



## Quality Management

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# Operation of quality circles in educational institutions of higher learning: a case study

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### ABSTRACT

By refusing to separate the management and workforce into water-tight compartments, the concept of Quality Circles made a radical departure from the western style of management. In the Quality Circle approach, the task performers at the grass-root level are given the privilege of participation in progress and to have a say in the work they do. Similarly, when we apply in academics, we suppose that people performing the tasks can rise to the occasion, solve their problems and recommend solutions provided the knowledge to analyze their problems is given. Ownership and responsibility towards the task are passed to the teachers and students doing the job. Quality Circles in academics do not segregate management, teachers and students into different blocks but treat them all as seekers of truth, together treading the path of knowledge. This in essence is the conceptual frame of the Quality Circles when we apply them in education.

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### Introduction

The educational institutions of higher learning have started establishing IQACs which are Quality Circles of the Industries. This has been done on the recommendation of NAAC. The real problem is how to make these Quality Circles operational in educational institutions. NAAC has recommended guidelines for this. The methodology used in industries for the operation of Quality Circles can yield better results to the educational institutions. An international workshop was conducted by City Montessori School and College, Lucknow. This was to train the participants about the operational aspects of Quality Circles. The participants were from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Japan and India. One case study is presented here for the benefit of educational institutions of higher learning and their faculty members. It explains the steps and the process required for making Quality Circles functional with the help of one hypothetical circle named as 'Synergy'.

**Step 1:** The circle is formed with motto and mission

MOTTO : SYNERGY: Balle Balle

MISSION : "To achieve TOTAL QUALITY"

#### Step 2: Introduction :

Name of the Circle : Synergy  
Constituted on : 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2k7  
Group Leader : Dr. P.K. Malik  
Deputy Leader : Mrs. Minu Katyal  
Facilitator : Mr. J.M. Sherchan

#### Step 3: Group Members

- Mr. Vaskar Kar
- Mr. Raghunath Adhikari
- Mr. Binayak Chhetri
- Mrs. Kumuduni Herath
- Mrs. Jeewanthi Walpita
- Mrs. Wasantha Mala
- Mrs. Laila Bilkis

- Mr. Md. Salim Mahmud
- Dr. Ranjana Malik
- Mr. Md. Shahjan Kabir
- Mr. Md. Abdus Samad

**Step 4:** To finalise the problem for Synergy Quality Circle, brainstorming session was held. The following topics emerged through session.

1. Morality in Teachers.
2. Building motivation among weak students.
3. Handling hyperactive children in class.
4. Total quality education – need of the hour.
5. Peer pressure.
6. Exam phobia.
7. Lack of time for networking.

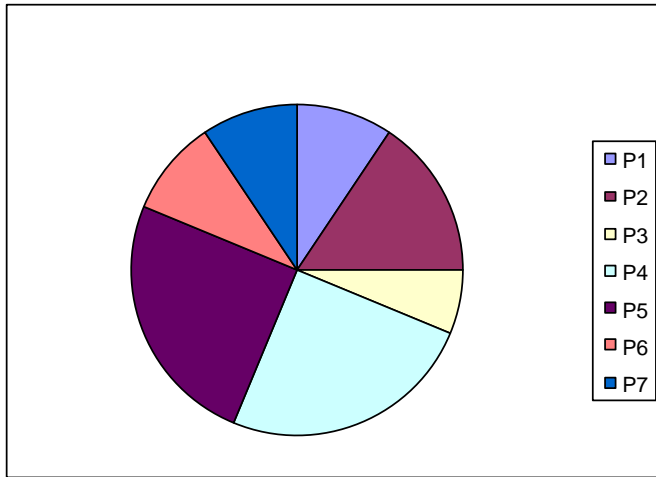
#### Step 5: Finalisation of Problem

Members assigned their preferences out of 10 to the above selected topics. The table is as follows :

