

## **CONCEPT OF TOTAL QUALITY IN SPECIAL LIBRARY: AN OVERVIEW**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper discusses the evolution, principles, stages and the implementation of TQM in Special Libraries. Special Libraries, due to their unique nature, are forced to implement strategies that will prove their contribution to the bottom-line of the organization and at the same time allow holistic and strategic measurement and evaluation to take place. Libraries and librarians are required to demonstrate to top management that they are getting a good return on their investments in the library.

**Keywords:** TQM, five laws, Quality Improvement Projects.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Total quality management is both a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that represent the foundation of a continuously improving library. It encompasses mobilizing the entire organization to satisfy the demands of the users. TQM is focused on routine involvement and participation of everyone in the organization in the systematic improvement of quality. It involves each individual and group within all parts of the organization. TQM provides a way of life to constantly improve the performance at every level and in every activity, by creating a positive continuous improvement environment based on teamwork, trust and respect, examining the process through which work gets

done in a systematic, consistent, organization wide manner, applying quantitative methods and analytical techniques, and expanding your knowledge and expertise in process improvement. This allows a firm to capture a larger market share and provide more job security.

According to British Standard (BS780);

Total Quality Management (TQM) refers to management methods used to enhance quality and productivity in organizations, particularly businesses. TQM is a comprehensive system approach that works horizontally across an organization, involving all departments and employees and extending backward and forward to include both suppliers and clients/customers.

Special libraries are restricted in its collection and also the users they serve. In special libraries, there is partnership between the Library staff and the users. Both are interested in working for the benefit of the origination.

### **IMPACT OF RANGANATHAN'S FIVE LAWS IN QUALITY SERVICE**

The five laws of Ranganathan help in quality improvement of service as those are concentrated to the users very seriously. The laws directly advocate towards libraries' collection development, speedy processing, maintenance and quick retrieval of information by users.

**The First Law** "Books are for Use" is a direction for measuring the quality of a library; quality interms of contents, accessibility and availability as and when needed.

**The Second Law** "Every reader his/ her books" implies needs of users. In order to meet this lawthe library has to index all micro and macro documents so that every reader can find out his or her requirements.

**The Third Law** "Every Book / Information its reader" implies the importance of book/ information selection in a library. The law advocates scientific document selection, subject based organization, advanced and in depth indexing, efficient and effective searching and locating tools, Staff assistance, open access, extension services, publicity programs etc .

**The Fourth Law** "Save the time of Reader" indicates the importance of fast and efficient Services to the users with the advanced technologies, method, techniques and tools. Open access, digital services, classified arrangement of documents in shelves, location and directing guides, excellent searching tools, and techniques i.e. Online public Access Catalogue (OPAC).

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### TOTAL QUALITY SYSTEM IN A LIBRARY

TQM prepares the library for effectively integrating all its activities and functions in all respects, and at all levels, for total quality. In this context total quality refers to means, measures and quality of the library services. Under TQM, overall effectiveness of the system should be greater than the sum of the individual outputs from the sub-systems. Therefore, the set up for TQM system in an library is based on systems and processes which are in synergy with each other. There are a number of TQM models that allow such a set up and administration of TQM process.

TQM system examines the approach, deployment and outcome of results from these process categories. For effectiveness of this system, the approach and deployment of each of these processes should be carefully coordinated to realize the synergies between them. The model of process categories starts with identifying values and vision of the library and integrates the processes with interactive cause-and-effect linkage between the categories of processes.

### IMPORTANT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR QUALITY PLANNING ARE:

Quality Function Deployment (QFD);

Failure Mode Evaluation and Analysis (FMEA); and

The New Seven Management and Planning tools.

Tools for continuous improvement are:

Statistical tools for data collection, compilation, analysis and control;

Measurement of cost of quality;

Techniques for continuous improvement, such as Quality Improvement Projects (QIP).

Just-in-Time (JIT) service;

Benchmarking;

Re-engineering of library processes (LPR) for achieving benchmarked results in every aspect of the library and

Six-Sigma practice.

