Total Quality Management: An Effective Approach for Library System

Sunil Bhatt

ABSTRACT

The paper presents the various aspects of total quality management and correlates the importance of it in the library and information sector. Now the library and information sectors have become totally users oriented so the concept of 'customers' satisfaction' also applies here and the basis foundation of total quality management is also associated with this concept, therefore, application of all the techniques of total quality management is essential in libraries to fulfill the users' needs in appropriate manner.

Key Terms: TQM, Library Management, Quality Management, Service Quality, Collection Policy, Budget Policy.

INTRODUCTION

The place where in so many information materials are kept is called 'library'. The basic function of library is to acquire, organize and disseminate the knowledge or information resources to the users, however, the techniques or process may differ to library to library. Library is also a social organization because it is directly related to human being either in form of staff or users. When some persons work together in any organization the concept of management also implies there. According to Dr. S.R. Ranganathan's Fifth law of library science, every library develops in the form of collections, infrastructures, users and manpower. So the application of management theories and techniques is also needed to run the library slickly.

CONCEPT OF LIBRARY MANAGEMENT

The word 'management' consists of three different words as 'Manage + Men + T', here 'T' refers for Techniques, so the meaning of management is very clear and that is 'Techniques to Manage Men'. In other words, manage the men power by using different techniques to achieve business or organizational goals. Management in all business areas and human organization activity is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives. Library is also an organization; therefore, the manpower is an important factor of any library system. All the techniques and principles like planning, organizing, staffing, motivating, budgeting, controlling, coordinating etc. are also applicable there. Figure 1 shows that all the library functions and services are provided under a management system, so it is necessary to follow all the functions and techniques of management to operate various library activities properly.

PERCEPTION OF TQM

In the early 1900s, F.W. Taylor, the father of scientific management emphasized on quality by including product inspection and gauging in his list of fundamental areas of manufacturing management. World War II caused a dramatic increase in emphasis on quality control. Soon after, U.S. universities started training engineers in the industries in the use of statistical sampling techniques and professional quality organizations such as American Society for Quality Control started emerging in the United States. The quality movement was consolidated in 1980s in the Indian industries about a synergy of resources by the pioneering efforts of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). The CII set up the total quality management...
According to the respondents, 41 per cent of the organizations among managers in implementing TQM in their organizations. The study revealed that there was an enthusiasm for continuous improvement, cultural change and effective use of financial resources to improve the value addition at each level. It was mentioned in Dayton (2003) study that total quality management implementation in various manufacturing organizations and to assess their relevance for Indian manufacturing organizations. It was shown that customer focus must be the prime objective for various industries to achieve total quality management. All the factors must be used systematically to achieve total quality management (TQM) and it can be done efficiently by using a model having four phases to implement TQM.

The purpose of Thakkar (2006) and others study was to explore the potential for adoption of TQM in self-financed technical institutions in the light of new demands and challenges posed by customers/students and society. The findings identified technical and students’ requirements for the modern educational set-up. It provided information about the severity of various technical requirements of competitive education and recognized the need for continuous improvement, cultural change and effective use of financial resources to improve the value addition at each level.

The purpose of Begum Sayeda (2010) and others study was to explore the adoption of quality management practices in engineering educational institutions (EEIs) in India from management's perspective. The findings highlighted twenty seven critical factors/dimensions of quality management, which analyzed the relationship between TQM dimensions and institutional performance, which had been formulated using five dimensions. Positive and significant relationships among the TQM dimensions and institutional performance had been observed.

The purpose of Yapa (2012) study was to report the results of an investigation on the use of total quality management (TQM) tools, techniques and concepts among Sri Lankan service organizations. The study revealed that there was an enthusiasm among managers in implementing TQM in their organizations. According to the respondents, 41 per cent of the organizations had already implemented TQM. However, deeper analysis of data revealed that there was a lack of thorough understanding of TQM philosophies and techniques among the managers.

Aly & Akpovi (2001) investigated the extent of total quality management implementation in two California public higher education systems: the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC) systems. These two higher education systems included 32 statewide campuses with over half a million students and 27,000 faculty. The study revealed that more than half of the California public universities were implementing TQM in one form or another and the TQM implementation in the CSU system was much wider than that in the UC system. In general, the character of implementation was still limited to business-type operations in universities, such as business finance and administrative services.

The purpose of the study of Toremen (2009) and others was to determine the extent of total quality management (TQM) practices in primary schools based on teachers’ perceptions, and how their perceptions were related to different variables. The findings showed that in the perceptions of teachers, there were some problems with the indicators of TQM practices, especially on the dimension of change management. There were significant differences among teachers’ perceptions on TQM practices depending upon the variables of branch, level of education and tenure, while there were no meaningful differences according to the gender variable.

