

FUNCTIONALITY OF QUALITY CIRCLES IN ORGANIZATIONAL HARMONY: A STUDY ON EMPLOYEE PARTICIPANT BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT

This paper is based on the theoretical exploration of the capability of quality circles and increasing creativity of employees by virtue of being a participant in that circle. It is based on the contention that quality circles have also the potential to substitute negotiation as a means of resolving disputes. When the employees gain creativity, fluency and flexibility, they can apply the techniques of total quality management in managing human resources. The paper underlines about disadvantages of negotiation which in maximum cases result in fist clenching and first fighting. Negotiation results in a kind of cold war between two parties. Its mantra is to overpower the counterpart. Quality circles on the other hand thrive on cooperation.

The methodology of the paper is conceptual. An attempt has been made to dig the negative consequences of negotiations occurring among the organizations and their contrast is being shown by a completely different phenomenon. The results of the whole discussion are the trade unions have lately become infested by multiple problems as discussed in the paper and are no longer a channel for freedom of expression. They should be substituted by quality circles which besides providing freedom of expression to employees also bring out the creativity among them. The suggestions are that quality circles based on continuous improvement and job enrichment may substitute negotiations as the latter are strait-jacket only fostering bitterness among the parties. Concludes that the phenomenon may lead to employee empowerment.

Keywords: Quality Circles, Trade unions, employee empowerment.

INTRODUCTION:

One of the chief characteristic of a group is creativity which denotes fluency and flexibility of ideas. This creativity becomes redundant when group divides itself on the basis of their own interests and ideologies. In a group setting, creativity is bolstered more by recurring group sessions. Organizational creativity is like a function of individual characteristic. Groups are characterised by creation, continuity, change and dissolution (Goldstein, 1985). Every individual of the group is structurally and fundamentally different which can be best manifested in the different kinds of course of action they follow. Employee participation programs which can be defined as groups, teams, circles or committees have a common objective of improving performance, product quality, worker productivity, labor-management relations and quality of working life. Idea Exchange is common practice in quality circles. The main literature on idea generation derives from the literature of brainstorming paradigm. Ideas come from random thinking. The members are instructed to make vocal all their ideas without criticizing or evaluating them in their minds. They are also encouraged to build on the ideas of the others. Creativity activity includes three functions:

- Problem Finding Activity
- Solution Implementing Activity
- Problem Solving Activity

(Basadur, 1992)

The company wants them to learn at the first hand at the beginning of their career about the needs and problems of their customers. In the long run, the company will focus on solving those problems of the customers (Basadur, 1992). This suggests an interesting organizational emphasis on inducing problem finding behaviour. Anticipating and sensing customer needs in a proactive manner is the best means an organization can adopt to satisfy all their needs and problems in time thus making customers loyal to their product.

More creativity will be there if employees are satisfied and motivated with their jobs. Activities as multi-skilling cross training, self-directed work teams and horizontal designs, job enrichment/enlargement all take care to generate creativity among their employees. Among such kinds of creative activities is that of Quality Circles, which is usually a group of 8 to 10 employees (sometimes number may vary from 10 to 12 also) who gather or form a formal group and conduct regular meetings to diagnose day to day problems of organizations chiefly production, sales and marketing, training and development of employees, employee participation and its improvement, employee selection and recruitment, designing for job, ensuring higher loyalty from employees, ensuring high decentralization of tasks, enlisting pluralistic environment in the organization. Team working is vital to continuous improvement, as it can achieve much more than the individuals trying to work out alone because a group function is a function of three summary variables- effort, knowledge, skill (Hess & Brockner, 1986).

