Students' Quality Circles for Personality Development:

An Approach to Prepare Total Quality People

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Abstract

Only with Quality people Quality products can be produced and quality services can be delivered. Quality people are those with good and smart characters. Educational institutes are character building organization and students are the real products of the organization. The paper tries to describe the new approach of introducing quality circles among young students to develop their leadership personality who can produce quality products and quality services when they grow and work in the future. Since last decade, some educational institutes of Asian countries are conducting experiments to introduce Students' Quality Circles in class rooms with an intention of preparing total quality people. During the Students' Quality Circle exercise in schools, young students identify, analyze and solve their problems happening at school and at home in a QC team applying QC story of systematic problem solving and using the QC tools. The Students' Quality Circle exercise ultimately develops the personality of young students. The analysis of the secondary information compiled from the proceedings of the international conventions on students' quality circles depicts that students have developed several characters that can be termed as good and smart. The result showed that students have developed characters and skills like self disciplined, self confidence, interpersonal and public relations, empathy, social responsibility, time management skills, scientific and analytical skills, communication skills, creativity and lateral thinking habits, working habits in a team, broader knowledge than bookish knowledge by practicing Students' Quality Circles at their class rooms. This experiment seems very successful and if applied by all educational institutes, Quality people will be produced in the future who will work as entrepreneurs, managers, or workers to produce quality products and deliver quality services.

Keywords: Total Quality People, Students' Quality Circles

Introduction

Customer today is becoming more quality conscious than ever before. The world has become flat with innovative technologies like Information Technology, Nano Technology (NT) and Mobile Technology (MT). Everything is available anytime everywhere from anyplace without delay and price differences. Customers are becoming more demanding and the suppliers are becoming more competitive. Suppliers are producing more and more creative quality and customers are continuously delighting with the attractive quality products and services available in the marketplace. In this calculated race for wining game, Quality plays a very important role.

Students' Quality Circles (SQC) - an Integrated Extracurricular Activities at School

You are all aware of the definition of Students' Quality Circle (SQC) practiced in various schools. You have practiced it regularly, I believe. Please continue this. The simplest definition says:

The short definition of Students Quality Circle (SQC) is:

- a small group of voluntary students of the same educational institute
- who meet regularly in their study place for a particular period
- to identify, analyze and solve their problems
- for their self and mutual development

Students' Quality Circle (also simply referred to as Circle) is thus a team of students who work to solve their problems through a participatory approach. This helps to develop the leadership quality attributes of the members working in the team.

A Circle is generally formed with a team of students of the same institution although they could be from different standards and grades. One institute may have a number of Circles. The membership in each team is limited to four to ten only. The members of the Circle come forward voluntarily. The chief or the principal of the institute does not interfere in the formation of the team. Since the Circle, as an informal group, works to cater to the needs of its own members, the members are motivated to participate in the Circle activities on their own will. This way, a team or Circle works as a motivated group of students of the institute for their leadership personality development and, at the same time, solving some small problems of their own.

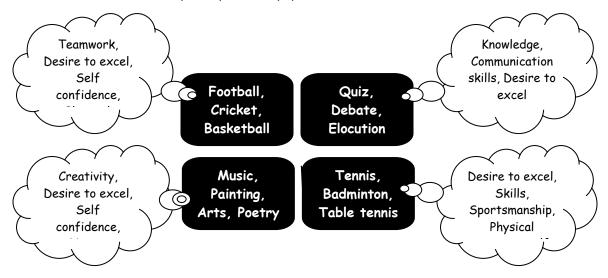
The members of Students' Quality Circle meet regularly with a purpose. The meeting generally takes place on a weekly basis in a set place in the school premises in a vacant class room, laboratory, computer room, sport complex, canteen, dormitory or any other convenient place where the students can meet and discuss without disturbance. The time of meeting is generally limited to one hour every week. Students do not waste much time in discussion. Each Circle fixes its meeting schedule for a particular time and day in a week. The time, day and venue of meeting is strictly adhered to unless some unavoidable circumstances arise. Other Circles may set different time and venue for their meeting.

