

Level of formal and informal communication in TQM Circles to total quality management

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Abstract – Practices related to total quality management as a management approach that businesses will adopt can be defined as the leading factors in achieving positive outputs at the level of individuals, groups and institutions. One of the mentioned quality management practices is quality circles. Group dynamics gain importance in achieving the desired positive results in these group works carried out on a voluntary basis, and the communication activity between the circle members, which is one of them, is reshaped with formal or informal qualities in this context. In quality circles created with different hierarchical titles from different departments, the level of formal and informal communication in businesses may directly affect the effectiveness of the circle. The informal climate in which the circles are created will make the hierarchical level difference in the communication process important/unimportant depending on functional competence in this context. In this study, elements related to communication effectiveness and how they can change the effectiveness of quality circles are discussed.

Keywords – Quality Circles, Formal Communication, Informal Communication, TQM, Efficiency of Quality Circles

I. INTRODUCTION

. In today's increasingly competitive conditions, people have become more attracted to the center of corporate practices as a fundamental factor in strategy formulation. The change experienced in the customer profile will be the determinant of the management and production approaches that the enterprises will adopt in the production they will carry out according to factors such as quality, speed, structural flexibility of the product, and cost.

Quality circles, which are a small group of volunteers ranging from 5 to 9 people, are small groups on a voluntary basis that continue until the problem is solved. These quality-oriented circles have become one of the most effective methods in increasing productivity and are used as one of the problem-solving methods in production and service sector enterprises [1]

In the quality circle, each link of the chain undertakes the task of solving problems and

developing various appropriate policies and procedures for the benefit of the organization [1]

In quality circles created with the principle of volunteerism, people from different functional sub-units under the same department or from different departments come together at different hierarchical levels and job titles. In quality circles, communication becomes important as a team dynamic in solving quality problems or reaching higher quality standards. The level of communication between the members of the quality circle, between the circle leader-guide and other members, with other circles or with the top management depends on the formal communication structure designed in the institutions and the emerging informal communication types and characteristics [1]

In this study, the structural features of the quality circles were examined and the effect of formal and informal communication in terms of type and level

in achieving the desired performance targets of the circles was discussed theoretically.

II. LITERATURE

A. Quality Circles

. Participants in quality circles receive training on group planning and teamwork in advance, and quality circles are led by the circle leader, who is trained by the guide and selected by the circle members. These quality-oriented circles have become one of the most effective methods in increasing productivity and are one of the problem-solving methods in production and service sector enterprises [1]

In the quality circle, each link in the chain undertakes the task of solving problems and developing various appropriate policies and procedures for the benefit of the organization. The hierarchy of the quality circles is shown at table 1.



Figure 1: Quality circle hierarchy
(<https://techqualitypedia.com/quality-circle/>)

The aims of the quality circles: The first is to ensure that management becomes participatory; The second is to meet the needs of the employees [2]. The purposes of establishing quality control circles

1-Increasing the motivation of individuals

2-To encourage individuals to reveal their creative talents through active participation,

3-To make communication more effective within the organization,

4-Developing personality and leadership abilities of individuals

5-To improve quality and reduce errors

6-Increasing manager-employee relations,

7-Contribute to the development of the business (Efil, 1998):

Structure of quality circles is shown at Table 2.

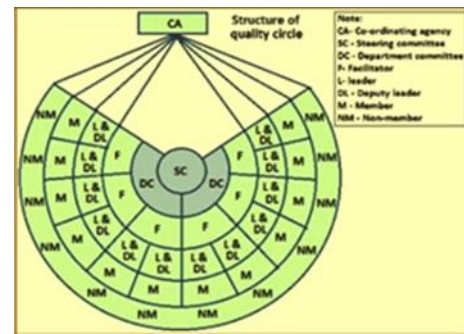


Figure 2: Quality circle structure

<https://www.ispatguru.com/quality-circles-an-effective-tool-for-management/>

In the structure, there are department committee under steering committee. Facilitators constitute the steering committee. Leaders and Deputy leaders report to facilitator in the quality circles. Members in the quality circles are supervised.

The process of quality of circles as below

- 1-Identification of problems
- 2-Selection of a problem
- 3-Analysis of the problem (with input of the technical/non technical data)
- 4-Generate alternatives
- 5-Selection of the most suitable solutions
- 6-Prepare plan of action
- 7-Presentation of solution to management
- 8-Implementation of the solution

Before the initial stage of identification of the problems, the members in the quality circles are trained.

