

## **Pro-socio Behavioral Interventions for Developing Quality Mindset from Early Age**

“Maya is a beautiful lady and always likes to keep her house neat and clean. Her two children always litter things everywhere, but she keeps all of them in place. Every morning she cleans her three small rooms including the kitchen, corridor and the staircase, collects all rubbish in a plastic bag which she leaves just outside her house. Her neighbor, Chandra Lal, always shouts abuses for leaving the bag of trash in front of his house. Why can't she keep all these things inside her house? A social tension.”

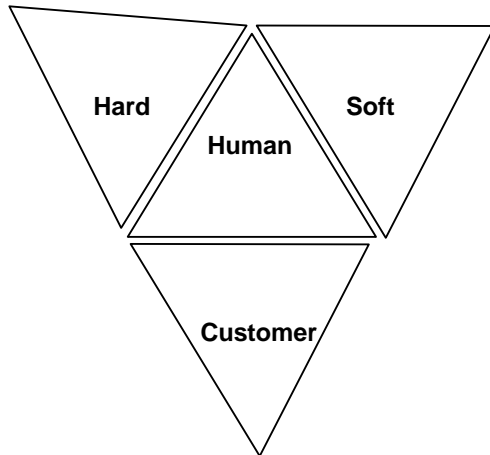
“The office in Balaju Industrial District starts at 9:00 a.m. Sri Pannaman, Managing Director arrives at 11 to meet the secretary at the ministry regarding some trade contract on which he has to make an urgent decision. He has waited for an hour for the secretary who comes late to office. Meanwhile, a number of customers are waiting at Pannaman's office. He had given them time for 10.”

“Sushil has been thinking of generating additional profit from his products in a very competitive market. His products are exercise books. The market is flooded with local Nepalese products. His idea was to reduce the dimension of the exercise books by 1mm each in width and length. The customers would hardly notice the difference. Making 20,000 copies of 100-page exercise books a day by reducing 1 mm in the width and length would save Sushil Rs. 20,000 only on the material cost. This would be a neat saving of Rs. 40,00,000 per year. He could afford to reduce the unit price of exercise book, be more competitive in the market and still save enough money.”

### **Quality Mindset**

To understand Quality in a deeper form, we have to observe its four dimensions – hard dimension, soft dimension, customer dimension and human dimension. When we look at the specification of a product and the manufacturer confirms the specification, the quality is said to be satisfied. This is the hard dimension of quality. On the other hand, there are some important aspects such as the methods and system characteristics of products and services that we cannot see or touch, but nevertheless determine quality. This is the soft dimension. Then there is another side of quality – the customer dimension, which has been assuming greater importance. No matter how perfect the hard and soft sides of the product are, some customers may like it while others may not be satisfied with it. It is equally important to understand the customer side of quality. Even with all these three dimensions, the understanding of quality will not be complete. One who procures, processes and sells the product or service is important indeed. But even more important is his attitude towards quality. This is the human dimension. These four dimensions can define quality more accurately. This paper deals more on the human dimension of quality.

**Quality Pyramid.** Quality can be seen as a pyramid of these four dimensions with human dimension as the base and hard dimension, soft dimension and customer dimension as the pyramid's three faces. This can be understood more clearly by the illustration in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Quality Pyramid with four dimensions**

The human side defines quality as a combination of culture, values and mindset of a person. Only a person with quality character attributes believes in producing products with quality hardware and software, and one that strives to satisfy customers through continuous improvement. Thus, it is necessary to understand how we can develop this quality mindset in a person.

Different literatures have defined quality mindset in different ways. These definitions emerged as outputs of practical experiences of best organizational results. Definitely, not

the products of conceptual research results. Some experts term them as quality languages, some as quality slogans, while others refer to them as major behaviours of quality persons. I would like to refer to this as the quality mindset of a human being. The following mindset is required in a person to be able to deliver quality in totality.