A small group of volunteer students of about the same age group

- who meets regularly for about one hour per week within school time
- to IDENTIFY, ANALYZE and SOLVE their own problems
- using systematic problem solving tools and techniques.

By definition itself, we can realize that the goodness attributes and smartness attributes required to be a total quality person can be implanted in the personality in long run when SQC is practiced regularly and properly with commitment and sincerity.

Here, I want to remind you some of the extracurricular activities both of you - boys and girls love to be involved in most of the schools. Also I am listing some of the benefits derived from these universally accepted and popular extracurricular activities.



Beside these mentioned here, various other forms of extracurricular activities have been designed and applied to develop different personality attributes of students at schools and these have been universally recognized. Students' Quality Circle exercise has more benefits than any one particular set of extracurricular activities now practiced. Students' Quality Circle is one of the extracurricular activities that need to be introduced in schools, and students have to practice regularly and with commitments and sincerity, so that the integrated form of benefits to be a smart and good person can be developed.

I believe your regular practice of Students' Quality Circle (SQC) exercise helps you to develop all these attributes in a balanced manner and make you a total quality person. This has already been proved by the research findings.

I like to show you the analysis I have made on the intangible benefits reported by the student participants at earlier 5 International Conferences held in India in 1999, 2001 and 2003, in Mauritius in 2000 and USA in 2002. I randomly selected 36 Student Quality Circles case presentations for analysis. The cases were 21 from India, five from Srilanka, three from Mauritius, three from Nepal, two from Singapore and two from Bangladesh.. The

3rd ANQ Congress, Singapore, 2006

ages of students involved in these sample exercises range from 6 to 24 years, the average age being 12 years¹. The intangible benefits presented by more than one third teams are shown here:

SI. No.	Reported %	Intangible Benefits	Cluster of Quality Attributes		
1	92%	Developed Self-confidence, Self-esteem and Self- discipline SMART			
2	89%	Learnt systematic, scientific and logical problem solving skill	SMART		
3	75%	Enjoyed working in a group, developed cooperation, involvement, participation and teamwork	GOOD		
4	56%	Built confidence in public speaking, presentation and communication	SMART		
5	53%	Learnt to develop plans, set priorities and manage time	SMART		
6	42%	Developed broader vision, more than course work and extra knowledge			
7	42%	Developed sense of responsibility and positive attitude toward others, empathy and learning from others			
8	39%	Developed personal contacts, received appreciation and cooperation from others			
9	36%	Unleashed latent potential, creativity and talents	GOOD		
10	33%	Developed confidence in coordinating group, effective leadership	SMART		

Out of ten intangible benefits the SQC presentations have expressed five personalities lie in "SMART" cluster of quality attributes and equally, five personalities lie in "GOOD" cluster of quality attributes of a total quality person.

¹ Extract from my paper "Pro-social Behavioral Interventions for Developing Quality Mindset from Early Age" presented at the 3rd Quality Convention held at Kathmandu, Nepal on 24-26 July 2004.

Tremendous Potential of SQC

"Character, not brain, will count at the crucial moment."

-Rabindranath Tagore

Practicing SQC activities in educational institutes creates the environment needed to deliver various benefits in the personality development of students. Students actively participating in SQC activities and their teachers have observed that the students have developed a number of leadership traits, skills and habits. These include many of the required quality character attributes to be a total quality person.

Self confidence

Students develop confidence in their knowledge, action and capability to deliver positive results even in difficult situations. This happens when a group of students in SQC solves their problem by themselves and not depending on others. Their confidence in analyzing the environment and service delivery starts to develop in their mindset. They become forward looking, desire to excel, and develop capability to take risks when they feel self-confident.

Self-discipline

Students instill self-discipline. When students in SQC start to identify and solve their own problems rather than always cuing on other's problems, they become self aware and develop a mindset of honesty and commitment. The self-disciplined character attributes of commitment and honesty are also developed when SQC members assemble every week at the same time for discussions and analysis.