### Performance Excellence

Leadership

Strategic Planning

Customer Focus and Satisfaction

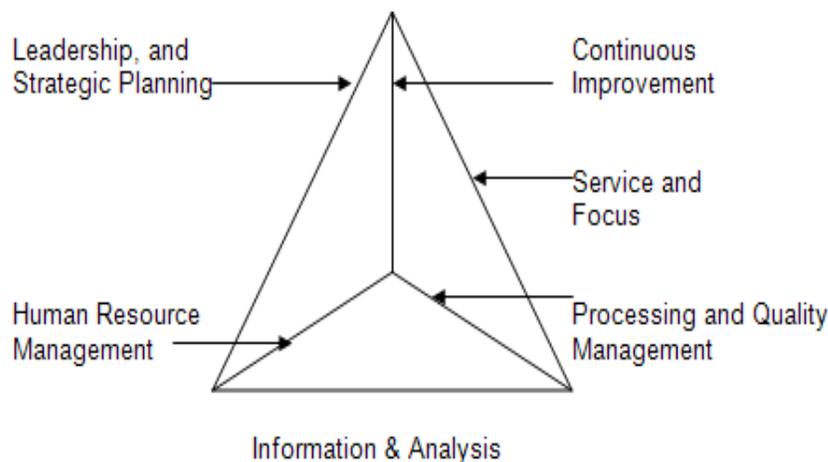
Human Resource Development and Management

Management of Process Quality

Information and Analysis

Business Result

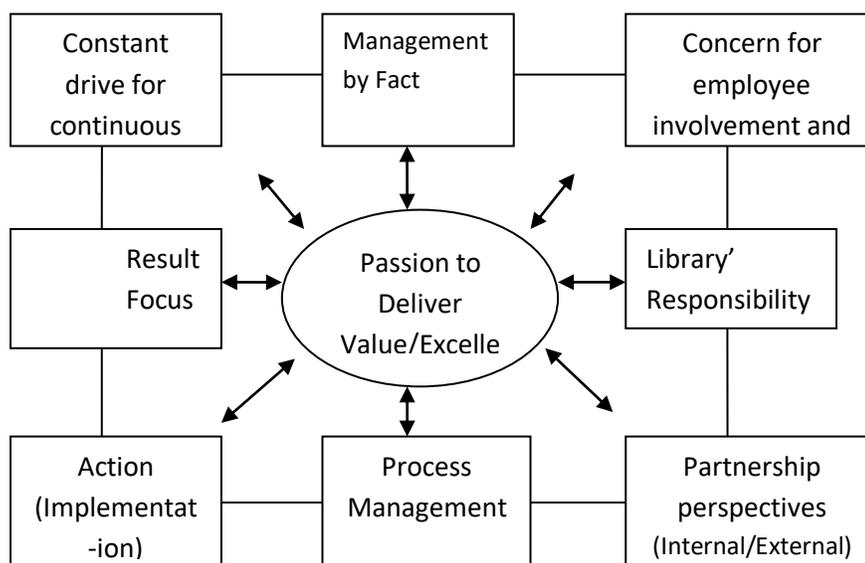
The interactive nature of the process categories is illustrated by this total quality triangle, where the ultimate outcome is measured by superior library results. Essence of this 'Total Quality Model' is the drive for continuous improvement in all these process categories. To improve, one must know where one currently is.



Showing the TQM triangle

Therefore, to measure and estimate the effectiveness and standing, it is also essential under TQM that an '**Information and Analysis**' system is adapted and encouraged in all activities under all the processes in an library. All the seven process categories are important in adding up to 'Total Quality' culture in library though for auditing the effectiveness of TQM system some categories are given more weight age than the others, such as 'Leadership' and library results.

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### OBJECTIVES OF TQM IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES:

Special libraries, although having a number of things in common with other types of library and information service, do not have the same shared objectives from which to work – as is the case, for example, in public libraries which have them set out in the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1964. The term “special libraries” covers library and information functions in a variety of settings, each of which dictates the type of service required and, increasingly, the mode of operation to conform with organizational standards and procedures.<sup>1</sup>

Special libraries have adopted the philosophy of total quality and have some objectives:

Continuous improvement of the libraries.

Continuous and relentless cost reduction.

Continuous and relentless quality improvement.

Total participation i.e. creating a library whereby everyone is working towards making the library, the best and to capitalize on the sense of achievement and working in a world-class library.

### **ELEMENTS OF TQM IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES:**

**Internal & External Customer/User:** The only way to ensure that the special library has a focus on user or customers that impacts quality on all department and teams, including those not in direct contact with the external users, is to encourage each employee to identify those to whom they provide a library services and to view those people as their internal users. In this way, the user orientation can permeate the library.

**Quality is customer defined:** In special libraries quality is defined in terms of users' perceptions, or in a more complex model i.e. widely debated in the service quality literature as the gap between expectations and perceptions.

**Performance measurement:** It needs to be based upon timely measures of , and feedback on performance through superior quality information system.

**Employee involvement:** Employee involvement means that each individual must take the initiative and not rely upon someone else. In order to achieve this, the library needs a culture which encourages this behavior.

**Continuous improvement:** It must be seen as the responsibility of everyone in the library. To develop this focus on training, education, communication, recognition of achievements and team work is often seen as appropriate.