Begum (2003) explained that 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.

The study of Li (2003) and others considered the role and practices of total quality management in China. After a brief overview of 428 Northern Chinese companies representing different forms of ownership they found that the implementation of quality was highly variable. In general, joint venture companies scored highly in quality practices, in contrast, state owned enterprises scored poorly. Privately owned companies also scored well in some aspects of quality implementation.

It was mentioned in Dayton (2003) study that total quality management was deemed by many, a decade or so ago, to be a management movement so significant that it was a paradigm change capable of completely reorienting corporate management responsibilities. It was the answer to the product quality challenge from Japan. It made quality "job number one". TQM was to provide the interdepartmental connections and the sharing of information, goals, and responsibilities that would assure complete organizational realignment to customer needs. It
sounded good and pragmatically made sense being just "too logical" not to work. So, where is it now?

The purpose of Tari (2005) study was to identify the components of total quality management, in order to make them known to managers and thus facilitate successful quality management implementation, and to show the situation of 106 ISO 9000 certified firms concerning these components. The results reflect that certified firms must develop their people orientation and use techniques and tools to a higher extent in order to progress towards total quality.

Library and Total Quality Management

Improvement in library services does not require fancy consultants, advanced degree, additional working hours etc. It can be achieved by using some management techniques like Total Quality Management. TQM was initially applied as a management philosophy in the manufacturing sector. Following its massive success this philosophy is increasing being applied in the service sectors like banks, hospitals, insurance, academic institutions and in libraries too. Library is basically a service oriented organization. It provides services directly to the users or readers. Therefore, users' satisfaction is the primary or basic aim of every library and to provide better services for users' complete satisfaction, the utilization of library sources should be in an adequate manner. Manpower or staff of the library is the key resources, so where as human being is involved the need of management techniques also will be there.

Basically a library has the following sections or cells: acquisition, circulation, technical, reference, online resources, audio-visual, reprographic, documentation etc. To carry out all the functions or activities of these sections efficiently, application of management techniques must be applied.

The various activities of library in figure 2 which are needed to make the library as an effectively information centre and creation and maintenance of such structure of TQM, requires an effective management process to achieve library's goals. For example, acquisition staff has a critical role because they are responsible to make accurate purchase policy to build a meaningful library collection by using proper budgetary control. Similarly, circulation and reference staff directly deal with the users and manage the users interface. The technical section, where the acquired materials are classified & catalogued before its display, also needed well-managed staff and policy. Therefore, quality or lack of quality impacts the entire library services. A successful set of activities begins with an organizational environment that fosters quality, followed by an understanding of the principles of quality and then an effort to engage manpower in the necessary activities to implement quality. When things are done well, the library typically satisfies its users and obtains a competitive advantage. The eventual aim is to triumph readers or users.

Systematizing for TQM

For effective quality management of a library, the following factors should be developed:

- Identification and confirmation of the specific quality work and teamwork including the responsibility, authority, accountability and relationship for quality of each of the key individuals and groups in the library.
- Identification and confirmation of these same areas for quality control function itself so that it may help the library achieve its quality objects.
- Leadership of the library itself in the establishment and ongoing maintenance of the quality library system.

Execution of TQM

Following steps to be considered for effective quality management in libraries:

- Job Content: self control and job design are two important aspects of any work. The staff of the library must be provided with knowledge of what they are supposed to do, feedback on their performance and the means of regulating their work in the event that they are...
CONCLUSION

Today’s technical improvement has influenced the users’ expectations, this resulted the libraries to improve the quality of services. Now quality management is increasingly integrated into library services, following their perceived success in industrial sectors with particular emphasis on improving service quality. Basically the libraries stress on maintaining administration, building the collection and serving the users. All these aspects need proper management to provide best service to users so the library can select the appropriate techniques according to its need. TQM implementation requires patience as it is a time-consuming process and not so easy, therefore, its implementation is not a guarantee of the high quality but it is step in the right direction. TQM implements a philosophy of strong leadership, increased communication among departments and the education of all employees. Now the time has come for new approaches to managing libraries with modern techniques of management and TQM will definitely helpful for improving library processes in the way to understanding the library as a system, aligning the work of staff, saving time and money and increasing users’ satisfaction. Brophy and Caulding list the following inter-twined facets of TQM which need to be developed simultaneously:

- Developing a clear purpose of organization.
- Providing vision, commitment and leadership.
- Encouraging teamwork and involvement by all staff.
- Ensuring that the design of all products and services is customer oriented.
- Having clear, systematic, unambiguous and universally applied process.
- Investing in continuous training and development of all staff.
- Monitoring performance continuously and acting on the results.
- Benchmarking achievements rather than confrontational relationship with suppliers.
- Careful control of resources and awareness of costs.

REFERENCES