Interpersonal and public relations

Students develop the confidence in interpersonal and public relations. In the process of problem observation and implementation of the action plan to solve the problem, the students have to meet and interact with a number of other people besides their own team members. They meet other students of their own grade, their seniors and juniors, their teachers, their guardians and sometimes people in the society who directly and indirectly influence the problems. Students involved in SQC develop confidence in public relations which is a very important character attributes of leadership.

Empathy

Students develop an attitude of empathy towards other human being and colleagues. During discussions and brainstorming, Circle members always listen to others and give due importance to the views and opinions of others. While implementing countermeasures to solve problems, they show understanding for other people with whom they have to work. Students with empathetic behaviour also develop spiritually. They develop peaceful and humorous character, and perform their work in a sporting manner.

Social responsibility

Students develop a feeling of social responsibility. At the time of identifying problems, the SQC members personally start exploring the problem keeping in sight the community's sensitivities and well being. They develop high regard for the community they deal with. The students' community members include all students, teachers, administrators, guardians and the society where they live. This way, the students develop social responsibility character attributes such as adaptability, tolerance and doing something good for the society.

Time management skills

Students develop the skills of managing time. SQC members have limited time to work. In one hour of each week, some ideas, analyses or conclusion have to be drawn. Besides, at least one problem has to be solved within one semester or a year. Students involved in SQC know the importance of time. They develop skills in prioritizing activities, preparing action plans for analysis and implementing countermeasures within scheduled time. Students learn to deliver services on time, a character attribute which is very important for a leader.

Scientific and analytical skills

Students develop scientific, logical and analytic skills. SQC activities involve a lot of data collection on the features of the problems and phenomena, observation, analyzing the causes and root causes. They utilize various problem solving tools and techniques. Students develop the habit of analyzing with facts and figures and learn several qualitative and analytical tools during the process.

Communication skills

Students develop excellent communication skills and confidence in expressing their views and listening to others. Students having difficulty in expressing their opinions in front of others develop confidence in communicating and sharing their views and opinions during brainstorming sessions. Besides, they also develop skills in presentations of their cases in front of a mass during the annual day function or seminars and conferences. Communication skill is one of the most important character attributes of leadership which students develop after involving in SQC activities.

Creativity and lateral thinking habits

Students develop the skill in lateral thinking and generating creative ideas. Students involved in SQC activities participate actively in several brainstorming sessions. The brainstorming exercises kindle the lateral thinking process among the students and help develop their habit of thinking creatively and always coming up with innovative ideas. The lateral thinking mindset is an important character attribute of a leader.

Working habits in a team

SQC is essentially a team-building program. Students realize the importance of group dynamics and the concept of creating synergic effect of a team working together. Individuals understand how to work in a team effectively. As a team, they participate in identifying, analyzing and solving common problems. Thus, students develop the personality attributes of working collaboratively to achieve a common objective.

Broader vision more than bookish knowledge

Students involved in SQC acquire broad and in-depth knowledge of life and the surrounding environment. They are quick to acquire knowledge and skills prescribed in the curriculum from their teachers in the class. They enjoy getting knowledge beyond their books. They learn a lot in the process of sharing and interacting with their SQC team members and also during the observation of the features of the problem. The information collection and analysis of the problem provides the scope for broadening their insights and visions. Such extra knowledge and skills help to create good leadership for the future.

Reports of Students' Quality Circle activities implemented in different parts of the world have proclaimed various benefits of practicing SQC in educational institutes. Beside the tangible benefits of solving problems of students in the respective educational institutes, a number of intangible benefits have also been cited. Based on an analysis of 36 randomly selected cases presented in five international conferences on Students Quality Circles held in India in 1999, 2001 and 2003, in Mauritius in 2000 and USA in 2002, the benefits of SQC are highlighted in Figure 5. Among these cases, 21 are from India, five from Sri Lanka, three from Mauritius, three from Nepal, two from Singapore and two from Bangladesh. The ages of students involved in these sample exercises range from 6 to 24 years, the average age being 12 years. The intangible benefits presented by more than one third teams were as follows:

