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Benefits of IQACs in educational institutions of higher learning

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ABSTRACT

The IQACs in the educational institutions of higher learning on the recommendation of NAAC can definitely contribute to the aspects such as increasing involvement of human resources, reduction of work pressure on management, human resource work in a smarter way than harder way, conversion of average into high achievers, enhancement in human resource efficiency, existence of better academic environment, collective administrative decision making, transparency in the financial transactions, better work culture, new dimension to education sector and raising the level of job satisfaction in various degrees. The sample has been taken from 44 institutions of higher education in Haryana. The coordinators of IQACs in each college were contacted to respond to the queries. These 44 institutions include 19 urban aided institutions (13 co-ed. And 6 women colleges), 8 urban government institutions (5 co-ed. and 3 women colleges), 11 rural aided institutions (3 co-ed. and 8 women colleges) and 6 rural government institutions (3 co-ed. and 3 women colleges).

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Introduction

The Quality Circles in the industries have provided various benefits not only to the workers but to the management, society and the nation at large. On the same pattern the establishment of the IQACs in the educational institutions of higher learning on the recommendation of NAAC can definitely contribute to the aspects such as increasing involvement of human resources, reduction of work pressure on management, human resource work in a smarter way than harder way, conversion of average into high achievers, enhancement in human resource efficiency, existence of better academic environment, collective administrative decision making, transparency in the financial transactions, better work culture, new dimension to education sector and raising the level of job satisfaction in various degrees. The extent of contribution to these aspects has been examined under tables 1 to 11.

Increased involvement of human resources: The concept of IQAC is entirely based on the involvement of human resources. The diverse minds are made to sit together and efforts are made to have threadbare discussions on the selected problem. The selection of problem and its solution is usually through consensus but number of techniques like check list, check diagram, pareto diagram, histogram, graphs, control charts, fish bone diagram etc; can be employed for selecting and solving the problem. In certain cases the management identify the problem to be resolved by the IQAC members which is basically against the philosophy of the Quality Circle. The process of taking the decisions through IQAC and its implementation increases the involvement of the human resources. The undertaking of such process boost the morale of the persons involved because they find their status has been elevated and this process brings number of related benefits to the organizations such as positive attitudes of the participants, better working relations with fellow beings, clarity in role perception, better utilization of skills, reduced psychological strains, etc.

Table 1

ENHANCED INVOLVEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES BY IQACs

Responses	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
COLLEGES						
RURAL						
AIDED	1	9.09	8	72.73	2	18.18
GOVT.	–	–	2	33.33	4	66.67
URBAN						
AIDED	7	36.84	10	52.63	2	10.53
GOVT.	3	37.5	3	37.5	2	25
TOTAL	11	25	23	52.27	10	22.73

Chi²=12.27(df:6)
C=0.47;

Source: Sample Survey

Reduced work pressure of management : As the adage goes 'only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches' and it suits best to our situation i.e. the functioning of the IQACs. The members of the IQAC (the teachers) know better various complexities related to a particular problem undertaken for consideration and they are better equipped for offering the solutions to that particular vexed problem. The operation of IQAC provides them on opportunity to overcome such gritty problems. In doing so, they are reducing the work pressure of the management.

Table 2

REDUCED WORK PRESSURE OF MANAGEMENT BY IQACs

Responses	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
COLLEGES						
RURAL						
AIDED	1	9.09	8	72.73	2	18.18
GOVT.	–	–	2	33.33	4	66.67
URBAN						
AIDED	6	31.58	9	47.37	4	21.05
GOVT.	–	–	5	62.5	3	37.5
TOTAL	7	15.91	24	54.55	13	29.55
Chi ² =10.83(df:6) C=0.44;						Source: Sample Survey

Human resource work in smarter than harder way: Gone are days when it was emphasized in louder tone that hard work has no substitution or hard work is the key to success. This is not absolutely true in this participative philosophy of the IQAC. The involvement of diverse best minds and taking a decision through brainstorming like techniques will not be emphasizing the hard work but smart work. Through IQACs we seek to achieve how the things can be done in an easier manner and better way rather than what can be done. While doing the work in a smart way it should be kept in mind that the work ethics are not violated through short cuts.

The smart work is a natural consequence of better understanding and support among the members from different disciplines for close interaction. The members of the IQAC develop their capabilities to resolve problems in a convincing manner.

Table 3
SMART WORKING BY HUMAN RESOURCES THROUGH IQACs

ASPECTS	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	3	27.27	4	36.36	4	36.36
GOVT.	–	–	3	50	3	50
URBAN						
AIDED	8	42.11	9	47.37	2	10.53
GOVT.	1	12.5	5	62.5	2	25
TOTAL	12	27.27	21	47.73	11	25

Chi²=8.14(df:6)
C=0.40; Source: Sample Survey

Conversion of average into high achievers: The IQAC offers scope for innovation, participation, growth, recognition and the members are motivated to give their best. The practical benefit of IQAC is that the group pressure activates responses from the different members resulting into decision making process faster and removal of delays leading to enhanced productivity and morale in the organization. The working of IQAC for work related problems in context of quality enhancement and sustenance, improving productivity and reducing cost naturally improve both quantifiable as well as intangible gains of the organization.