Participation in decision making is a very comprehensive concept. It not only includes individual aspect but also organizational aspect. Participation can be described as one of empowered state because it addresses the needs and requirements of the individuals of each culture and identity. Participant decision making has taken form of quality circle. It is a process where hierarchical unequal also come on the same platform. Thus the involvement of managers is balanced, in that even the shop floor workers come on the same footing as the higher level management and middle level management. There is no senior and junior in the circles and the individual whose idea/solution is out of the box and feasible is considered noteworthy. Quality circle activity provides a reservoir of problems to aid individual problem finding activity and smart managers learn how to get individuals to select problems of strategic importance to solve. Employees are trained to provide suggestions that include new and improved products as well as methods. Co- workers are asked to help provide solution for solving the problems. If individuals or employees cannot provide any solution, they are referred to a quality circle team or engineering department for help.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The quality circles are part of a Japanese tradition that has modelled Japanese employees in general and union members in particular according to the recommendations of both government and business (Munchus, 1983). When the traditional system of paternalism starts weakening, a democratic and participant system motivates employees more and results into higher productivity. Blue-collar workers were taught more the techniques of quality circles. There were not many white-collar participants in quality circles and nearly one-fourth of Japanese hourly population was employed in quality circles. Toyota was the first plant to implement quality circles and within a short span of time over 4000 workers belonging to blue-collar working group were part of 760 quality circles. Members belonging to Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers were also included in the circles. 50% of quality circle activities focused on quality control, 40% on productivity and cost considerations and 10% on safety and other affairs (Munchus, 1983).

Quite contrary to India, where almost all trade unions were formed in pre-independence period and staunchly supported by the Congress leaders of the times as Lala Lajpat Rai, S.S. Bengalee, N.M. Lokhande, S.A.Dange. B.G. Tilak, Annie Besant, B.P.Wadia, Divan Chaman Lal, N.M.Joshi and none other than Mahatma Gandhi. Trade unions used to act as vanguard for all workers and employees who were hopeful of a bargain or a deal with their superiors. This practice was negotiation, which is still in trend. Negotiation is thought to be a means through which two or more actors having different interests, issues and viewpoints come to a common ground and suggest a best suitable alternative for the problems existing among parties. Negotiations include bargaining, both integrative and distributive which denote to produce greater outcome together and dividing the means respectively. Former denotes expanding the pie while latter denotes dividing the pie. Negotiation is however both voluntary and involuntary and many times quite devoid of results. Anyone party can terminate the whole negotiation process at his or her will, the reason there are no written formal rules of the whole process. The perspective to view each conflict is different and varies from individual to individual and group to group. They are like lenses through which the parties to dispute view a conflict situation. They have a psychological orientation to focus on some characteristics of a conflict situation while ignoring others. They are like perceptual sets. Difference in conflict frames reflects differences in conflict focus. Conflict frames are schematic and guiding factors for understanding various stands of negotiating parties. Individuals' information search, processing and evaluation takes place at this level, which occurs at a sub-conscious level (Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994). There are two dimensions of conflict which depend on the processing nature of the conflict:

- 1) Affective Component or relationship orientation these disputants focus more on interpersonal concerns and relationship. Ongoing relationships with the other parties to conflict are the focal point.
- 2) Task Orientation

It concentrates on material aspect of dispute such as money or property settlements.

Some disputants focus on the feelings involved during a dispute as hatred, jealousy, anger and frustration while certain disputants focus on the implementation aspect or the action and outcome that occur. Final dimension of disputants is quite positive in nature which is cooperating/ win. Disputants belonging to this dimension consider the responsibility of both parties to the dispute. In this dimension, both the parties concentrate on winning and maximize their gains at the expense of each other. These frames are ever-changing and vary from situation to situation. These frames of conflicts play a decisive role in delimiting the conflicts and act accordingly. The frames of disputants are either similar and converge at one point or the other. The converging points become unanimity between or among those parties and a solution is arrived at (Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994).

Hoxie believes that trade unions emerged with a set of their own procedures, methods and policies. Scarcity of job opportunities and job consciousness led workers to form trade unions

(Perlman). This comes as the most legitimate means for workers of voicing their opinions, rights and grievances. Without unions, companies have either become too paternalistic or too dictatorial, and the workers' interests would be marred. Hoxie & Perlman, 1921 and 1928 respectively, enumerated certain primary functions of the trade union. Some are as follows:

- Improving working and living conditions of workers.
- Representing workers interests in various fora.
- Offer responsive cooperation in improving levels of production, productivity, discipline and high standards of quality.
- To offer training and development opportunities to all members of trade union.
- Securing fair wages to workers.
- Promotion of workers identity of interests with that of the industry.
- To cooperate and facilitate technological advancement by broadening workers understanding of underlying issues.