Personalit	y Attributes	Percenta	ige of Response	es
1. Developed Se esteem and Self	elf-confidence, Self- f-discipline			92%
2. Learnt system logical problem s	atic, scientific and solving skill			89%
 Enjoyed work developed coop participation and 	peration, involvement,		75%	
	e in public speaking, d communication		56%	
5. Learnt to develo and manage tim	op plans, set priorities le	ę	53%	
	der vision, more than d extra knowledge	42%		
and positive att	nse of responsibility itude toward others, arning from others	42%]	
8. Developed p	personal contacts, ppreciation and	39%		
9. Unleashed creativity and ta	latent potential,	36%		
10. Developed confi group, effective	idence in coordinating leadership	33%		

Figure 5: Responses from SQC Cases on Personality Development

The intangible benefits expressed by the SQC teams confirmed that educational institutes implementing SQC activities were capable of developing various personality character attributes essential for producing total quality people - people who are both good and smart and who are capable of leading quality life.

1. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE AS A CHARACTER BUILDING INDUSTRY

A schematic model of an educational institute using system approach is shown in figure 1. Students with aspiration of developing themselves as total quality people are supplied from within the population to the educational institute. Values are added to these students in processes (1,2,3,..N) stages in semester or yearly basis, upgrading from lower stage to higher stages. After building up character, and evaluating and inspecting the quality of students they are awarded the graduation certificate. Then, they become ready to come out from the educational institute. The absorbing population uses these graduates. The question here is who defines the quality of these students?

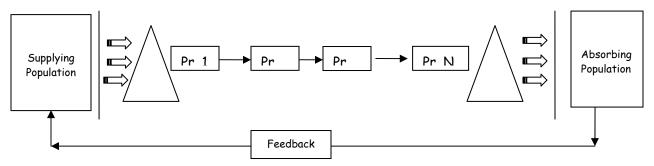


Figure 1: Schematic Model of Educational Institute

There are mainly three different stakeholders in the system. All these three stakeholders of education decide the quality attributes, but may be in different ways.

Supplying population who decide the quality of education at the institute and they pays the expenses of education for the students. They advocate for good education. They are guardians, policy advocates, sponsors and leaders of the society. They are kept at the input side of the system.

Absorbing population who use the graduates of the educational institutes and so they are the real customers. They demand the quality as per their need. They are industries, business houses, higher educational institutes and society at large. They are kept at the output side of the system.

Processors who decide the quality attributes that a student will be value added with. They are educational institute. They admit students, process them, evaluate and give award of graduation.

This study has considered student as a product, and wanted to categorize its quality attributes as Kano has suggested for products and services.

ANNEX-1: A Case Study Presentation of Students' Quality Circle

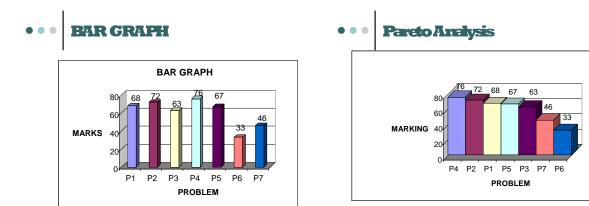
	•••	Introduction	
A Case Study of AIM: The Destination A Step to Reach to Destiny Kathmandu University		 Formation: Circle name: Leader: Deputy Leader: Members: Meeting day: Meeting Hour: Facilator: 	1st October 2004 Aim The Destination Miss Priyata Kafle Miss Prabritti Nepal Master Anjesh Shrestha Miss Anna Sharad Gautam Miss Rika Shakya Master Soyuz Baral Miss Urusha Balla Miss Urusha Shrestha Wednesday 4:00 to 5:00 Mr. Narayan Pradhan



- No proper concentration in class
- o Drowsiness
- Frequent changes of teachers
- o Bullying
- o Torture
- Western culture
- o Improper language

ProblemScoring

Problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Names		-	5	- T	5	0	'
Priyata	9	10	7	8	7	5	5
Prabritti	8	9	9	7	7	6	6
Anna	9	10	6	9	8	4	5
Rika	8	7	7	10	7	3	8
Urusha.	6	6	9	6	6	2	7
Urusha	7	9	7	6	7	5	6
Soyuz	7	6	10	10	10	2	2
Anjesh	6	7	4	10	8	4	5
Total	61	64	63	76	67	33	46
Main Problem - Bullying							