### **Respect humanity**

The immense capability of all individuals must be respected. Generally, it is taken for granted that the boss knows everything and that the subordinate has to perform as per the direction of the boss. A person with the mindset for respecting human beings feels that each individual has unlimited capability to think create, innovate and solve problems.

### **Priority Consciousness**

People have numerous tasks to perform. Some individuals have to deal with a lot of problems and opportunities as well at one time. A quality person cannot work haphazardly and be successful in delivering quality services to its customers and society. He or she must work through prioritization to be a quality person.

### **Management by Fact**

Many people live in the world of fiction. But a quality person talks and works only with facts. A person should make a habit of measuring and standardizing the activities. He should manage by utilizing facts and figures.

### **The PDCA Wheel**

A quality person always plans his activities before doing a work, and checks its effectiveness against the objective of the plan. Whenever there is a deviation, appropriate action must be taken to improve the plan in the next phase. Considering planning and checking activities only as some auxiliary activities will tarnish the effectiveness of the job. Hence one should assume a mindset of moving with PDCA wheel to deliver a quality performance.

### **Recurrence Prevention**

We are constantly solving one problem after another in our daily activities. And many do so merely by analyzing the symptoms. Result – the problem recurs. On the other hand, a quality person analyzes the root cause of the problem scientifically, logically and systematically before devising countermeasures to solve the problems.

This way, the problem is solved permanently. It will not reoccur again. A quality person must ensure that the same mistakes do not repeat again and again.

### **Customer Orientation and Next Process is the Customer**

Whatever one does is basically to serve others either directly or indirectly. One should bear in mind that these others are the customers – consumers, clients or even neighbors or community. His actions bear effect on somebody. A quality person ensures that the outcomes of his activities produce a positive effect and should never harm others.

### **Process and Dispersion Control**

If the process is controlled effectively, the output is bound to be of quality. A quality person believes in process improvement rather than controlling the output. He should develop the attitude of controlling the source and the process as well.

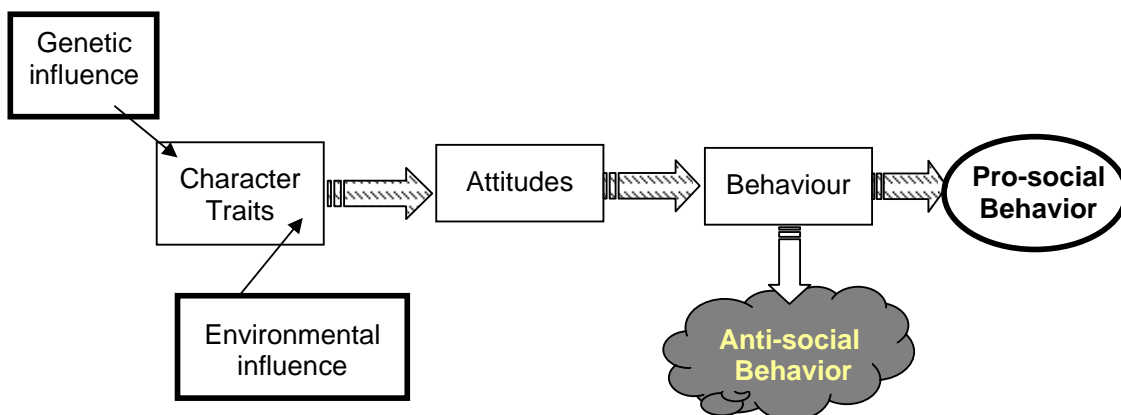
### **Quality First**

Above all, the mindset of people must be fully oriented towards quality

## **Behaviour by Nature or Nurturing**

Can the mindset of a person be changed? If yes, how? Does a person possess certain behavioral attribute by nature or can they be nurtured? A lot of discussion is taking place regarding this. We are aware that there is a number of behaviour modeling techniques that can be used to change the behaviour of a person. Researches have indicated that if proper intervention techniques are followed, the mindset of a person can be changed. However, specific behaviour attributes of some persons may not be changed. These are present by nature, derived through genetic or hereditary influences.