PROBLEMS FACED BY TRADE UNIONS:

Iron Law of Oligarchy:

Even the most democratic of all organizations gets distorted into undemocratic one with the passage of time. The decision of majority paves way for the decision of minority. The decisions taken by majority are in fact the decisions of the minority. As per the Iron law of Oligarchy, in a large- sized and populated nation-states of today, the masses of people are completely helpless in making their power felt unless and until they are not organized. The only way in such a mass populated state is to elect the representatives whereby they represent the masses and carry out their will. These representatives with the gradual passage of time become a small coterie and this coterie become influential so much so that the facade of democratic set-up actually patronizes monopoly of power by an oligarchy.

Disinterest among Members:

Workers demonstrate strong affiliation to unions mostly during times of emergency whereas during normal times, they lose interest in union programs. Average member of the union is apathetic or indifferent to the works of the union they seldom attend meetings of the union. This irregularity shows that the interests of union are not in sync with the workers' interests. This case is both in East as well as West.

Over-Politicization of Trade Unions:

Trade Unionism is very well connected with political ideologies. All trade union federations strive to organize the workers in all sectors of the economy and in each industrial establishment (Patil, 1976). Every party gathering strength from its toiling masses has a trade union wing and a labor policy. The multiplicity of trade unions in Indian industries owe a lot to political orientation of gaining control over the state-owned undertakings. Similarly, the trade union is interested in gaining strength through political affiliation (Patil, 1976).

For instance, Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) formed by Indian Congress Party, All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) function serves as labor forum of Communist Party of India, Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) was formed an associate of Bhartiya Jan Sangh Party, Union Trade Union Congress (UTUC) with Left-Wing affiliations, Center of Indian Trade Union (CITU) has political affiliations with Communist Party of India. Similarly in other developed countries as USA and UK, the workers are more aware about their rights and hence, they are more united either in the form of Union or as Brotherhood, such as International Brotherhood of Teamsters, National Education Association of the US, Service Employees International Union. United Steel Workers of America, American Federation of Teachers. The names of Trade unions in India even reflect the affiliation they are having with any political party. They are the functionaries/wing of political parties.

Workers Not Aware:

The workers especially in India are not that much aware about the rights they as a member of particular trade deserve. They have more political awareness rather than being aware about their trade or profession. The unions committed to a particular profession, if present also have receded to the background and do not come around as a major trade union. This is because of the fact that the workers are not enlightened about their rights.

Less Developed Trade Unions:

Certain developed countries and also certain Asian nations where trade unions belonging to specific professional group have their own written constitution enumerating all the process and procedures of that trade union which is not the case with developing countries.

Workers Not Enlightened:

Because of the constant intervention of political parties into trade unions, vitality of the workers have often been sapped and they remain mere obeying entities without any power to have a say in the matters directly concerning them. Such politicization has generated conflicts and created mayhem thus labor interests.

No Review of Arbitrator's Decisions:

Certain instances are there when arbitrator's findings are supported by factual evidence, but when they are not supported they suffer from quite many procedural efficiencies. In many cases judicial trials happen of those arbitrator's decisions but the scenario is not same in every country.

Guided by a Personal Sense of Fairness:

In the United States, labor law practice arbitrators are guided by the published decisions of previous arbitration but they are not bound by them since their own decisions normally turn on the estimate of the exact personal and group relations between workers and managers involved in the personal disputes. The arbitrators seldom they bring their own subjectivity to the on-going decision.

Institutional Pressures over the Arbitrators:

Sometimes arbitrators have to bear the brunt of institutional pressure. Times are changing and employees are going more and more for non-union procedures. Human resource management strategies and institutional pressures have become the driving factor of any organization. The on-going nature of dispute between employers and employees provide a ground for all non-union activities which provide a link to high performance work systems. The arbitrators have to keep in mind the boundaries of demands of individual rights and liberties and also institutional pressures and pass the judgment.

Not Much Time Given by Arbitrators:

The arbitrator is frequently a lawyer or a law professor who arbitrates on a part-time basis.

Absence of Discovery:

Although, it is an expensive affair, it gives both the parties access to each other's theory of case and evidence thus corroborating from them their personal way to approach that case. It usually prevents Perry-Mason moment in which information is dramatically and unexpectedly introduced in the court without giving prior information.

