



# Total Quality Management In Information Technology And Libraries

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## **Abstract**

TQM (TQM) is a comprehensive and structured approach to organizational management that seeks to improve the quality of products and services through ongoing refinements in response to continuous feedback. This article is focused on the techniques of TQM to use in libraries. It also glimpses on benefits of TQM.

**Keywords :** TQM, ICT.

## **Introduction**

The term Total Quality Management (TQM) is frequently used to describe any combination of adjustments, methods, and initiatives that managers decide to use in the name of progress. The word "total" suggests that all workers should strive for quality across all roles and organizational levels. Every facet of the company is characterized by the word quality. The concept of Total Quality Management is widely acknowledged as a fundamental component of management philosophy. Originating in Japan in the 1950s, the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) has subsequently spread throughout the world as a unique management methodology. Satisfying customer needs is the main goal of Total Quality Management (TQM), which eventually leads to increased quality across all organizational processes.

For companies that prioritize their customers and involve every worker in providing excellent products and services,

This particular model is particularly appropriate. Total Quality Management (TQM) is a customer-focused approach to continuous improvement that makes use of participatory management approaches. Enhancing

total productivity, adaptability, and competitiveness are the primary goals of a comprehensive approach to corporate management.

### **What Is It? Total Quality Management:**

Total Quality Management (TQM) is an ongoing process of customer-centered improvement that uses participative management. Employee participation, teams for problem resolution, statistical techniques, long-term objectives, critical thinking in problem analysis, and ongoing improvement of quality performances that lead to excellence are all prerequisites for the TQM concept.

The goal of Total Quality Management (TQM) is to elevate the standard of products and services via continuous improvement in response to customer feedback. It is a comprehensive and methodical approach to managing businesses. TQM guidelines can be customized for a particular company or they can adhere to industry standards such as the International Organization for Standardization's ISO 9000 series. Since the manufacturing sector was the source of TQM's development, almost any type of organization, including educational institutions, can use it. Numerous sectors might benefit from the widespread uses of Total Quality Management (TQM). Although it originated in the manufacturing industry, it has since been modified and applied, among other places, to churches, hotels, schools, and highway maintenance. The foundation of TQM is quality management as viewed from the customer's point of view.

TQM is a philosophy rather than a technique. Its foundation is based on three key concepts: quality control, staff involvement, and customer satisfaction. "Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management approach that is centred on quality, based on the participation of all members of the organization, and aiming at long-term success through customer satisfaction with benefits to all members of the organization and to society." The most important thing is customer happiness.

### **TQM in Libraries**

Among the service industries such as Airlines, Banking institutions, Insurance companies and Health care providers, Libraries are the last to adopt TQM practices. For a long time, Librarians saw themselves as keepers of knowledge rather than active agents in information transfer. Though the main aim/objective of libraries is to satisfy the users, the library professionals often forget that. But today's libraries are pushed to a position where they have to provide quality services to its users, to justify their existence. So, now libraries are also started adopting TQM practices following other kinds of service industries. The practice of Quality Management in Library & Information Science sector existed since the evolution of the subject itself, but the terminology used for these varied widely. Performance indicators; performance evaluation; evaluation of reference sources using check-list of criteria; Evaluation of Information Retrieval systems using Precision and Recall ratios; Cost-Benefit and cost effectiveness studies; user surveys electing opinions on library services - all these studies make part and parcel of Quality Studies using different mechanisms of assessment and methodologies. In early 1980s, numerous studies were made on automated data validation, error rates and patterns, authority control which belongs to quality control in online databases. However, customer and

employee satisfaction are seldom in focus. Quality assurance studies were mostly restricted to special libraries and academic libraries. Although quality assurance studies based on ISO 9000 and other accreditation schemes were conducted in libraries in UK, USA and Canada, such studies are rarely reported in Indian libraries and information systems. The quality assurance initiative in LIS has primarily come from the parent organization to which it provides services. However, in the later years, the quality assurance system has become as essential feature of LIS management. Quality studies in LIS sector are mostly isolated and are made on different aspects of library management, services, user-studies, etc. The evidence produced by the few TQM cases in the LIS sector indicates that TQM is a highly relevant management theory for information sector.

### **Principles of TQM:**

The following are listed by Gerald F. Smith as the fundamentals of total quality management.

- Aim for excellence in everything.
- Enhance the method or system used to generate the items. The client is the standard for quality.
- Improving quality is an ongoing, never-ending endeavor.
- Employee engagement is crucial
- Base choices and actions on information.

### **Benefits of TQM**

Sirkin (1993) suggests some ways a library might use the principles of TQM to enhance library services.

- Create service brochures and information kits
- Conduct a user survey about library services
- Improve sign age
- Change hours of operation
- Provide convenient material return
- Simplify check out of materials
- Use flexibility in staff assignments
- Cooperate with local government
- Ask vendors to give product demonstrations
- Give new staff at thorough orientation
- Create inter departmental library advisory groups
- Improve the physically out of the library
- Track complaints

- Develop an active outreach program
- Open satellite offices
- Publicize new or changed services
- Develop user and staff training materials
- Target services to specific groups
- Offer electronic document delivery
- Follow the mission statement
- Smile

### Conclusion

From the review of the current status of quality improvement activities in libraries, it is evident that TQM or closely related approaches are not just “flavours of the month” or “fads of the day.” Many libraries are practising quality in the form of Quality Assurance, Continuous Quality Improvement, User Satisfaction, etc., if not in the form of TQM. The success of TQM will vary from library to library as each library is different from the others. The realities of the current library situation indicate that quality improvement is essential not only for survival but for facing major changes and growth required for the libraries of today and tomorrow.

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For customer focused businesses that include every employee in producing topnotch goods and services, this model is especially suitable.