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## TOTAL QUALITY AND WORLD CLASS SERVICE SYSTEM IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: SOME SUGGESTIVE FACTORS

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### Abstract

*The paper describes the concept of the Total Quality Management in brief. The essential elements of TQM are also listed in the paper. The 'servicing sector systems' are discussed in general. The relationship between 'servicing sector' and libraries is highlighted. The world class service system is also outlined. The paper discusses about some essential characteristics for world class service system and their applications in the university libraries.*

### Introduction

Now a days most of the profit making organizations, have adopted the concept and application of Total Quality Management (TQM) for satisfying the needs of their clientele. The libraries and information centres are considered as non-profit making organizations. But the trend is now changing towards profit making organization. Many libraries and information centres, are marketing their products and services for making profits. Here, it is stated that the TQM and its application may be applied for both of the organizations, i.e. 'profit-making' and 'non-profit-making'.

In the initial stage, the TQM was considered for the 'Products' of an organization only. But, now it is considered equally for servicing sector. The organizations can not achieve complete 'satisfaction' until they adopt TQM for both of the aspects i.e. 'products' and 'services'.

### TQM Definitions

Various management scientists define the TQM in various ways. Most of the scientists define the TQM as a quest for excellence, creating the right attitude, optimum satisfaction of the clients, increase of the work efficiency and output productivity, etc.

### According to A. Muchlemann & J. Oakland

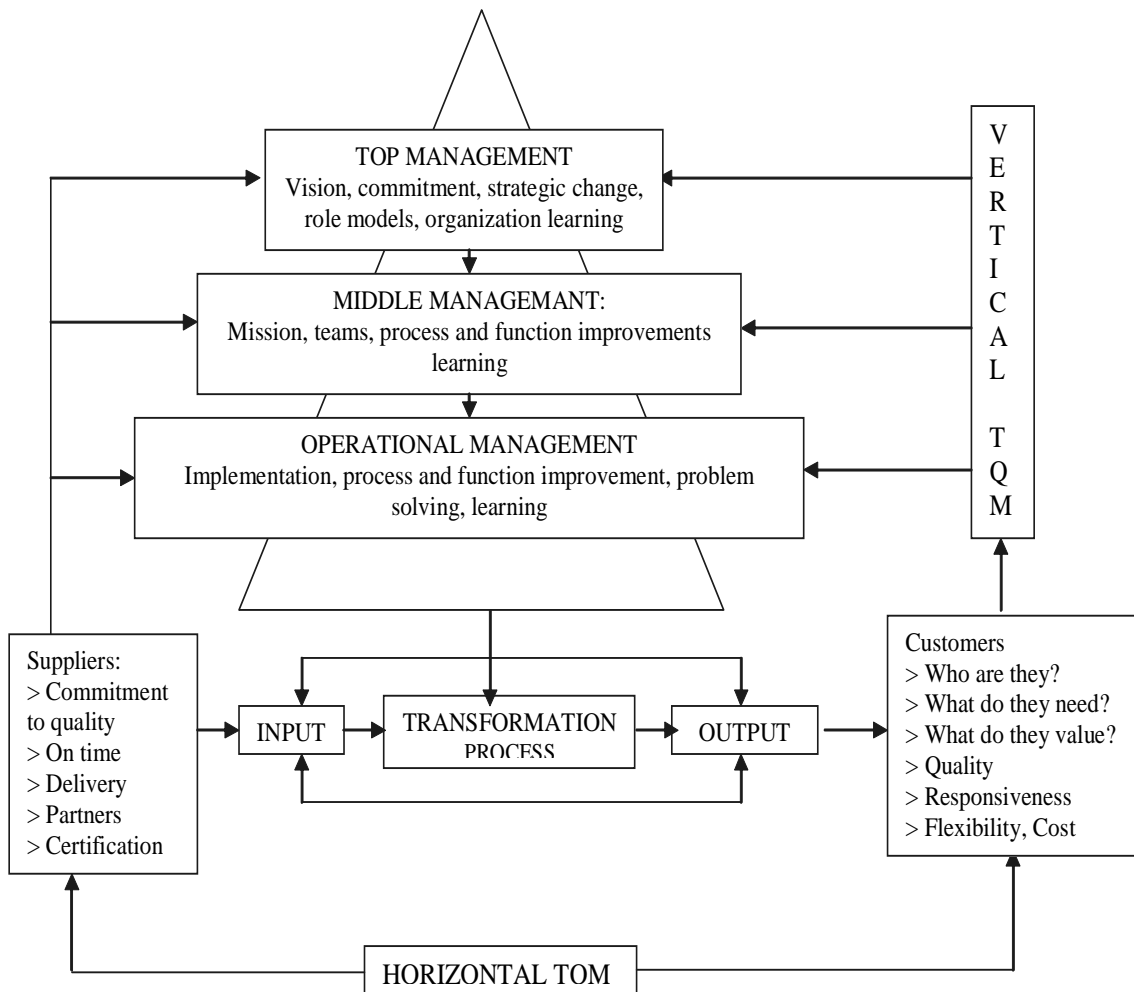
"TQM covers all parts of the organization- for an organization to be truly effective every single part of it, each development, each activity, each person and each level must work properly together because every person and every activity affects and in turn is affected by others"<sup>1</sup>