Arbitration does not Establish Precedents:

Majority of decisions are taken and disputes settled without a formal hearing.

Arbitrators not trained in Employees Issues:

The arbitrators are not well trained in dealing with issues of employees

Privatization of ADR:

The Alternative Dispute Resolution Movement as it is justly called so as it has emerged as most appropriate and mature way of resolving disputes. The tension between dispute's public function and private function emerges.

Private Arbitrators are Lured:

The recent case of Google vs. Uber in which the employees of Google were forced to seek for private justice system rather than public justice system. In any organization, reputation of the employee comes at stake when there is fallout with his employer. The inability to conceal the folly committed within the corporate walls is the biggest folly. Reputation depends more on what is hidden rather than on what is known or seen or heard (Novovic, 2014). However, there is also a need to keep the arbitrator (be it judge or any other law expert) in checks. For keeping a check, publicity is required. Hence, it proves the necessity of keeping too much privatization of justice under check.

Pathetic Situation of Unions:

It is only when unions are powerful, well established and responsive to the needs of their members that labor arbitration work successfully. Without unions and collective bargaining the labor arbitration cannot work so productively and they become meaningless. To be aware of their rights, and filing a case of grievance in the case of their violation, unions should be consolidated. If the grievance is not resolved through negotiation, the case may be referred to arbitration (Gateman 1979).

Resistance of Unionization:

Unionization in USA has been prevented as it has grown both adversarial and cooperative since 1980s. Employers have vigorously restricted unionization. When labor market conditions prevail, they react strongly to potential and actual strikes by threatening to use or hiring replacement workers (Rousseau D.M., Violet T.H. and Greenberg J. 2006). The spill over effect of unions continues even after so much restriction placed on formation of unions in the country. This spill over effect occurs when a practice first adopted by Union workers is later on adopted by non-union workers as well.

Fear of Union Tactics:

People have strong opinions about their strategies and tactics. Unions benefit their members (as they create monopoly) in a way by providing employees a voice in how the employment relationship is implemented in their workplace.

Depending upon the degree and scale of disagreement, it is desirable that both the parties should decide their goals, alternatives and keep their preparations handy before conducting a negotiation for positive outcome. Following points should be kept in mind while starting negotiation:

Goals: Decide your expected outcome from the negotiation and what share wills you get?

Trades: It implies that what can you trade-off or what can happily give to the other party and still achieve your goal?

Alternatives: In case of disagreement, what best alternative do you have should be the question of concern. Whether the alternative gives same weight to the string of factors required for achieving the goal.

Relationships: The old relationships with the negotiating party should be taken into consideration. If the relations were marked by animosity then more alternatives should be thought in mind beforehand.

Expected Outcomes: Outcomes are expected on the basis of precedents which have happened earlier. The outcome achieved earlier decides the outcomes for the coming negotiation.

The Consequences: The consequences of negotiation should always be well thought of before entering into it. If the relations were bleak then there are chances that either side may lose. A set of alternatives should be kept ready in that situation.

Power: The controller of resources dominates the negotiation; hence parties should necessarily have an equal footing meaning equal possession of resources.

Possible Solutions: Considering every factor, what possible compromise will be there?

Win-win approach of negotiation is also known as integrative negotiation. This approach believes in expanding the pie. Few negotiations are purely integrative, whereas some are both integrative and distributive in character (Barry and Friedman 2006). Integrative negotiations are functioning upon the principle of non-zero sum game in which both parties have minimum losses and optimum gains. In the near future they can remain attached to each other exchanging information and exploring options. Thus being aggressive in communication and remaining self-focused will not help in the long run.

CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATION:

Negotiation is a very cooperative process which requires the participants to identify the issues of difference, educate each other about their needs and interests generate possible settlement options and bargain over the terms of final agreement. Negotiation is helpful in redefining the old relationship of people if none existed. It is very essential to be furnished with the dynamics and skills of negotiation otherwise it will be mere lurking in the dark or a ship without a radar. The following conditions make success in negotiations more likely:

Identifiable Parties: Parties must be identifiable and willing to discuss the terms of negotiation. If one of the parties is absent, negotiation will not take place.

Voluntary participation of Parties: Parties should have participation by their own will and it should not be forced otherwise the needs and demands of the party will never be met.