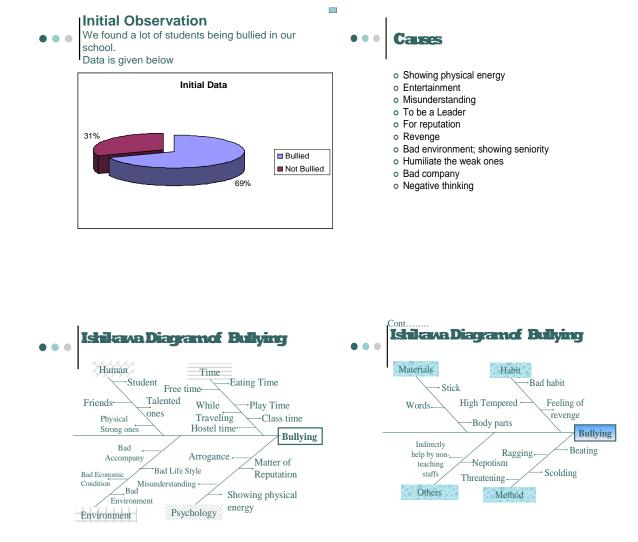


ProblemDefinition

Bullying here stands to be a serious problem because of small matter a child gets physically and mentally disturbed. Bullying is when someone keeps doing or saying things to have power over another person. Bullying in educational institution leads a serious consequences and negative impact upon studies. An individual in senior classes mostly bully junior for enjoyment, for reputation among friends, show energy etc. Bad environment leads a serious role on bullying. Hence, we can say that bullying is a mental and physical torture. It can be a serious problem in our society which may lead a serious impact.

Observation and Data Collection

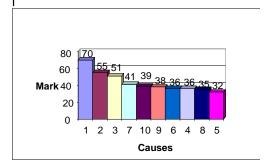
- Do you know the term bullying? Yes 50% No 50%
- Do you bully others? Yes 93% No7%
- Do others bully you ? Yes 69% No 31%
- Do you know the reason for bullying?
- Yes 62% No 38%
- Do you think this problem stands out to be a serious problem? Yes 100%
- Is bullying hampering your studies? Yes75% No25%
- Do teachers help you in case you are bullied? Yes 25% No 75%
- Is bullying taking place in modern educational institute? Yes 100%



•• Problem causes scori

Causes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Names`	1	-	ľ	· ·	Ŭ	Ũ		Ŭ	Ű	
Priyata	8	7	5	4	4	4	3	3	5	4
Prabritti	8	6	4	2	4	3	4	4	5	5
Soyuz	10	6	7	0	0	3	6	2	2	2
Anjesh	9	7	6	3	5	8	2	3	8	2
Urusha S	9	7	7	8	5	5	4	5	7	8
Urusha B	8	7	5	4	3	5	7	3	3	3
Anna	9	8	9	7	5	3	7	8	8	9
Rika	9	7	8	8	6	5	8	7	7	6
Total	70	55	51	36	32	36	41	35	38	39
Main Causes of Problem- Showing Physical Energy										

• • • Pareto Diagram

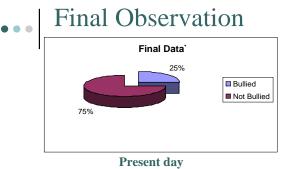


Showing physical energy

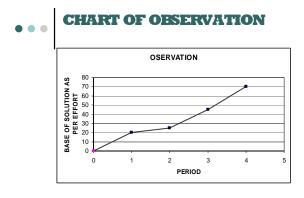
Showing physical energy was found to be the main reason for bullying in the school. Some students also were bullying the weaker/younger ones with the support of stronger/older friends.

••• Strategy

We basically published pamphlets for the awareness needed in our institute. We also conducted discussions during the free time with class mates and friends. Personal counseling was another way we followed to prevent one from bullying. We took help from the teachers too.



