

An overview of Quality Management in College Libraries

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Abstract

Quality management is the basis for library management in general. The purpose of this paper is to present an overview of Total quality management (TQM) in college libraries. This paper discusses the various aspects of total quality management like meaning, definition, etc. It also discusses the implementation of TQM in college libraries, its benefits, tools & technicians of TQM, its feature etc. The basic idea of TQM is commitment to continuous improvement.

Keywords: Library, Quality, Management, Total quality management.

Introduction

Whenever there is an organized group of people working towards a common goal, some times of management become essential. No organization runs successfully unless there is someone to manage its activities. It resolves situations of scarcity, be they in the physical, technical or human fields, through maximum utilization with minimum available processes to achieve the goal. Lack of management causes disorder, confusion, wastage, delay, destruction and even depression. Managing men, money and materials in the best possible ways, according to circumstances and environment is the most important and essential factor for a successful management (Sathe, 2015). 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 (Moghaddam & Moballeghi, 2008). Total quality management is part of management which focuses on each and every employee of an organization will participate and put his efforts to maintain and improve the quality of their work to satisfy their customers. Total quality management (TQM) is a management philosophy that empowers every member of the organization. TQM encourage each individual to participate, contribute and offers to present suggestions for improvement. It is intended to promote continuous and sustained improvement in quality and performance, and develops an attitude of quality culture. Its basic principle is that the cost of prevention is less than the cost of correction. TQM address overall organizational performance and recognizes the importance of processes. For TQM to be successfully adopted by an organization there needs to be a perceived need for change in that organization (Astunkar, 2016).¹ It is totally based on customer satisfaction.

Quality: Quality is a necessity in all walks of life. It is always customer oriented. If our customer is satisfied with our product or services we have qualitative product. According to Peter F. Drucker said, “Quality in a product or service is not what the supplier puts in. It is what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for.” The quality of an organization depends on customer’s satisfaction. Quality is a continuous process and also unending. But many people including library professionals are confused about the meaning of the quality. Quality is often used synonymously with excellence. However, for proper quality management, defining quality and its measurement are essential (Chakrabarti & Pramanik, 2014). The quality of academic libraries is connected with services, product as well as staff, Facilities. High quality staff can transform even the poorest library into an operation offering excellent service. Because libraries are service organizations, the quality in the context of a library is often treated as the quality of service (Sivankalai & Yadav, 2012).

Management: ALA glossary of library and information science defined “Library management as the process of coordinating total resources of an organization towards the accomplishment of desired goals of that organization through the execution of a group of interrelated functions such as planning, organization, staffing, directing & controlling. Management is an administration that plans, manages and controls all function of an organization. Management is a technique to getting things done with the help of people or staff within an organization. F.W. Taylor defines “Art of knowing what you want to do and then seeing that it is done best and cheapest way.

Total Quality Management: The term total quality management (TQM) is self-explanatory from terminological point of view that means totality of efforts of different departments of an organization to make its products/services more qualitative that would satisfy the management as well as the user’s actual needs and expectations. It is always customer oriented and based on continuous improvement to maintain the quality. It includes the involvement of employees of all levels to perform their duties well and achieve excellence in their respective field. Total quality management is an approach that an organisation takes for improving its performance on systematic and continuous basis. This is achieved by involving all employees throughout the organisation in satisfying all requirements of every customer, whoever the customer may be - either external or internal. Quality management is the basis for library management in general. Such principles of TQM as meeting the customer’s needs, exact assessment, continuous improvement, teamwork, and enthusiasm of the leaders are typical for library service (Kumbar, 2004).

TQM and College Libraries: Nowadays technology has put its impact on every aspect of our lives. Peoples are connecting with internet. Libraries are also attached to this revolution. Information bearing documents are key product of college libraries. Dissemination of information sources (print and non print material) is primary service of the libraries. It is the most challenging job for libraries to provide qualitative services to its users. The user’s demands are changing and increasing day by day. College libraries should introduce the concept of total quality management to provide better services. It would enhance the capability of library staff make their users satisfied.

Application of TQM in College Libraries

1. First of all library staff should keep in mind the ‘Five Laws of Library & Information Science’ to perform any activity of a library.
2. Libraries can adapt TQM principles to ‘provide the right information to the right user at the right time and in a right way’ in college libraries.
3. Make library decisions after careful investigation, and analysis of data collected from the readers.
4. Conduct surveys about users ‘current approach to their information needs and their information seeking behavior.
5. Evaluate each and every document before acquiring it in the libraries. Collection development should be based on information needs of the users.
6. Familiarize fresher’s with information sources and services, rules and regulations of library to take maximum use of it.
7. Use of information communication technology and Social media (Facebook, blog, WhatsApp, etc), to deliver library services may be enhance the user satisfaction.
8. User friendly web-OPAC must be developed qualitatively and comprehensively.
9. Library consortia, institutional repositories and databases should be subscribed to fulfill the information needs of users of now-a-days.

10. Awareness and training programmes should be arranged for staff and students to make maximum benefits of libraries of digital environment.
11. Library networking, resources sharing and inter library loan facilities should be provided to the users to satisfy the growing information needs of the users.
12. Libraries should adopt TQM principle to survive in the digital world where students are not willing to come in the library.
13. Library staff can enhance their capabilities with TQM to satisfy the user's needs and by this they can improve their image in the college.

Conclusion

Libraries are nonprofit agencies and these are purely services based. The primary motto of libraries is to support teaching and research activities. It can only be achieved by providing qualitative information to its users. So TQM becomes a necessary element to satisfy user's needs and overall development of library staff and continuous improvement in library services of any college.

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