Interdependence of Parties: Parties are interdependent on each other, as their needs are meted out only when the other party cooperates or restrain from taking a certain negative action.

Readiness to Negotiate: Parties should have readiness to solve the problems and come to a conclusion; they should be psychologically prepared when all information is available.

Ability to Exercise Influence: Influence over the attitude of other party can be exerted on the other party through asking thought-provoking questions, providing needed information, seeking the advice of experts, exercising legitimate authority or providing rewards are all the forms of influencing the parties involved in negotiation.

Agreement on some Issues and Interests: Parties must have common interests to commit themselves to a joint decision making.

Willingness to Settle: For negotiations to succeed, participants must have the willingness to settle the issue. Parties quite often take the help of conflicts to create negative publicity against the negotiating party and manipulate the public opinion in their favor.

Uncertainty of Outcome: In negotiations, each party has a chance of winning something whereas the same case is not present in court. There is always a chance of a decisive and one-sided victory hence parties entering into negotiations.

Deadline and a Sense of Urgency: Internal and external time constraints are always prevalent for negotiation. Internal constraints are artificially created by the parties so that there is always a sense of urgency and deadline for negotiation. This is helpful in fastening the process of negotiation.

No Psychological Tension between Parties: Strong expressed and unexpressed feeling with the other party can create an atmosphere of tension and readiness to bargain will become lower.

Issues must be Negotiable: Parties will be reluctant to hold a dialogue if they realized that their stands a chance of them losing negotiation. So it will be better to conduct a negotiation in which everybody has a chance of winning i.e. win-win kind of negotiation.

People must have the Authority to Decide: All the participants need should be met and it should not require sacrifice from any one of them. The desire to get 100 per cent of needs satisfied cannot lead to a fruitful outcome.

Agreement must be Feasible: Agreements reached should be implementable. A realistic work plan should be made in order to take the maximum benefit of negotiations. Settlements reached if are not able to be realized then the whole process becomes a mere farce.

External Threats be absent: Other factors which are external in nature should not inhibit or encourage forcefully conducting the negotiations. The political climate or economic turmoil, views of friends and relatives may create such condition.

Resources to Negotiate: Interpersonal skills of the person carrying negotiation come on handy while negotiating. Wherever appropriate, money and time also plays an instrumental role in carrying out dialogue procedure. Inadequate resources should not block or hinder the negotiations.

REASONS FOR FAILURE OF NEGOTIATION:

Difference of Skilled and Unskilled Negotiators: Skilled negotiators do the pre-negotiation preparation whereas unskilled negotiators come completely unprepared and go with the flow.

Orchestrated Perceptions: Skilled negotiators can very well orchestrate the perceptions of unskilled negotiators and all other parties present at the time being by cleverly shaping the thought process of other participants by various techniques

Potential Conflict: Potential Conflict can make any negotiation poisonous for which skilled negotiators and outside parties are called for negotiations.

Chaotic Interaction: Negotiation is basically a chaotic interaction but there is order even in the situation of chaos. Skilled negotiators can find opportunity even in that kind of chaotic situation.

Diverse Contexts: Though structures are similar, the contexts are diversified in nature and they may appear very different. Skilled negotiators have the ability to shape the structure.

Past, Present and Future Linkages: Prior negotiations may influence current ones and current ones could be affected by the future ones as every negotiation is relative in nature.

Fragmented in Nature: Careful observation of negotiations process reveals that movement towards agreement appears in surges and do not have a flow.

Failure of Unskilled Negotiators: The negotiators who are not such adept in their field and not having so much experience fails to display tackle with the skilled ones given the expertise and experience they have.

Negligence of Rules of Negotiation: Because of the chaotic situation prevalent, minor conflicts are escalated into major ones, also because of the negligence of rules. In the midst of chaos, skilled negotiators are comfortable with the ambiguity and uncertainty. They set broad goals and advance firmly yet flexibly towards them.

Power Dependence Relations: Outcome of negotiations belong to the skilled negotiators because they can easily manipulate the situation by creating order out of chaos and also finding the best solution for themselves if the situation is slippery and escalating. (Watkins 1999). As a result skilled negotiators dominate the unskilled ones who are compelled to leave the table.

