

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT (TQM): A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LIBRARY

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Abstract

This paper deals with the History of TQM, meaning of TQM, origin, principles, etc. Also provides information about the comparison between TQM to ISO 9001 and application of TQM in libraries. At last, shows the barriers to the adoption of TQM in libraries.

Introduction

Library and Information centers exist to support the learning and research needs of their parent institutions. These are dominant agencies for the dissemination of information. Their aim is to provide services acceptable to the users to their fullest satisfaction. For successful functioning, these require professionals who are not only to be professionally qualified, competent and efficient but also to be lively active, contented and well satisfied with their jobs. For sustaining the library services and librarianship, there is need to provide the library professional with adequate training in view of the rapid developments in the fields of science and technology.

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.

Total Quality Management (TQM)

In the 1950s, the Japanese asked W.Edwards Deming, an American Statistician and management theorist, to help them improve their torn economy. By implementing Deming's principles of TQM, Japan experienced dramatic economic growth. In the 1980s, when the US 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-profit organization including libraries (Jurow & Barnard 1993).

TQM is “a system of continuous improvement employing participative management and centered on the needs of customers” (Jurow&Barnard 1993). Key component 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 (Jurow&Barnard 1993).

A library should focus on providing the best services possible, and be 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 already? (TQM, 1995). First learn about the customer, and then solve the problems.

Definition:

TQM is composed of three paradigms:

Total: “Organization wide”

“Quality involves everyone and all activities in the company”

Quality: “With its usual definitions, with all its complexities”

“Conformance to requirements (meeting customer requirements)”

Management: “The system of managing with steps like plan, organize, control, lead, staff, etc.”

“A process for managing quality; it must be a continuous way of life; a philosophy of perpetual improvement in everything we do”.

As defined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO):

“TQM is a management approach for an organization, centered on quality, based on the participation of all its members and aiming at long-term through customer satisfaction, and benefits to all members of the organization and to society”.

Origin

- “Total Quality Control” was the key concept of ARMAND FEIGENBAUM’s 1951 book, *Quality Control: Principles, practice and administration*; a book that was

subsequently released in 1961 under the title, Total Quality Control. Joseph Juran, Philop B. Crosby and Kaoru Ishikawa also contributed to the body of knowledge now known as TQM.

- The American Society for quality says that the term TQM was first used by the US Naval Air Systems Command “to describe its Japanese-style management approach to quality improvement”.
- Xu in his paper “The making of TQM: History and Margins of the Hi(gh)-story” from 1994, claims that “Total Quality Control” is translated incorrectly from Japanese since there is no difference between the words “control” and “Management” in Japanese.

Principles of TQM

The Principles of TQM are as follows:

1. Quality can and must be managed.
2. Everyone has a customer and is a supplier.
3. Processes, not people are the problem.
4. Every employee is responsible for quality.
5. Problems must be prevented, not just fixed.
6. Quality must be prevented, not just fixed.
7. Quality must be measured.
8. Quality improvements must be continuous.
9. The quality standard is defect free.
10. Goals are based on requirements, not negotiated.
11. Life cycle costs, not front end costs.
12. Management must be involve and lead.
13. Plan and organize for quality improvement.

TQM compared to ISO 9001

ISO 9001 is a Quality System Management Standard. TQM is philosophy of perpetual improvement. The ISO quality standard sets in place a system to deploy policy and verifiable objectives. An ISO implementation is a basis for a Total Quality Management implementation. Where there is an ISO system, about 75% of the steps are in place for TQM. The requirements for TQM can be considered ISO plus. Another aspect relating to the ISO standard is that the proposed changes for the next revision (1999) will contain customer satisfaction and measurement requirements. Implementing TQM is being proactive concerning quality than reactive.

Main elements of TQM

The main elements of TQM are depicted in figure 1.



Figure 1. The Main Elements of TQM

1. **Quality is customer defined** – Quality is defined in terms of customer’s perceptions, or in a more complex model that is widely debated in the service quality literature as the gap between expectation and perceptions.
2. **Internal and External customers** – The only way to ensure that the organization has a focus on customers that impacts equally on all departments and teams, including those not in direct contact with the external customer, is to encourage each employee to identify those to whom they provide a service and to view those people as their internal customers.
3. **Employee involvement** – Employee involvement follows automatically from the need for all employees to consider their internal customers. Employee involvement means that each individual must take the initiative and not rely upon someone else. In order for this to be achieved the organization needs a culture which encourages this behavior.
4. **Error free processes** – The focus of TQM is on prevention to eliminate waste, reduce costs and achieve error – free processes.
5. **Performance measurement** – Performance measurement needs to be based upon timely measures of, and feedback on performance through superior quality information systems.
6. **Continuous improvement** – Continuous improvement must be seen as the responsibility of everyone in the organization. To develop this a focus on training, education, communication, recognition of achievements and teamwork is often seen as appropriate.

TQM in libraries

TQM has proved very effective in the manufacturing and business environment and it will be profitable if the library profession also rises to the occasion and ponders over the processes and services where TQM can gainfully applied in research oriented libraries. It has been put forward by the proponents of TQM that their principles also hold good for any educational and governmental agencies and those organizations which intend to achieve excellence in

their performance and take pleasure in satisfying their customers will do well in adopting them.

In most of the libraries, people are engaged in establishing and restructuring the routines, creating job descriptions, acquiring and organizing materials and doing odd jobs which do not contribute to the information functions. Many libraries have implemented TQM successfully as Harvard college library created a task force which rewrote the library's 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 and responsibilities in an era of pervasive change" (Clark 93').

Sirkin (1993) suggests some ways a library might use the principles of TQM to enhance library services:

- Create services brochures and information kits
- Conduct a user survey about library services
- Improve signage
- Change hours of operation
- Provide a more convenient material return
- Simplify checkout of materials
- Use flexibility in staff assignments
- Cooperate with local government
- Ask vendors to give product demonstrations
- Give new staff a thorough orientation
- Create interdepartmental library advisory groups
- Improve the physical layout of the library
- Track complaints
- Develop an active outreach program
- Open satellite offices
- Publicize new or changed services
- Develop user and staff training materials
- Target services to specific group
- Offer electronic document delivery
- Follow the mission statement
- Smile

Barriers to the adoption of TQM in libraries

Though the advantage of adopting 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.

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

Conclusion

Thus, TQM may play an important role in Learning Resource Centre of any institutes. But many institutes in india are not fully aware about this. There is a need to organize many training schedule to train the library professionals about how to update?, how to co-ordinate among different sections, what are the facilities/services, users may get from the centres,etc. We should think about the management I broad perspective, not only in one aspect but in multi aspect.

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