**Error-free process:** The focus of TQM is on the prevention to eliminate waste, reduce costs and achieve error-free processes. The library service managers need to interpret this focus in a way i.e. appropriate for services with inherent variability and the less controllable element of the user.

### **Principles of TQM in Special Libraries:**

The Goal of TQM is customer satisfaction, by means of continuous improvement. TQM occurs when an entire organizational culture becomes focused on quality and customer satisfaction through an integrated system of processes, tools, techniques and training.

The key element in the journey of total quality is, therefore, the process of continuous improvement, gearing to work to the changing needs of users by delivering lasting user satisfaction. User satisfaction is, however, an outcome of concerted efforts at all levels of the library, the end result of a process that involves planning and production for quality and total commitment of the library to combine, direct and integrate all activities, functions and processes towards this common goal. This is at the core of Total Quality Management practice, and to achieve this objective, all functions, activities and processes of the libraries have to be designed, coordinated and integrated under the TQM system by

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following the principles of total quality management. The principles governing the TQM systems are:

**User Focused approach** to all activities and processes in the library. It ensures that all are concerned with the user's needs and their efforts should be directed towards winning **user satisfaction**.

**Strategic planning and leadership** for achieving the user focused quality targets in all activities and processes.

Restructuring of vertical processes to **cross-functional horizontal processes** where clear view of user needs can be established in each of these processes.

Creating a culture of working through **internal user system**, where each stage in the process and each person in the process can be linked as users to each other in the chain of activities for production and delivery of services.

**Training and development of people:** TQM believes that people are at the core of every process and activities of the organization. Therefore, people should be trained and developed for understanding the process of TQM, the values and vision of the library, system and tools of TQM and, above all, understanding user's need.

**Empowerment and teamwork of people:** This is to provide people with the opportunity to learn, apply and practice their skills, creativity and knowledge. Objective of this step is to eliminate bureaucracy and delay in decision-making, which otherwise adversely affects user service.

**Implementation of TQM in Special Libraries:** Systematic implementation of quality management in Special Libraries requires a concise and exhaustive framework. The following steps will help to arrive at a systematic framework for quality assurance in Special Libraries.

1. Define the services you are attempting to improve. What is the motive behind in?

Providing that particular service?

2. Define what do you mean by 'Quality' in terms of satisfaction of users; satisfaction of the Staff or pre-fixed norms and standards for that service.

3. Define quality criterion for the service.

4. Feedback from the users of the service is important for improving the quality.

5. Decide upon the measures to achieve quality.

6. Decide whether involvement of staff at different levels is necessary.
7. Review the resources for implementing the measures for improvement of quality.
8. Ensure commitment and support of top management at all stages of quality implementation.

The quality framework should emphasis on the following points.

### **POLICIES**

For Special Libraries, quality should be taken into consideration with the organization to which it is concern. Clearly defined policies for collection development; processing; stacking, lending, weeding out of books will help to achieve quality control to certain extent.

### **RESOURCES**

The management must carefully plan for:

1. Financial Resources
2. Document and Information Resources

Availability

Accessibility

Preservation

3. Technology

Costs and benefits

4. Infrastructure

Building

Furniture and fittings

### **PROCESSES**

1. Decide the services required to meet the changing needs of the clientele
2. Evaluate the services in terms of
  - Accuracy of information

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- Timeliness
- Relevance to the purpose
- Cost of providing service

### **USER SATISFACTION**

Although user satisfaction cannot always be equaled to the success or failure of the system, but often it is an important source for pointing out the loopholes in the system and its services. Feedback from learners is essential for continuous improvement in quality of information Services. Assessment of SL services in the framework suggested above will help the SL professionals to improve and implement quality information services.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the above discussion, following suggestions are made for the implementation of quality in Special libraries.

1. Quality Assurance of Library and Information System should be part of the Quality Assurance of Special Library TQM project;
2. There is a need to develop standards / norms for assessing quality of information services with particular reference to Special Libraries;
3. There is a need to evolve methodologies and mechanisms for improvement of quality Information services;
4. More funds to be allocated for studying the quality of information services on project Basis;

### **CONCLUSION**

Teamwork is important for successful implementation of TQM. Every employee is responsible for what he is doing and also responsive to what is going on in the whole organization. This requires a continuous training of human resources in order to keep them up to the changing demands of both internal and external customers. Every step of the process depends upon the constant support of the top management. Their role determines how far and how long the implementation can go. Therefore, once a decision is made to apply TQM, a strong leadership is required. Successful TQM implementation requires a thorough understanding of critical Success factors, barriers to achieving these factors, and managerial tools and Techniques to overcome these barriers.

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