Character traits of a person mainly depend on genetic and acquired environmental factors. These character traits give rise to his mindset or attitude which in turn reflects his behaviour. The following schematic diagram (Figure 2) illustrates this process. Behaviour of a person can be mainly of two types – anti-social and pro-social. The quality mindset described here highlights the importance of exhibiting a pro-social behaviour to be a quality person. Understanding the environmental factors and then applying appropriate interventional techniques is necessary to change the mindset of a person, and to ensure that the person will behave as a pro-social and not as an anti-social one.

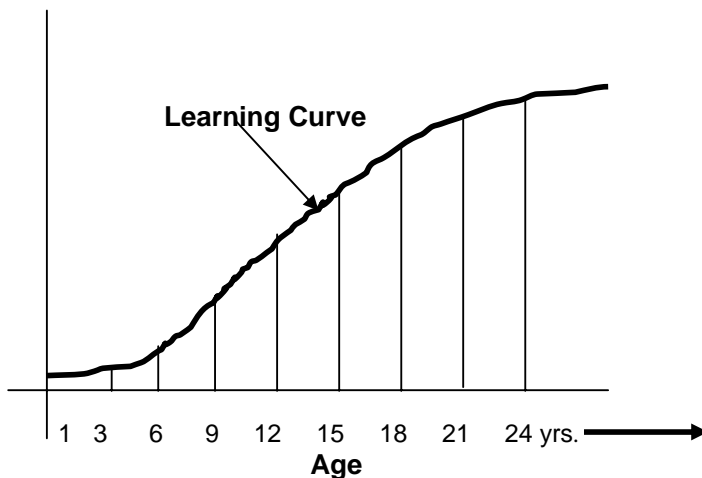


**Figure 2: Nurturing for a Pro-social Behaviour**

The pro-social behaviour of a person is a function of acquired environmental factors and genetic factors. In other word, the pro-social behavioral intervention may be considered an important technique to develop a quality mindset in a person. The character educational process provides an appropriate socio-behavioral intervention.

### **Character Educational Interventions**

Educationists have developed various intervention programs called character educational intervention to build up positive character or pro-social behavior of students. Teaching moral education, ethics and value system to school children have immensely helped to develop positive attitudes of students towards society. Other measures such as competition among students in sports, dramatics and music have also contributed to this. These interventions are more effective during early ages of the students.



**Figure 3: Age and the Learning Capability**

The learning curve as shown in Figure 3 shows the relationship between the age and the learning capability. Intervention to a three year child will not be so effective. But as age increases beyond 5 years, the learning capability increases very fast up to the age of 25 years. Students of 20s acquire skills and knowledge required for their life very fast.

Presently, a new experiment on the pro-social intervention is being carried out in many countries to develop the quality mindset among students at an

early age. This is done through the practice of Students Quality Circle [SQC] at schools and colleges. The slogan is “catch them young”.

The initiation of this intervention dates back to 1993/94 when the quality experts of the world watched with awe small kid students of City Montessori School, Lucknow, India making quality control circle case presentations in the International Quality Circle Conference in Hongkong. The marvelous presentations on scientific and logical problem solving techniques, the communication style and confidence of the students, and the emphasis on respect for humanity and creativity struck the quality experts that the renowned Quality Control Circle practiced in the factories of Japan could also be used to generate the quality mindset of the students at school.

### **Experiment with Students Quality Circle**

Mr. Jagadish Gandhi, a manager, tried to realize a vision that problem solving tools that helped a war worn and trodden Japan in the 1950’s become an economic giant by 1980s, can be used to develop pro-social behaviour among students at schools. He is being helped in this crusade by two stalwarts, namely Dr. Mrs. Veenita Kamran, Principle, City Montessori School and Degree College, Lucknow, India and Mr. Prakash C. Bihari, a quality professional of Indian Railway. Since 1994, Students Quality Circle, a pro-social behavioural intervention is being promoted in Indian schools, and by 1997, the first International Conference of Students Quality Control Circle was organized in Lucknow. In 1999, the World Council for Total

Quality and Excellence in Education was established with an objective of developing quality mindset among school children all over the world. The council has representatives from USA, Japan, India, Switzerland, Germany, Singapore, Malaysia, Srilanka, Mauritius, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Israel and others. The experiment is going on in many countries.