Though our problem was not completely solved we saw the declination of the percentage of Bullying. We found completely positive result .





After observation we moved to conclusion. And here we find out that our research was finally a success. Even though our problem was not completely solved we found out the positive response toward the project and result was also encouraging.

What can you do if you are being Bullied?

Copind with bullying can be difficult, but remember, you are not the problem, the bully is. You have a right to feel safe and secure.

And if you're different in some way, be proud of it! Spend time with your friends - bullies hardly ever pick on people if they're with others in a group.

You've probably already tried ignoring the bully, telling them to stop and walking away whenever the bullying starts. If someone is bullying you, you should always tell an adult you can trust. This isn't telling tales. You have a right to be safe and adults can do things to get the bullying stopped.

Even if you think you've solved the problem on your own, tell an adult anyway, in case it happens again.

An adult vou can trust might be a teacher, school principal, parent, someone from your family or a friend's parent. If you find it difficult to talk about being bullied, you might find it easier to write down what's been happening to you and give it to an adult vou trust.

• • • Benefits

- o Built up team spirit
- o Learn to tackle problem systematically
- o Developed Creativity
- Developed unity
- o Consciousness towards quality
- o Developed Positive outlook
- o Built up confidence

••• Benefits cont....

- o Developed desire to excel
- Developed communication skills
- Developed adaptability to new things
- Developed good relationship with others



Gratefulness

We are grateful to Prof. Dinesh P. Chapagian for teaching us QC philosophy and our principal Mr. Narayan Pradhan for encouraging and helping to prepare this presentation.

ANNEX-2: QC Team, Problem Theme and Intangible Benefits Expressed by Students: Content Collected from the International Convention on Students' Quality Control Circles ' 2005, India

	QC Team Description	Problem Theme	Intangible Benefits Expressed by Students
			Became more creative
1.	QC team "Utkal" with six	T C C	•Got scope for creative learning
	members of average age 14	Less scope for creative learning to students	•Enjoyment in group working
	years	learning to students	•Develop leadership qualities
			•Learn problem solving techniques
			•Team spirit
			Better dress and manners
2			•Problem solving skills
2.	QC team "Apeksha" with six	Bleak career and future	•Faith in God
	members		•Better self esteem
			Positive attitude
			•Hope and will
			•Team Spirit
			•Better thought and manners
			•Problem solving skills
3.	QC team "Bharti" with six	Absence of 5 "S" in life and	•Development of communication skills
	members of Grade VI	work	•Faith in God
			•Better self esteem
			•Positive thinking
			•Hope and light in future
			•Confidence level increased
4.	QC team "Agile" with six	Lack of extra readings	•Fluency in English increased
	members of Grade VII	Luck of oktin founings	•Best performance in writing essays and quiz
			•Awareness of wastage of water is created among students
5.	QC team "Visuals" with eight	Wastage of drinking water	•Realize the importance of drinking water
	members of Grade IX	water	•Learnt various methods of preserving water resources
			•Gained an analyzing and introspective view
6.	QC team "Blooming Buds"	Lack of harmony between boys	•Improved interpersonal relationship
	with six girl members of	and girls	•Enhanced team spirit
	Grade VII		•Pleasant friendly environment in class
			Learnt to solve problems systematically
7.	QC team "Celestial	Look of offective learning	•Exposed to application oriented concepts
	Celebrates" with five	Lack of effective learning techniques	•Exposed to application offended concepts •Teachers realized their responsibility
	members	techniques	•Improved modern method of teaching of teachers
-			
8.	QC team "Orators" with six	Look of eacher Eaclich	Team spirit developed Self confidence increased
	members of Grade V	Lack of spoken English	
			•Cooperation increased
			•Learnt to solve problem systematically
			•Developed analysis skills
9.	QC team "Perfect Warriors"	In the second large we	•Improved communication skills
	with seven members of	Inefficient learning process	•Develop dstatistical skills
	average age 16 years		•Developed computer knowledge
			•Improved logical thinking skills
<u> </u>			•Improved team spirit
			•Team spirit boosted
			•Sense of responsibility increased
		Lack of social graces	•Skills in systematic approach developed
10.	QC team "Sath Sang" with		Positive changes occurred
	eight members		•Teachers chisels the personality of pupils
			•Acquired knowledge to mould pupils and face challenges
			•Traveled an exciting journey in the world of quality
			improvement

