TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This paper has discussed different aspects of application of TQM in academic libraries. Libraries are also the service organisation dedicated to their users. Quality planning starts with identifying users both internal and external determining their need and developing product feature. Library should adopt helpful policies, programmes and technology as per user requirement. Now a day’s user’s expectations have challenged libraries to improve their service quality.

Key word: Total Quality Management, user satisfaction, Management, TQM.


1. INTRODUCTION

“The concept of quality management originated in Japan and later moved into the USA and the UK, initially in the manufacturing sector. Since then, the theory of quality management has been growing fast. It has become a management philosophy in its own right and has taken shape in a series of international standards in the ISO 9000 series. The philosophy is increasingly being applied in the service sector, including libraries”[1]. “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”[2]. “Libraries and Information Centres have a long tradition of providing information products and services to its customers”[3].

2. DEFINITION

Cambridge English Dictionary define TQM as “the involvement of all of a company's managers and employees in making sure that its products and services are all of a high standard and exactly as designed”[4].
“Total Quality Management (TQM) is a philosophy that involves everyone in an organisation in a continual effort to improve quality and achieve customer satisfaction”[5].

3. LITERATURE REVIEW
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 [1]. 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[6]. 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[7]. 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[8]. S. Kumar (2013) made a study on total quality management in college library” and suggests that getting feedback from the users about the quality of service, through given a questionnaire to improving services[9].

4. OBJECTIVES [2]
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.

5. DIMENSIONS OF QUALITY
Generally, customers are preferred to evaluate quality of a product or service. While they are purchasing, they consider different angles or dimensions of the product or service. The nine dimensions of quality are as follows [5]:
- Performance
- Features
- Reliability
- Durability
- Service
- Response
- Aesthetic
- Reputation
- Safety

Importance of TQM in Libraries
“The importance of total quality management for library is not only centered around the users need but also in anticipating and exceeding the demands of the fast changing environment of service delivery in libraries. Most libraries today operate according to strategic plans containing vision and mission statements, goals and objectives and short, medium and long-term plans”[8].
Implementation of TQM in Library Services
“Implementation of TQM in library 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”[10].

TQM in the Academic Libraries
“The objectives and the policies of the library must reflect in its commitment to quality as a philosophy of user’s satisfaction. The TQM philosophy must be effectively communicated to each and every employee and department so that it is clearly understood throughout the organisation”[11].

“In the academic library, quality may be recognized by the customers in terms of prompt delivery or error free services. Recently, some librarians have shifted their perspective of library services to represent a user driven view. The assessment of how well a library succeeds depends on the user as judge of quality”[12].

“The user in the academic library is the user reader/students/staff. Here the customer is not an outsider, but part of the academic community. In India NAAC set up by UGC conducts audit and inspection on the quality of service provided by the educational institution including library service”[9].

Some Principles Used for Providing the Good Library Services[9]
- Library broachers
- Distribution of work among library staff
- Implementation of library rules and regulations
- Qualified staff in the library
- Opening and closing timing of library should be as per reader requirement
- Implementation of new technology in library to attract the readers
- Proper arrangement of library resources
- College authority should create a library committee
- Unity of command

Library Facilities
- Library should be established in the centre of college/institute
- Proper layout
- Library furniture should be comfortable
- Sufficient space, lighting and space
- Collection of textbooks, reference books and Journals, should be as per course of college.
- Proper classification of study materials
- Proper arrangement of study material so that user can get their required material immediately
- Display of new arrivals
- Multimedia system in library
- Subscription of e-journals and e-books as per requirement
Suggestion for Maintaining Quality in Academic Libraries

“A successful TQM environment requires committed and well-trained library staff that participates fully in quality improvement activities of the library. Library staffs are encouraged to take more responsibility, communicate more effectively, act creatively and innovate”[13]. To fulfilment of user satisfaction librarian must find out:

- What user need
- Status of user
- Availability of resources

Users are the main clientele of libraries. User must satisfied by the library services. Library should organise properly planned training programme so that user can search the required study material. User feedback through questionnaire for improving the library service is required. All the college library staff must get the proper training to give the quality service in the library [9].

ICT Based Library Activities Required in Quality Based Academic Libraries [8]

Data processing
Circulation
Cataloguing
Prepared In House Database
CD-Rom Searching
Online Networking
Photocopying
News Clipping Scanning Service
Online Reservation Service
Database Searching Service
Internet Access
E-Query Service

After carefully implementation of TQM, libraries will get following benefits [14]:

- Improvement in user satisfaction
- Staff participation in maintaining the library service will increase
- Library staff will get motivation to develop quality concept in library
- Library staff and their skill will improve

6. CONCLUSION

Implementation of TQM requires depth knowledge of critical success factors. The planners must look into their crystal balls to predict future conditions that will affect their product or service. All Library staff should be well trained. User’s feedback is important to provide better service. The librarians and libraries are providers of learning tools, atmosphere and resources to the users. Library should subscribe resources in electronic form as per user need. The Library being a service organisation, its main objective is to provide the right resources and services to its each respective user. Presently e-resources and web represents major parts of library services. So, every library should take benefit of ICT while providing the services to its user community.
REFERENCE


