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Participative Problem Solving Towards Continuous Improvement: A Case Study of Motorola (M) Sdn. Bhd.

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ABSTRACT

In the 1980s when the QCC concept was first introduced in the local organizations, many considered it as a management fad. Today, however the success from those that have implemented the concept have convinced, others in the private and public sectors to adapt it too.

This research examines the adaptation of the QCC concepts to the current organizational scenario. A case study which involved a manufacturing company, Motorola (M) Sdn. Bhd. was conducted to examine the various aspects of participative problem solving and its contribution towards continuous improvement. Each element of the QCC was investigated in terms of how it had been used differently in the 1990's especially in the framework of Total Quality Management.

A survey is utilized to gain insights on the PPS activities from the organization. Interviews with some key personnel to evaluate the benefits and the implications of the PPS activities to the overall performance of the organization, as well as feedback from the experiences from the team members were obtained.

The survey results seemed to suggest that the basic concepts of QCC are applicable in organizations of the 1990's and beyond. However, some adaptation would be required to meet the demands of the current organizational scenario. The increased level of empowerment, mobilization of people at all levels and the trend to cross departmental boundaries are some of the new features of the team environment that must be considered in this era. Results from the survey showed that the Participative Problem Solving teams at Motorola (M) Sdn. Bhd. look forward to solving more complex problems, in line with the continuous improvement concept of the TQM framework.

The effectiveness of the PPS programs in meeting the organization's tangible and intangible objectives was affirmative. The benefits that the employees and management received tend to indicate that the PPS activities should be adopted company wide. However for optimum results some improvements were recommended so that it will bring more benefits to Motorola in the future.

The findings of this study, would also benefit other organizations in the manufacturing industry which may be interested in organizing similar teams.

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