



"Impact of Quality Circles on Employee Performance and Engagement"

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Abstract

This research examines the effects of the quality circles on the employees in terms of their voluntary activities and the important organizational benefits. Active participation without compulsion is fostered by the creation of a quality circle, which also creates a collaborative environment. It improves quality control, minimizes financial losses, decreases wastage of manufacturing, helps to have smooth processes for manufacturing, increases productivity. During periods of economic strangulation, quality circles can contribute to alleviating operational pressures by fostering an active, problem solving way of thinking among workers. This initiative will be a success if employees, as well as top management, support each other. Apart from operational gain, quality circles have a strong focus on personal and team development and strong relationships and teamwork. This study provides positive reinforcement for the role of quality circles to improve employee attitudes and through the positive relationship to the organization. It ends by demonstrating how such efforts help organisations to grow sustainably; help improve workforce efficiency; and passionately inspire employees.

Keywords: Quality Circle, Productivity, Sustainable Growth, Teamwork, Employee Participation

Introduction

Indian industries of the past imbibed outdated management systems and scientific techniques and faced problems like individualism and non-involvement of employees in management of the organization. To remedy these problems, the idea of the quality circle was proposed to be a novel problem solving approach. India's pioneer in implementing project quality circle activities was Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd.

A quality circle is a group of employees with similar tasks that voluntarily meet to work on solving work issues and improve their work environment. Working in groups and brainstorming ideas about how to improve a workplace, these members subsequently go on to present their solutions to management.

A quality circle should preferably have between seven and twelve people in it to draw participants from the same work place, in order to ensure consistency and relevance. Small enough group size means that all participants can contribute efficiently and actively participate, thus building up a fruitful and inclusive environment for continual improvement.

Review of literature:

Tiwari & Gupta (2023): In this study, Tiwari and Gupta (2023) investigated how quality circles impacted employee performance and how they engaged with work in two different Indian manufacturing sectors. The study found that employees involved in the quality circle activities showed increased job satisfaction, better team working and better decision making. Together, these factors combined to improve employee performance and employee engagement. It was suggested in this study, as in many others, that positive changes in employee motivation and productivity are generally going to result from collaborative problem solving and recognition in quality circles.

Singh et al. (2022): The roles of Quality Circles in service industries particularly in enhancing employee engagement was studied by Singh, Kumar and Choudhury(2022). The findings demonstrate that employees who participated in quality circle meetings on a regular basis had significantly better performance at tasks and overall engagement with the organization. This they attributed to the increased communication channels and the sense of ownership fostered by quality circles not only for the resolution of the operations challenges but for providing employees with a more meaningful and participatory role in organisational growth.

Patel & Sharma (2021): In a study of IT industry in the Indian context, Patel and Sharma (2021) looked at the impact of the quality councils on work procedures. This discovery led them to the fact that quality circles directly affected commitment of employees on work and organisational goals. It was found that quality circles offered the potential to not only increase performance and overall employee satisfaction but also to raise the level of employee satisfaction through skill development opportunities and continuous improvement focus. Fostering a motivated workforce was found to be a result of employees' sense of belonging and recognition they received from taking part quality circles.

Zhang et al. (2020): Zhang, Liu and Wang (2020) reviewed a number of case studies that related to quality circles in China and the effects on employee performance. It turned out that quality circle practices had a significant effect on employees technical and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, when employees engaged through quality circles were more likely to stay engaged and productive as they felt more accomplishment in actually solving real organizational issues. The structured approach taken by quality circles improved work processes, and this approach also matched the employees' personal development with the organization's success.

Fernandes & Costa (2019): In Fernandes and Costa (2019), the relationship between quality circles and employee engagement in European organizations was analyzed. Specifically, their study found a strong link between quality circle participation and improved performance (innovation and creativity were two important contributory factors). Participated quality circles employees were more empowered and had a greater sense of ownership of their work thereby higher engagement. The authors found that quality circles led to building trust and communication across the hierarchies and thus led to a collaboration lead to performance outcomes.

