
QUALITY MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARY

Dr. Rewaram M. Malkhede
Librarian
Rani Laxmibai Mahila Mahavidyalaya
Sawargaon

Abstract: *5S is the name of a workplace organization methodology that uses a list of five Japanese words. The basic philosophy on which this methodology is based is to increase the efficiency of the employees by organizing the workplace in a systematic way which helps to reduce stress and create the temptation to achieve perfection in the job done. In this paper an attempt has been made to have a clear understanding of this methodology and discussed its application on library management as a quality management technique to enhance the quality of library services.*

Keywords: *5S methodology, quality control tools, modern management technique*

Introduction:

Library and Information Science being an interdisciplinary subject, for the effective and efficient management of library functions to enhance the service quality borrowing of various ideas, methods and techniques from different subjects are commonly noticeable. The literature of library and information science contains several studies that help to provide a list of disciplines contributing to its interdisciplinary character.

"The interest in identifying fields that could contribute to the effective and efficient management of library dates at least to 1931. **Waples** in an article describing the graduate library school at Chicago had remarked that various other fields of studies have already been identified as capable of yielding laws, facts and methods of investigation from which a genuine science of librarianship may evolve".

Borko's definition gives more clear picture on this aspect which states "Information Science is an interdisciplinary science that investigates the properties and behavior of information, the forces that govern the flow and use of information and the techniques, both manual and mechanical of processing information for optimal storage, retrieval and dissemination. The interdisciplinary science is derived from and related to such fields as mathematics, logic, linguistics, psychology, computer technology, operations research, graphic arts, communications, library science, management and other similar fields".

However, nowadays in studies reported in the Library and Information Science literature, the most commonly traced borrowed ideas are of various management techniques like TQM, Kaizen, ISO, Six Sigma, Just-in- Time etc. for the enhancement of quality in services rendered.

Objectives Of Academic Libraries:

The term quality has been dominating the current debates about higher education system where library is an integral part. Quality has been added to the list of terms including performance, effectiveness, efficiency, which are being used as buzz words to express the status of current higher education system in our country. There is thus always a large context for assessing library quality, that is what and how well the library does contributes in achieving the overall goal of the parent institution.

Sir John Daniel, President and CEO, Commonwealth of learning has defined quality in the foreword published in the NAAC Manual as "fitness for purpose at minimum cost to society". As suggested in this definition, maintenance of quality with minimum cost, here an attempt has been made by the authors to apply the 5S methodology to ensure quality in academic libraries with almost no additional financial burden.

Application of the Methodology in Library Management:

Manufacturing based models and techniques for managing quality in a service sector may be unproductive unless a clear understanding of the particular nature of the service sector is used to re-focus the model and select an appropriate set or sequence of tools or techniques. A brief idea about this methodology and its applicability in library management is discussed below.

Application:

In library management this concept is already in use with a broader context than in the manufacturing unit in the form of classification of library collections, which can be called as the backbone of the library system. In addition to this it can be extended to other sections of the library like periodical section, file cabinet and storage of stationeries, other equipments. The library notice board works as the mouth piece of the library. Timely removal of each paper after the deadline is very important to avoid misinterpretation and confusion and at the same time this reflects the alertness and seriousness of the employees concerned.

As the second important aspect which is highlighted in this method is discarding of unwanted things, more attention should be given to weeding out of unused collections periodically. This will help to proper space management and ultimately support the fourth law of library science.

Straightening or Setting in Order:

Overview:

Arranging tools, parts, and instructions in such a way that the most frequently used items are the easiest and quickest to locate. The purpose of this step is to eliminate time wasted in obtaining the necessary items for an operation.

Application:

Set in Order means arranging the things in an order that promotes work flow. Here in addition to the arrangement of the physical things like books, journals, magazines, electronic resources, files, stationeries etc., the bifurcation of various sections of the library should be taken into consideration and these should be planned in such a manner that eliminates extra motion and confusion.

This optimised approach to organising the library may include,

- Arrangement should not be changed very frequently
- Display of floor plan at the entrance
- Use of bay guards, shelve guards in the stack room
- Labeling of shelves and cabinets of the journal / magazine display by that materials stored in them is always easy to locate and can be returned to its correct storage location.

Sweeping or Shine:

Application:

Daily follow-up cleaning is necessary in order to protect the library collections from damage and to attract the users. At the end of each day, the books from the return counter and reference desk should be replaced. Journals, magazines from the table should be restored to their place. Newspapers of the day should be stored properly. This helps to start the next day with a fresh and clean look. The key point is that maintaining cleanliness should be part of the daily work - not an occasional activity initiated when things get too messy. This helps in creating a visually attractive environment.

Here cleanliness is viewed from a different angle than just outward appearance. It is also a state of mind and heart that influence the morale and beliefs of a person. Library professionals should take an oath to maintain a clean image while performing their duties and keep themselves away from any type of immoral behavior.

Standardising:

Sustaining the Practice:

Application:

This task refers to the practice of maintaining the cultural, operational changes in the library and reviewing the 5S standards. Once the previous 4Ss have been established they become the new ways of operating.

The major objective of the academic libraries is to align themselves with the structure of higher education system and the criteria by which they are judged. The criteria is bound to change from time to time taking into consideration the changes in various sectors of the society like economic, social, cultural, political etc.. Moreover, no two persons think alike. As different persons have different style of working, with changes in the decision making position like principal or librarian, suggested improvement, a new way of working, use of new equipments may arise.

Then a review of the first four S's is appropriate. Hence sustain is by far the most difficult S to implement and achieve. Once fully implemented, the 5S process can increase morale of the employees, create positive impressions on the users of the library and increase efficiency.

5S as a Waste Management Tool:

The five steps of 5S can be readily applied to for waste management at anytime. When the discussion is focused on about library, most appropriately we can link this to time management. Some of the examples of waste of time which normally encountered in library are:

- Re-preparing a report or re-doing a service
- Unnecessary documentation or filing of unnecessary papers without any sorting
- Taking more steps than necessary to complete a task
- Material being routed through many steps at the time of processing or issuing to users
- Damaged or out of syllabus text books which are no longer in circulation but are still being stored
- So by standardising the procedure a lot of time can be saved and can be utilized for more productive works.

Conclusion:

Quality management approach and techniques can help libraries. First a frame work of TQM must be established by promoting a quality culture before applying any particular technique. Factors which should be taken into consideration before selecting any technique are organization culture, competence, skills, vision and mission of the organization, requirement of resources and accessibility of resources and information to ensure the best outcome.

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