### 1992 Total Quality forum defined TQM as: -

"A people focused management system that aims at continual increase in customer satisfaction at continually lower real cost total quality is the total system approach and an integral part of high level strategy, it works horizontally across functions and departments involving all employees top to bottom and extend backwards and forwards to include the supply chain and the customer chain..."<sup>2</sup>

In this way, the TQM may be considered as a continuous process in which all the levels of management, i.e. top, middle and bottom are involved. These three levels of management involve all the categories of the personnel of a particular organization. The aim of these level personnel remains same, i.e. to improve the quality in all aspects of that organization.

Youssef et al. (1996) <sup>3</sup> defines the TQM which is pictorially presented as follows:



#### Elements of TQM

The following elements are involved in the TQM:

1. Leadership
2. Commitment-ness of the personnel

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3. Vision
  4. Role models
  5. Organizational learning
  6. Functions implementation
  7. Problems solving
  8. Learning
  9. Rewards and recognitions
  10. Education and trainings
  11. Team work feedback
  12. Top management commitment
  13. Provision of appropriate resources
  14. Priorities of implementation
  15. Communication technology, policy and strategy
  16. Market segments and researches
  17. Information services and systems
  18. Performance measurements
  19. Cost management
  20. Financial strategies and Policies, etc.

#### **Servicing Sector Systems:**

##### **Introduction**

The 'service enterprises' are developing at a very fast rate. It can be said that the 'production enterprises' are almost in the matured stage. The service sector enterprises are becoming more popular day-by-day. In fact, the servicing sectors are the need of the hour in the world. Second thing, due to the rapid growth and development in the communication technologies, computers, information technologies, the servicing sectors are growing speedily. Developed countries of the world are moving towards the service sectors and these sectors are providing financial earnings to the nations.

##### **According to Stanton (1986) <sup>4</sup>**

"Services are those separately identified and essentially intangible activities that provide want satisfaction and that are not necessarily tied to the sale of a product or service. To provide service, we may or may not require the use of tangible goods. However when such use is required, there is no transfer of the title of these tangible goods".

Payne (1996) <sup>5</sup>

He defines service as "an activity that has some elements of intangibility associated with it, which involves some interaction with customers or with property in their possession and does not result in a transfer of ownership. A change in condition may occur and production of the service may or may not be closely associated with physical product".

Service is also a function, which is provided by the 'white collared manpower' to their clients. It is always provided to the others. The 'service' may have the following characteristics:

1. It is not in physical forms;
2. It is always provided to the others;
3. It involves highly intellectual expertisation, analysis and dissemination powers and capacity;
4. It is indispensable and can be spread up from one person to another promptly;
5. It is highly variable;
6. It is an intangible in nature;
7. Customer/client satisfaction is the 'end task' of the servicing sector;
8. The factors like IT, computer, network/networking are there;
9. The understanding of the human behavior for providing these services is essentials for servicing sectors;
10. Generally, the ownership does not transfer in these sectors, etc.

University libraries can be said apex body among academic libraries. The university libraries are established to serve the students, teachers, research scholars' community of the various departments of the university. Therefore, these libraries set their services and functions as per the requirement of its parent organization, *i.e.* university

All the established information centres or information units of a library provide information through various types of information services *viz.* Abstracting services, translation services, current content services, current awareness of information services, reference services, referral services, reprographic services, dissemination services, data bank services, data base services, clearing services, information consolidation and repacking services, document delivery services, retrospective search services, on line services, off line services, etc.

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The universities of the globe are adopting the courses of interdisciplinary nature; the components like information technology, computer science, environmental sciences, etc. are being included in the various courses. New interdisciplinary courses are being opened. The established university systems have: -

1. Increasing awareness level among the students, teachers, research scholars;
2. Comparatively high IQ of the user community of the universities;
3. More economical facilities for the users of the universities especially among the students' community;
4. Information technology and computer awareness;
5. Interdisciplinary nature of the courses, etc.

To cope up with the above-mentioned challenges that are affecting the whole university systems, the libraries and information centers should provide suitable, qualitative, world-class library and Information services/systems to their clientele.

#### **World-class Service System and University Libraries:**

World-class service system advocates for qualitative service system. It is considered as an umbrella term. It is a system, which is capable of operating profitably in the world where competition among various institutions is very high. In world-class service system everyone expects the quality in the services what he/she needs. To achieve the quality, all the concerned components need to give proper attention on it. The concerned components may be individuals, governments, associations, organizations, etc. Secondly, within the organization, the trainings, education, teamwork, vision, commitment, leadership, cooperation, etc. are required.

