQM is the foundation for activities, which include:

a. Commitment by senior management and all employees
b. Meeting customer requirements
c. Reducing development cycle times
d. Just in Time/Demand Flow Manufacturing
e. Improvement teams
f. Reducing product and service costs

g. Systems to facilitate improvement
h. Line Managament Ownership
i. Employee involvement and empowerment
j. Recognition and celebration
k. Challenging quantified goals and benchmarking
l. Focus on processes / improvement plans
m. Specific incorporation in strategic planning.

V.ACADEMIC LIBRARIES AND TQM

Libraries are among the most ancient social and cultural institutions in existence. Ancient libraries as well as modern ones have one thing in common: all of them have a body of information recorded on some type of medium and that information could be retrieved when needed. The accessibility of information requires good organizational ability from those who are in charge. 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 requires an effective management process that facilitates work toward that goal. Over many centuries libraries have adopted many different management principles from business, industry, religion, and government. A library is a business that must be operated efficiently and well. A major difference is that most libraries are non-profit organizations. Management of vast amounts of information stored in different formats – printed, electronic, audio, video-requires use of the most modern management techniques.

Today technologies have changed our social and economic life. In the workplace methodologies change; people work at home or on the web with flexible timetables, and more and more virtual communities are emerging in different fields. The most important stakeholders in the library are customers, the providers of subsidies, staff, and other libraries. These stakeholders are interested, for various reasons, in the introduction of TQM. The introduction of TQM makes great demands on the staff. The following factors in particular need to be taken into account:

1. TQM involves a process of change and therefore requires of staff that they be ready to play a constructive role in that process.
2. TQM requires a basic reorientation from the media stock towards customers and markets. For TQM a result-oriented approach, not the input of resources, is of vital importance.
3. A strongly hierarchical organization with fragmented responsibilities is not well suited to the introduction of TQM since all staff needs to feel a responsibility for influencing quality.
4. The effort necessary for implementing TQM is at the same time rewarding for both staff and the institution: improvement of the institution in which they work, a strengthening of that institution's position, and more opportunity of staff to influence their own work.

The management of quality in libraries, as a management method that allows the improvement of performance, has been the object of interest for the managers of these services. In this context, the identification of indicators that may take into account the social-economical and political context that permeate the reality of the information services is essential to better adequate the quality proposals. In recent years the academic libraries stood against the fast improvement of technology, with low budget and with more requirements for responsibility. Because of these, new strategies of renewal have been developed at a quick pace. A first step which is necessary for a library, is to define which approach in the procedure of change is more appropriate for itself, considering the size, the environments and the conditions of function that apply in this library.

The method of TQM represents a new age in the management of an organization. Its elements such as participating management, the personnel training and the responsible service to the customers, are views that the libraries are already driven by. As a result of this, the libraries are up to improve these principles which already have been valued positively by them and put them partially in practice. Many libraries have embarked on plans for implementing quality-related philosophies such as TQM. It is well-known that TQM is a management method that libraries can benefit from it in several ways.

In each and every academic institute, the library plays key role for development of professors, students, researchers in terms of knowledge navigator. Today in the information age the information explosion is very fast. Every movement new information are produced, and it is difficult for the library to maintain these information. A library should focus on providing the best services possible, and be willing to change to serve its customers. In a service organization like an academic library the customer satisfaction means fulfilling expectations.

The library might use the principles of TQM to enhance the library services

a. Make a Library Brochure
b. Library Orientations

Implement interlibrary loan facilities

a. Smooth Acquisition procedure
b. Technology use for easy information retrieval
c. Training & development of staff
d. Motivation
e. User based information services

VI.BENEFIT OF TQM FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

1. TQM reduces bureaucracy, empower staff and create a team base culture, which is keenly desired for academic library.
2. TQM help us for gauging users' needs and expectations in an appropriate way.

3. TQM help us to maintain qualitative library and information services.
4. TQM helps in libraries improves the image of the library staff and helps in public relation and marketing.
5. TQM helps for development the qualitative library collections.

VII.IMPLEMENTING TQM TECHNIQUES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARY

While implementing TQM in library services, a different set of skills is required of the staff. Training is key component in TQM which upgrades the skills of the staff. Implementation of TQM provides a library organization with the opportunity to update and enhance the abilities of the staff to work effectively and collectively. Today, all kinds of organizations are becoming customer oriented organizations to survive in this world. So, they need to provide quality products and services to their customers. Total Quality Management (TQM), provides the tools and the direction to improve quality. Libraries has always been committed to provide a high quality of services to its users. In the past, consuming more resources, buying more books, and moving to large premises are considered as improving quality. But that approach is not valid today. One of the good solutions to improve quality is to provide right information to a right user at right time. This requires a through change in the approach – an approach based on user requirements and user satisfaction. It is believed that this can be achieved by implementing TQM. Thus, TQM approach is slowly getting popular in today's libraries. Each one gives his or her own definition, but one meaning of quality is customer satisfaction through product or service. The customer in the academic library is the students, researchers and faculties parts of the academic community.