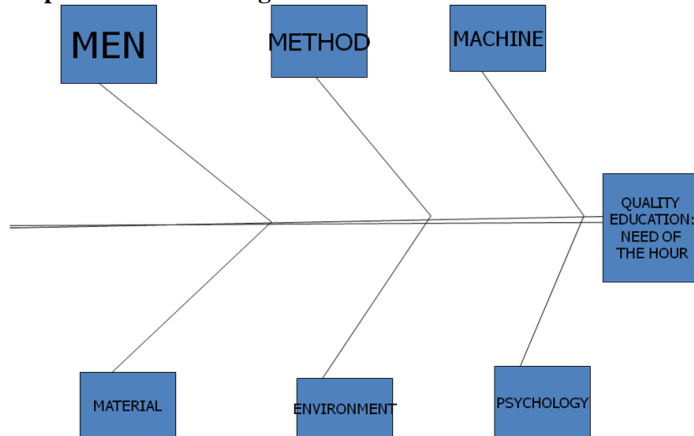
MEMBERS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Vaskar	3	5	2	8	8	3	3	6
Jyoti Mohan	2	2	3	7	2	9	7	5
Raghunath	6	9	8	9	1	1	9	6
Binayak	3	3	1	6	3	6	4	5
Kumudini	5	2	4	8	5	2	2	6
Jeevanthi	9	5	7	9	6	5	6	7
Bsantimala	8	9	6	6	3	3	8	9
Laqila	3	7	5	6	7	2	3	
Mohammad	7	1	2	9	9	1	4	
Salim	4	6	9	8	8	4	6	
Ranjana	5	3	2	7	3	9	2	
Abdullah	7	4	5	7	6	5	6	
Sarjahan	6	3	7	9	7	7	5	
Meena	8	1	3	8	2	3	2	
Sarita	2	6	2	2	8	2	1	7
Meenu	9	2	1	8	2	2	7	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>58</b>

The highest marks have been allotted to fourth problem. This problem is selected for Quality Circle Synergy.

**Step 6 : Pictorial Presentation of Scores given by Members to the Problems and Selection of one Problem:**



**Step 7 : Fish-bone Diagram for the Selected Problem**



**Explanation to Men :**

- Lack of training
- Negative attitudes
- Vanishing morality
- Inadequate Pay Packages
- Absence of incentives
- Lack of promotional Avenues
- Biasedness against the teachers

**Explanation to Method :**

**TQM**

- Quality Circles
- Benchmarking
- Kaizen
- Six Sigma
- Seminars
- Group Decisions
- Symposium
- Workshop
- Orientation & Refresher Courses
- Training
- Handling of teaching gazettes

**Explanation to Machine:**

- OHP
- LCD
- Computers

- Use of Multimedia

**Explanation to Environment :**

- Faulty recruitment
- Political Interference
- Bureaucratic meddling
- Lack of parents support
- Defective location policy

**Explanation to Psychology :**

- Unhealthy family environment
- Improper upbringing of the child
- Discrimination on various basis
- Victim of complexes

**Explanation to Material :**

- Infrastructural facilities
- Historical subjects
- Absence of modern teaching aids
- Lack of operational knowledge for advanced technological methods

**Step 8 :**

**Strategy – 1 : For School Education**

- Establishment of counselling cell
- Overall performance evaluation
- Motivating through rewards and incentives
- Students feedback
- Parents feedback
- Educational exchange programmes at level of schools, principals and management

**Strategy – 2 : For College and University level**

- Admission according to merit and interest\
- Segmentation of various courses – traditional, technical and professional
- Offering scholarships
- Introduction to the TQM concept and techniques
- Students election should be banned
- Educational Exchange Programmes at level of school, principal and management
- Concept of holistic education should be added
- Promoting community services programme
- Ban on all anti-social activities

**Step 9: Benefits**

- Development of holistic society
- Helpful in creating better work environment
- Leads to positive attitude
- Person can think globally and act locally
- Helps in creating healthy society of healthy nation
- Promoting cordial international relations
- Improved teacher-taught relations

**Conclusion:**

- If you plan for a year - sow rice
- If you plan for a decade – plant trees
- If you plan for a generation – provide quality education

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