Use of Excessive Power by Employers: Excessive power used by employers creates the same scenario as witnessed in the above mentioned case. The already submissive parties do not bend down more and end the whole process.

Excessive Penetration of Technology: Computers are no longer confined to routine manufacturing tasks. Hence workers are getting redundant with technology taking over all their activities and executing them. For the same reason there is no use of negotiating with the employees which is putting an end to this practice (Frey and Osborne 2013).

The above mentioned factors contribute in various degrees towards the failure of negotiation process.

QUALITY CIRCLES:

As popular literature narrates, quality circles program belong to the democratic way of society. Democratic society ensues participation and the least contribution of important constituents of that group. Quality circle programs are the programs that are attended by the employees from every department in an organization. These circles consist of ten to twelve employees widely spread from every organization. They conduct regular meetings in order to discuss various issues confronting the organization and its functioning. In conducting a quality circle program, there is always a dual purpose; one is that of increasing productivity and quality improvement. The second set of goals deal with employee involvement. Workers themselves know more about the daily problems they are facing while working. Hence, they are in a better position to find out a solution for that. Total quality can be achieved by constantly pursuing Continuous Improvement through the involvement of people from all organizational levels.

Due to the day to day nuisance involving their work, they are inducted in the training program of quality circle. Participation in a quality circle program gives a feeling of self-efficacy and self-fulfilment which is reflected in the work of employees in that organization. This also gives a boost to their feeling of self-accomplishment, pride, self-esteem and self-fulfilment. Workers with increasing knowledge and sophistication expect more fulfilment from their jobs. Participant style of management enables managers to work in a more participant manner. Thereby their feeling of job autonomy is enhanced. Autonomy gives empowerment to employees by which they can contribute more completely to their respective jobs. William Mohr has described quality circles containing three different components:

- Form of Participatory Management
- A technique for the Development of Human Resources
- A forum for solving the problems

Quality circle believes in delegation of authority which is also the fundamental of empowerment. Hence, empowerment gives a sense among the individuals that they are heard in significant matters concerning organization. Employing empowerment is managing behind the scenes (Ongori and Shunda 2008). Employee empowerment has been defined in numerous ways, such as one very apt definition for empowerment is to give discretion or latitude over certain related tasks. Empowerment is not only the freedom to act but also having higher degree of responsibility and accountability (Honold 1997). Employee empowerment was not a new concept when Linda Honold took it for her research. It was term ever used frequently in management circles. The beginnings can be seen from socio-technical approach which combined two aspects of work in a systematic manner. This concept was loosely based on job enrichment. The idea of job enrichment was first mooted out by Frederick Herzberg wherein he focused upon increasing control and decision making in one's work.

Decision making provides job autonomy to the employee which imparts a feeling of empowerment. Many leadership approaches too empowers subordinate as a primary component of managerial and organizational effectiveness. Empowerment is giving power to those people who are at a disadvantaged position in the organization or any place in society. Manager has a role in empowering employees. A continuum is there from powerlessness to empower which an employee travels only with the help of manager. Managers supervise less in an empowered scenario than in a traditional hierarchy and delegate more decisions to their subordinates. Managers act like coaches and help employees solve problems. From the employees point of view the definition of employment is cognitive state of perceived control, perceived competence and goal internalization (Honold 1997). Empowerment does not only refer to self-empowerment but also team empowerment. It is very much based on proverbial united we stand divided we fall. Some group of writers see the need of changing the structure and the work processes within the organization.

Empowering employees cannot happen in a single day. A number of disempowering structures took such a long time in subduing the employees. Change in leadership or only the leadership component cannot help in unleashing the change. Individual component also will be affected along with leadership component but they will not be as successful as they could have been. For that a multidimensional approach would have to be followed wherein the following measures can be adopted:

1. Leaders creating a vision and developing common goals, continually scanning the environment and adapting to it.
2. Formation of teams and collaborative working arrangements.
3. Job autonomy, job enrichment
4. Decentralized work structure having checks and balances and is flexible for development overtime.
5. Contingent rewards systems with such components as employee's stock option programs, pay for performance and win-win strategies (Honold 1997).