As a response of this challenge of quality, India's Academic Grants Commission (UGC-www.ugc.ac.in/) has set up NAAC (www.naac-india.com/index.asp), the National Accreditation and Assessment Council. NAAC conducts audits and inspections on the quality of service provided by educational institutions, including library service. Grants are linked to the outcomes of these assessments. In light of this, academic libraries must develop systems, philosophies, and strategies for managing quality. The primary purpose of an academic library is to support the teaching, research, and other academic programs of its parent organization. An academic library is part of a service organization which delivers products personally to the customer. In a manufacturing concern, the customer is remote, where as in service organization like an academic library, producers and consumer meet face to face. The complexity of managing service organizations is typically compounded by the existence of multiple interfaces.

Capezio & Morehouse defines TQM as follows: "TQM refers to a management process and set of disciplines that are coordinated to ensure that the organization consistently meets and exceeds customer requirements. TQM engages all divisions, departments and levels of the organization. Top management organizes all of its strategy and operations around customer needs and develops a culture with high employee participation. TQM companies are focused on the systematic management of data of all processes and practices to eliminate waste and pursue continuous improvement".

VIII. STAGES OF TQM

Four stages can be identified in the evolution of TQM. They are:

(1) Inspection-based System
(2) System of Quality Control
(3) Quality Assurance
(4) Total Quality Management

Quality Management started with simple Inspection-based system, where a product was compared with a product standard by a team of inspectors. First revolutionary charge – System of Quality Control came along with II World War. At that time quality was achieved through control systems, product testing and documentation control. In the Quality Assurance stage, there was a change from product quality to systems quality. Typical of this stage were quality manuals, quality planning and advanced document control. Quality assurance is prevention-based. The fourth stage of development was TQM. A clear and unambiguous vision, few interdepartmental barriers, staff training, excellent customer relations, emphasis on continuous improvement, and quality of the company as a whole are typical in a TQM environment.

IX. MANAGING QUALITY IN ACADEMIC LIBRARY

In a service organization like an academic library the customer satisfaction means fulfilling expectations. Librarians must find out what readers want and concentrate upon providing it. Designing an appropriate service means asking:

a. Who are the customers?
b. What do they want?
c. What can the organization provide?

In a library there are basically two types of customer: those who are in a hurry and those who want to kill time. An academic library has to identify these and serve them accordingly.

Managing Customer Expectations

The expectations that the customers bring to a library have a critical effect upon their perceptions of quality. It is better to acquire a reputation for one or two factors which are important to customers and to concentrate upon developing those.

Service delivery is like a theoretical performance. If customers are to gain maximum benefit from a service, they must know how to use it. So, properly planned user education is a must for an academic library.

a. Support systems should reflect customers' priorities. It is important to find out which services can be automated without losing the personal touch.

b. Getting feedback from the user is important to ascertain the quality of service. A regular survey for getting feedback from users should be conduct.

c. The circulation desk staff are the front line staff who play a critical role is an academic library because they represent the library; first deal with inquiries and manage the reader interface. Public services staff must be carefully-appointed and be given periodic training to keep up-to-date.

d. All academic library staff must receive training, including skill training; on the job guidance; retraining. Well-trained staff are the competitive weapon for better quality service in an academic library.

e. Teamwork plays a vital role in giving better quality service. People have to develop a culture and commitment towards quality service in an academic library.

ISO-9000 Series Steps Towards TQM in Academic Library

ISO 9000 has an internationally accepted certificate that accredits an organization for its quality management systems and procedures. ISO 9004-2:1992 has guidelines for services and was issued by ISO to establish and implement a quality system within a service organization such as an educational institution. Total quality management (TQM), as a managing concept and method, achieved much in every aspect of life, has been praised highly by various managers and supervisors and has been commonly applied in libraries in the world. But, as a newly mushrooming digital library, there are still different opinions and ideas on its operation model and managing method (Li, 2005).

TQM and the Digital Library

Total Quality Management (TQM), as a philosophical concept and management method, undergoes continuous development and improvement while being applied in factories, enterprises and libraries, while greatly promoting global quality management. As we know, the total quality management in academic library is comparatively widespread in western countries, and is already being started in China. However, it is not yet fully and widely used in digital library and need more research and discussion.

X. CONCLUSION

Among the service industries such as Airlines, Banking institutions, Insurance companies and Health care providers, Libraries are the last to adopt TQM practices. For a long time, Librarians saw themselves as keepers of knowledge rather than active agents in information transfer. Though the main aim/objective of libraries is to satisfy the users, the library professionals often forget that. But 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.

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