Table 4
CONVERSION OF AVERAGE INTO HIGH ACHIEVERS BY IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	2	18.18	7	63.64	2	18.18
GOVT.	–	–	3	50	3	50
URBAN						
AIDED	11	57.89	8	42.11	–	–
GOVT.	2	25	3	37.5	3	37.5
TOTAL	15	34.09	21	47.73	8	18.18

Chi²=15.54*(df:6)
C=0.51; Source: Sample Survey

Enhancement of human resources efficiencies: The participative culture of IQAC has increased the involvement of the human resources, reduced the work pressure of management, work is done in a smarter way and average performers have been converted into high achievers. Obviously this all will result into improved efficiency of the human resources. The IQAC provides an opportunity to the members to look at a particular problem from different angles before arriving at a particular decision. The implementation of such decisions results into

reduced cost of operation and minimization of wastages and thus, leading to improved efficiency.

Table 5
HUMAN RESOURCES EFFICIENCY IMPROVED BY IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	3	27.27	5	45.45	3	27.27
GOVT.	–	–	5	83.33	1	16.67
URBAN						
AIDED	11	57.89	7	36.84	1	5.26
GOVT.	3	37.5	4	50	1	12.5
TOTAL	17	38.64	21	47.73	6	13.64

Chi²=9.12(df:6)
C=0.41; Source: Sample Survey

Better academic environment: The studies conducted so far indicate that academic environment can benefit tremendously by initiating quality circles or IQACs in the educational institutions of higher learning. The feeling of oneness with the organization, personality development, sense of fulfillment, positive attitudes and improved creativity are the main benefits reported in the industrial set up and they can also be exploited in education. IQACs can contribute efficiently for high quality goods and services (education), the attainment of great respect for humanity, building of worthwhile lives, enhanced human abilities and the creation of an affluent, humanistic and peaceful society everywhere for all the people. This all is necessary for creating better academic environment in the educational institutions of higher learning.

Table 6
BETTER ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT THROUGH IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	5	45.45	3	27.27	3	27.27
GOVT.	–	–	1	16.67	5	83.33
URBAN						
AIDED	15	78.95	3	15.79	1	5.26
GOVT.	4	50	3	37.5	1	12.5
TOTAL	24	54.55	10	22.73	10	22.73

Chi²=19.63*(df:6)
C=0.56; Source: Sample Survey

Collective decision making process: IQAC is a body in the educational institutions of higher learning recommended by the NAAC that takes strategic and non-strategic decisions for the betterment of organization. Strategic decisions are concerning the survival of the organization whereas non-strategic decisions are for efficient operation but not questioning the survival of the organization. All the decisions are stamped by the IQAC. Therefore, we can say the administrative decisions are taken collectively.

Table 7
COLLECTIVE DECISION MAKING BY IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	5	45.45	3	27.27	3	27.27
GOVT.	–	–	–	–	6	100
URBAN						
AIDED	7	36.84	10	52.63	2	10.53
GOVT.	1	12.5	4	50	3	37.5
TOTAL	13	29.55	17	38.64	14	31.82

Chi²=19.39*(df:6)
C=0.55; Source: Sample Survey

Transparency in financial transactions: It is widely believed that establishment of IQACs in the educational institutions of higher learning will help transparency in the financial transactions as decision making process is routed through IQACs and that is a collective approach. If IQAC are permitted to work in the true sense of the word of its philosophy, the chances of financial irregularity or fraud will be non-existent. The temples of learning, thus, will be away from the wild allegation of corruption, financial improprieties and embezzlements. This all will lead to usher a new era of clean educational administration.

Table 8

FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY BY IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	3	27.27	3	27.27	5	45.45
GOVT.	—	—	—	—	6	100
URBAN						
AIDED	7	36.84	9	47.37	3	15.79
GOVT.	—	—	3	37.5	5	62.5
TOTAL	10	22.73	15	34.09	19	43.18
Chi ² =16.64*(df:6) C=0.52; Source: Sample Survey						

Work culture is changing for better: The success of the Quality Circles in the industrial set up has been ensured inter alia, by work ethics, discipline and trust. Trust is the corner stone of Quality Circle philosophy. The intangible and unquantifiable trust among the members of Quality Circles results into incalculable benefits for the members and the organization. The same is true for IQACs in educational set up. The activities of the IQAC lead to improvement in the quality of education, performance of the teaching and administrative staff, enhance the efficiency and productivity of the resources and finally lead to quality of work life in the organization concerned. It helps creating work environment, a congenial place to work in. Thus, IQACs are capable of changing the work-culture in the educational institutions of higher learning.