Another major work on empowerment has been carried by Sanjay Menon on the factors leading to empowerment. Empowering employees involve decision making which should be percolated to

all subordinate levels. Down to all organizational hierarchy and granting the employees ability to affect organizational outcomes. Empowering is ensuring that employee has the authority to do his or her job. This has been the traditional approach to empowerment and it focus more on actions of “power holders” who transfer some power to the less powerful. Menon has focused more on the studies of Kanter which refer empowerment as resulting from decentralization and London who refers empowerment as ensuring that employee has authority to do his or her job. Menon in his study has made a point that there is need for diving into the psychological impact of employee empowerment and not studying it on surface level. There is also a need on the part of researchers to understand empowerment completely. Empowerment initiatives can be as diverse as flex time, job enrichment, joint labor management committees, self-managed work groups, equity participation and labor representation on the board. Empowering is a psychological state and that state act as a mediating link between empowering acts and employee outcomes such as satisfaction, involvement and organizational commitment. An empowering act for example: delegation can lead to empowerment. Defining empowerment as a cognitive state lends itself to the development of measures of individual psychological empowerment. Failure of empowerment initiatives can be ascribed to superiors who were unable to implement it effectively.

Intrinsic task motivation involves positively valued experiences that individuals derive directly from a task. Intrinsic task motivation involves those generic conditions by the individual that pertains directly to a task and it produces cognition and motivation. Thomas and Velthouse have dealt in the same topic in 1990s. They have designed a cognitive model S-O-B-C which consists of:

- Stimulus
- Organism
- Behavior
- Consequences

Consequences and stimuli are simplified into a single external event. Environmental events provide data to the individual about the consequences of ongoing task behavior and about conditions and events relevant to future behavior. This data is seen as shaping the individual’s task assessment regarding impacts, assessment, meaningfulness and choice.

Quality circles can be called as a tool to motivate employees, reducing labor turnover, enlisting organizational commitment from them, new vistas for their participation and enhancing their abilities. A study done by George Munchus III traces the development of quality circles in Japan which is known as the originator of the phenomenon. This phenomenon is based on the idea advocating increased responsibilities of workers for their own quality of work. Earlier this idea was restricted only to quality and productivity in their area of expertise and not towards compensation or other areas concerning human resource management.

TRANSITION IN JAPAN:

Quality Circles are a direct form of participation with the main objective of cost reduction. History dates back to when US Government sent two experts on statistical quality control, Dr. Deming and Dr. Juran for rejuvenating Japanese economy which was earlier producing cheap and shoddy goods. Japanese realized that quality is not merely a factor of control but motivation of workmen at the grass- root level. Henceforth, Dr. Kaouru Ishikawa, Engineering professor at the University of Tokyo with the sponsorship of Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers structured the theories of motivation with quality science. Already a “book reading circle” was formed by Ishikawa for workers which used to teach them in quality control. This started the registration of quality circles with JUSE.

RESULTS:

From the literature review which forms the basis of this paper, it is suggested that in India too, the practices of quality circles and such other employee participation intervention programs be carried out. In the short run, it can boost up productivity and quality of whole organization. It can stimulate

communication, increases sense of responsibility among employees and innovation. In the long run, it may wipe out the process of negotiation which is much dramatic and also reeks of domination.

DISCUSSIONS:

Toyota succeeded in employing an innovative form of Toyota's time and motion regimentation factory not only to create comparatively better productivity and quality standards but also to enhance workers motivation and satisfaction. In India, BHEL was the first adopter of the phenomenon. Starting from engineering workshops, quality circles spread in other service departments of BHEL such as personnel, purchase, hospital, administrators etc. Other major examples for implementation of quality circles are Durgapur Steel Plant, Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd., Bharat Electronics Ltd., Ghaziabad, JSW Steel, Bellary etc. QCFI (Quality Circle Forum of India) was formed as a non-profit national body in April 1982. Quality circles forum of India has member from various manufacturing and non-manufacturing organization in India. The forum has also published its booklets entitled quality circle at a glance in ten different languages. All India Organization which have implemented quality circles are the members of QCFI taking the initiative from BHEL. QCFI is a professional body which revolutionized the operational movement of Quality Circles in India (Sandeepsoni, Kumar, Duhan and Duhan 2015).

CONCLUSION:

Indian organizations which have not till now adopted any employee participation program should go for this program which can cure this chronic problem of negative consequences of negotiations.

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