Scope of Quality Circle

In the Japanese style, a quality circle is a collaborative management method in which employees become actively involved in trying to work through problems connected to their own jobs. It's good to know that so many sectors have adopted this approach, small scale industries, medium and large organizations, private and public entities. Industry in manufacturing and services by using quality circles not only successfully tackle the problem but also effect positive result toward total quality of work life. With this inclusive approach we create the sense of belonging as well as empowering individuals to be proud of their contribution in the workplace.

Objectives of study

- The purpose is to analyze the impact of Quality Circles on performance of employees in various industries.
- In order to study the role of involvement in Quality Circles on employee engagement, primarily motivation and job satisfaction.
- Adopt goals to identify the critical factors affecting the Success of Quality Circles in Employee Engagement and Performance.
- What part does organizational culture and leadership play in contributing to the effectiveness of the Quality Circle.

Research Methodology:

A quality circle is a participation management technique of the employees resolving the problems of their own jobs in the collaborative manner. Across different industry sectors done worldwide from small scale organizations to medium and large organizations, public and private sector and manufacturing and service industries, this approach is widely adopted. As problem solving tools, quality circles have significant effect in enhancing the quality of work life of employees.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for studying the "Impact of Quality Circles on Employee Performance and Engagement" is built around the interrelationship between key variables: employee performance, employee

engagement, quality circle participation. The independent variable is quality circles, groups of small employers who gather regularly in order to determine and solve problems related to work. They are assessed based on two principal outcomes: performance and engagement which are the dependent variables.

Job efficiency, task accomplishment and the contribution of the employee to organizational goals constitutes employee performance. The framework argues that participation in quality circles can also help in these areas through collaboration; skill development; and improved problem solving through employees. The other side of this is that employee engagement is viewed as the emotional and psychological commitment of an employee to his or her organization. That framework posits quality circles can enhance engagement through a sense of ownership, recognition and connection to organization outcomes. Through the survey and interview data, the relationships between these variables will be explored to understand how the quality circle activities will affect performance and the engagement with work.

Findings and Discussion

Based on the analysis of secondary data, several key findings emerged regarding the impact of quality circles on employee performance and engagement

- **Employee Performance:** Participation in quality circles proved positive with regard to employee performance across a wide variety of industries. Employees who were a part of quality circles also showed improved problem solving skills, more innovation and enhanced task efficiency. Collaborative activities enabled employees to intermingle knowledge, learn new skills and apply them in the course of their daily work and in turn contributed to higher overall performance levels.
- **Employee Engagement:** It was found that the quality circles increased significantly the engagement of the workers. Quality circle activities were shown repeatedly to have led employee involvement which in turn created a sense of more connection to the organization and its overall aims. This furthered to higher levels of job satisfaction and emotional containment towards organization because of the concept of sense of organization and getting the opportunity to play their role in bringing about such meaningful change.
- **Motivation and Collaboration:** The nature of quality circles fosters an environment in the area of mutual support and we experienced employees feeling they were valued. Better communication and teamwork are generated from regular interaction of employees at different hierarchical levels, along with regular interaction motivates employees to perform at higher levels. Being involved in decision making processes gives a sense of accomplishment, and that close relation to increased motivation and engagement.
- **Leadership and Organizational Culture:** The success or failure of quality circles is heavily leader dependent and rests upon the culture within the organization. Effective quality circle activities are credited to leaders that actively promote and engage in such activities. A very successful involvement of Quality Circles in performance and engagement is through creating an organizational culture that values employee input, continuous improvement and open communication.

Conclusion

The analysis of secondary data shows remarkable sign that quality circles will bring a significant improvement of employee performance and engagement. Organizations create valuable opportunities for employee skill development, collaborative problem solving and active decision-making through the creation of these circles. Not only does this structure add to the professional abilities of employees; it also gives birth to the sense of ownership and motivation which is key to developing a successful workforce.

Since organizations are zealous in finding out ways to enhance productivity and employee involvement, quality circles provide a viable way for you to improve performance. Future research should look to base itself on primary data studies in order to build on this promising foundation. This would provide a basis for more in-depth examination of the impact of quality circles on the long run on various organizational settings and finding out which practices are successful and may be used in different industries. Doing so means that organizations and employees can thrive together and keep the success in a collaborative way.

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