In sharing their experiences, the students involved tell of the intangible benefits that they get by practicing SQC activities in their respective schools. Students from different schools and countries have been presenting their problem solving cases in international conferences being held regularly since 1999. In the years 1999, 2001 and 2003, the international conferences were held at Lucknow, while in the years 2000 and 2002, they were held in Mauritius and the USA respectively. In December 2004, the conference will be held in Bangladesh.

Here, an inference is being made that extra curricular activities in schools in the form of SQC act as socio-behavioral intervention to prepare people with quality mindset. The proceedings of four international conferences (1999 to 2003) of SQC are taken as sources of information for analysis. There were several case studies made by students from different countries.

36 SQCs are randomly selected for identifying the intangible benefits that students received after practicing quality circle for problem solving through their respective circles formed at their schools. The sample of circles selected for data collection are from India – 21, Srilanka – 5, Mauritius – 3, Nepal – 3, Singapore – 2 and Bangladesh – 2. The ages of students involved in the exercises range from 6 to 24 years, the average age group being 12 years.

Beside the tangible benefits the students and schools have gained by solving specific problems, students have also expressed several intangible benefits after their exercises. The frequency of some important intangible benefits as explained by the students in the case exercise presentation is tabulated below in Figure 4.

SN	Intangible Benefits	Frequency	Percentage
1	Developed self confidence, self esteem and self discipline	33	92%
2	Learnt systematic, scientific and logical problem solving skill	32	89%
3	Enjoyed working in group, developed cooperation, involvement, participation and teamwork	27	75%
4	Built confidence in public speaking, presentation and communication	20	56%
6	Learnt to develop plans, set priorities and manage time	19	53%
8	Developed broader vision, more than course work and extra knowledge	15	42%
9	Developed sense of responsibility and positive attitude toward others, empathy and learning from others	15	42%
5	Developed personal contacts, received appreciation and cooperation from others	14	39%
7	Unleashed latent potential, creativity and talents	13	36%
10	Developed confidence in coordinating group, effective leadership	12	33%

**Figure 4: Intangible Benefits derived from Students Quality Circle Exercise**

The table shows that the students received maximum benefits in the forms of development of self confidence, self esteem and self discipline, learnt systematic, scientific and logical problem solving skill, and enjoyed working in groups, developed cooperation, involvement,

participation and teamwork. This has changed the mindset of the students. This has made the future citizens work together and develop capability to cope with the problems logically and scientifically.

### **Humble Request**

Students Quality Circle, a pro-social educational intervention has been considered as an effective technique to develop people with quality mindset. Its regular practice can influence the character traits of children as well as of adolescents. Students Quality Circle intervention helps to respect humanity, have self confidence, work scientifically and logically in a team for solving problems and develop communication and presentation skills – in short, all the ingredients to prepare a valued future citizen. The responsibility to prepare a socially valued citizen is that of the government, educationists, guardians, and the society in general.

Hence, a humble request is made here:

- His Majesty's Government of Nepal is requested to promote Students Quality Circle as the most important pro-social interventions at educational institutions. Singapore and Mauritius are two countries that have already attached great importance to this aspect for developing people with right kind of quality mindset.
- Schools are requested to initiate the practice of Students Quality Circle as an essential extra-curricular activity along with other general programs such as sports, arts and talent programs. Hundreds of schools of India, USA, Singapore, Mauritius, Srilanka, Bangladesh and others are practicing this and have already disseminated benefits derived from this.
- Parents and guardians are requested to motivate their wards to participate in Students Quality Circle activities at their respective schools. It is an identified fact that without parents' support to school programs, a mission of developing a valued future citizen is not possible. Thus, parents of school children in many countries are collaborating with schools.