The world class service system for the university libraries (ULs) can be discussed from various management /institutional angles viz. at the management level itself; public/customers' level; personnel level; marketing level and the level of organization as a whole. These aspects may be discussed as follows:

##### **1. Management itself**

At the management level of a university library, to achieve the world-class service system, it should be governed with a philosophy of transformation and revolution. It may include the leadership development, various aspects of staff like perception, motivation, division of work, delegation and authority of power, etc. In other words, it may be said that all the concerned aspects of management in a university library should be taken into consideration to achieve the world-class service system.

**2. Public/customer level:**

The over-all satisfaction of the customers for services of a university library helps in getting the world-class service system.

**3. Personnel level:**

All the personnel from "bottom to top" and "top to bottom" should give qualitative inputs in the development of the university library so that the world-class service system can be achieved.

**4. Marketing level:**

Marketing of any products and services that is offered by the university library is essential for achieving the set standards and quality.

**5. Organization as a whole level:**

The consideration of the aspects of a university library particularly with staff, products, services, parent body's attitude, users' of the library, etc. brings the university library into a world class service system as a whole.

**Important factors for world class management:**

For achieving world class management some factors must be considered by the university libraries. The factors may be as follows:

**1. Fore sight ness and Leadership**

- Librarians should guide the users through User Education Programme.
- They should plan for improving the Library services.
- They should plan for IT applications in the Library.

**2. Interdisciplinary approach with new goals**

- They should have discussions with other related disciplines professionals, such as computer science, Information technology, communication technology fields
- They should amend the goals and improve their goals

**3. Long Term Planning with effective Strategies**

- They should plan for long key term planning in respect to finance, automation, collection development job related issues etc.

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- They should kept in mind Ranganathan's five laws at the time of long term planning.
  - Long term plans should be supplemented with short term plan in terms of implementation of strategic plans.

#### **4. Employee involvement in Decision making**

- Librarian should involve all the persons working in different sections, such as Acquisition, technical processing, periodical, circulation, documentation in planning.
- These people working at ground level can provide the solutions for practical problems.
- It boosts up the morale of employee also, that helps in better planning and implementation.

#### **5. Organization as a whole entity**

- Librarian should incorporate all the sections in setting up objectives.
- Librarian should focus on quality, cost and customer satisfaction that can be achieved through coordination of different departments.

#### **6. Measurement of Goals/Performance based reward system**

- Librarian should measure the different services and operations in terms of cost-effectiveness and then services can be up-lifted or stopped.

#### **7. Customer Oriented View**

- Users (Students, Research scholar, faculty members) should be at the focal point.
- The services and activities should be designed to fulfill the needs of the respective users.
- Quality of documents, quality of library services, and quality of library infrastructure should meet out the user's requirement.

#### **8. Good Communication Systems**

- It should adopt simple and transparent architecture of the communication;
- Hierarchy should be simple;
- Easy language should be used;
- Librarians/library personnel should be well behaved and proper co-ordination between all of them is required.

#### **9. Promotion of Research Work**

- The university library should have linkages with other international & National organization working in the field of Library & Information science.

- Different departments of University and University Library should have linkage with other organizations that have rich and good collection. Resource sharing among institutions can be initiated.

#### **10. Marketing of the Products/Services**

- The university library should design the products after conducting survey regarding user's demand.
- The consolidation and repacking of the information products should be according to user's specifications and demand.

#### **11. Team Management**

- All the departments of the Library should be functional and well attached to each other.
- The communication should be communicated to each department of the library.

#### **12. Quality Improvement through fixing individual responsibility**

- Librarian should assign the job responsibilities to all section heads.
- They should be responsible for their particular department quality improvement and services.

#### **13. Use of statistics in taking decisions**

- The University Librarian should take the help of statistical methods for removing the drawbacks of different products and services.
- The statistics of the different department provides input to take better decisions.

#### **14. Innovation in activities**

- The innovative programmes may be done in the various branches of the services/ functions like current content services, indexing techniques, classification and cataloguing schemes and other computerized services in the university libraries.

#### **15. Linkages with reputed vendors**

- University Libraries should appoint certain quality vendors for periodicals, books etc. They have written agreements with them.
- These vendors can provide delivery of quality documents on time.

#### **16. Flexibility in work**

- The university Librarian should provide facility to the library personnel working in different deptt. to complete their task in their own way, but they should not compromise with quality.
- The scientific methods must be adopted for doing repetitive jobs in the different sections of the library.



**17. Demand based services**

- The processing of documents such as indexing, abstracting, cataloguing, classification etc. should be done after assessing the needs of the users.
- After assessing the user's requirement some processing methods can be stopped and other can be provided in better way.

**18. Flexibility in procedures and working**

- The opening hours and duty timing of staff in the university library should be designed properly.
- The change of duty process should be simple.
- The circulation and periodical section duty timings should be given more attention.

**19. Standardization of processes**

- Standardization should be done at all sections and level before using the newer information technology techniques.

**Conclusion**

In today's competitive age, Total Quality Management is primary requirement of any service providing organization. The University Libraries should also follow the standard of world class service system. This paper describes about concept of TQM, element of TQM. The elements required for world class management have also been dealt in detail. These suggestive measures may be useful for achieving the world-class standard for the university library functions and services.

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