The factors affecting the success of quality circles [1]

- 1-Expectations from quality circles
- 2-Employees' adoption of the work they do and the business they work in,
- 3-Understanding the team spirit
- 4-Employee job satisfaction
- 5-Attitude of top management
- 6-trust subordinates
- 7-Middle and lower hierarchy managers
- 8-middle and lower level managers who participate as leaders, members or mentors
- 9-Circle members
- 10-unions

It is important to meet regularly for the circle to produce solutions by continuously benefiting from the ideas of the members. Meetings are usually every week or every fortnight [3]. The meeting time varies from 1/2 hour to 2 hours and is seen in practice. The period considered valid is between one hour and 1.5 hours. More than 80% of the problems

faced by circles can be solved with simple techniques. However, other techniques should not be characterized as complex. These are any are techniques known to a quality circle: [1] Brain storming, Ishakawa diagram (cause-effect diagram), Pareto analysis, techniques relating to gathering data, Histogram, Graphs, Gant Diagram [4]

Group dynamics gain importance in achieving the desired positive results in these group works carried out on a voluntary basis, and the communication activity among the circle members, which is one of them, is reshaped with formal or informal qualities in this context.

Keeping the communication channels open between the top management and the lower level, the top management's communication with the employees through formal and informal communication context gain importance.

B. Organizational Communication

Communication is one of the most important processes in the organization. The effectiveness of an organization depends on good management and communication. If successful communication is established in the organization, success is achieved and high performance is achieved. Individual learning, motivation and professional satisfaction also depend on effective communication [5]. Thanks to organizational communication, integrity is created in the organization in a harmonious and systematic way [6].

Communication is with the individual. It is a two-sided process. If one of the individuals is not active, communication is lost. Both parties play an active role in communication. Communication is a whole. In communication, the form of communication and the process cannot be separated from each other [7]. Communication is the process carried out with certain tools. The channel is the technology used to send messages. In the communication process, there is a need for a tool that will enable the transmission of the message [8]

Formal communication: In formal communication, communication consists of the chain of command. Horizontal communication, cross communication, bypass, Fayol Bridge are formal communication types.

In order to have an effective management, there is a need for an open system in communication channels, allowing free circulation of information [9]. It takes place in a special communication

network organized according to the source of authority in the formal relationship, the distribution of authority in the enterprise, and the way responsibilities are assumed.

To provide the necessary knowledge and understanding within the group, to create the desired attitude for the satisfaction of the employees and to produce information when necessary. The mechanism that works together with the formal communication channels, to a large extent, within the institution, developed in a top-down fashion. In this way, management level of the institution, is decisive in process.. The system, in which the elements such as orders, instructions, reports, etc are used ensures that the employees of the institution are informed about the process. In formal communication, there is a vertical communication mechanism between management and employees. There is a horizontal communication mechanism among the employees. In addition, in different parts of the institution, there is a cross communication mechanism between individuals [10].

Informal Communication: It is a form of communication based on personal relationships to meet the needs of natural groups. Informal communication is the communication that does not pass through the predetermined channels of the organization, does not take place in a certain plan, and occurs spontaneously between the employees in the organization.

No matter how perfect the formal communication is, informal communication has a very important place in the realization of the goals of the organization. This communication develops naturally within the organization. It enables employees to find social satisfaction [11].

It is more personal than formal communication. In many organizations, networks are formed in an environment of regular patterns of informal communication atmosphere. Informal networks are developed and maintained through special relationships created by organizational members.

It depends on personal, emotional factors. It is more flexible and open-ended than formal communication. It tends to reveal attitudes and feelings [12]

This communication process, which takes place by ignoring individuals position both inside and outside the workplace, enables a freer and more comfortable expressed the communication structure. Ignoring the status elements and giving

them a chance to express their opinions correctly for the parties increases the quality of communication [10],[12]. It is possible to evaluate the functions of organizational communication as follows [12], [13]. **They can be utilized for designing effective communication way for actors in quality circles.**

Control: Communication, when expressed clearly, removes ambiguity, In this way, it is possible to find the root causes of the problems and eliminate these problems. It ensures removal and taking measures for the future.

Motivation: Gaining information about organizational goals together with communication and in this context, there is also a sense of motivation towards goals.

Expression of emotions: Communication is the expression of emotions accurately for social purposes acts as an intermediary role.

Information transmission: Communication provides the distribution of information about applications to the environment. Communication with communication elements in order to implement an effective decision channels must be used in a efficient way.

CONCLUSION

Communication within the quality circles;

*Vertical Communication, Horizontal Communication, Cross Communication as a multi-faceted formal communication, it allows formal information sharing and encourages employees in this regard,

* Building a corporate culture that does not see informal communication as harmful

* Power gap culture in the business for communication efficiency between different hierarchical titles in quality circles...

* The level of functional competence perceived by the other members in the problem-solving stages of the circle members

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