Total Quality Management in Academic Libraries

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Abstract:

A Library is a storehouse of information. Quality in the library deals with everything the library does towards the satisfaction of its users. Activities that will encourage users to regard to the library as one of the best. Those activities are highly satisfactory to the users. Total Quality Management deals with the product & service in its totality. It tells about continuous improvement in the process till the desired quality of the end product or service can be achieved.

Introduction:

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 have always been committed to provide a high quality of services to its user. In the past, consuming more resources, buying more books, and moving to large premise are considered as improving quality. But that approach is not valid today. One of the good solutions to improve quality is it 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.

Total Quality Management is a approach, which is becoming more and more popular in the growing industries. W. Edwards Deming and Joseph M. Juran introduced a similar concept in 1950 in Japan and termed it as Total Control in production. This approach become popular in 1980 and came to be called as Total Quality Management.

TQM describes the culture, attitude and organization of a company in order to provide such types of products that can satisfy the requirements of the customer. This method helps in increasing business and reducing losses by combining the quality and management tools. It is considered that an organization is made up of many processes and the main objective of TQM is to ensure that an organization should improve these processes by the knowledge and experience of the workers.

Definition:

Termer and De Toro: " A basic business strategy that provides goods and services that completely satisfy both internal and external customers by meeting their explicit and implicit expectation This strategy utilizes the talent of employees to the benefit of the organization in particular and society in general and provides positive financial return to the shareholders."

In short TQM is way of managing to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility &competitiveness of a business as a whole. It involves whole companies getting organized and committed to quality in each department, each person at each level.

Total Quality Management:

Total quality management is an approach that an organization takes for improving its performance on systematic and continues basis. This is achieved by involving all employees throughout the organization in satisfying all requirements of every customer, whoever the costumer may be – either external or internal. Quality management is the basis for library management in general. Such principles of TQM as meeting the customer needs, exact assessment, continuous improvement, teamwork, and enthusiasm of the leaders are typical for library services.

Total –everyone in the organization is involved in creating and maintaining the quality of the services and product offered.

Quality -the organizations through individual and collective action focuses on meeting customer needs, recognizing that customer perception identifies quality.

Management – in managing the system, the emphasis lies on continuously improving the system in order to achieve the best results.

TQM is management philosophy embracing all activities through which the needs of the customer and the community, and the objectives of the organization, are satisfied in the most efficient and cost effective way by maximizing the potential of all employees in a continuing drive for improvement.

Characteristic of TQM:

1. TQM is a management philosophy to guide the librarians in meeting the challenges of the time.
2. TQM Promotes teamwork.
3. TQM focuses on the users.
4. TQM recognized internal and external users of the library.
5. TQM aims to install prevention not an inspection
6. TQM is a process and activities based approach.

TQM in ACADEMIC LIBRARIES:

Libraries have faced many difficult times in their history. Even in present time some of those difficulties are still in existence as challenges. Library continuously expanding and the size of the library is reaming or decreasing. Expectation increases while resources are limited. In information exposing places new information technology and knowledge resources before users. As users are the key persons of the library. Library staff has stress how to combat this situation and how to provide more with less to the users. This situation thrust information professional to think about TQM. The concept of TQM is also application to Academic libraries. TQM plans for future.

The success of TQM depended to a large extent how carefully and skillfully crafted the vision. In the light of vision academic libraries must develop system 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 which delivers products personally to the customer and user part of the academic community.

Key Elements of TQM Process:

1. Focusing on Users expectation:

There are three basic factions of modern library. These are acquisition of information, organization of information and dissemination of information. The first two are the behind the screen activities are called housekeeping operation whereas the third one represents the on- the screen actives called service oriented operation. However, the user directly or indirectly involved/affected /concerned with the above activities. So identification of users expectation regarding any service is very important for

rendering efficient and effective library and information services to user's community While knowing the user's expectations library authorities should know the accountability, affordability, availability ad appearance of serve offered by the library from user's point of view.

2. Developing a Quality Measurement System:

This task is associated with finding measurement that will help to understand user's dissatisfaction and periodicity f library service. While developing quality management system it is necessary to specify some quality standards so can the quality of service should be measured. There should be some parameters to decide the quality. Every library service should be property analyzed and then establish some standards for quality measurement.

3. Identification of Robot Cause :

User's dissatisfaction negative feedback, conflicts in rendering library service, problems in interaction with the users etc. are some symptoms of poor quality. However, the real cause of these problems is usually hidden and difficult to identify. The real cause may poor techniques, insufficient training to staff or poor management practice. To identify the root causes, quality management consultants have developed several tools to identify the root causes. These tools help to organize and analyze information so that it is easy to trace the problem. Statistical control process, check sheets, brainstorming, flow chart, Pareto charts etc, are some of the tools and techniques to identify the root causes.

4. Developing a Communication System :

Quality management is information, related management system. An Efficient communication system is an important requirement for the functioning of quality management systems. A good communication system must be developed that can give us up –to date information about user's needs and expectations from various library services. There should be proper communication among users and library staff. It is also important to communicate with employees about the progress of quality management and the corrective action that are being taken. Suggestion and feedback system is very important not only in ascertain users needs and expectation but also useful to make necessary correction and modifications in library systems and services.

5. Employee Motivation :

One of the most challenging questions facing every manager is how to motivate the employees. The role of employees is very much important in quality management. Even though quality can be defined by the library users and quality objective by library authorities, it the library staff who will finally make quality improvement possible. Quality objectives can only fulfilled when employees are motivated to implement them. Allowing employees to be involved in the decision making process is one of the important ways to motivate them to work towards the quality improvements. There are some other management skills to motivate employs toward the quality management of libraries.

Benefits of TQM in Libraries:

If implemented carefully, quality management principles yield positive benefits libraries such as (Miler & Stearns): Incremental changes lead to continues improvements –quick solution may yield only partial results.

1. Forces Library managers to develop leadership skills interested of replying on power within position to obtain result.
2. Increase staff participation in decision-making, thus increasing the feeling of "ownership" of decisions and direction once charted.
3. Improves the level of training given to staff, thus increasing skills.

4. Helps break down barriers between library departments and improves communication within the organization.
5. Provides a method of improving services to users in a period to similar resources.

Conclusion:

TQM is a necessary for libraries. Libraries in India have traditionally underfunded. But the information age is already superb and has even greater potential, but needs to change older mind and work style. Librarians have to respond to the challenge and making sure that they get their share of the information age. We mist seriously reflect on the implication, relation and conflicts raised by the information oriented process in libraries. In the case of libraries technology has made their activities easier and they have changed them. The work done by the information services is an enterprises that requires commitment and good deposition to devote time, delivering and communicating this attitude, converting ordinary into extraordinary achievements.

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