Table 9

BETTER WORK CULTURE THROUGH IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	3	27.27	6	54.55	2	18.18
GOVT.	—	—	3	50	3	50
URBAN						
AIDED	8	42.11	9	47.37	2	10.53
GOVT.	—	—	6	75	2	25
TOTAL	11	25	24	54.55	9	20.45
Chi ² =10.15(df:6) C=0.43; Source: Sample Survey						

New dimension to educational sector: The IQAC in the educational institutions of higher learning is an extension of the industrial Quality Circle philosophy. Although the same set of principles applies to both the set ups yet, the focus is different in academics. NAAC, the autonomous body of the UGC, has made it compulsory for the colleges and universities in the country to establish IQACs. The IQACs in the education are established for developing a holistic personality; self, mutual, organizational and societal development; for creating team work, spirit of duty and sense of responsibility; for building analytical minds to develop scientific temper of the people to various problems; to find out unlimited possibilities and human capabilities under the

new learning environment; to make education more pragmatic and for achieving total quality education.

Table 10

NEW DIMENSIONS TO EDUCATION BY IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	3	27.27	5	45.45	3	27.27
GOVT.	1	16.67	2	33.33	3	50
URBAN						
AIDED	10	52.63	6	31.58	3	15.79
GOVT.	1	12.5	6	75	1	12.5
TOTAL	15	34.09	19	43.18	10	22.73
Chi ² =9.14(df:6) C=0.41; Source: Sample Survey						

Increased level of job satisfaction: The IQACs in the educational institutions help members enjoy work. The feeling of the belongingness makes them perform enthusiastically rather than finding faults and excuses for non-performance. The grievances of the members also get automatically minimized because most of the work related problems are solved by the members themselves. The freedom to express themselves, openness, informality, flexibility and mutuality are values of the IQACs beneficial for raising the level of job satisfaction in the personnels' working in educational institutions of higher learning

Table 11

IMPROVED JOB SATISFACTION BY IQACs

RESPONSES	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all	
COLLEGES	No.	%age	No.	%age	No.	%age
RURAL						
AIDED	2	18.18	6	54.55	3	27.27
GOVT.	1	16.67	1	16.67	4	66.67
URBAN						
AIDED	5	26.32	13	68.42	1	5.26
GOVT.	—	—	5	62.5	3	37.5
TOTAL	8	18.18	25	56.82	11	25
Chi ² =12.01(df:6) C=0.46; Source: Sample Survey						

Tables 1 to 11 are analyzing the extent of contribution of IQACs in various aspects benefiting the members, institutions and the education. The investigation reveals the following:

- The extent of contribution of IQACs in creating 'better academic environment' has been noted by majority of the respondents 'to a great extent' irrespective of the category of the institutions. One-fourth or more respondents of 'all-data' category have observed the extent of contribution of IQACs 'to a great extent' in the aspects of 'involvement of human resources', 'human resource work in smarter way than harder way', 'conversion of average performers into high achievers', 'increased human efficiency', 'collective culture' and 'adding of a new dimensions to education'.
- The contribution of IQACs has been found 'to some extent' in the aspects of 'involvement of human resources', 'reduced work pressure of management', 'better work-culture' and 'improved level of job-satisfaction' by more than half of the respondents irrespective of the category of their institutions. One-fourth or more respondents observed the contribution of IQACs 'to some extent' for all the remaining aspects except 'better academic environment' which was noted by 22.73 percent respondents
- The contribution of IQACs was also denied by one-fourth or more 'all data' category respondents for 'reduced work-pressure' of management, 'working of human resources in smarter way than harder way', 'collective decision making',

‘transparency in financial transaction’ and ‘improved job satisfaction’.

- The contribution of IQACs to these aspects was overwhelmingly (50-100 percent) denied by rural government respondents except in case of increased human efficiency.
- Urban aided college respondents were ahead of others in finding the contribution of IQACs, ‘to a great extent’ in all the aspects except ‘increased involvement of human resources’ and ‘collective decision making where urban government and rural aided colleges respectively were ahead of others.’
- The urban college respondents were far ahead than their rural counter-parts in admitting ‘to a great extent’ in all the aspects except ‘improved level of job satisfaction’.
- The rejection of null-hypotheses for chi-square statistical test at 1 percent level of significance for the aspects of ‘better academic environment’, ‘collective decision making’ and at 5 percent level of significance for ‘conversion of average performers into high achievers’ and ‘transparency in financial transactions’ lead us to conclude that there is association between the contribution of IQAC to the above aspects and the nature of the educational institutions of higher learning. It is concluded that realization of above mentioned benefits in the hands of educational institutions.
- The acceptance of null hypothesis for extent of IQACs contribution in the remaining aspects explains that educational institutions and the aspects are independent of each other.

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