

A STUDY ON IMPACT OF QUALITY CIRCLES IN PROMOTING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT SERVICE SECTOR

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to focus on the impact of quality circle towards employees & organization. Employee's attitude towards participative management Quality Circle is modern management concept designed to bring together all level of workforce in an organization for setting standards of excellence and achieving better results. This concept has since gained wide acceptance. Quality circles are a positive and humanistic approach to productive management. Quality circles which have been popularized by Japanese firms are being used all over the world because of the benefits that accrue to the firm. A quality circle involves participation from a small group of employees doing the same type of work. They meet regularly to identify, analyze and solve the problems that arise during the course of their work and their association with the organization. By operating machine with care and minimizing wastage, the production & hence productivity increases considerably. It also aims individual as well as group development by bringing out hidden capabilities of the employees, their change in attitude, skill development & good team relationship. It enhanced the quality of the output & services. Significance and perception of training with good leadership qualities are the success of quality circle in any organization. This study reveals & suggests that the positive attitude will be developed. It leads to overall improvement in organizational culture as well as performance of employees.

Key Words: Quality Circle, Participative Management, Employee's Motivation, Productivity, Group Development, Hidden Capabilities, Overall Improvement, Organizational Culture.

Introduction

"Quality Circle is a small group of employees in the same work-area or doing a similar type of work who voluntarily meet regularly for about an hour every week to identify, analyse and resolve work-related problems, leading to improvement in their total performance, and enrichment of their work life" (Udupa 1986). 32 "Quality circles are a formal, institutionalized mechanism for productive and participative problem-solving interaction among employees"(Lozano & Thompson 1980). "Quality control circle is not just a little room adjacent to the factory floor, whose occupants make a nuisance of themselves to everyone else. It is a state of mind and a matter of leadership with everyone from the president to production trainee involved"(Rehder 1981).

"Quality circle is a small group to perform capital quality control activities within the same workshop. This small group carries on continuously as a part of company wide quality control activities self development and mutual development and improvement within the workshop, utilizing quality control techniques with all member participating"(Dr.Ishikawa).

Performance management is an ongoing, continuous process of communicating and clarifying job responsibilities, priorities and performance expectations in order to ensure mutual understanding between supervisor and employee. It is a philosophy which values and encourages employee development through a style of management which provides frequent feedback and fosters teamwork. It emphasizes communication and focuses on adding value to the organization by promoting improved job performance and encouraging skill development. Performance Management involves clarifying the job duties, defining performance standards, and documenting, evaluating and discussing performance with each employee.



Objectives of the Study

1. To create an impact of Quality Circle in promoting Employee performance.
2. Self development of employees by bringing out the hidden potential of individuals.
3. Developing team spirit i.e To improve their performance in work.
4. Improved organization culture.

Concepts of Quality Circles in India

Quality Circle concept was first introduced by BHEL, Ramachandrapuram Hyderabad in the year 1981 in India with the initiation of Mr. S.R. Udpa - GM-Operations. He received the needed support from senior management of BHEL headed by Mr. Madhav Rao. Mr. K.L. Puri, Chairman and Managing Director of BHEL also encouraged this concept by his active involvement. Prof. V. Narayana of Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) of Hyderabad too had knowledge about concept of Quality Circle and ISI, also had presentation material available on the concept. With the help of this material, programmes were conducted in various places and BHEL also lent support by sharing its experiences.

Dr.R.C.Agarwal, President, JK Jute Mills Ltd., initiated workers participation in management in 1977. In 1981 he heard about Quality Circles and got in touch with JUSE who directed him to Mr. S.R. Udpa. On his invitation Mr. S.R. Udpa twice visited Kanpur, out of which once with BHEL Quality Circle members. Then M/s JK Jute Mills Ltd., started the QC movement in 1982. Later on they, with the help of Asian Productivity Council invited Mr. Ichiro Miyayuchi of JUSE. Dr.Gaur Hari Singhania and Mr. Ramapati Singhania also took keen interest and with Miyayuchisan's training it was firmly institutionalised in M/s JK Synthetics Ltd. and M/s JK Jute Mills Ltd.

In fact, world over most of the countries became aware of this concept only in 80s, even though Japanese had been practicing it from the 1960s. Of course, South Korea and Taiwan introduced it much earlier with the help of Japan (1975).

Quality Circles was on improving quality, in BHEL, the managers realized that such small group activities can also result in:

1. Improving human relations
2. Promoting participative culture
3. Improving productivity
4. Promoting job interest
5. Inspiring more effective team work
6. Improving communication
7. Promoting leadership development
8. Catalyzing attitudinal change

Conclusion

The impact of Quality circle towards employees and organization has become very important for improving a firm's process capabilities in order to achieve fit and sustain competitive advantages. It focuses on encouraging a continuous flow of incremental improvements from the bottom of the organizations. Job satisfaction and company commitment are the work attitudes, being the dimensions of employee attitudes. Quality circle can be linked more with productivity which cannot be measured only by money. There are various factors involved in developing the employees attitude towards quality circle. The organization plays a facilitator role in developing Quality Circle. The transparency and integrity of the organization is very much important for the smooth functioning of quality circles. The culture has great impact on the quality circles based on employee involvement, employee empowerment, perceived organizational support & employee engagement.

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