r			
11.	QC team "Zealous" with six	Lack of skills in life oriented activities	 Developed self-confidence Developed adjustability and team spirit by doing group activities Developed skills on organizing, Developed skills on presentation, Developed skills on communication, Developed skills on analytical and research
12.	QC team "Butterflies" with seven members of Grade V	Lack of personal Hygiene	•Created awareness on cleanliness •Learnt to manage the time effectively •Learnt discipline •Self confidence increased
13.	QC team "Smart" with six members	Ineffective uses of teaching learning materials	Confidence level increased Attained satisfaction
14.	QC team "Reflection" with twelve members of Primary section	Exposure of hidden talents	 Spirit and self confidence level increased Developed sense of empathy I will try has been replaced by I will do
15.	QC team "Dawn" with ten members	Instilling better relationship between teacher and student	 Development of "Can Do" attitude Better team spirit Students are more obedient Students began coming up with their problems Better motivation in studies and co-curricular activities Self confidence level increased Self of belongingness developed among the students
16.	QC team "Keats College Lizie Dan Lamin & Hear Institute" with eighteen members of technical schools	Empty cans and plastic bottles are a nuisance in our environment	 Develop the habit of responsibility To work in groups – team spirit The skill of how to tackle a problem and find solutions Self discipline Social skills Learn to live and communicate with other friends Learn how to share ideas, educate others Develop positive attitudes Help to avoid a "Muda" and become a muda buster Develop creativity attitudes in our environment Leadership qualities
17.	QC team "Pacific" with eight members of Grade VIII and 13 years of age	Excessive mental stress among young students	 Team spirit Communication skills Problem solving skills Positive attitude and sharp attitude Group wisdom Elated sense of globalism Resolution of we can, we must and we will
18.	QC team "Ashima" with eight members of average age of 14 years	Inconsistency in attitude	 Academic improvement Taking pragmatic approach Gains more confidence Self reliant and focused Developed concentration More adaptable and adjustable Enhancement in owns behavior Improved self-respect Basic values and ethics
19.	QC team "Panache" with ten members	Identity crisis	Honest to yourselfMaintain self esteemCultivate hobbies
20.	QC team "Prayas" with eight members of Grade VIII	Bringing unacceptable materials to schools	 Self confidence Recognition by others Sense of responsibility Self discipline Overcome stage fear

			•Seriousness in studies
			Well disciplined
			•Knowledge and importance of the rules and regulations of
			the school
			Self Confidence
			Self Discipline
21			•Sense of responsibility
21.	QC team "Laligurans" with	N-+	•Experience of new ideas
	ten members of average 15 years of Grade IX	Not proper uniform	•Recognized by others
	years of Grade IX		•Overtake stage fear
			•Self respect
			•Creativity
			•Learnt to solve problems systematically
22	QC team "Maroons" with eight members of average 15 years	Lack of personality in studies	•Learnt to analyze facts
22.			•Learnt concepts of quality
			•Developed leadership skills
			•Get more and more involved in school operating system
			•Practical knowledge in organizing an event
			•Learnt to utilize problem solving tools
			•Built confidence
23.	QC team "The Key Group"	D 1 1 1 1	•Developed presentation and oratory skills
	with six members	Poor academic achievement	•Development of team spirit
			•Self discipline
			•Broader vision of education
			•Built up team spirit
			•Learn to tackle problem systematically
			•Developed creativity
			•Developed unity
24.	QC team "Aim: the		•Consciousness towards quality
	destination" with eight members of average 12 years	Bullying in school	•Developed positive outlook
			•Built up confidence
	of Grade VII		•Developed desire to excel
			•Developed communication skills
			•Developed adaptability to new things
			•Developed good relationship with others