Students' Quality Circles: QC Circles Re-engineered for Developing Student Personality. Dinesh P. Chapagain (2022)

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In this book, the author presents his experience from working with Students' Quality Circles (SQC). The author is a Professor of Engineering and of Business at Kathmandu University, Nepal. He has for the last twenty years worked with an alternative approach to Education in Schools inspired by the Japanese tradition of solving quality and productivity problems in the industry. Chapagain founded QUEST-Nepal (acronym of Quality Circles in Education for Students' Personality Development in Nepal), which is a network of SQC master trainers.

The book is organized in 8 chapters and an appendix with reading material. It is an open access book. Each chapter can be downloaded and read separately, and each chapter starts with an abstract and ends with key issues. In chapter one, it is asked why Students' Quality Circles are necessary in academics? The author starts by arguing that an "educational institute is not only a centre for providing appropriate knowledge and skills, but a character-building institution". A total quality person (TQP) is the outcome of such an institution, and SQC is the process for the personal development of students. SQC is a small team of like-minded students who meet regularly with the purpose to identify, analyze and solve their own problems. In a nutshell the aim is to enhance the pro-social personality of students and thus empower them with tool, technology and boost their moral values. Then follow three descriptive chapters. Chapter two describes the fundamentals of SQC, chapter three the major elements and chapter four the basic tools. In chapter five the focus is on how to implement SQC in academia. In chapter six the author describes how Quality Circles are evolving in the world and in the final chapter what the SQC masters say about SQC.

In the first chapter the author underlines that there is a broader knowledge than bookish knowledge. I agree in a distinction between knowledge, or more precisely, theoretical knowledge and knowing how. Knowing that is the ability to know why a certain issue exists and what its definition is (Ryle, 1949). According to Ryle (1949), knowing that is theoretical knowledge, while knowing how is the ability to do something. Knowing how emerges through the application of knowledge in a given context. Ryle (1949) argued in favour of knowing how in action, since knowing how is possible to observe and identify in action. Procedures and rules for an action cannot substitute for the knowing how to do that action. Knowing how cannot be prescribed and then executed. Knowing how is dynamic, and descriptions are static. Theoretical knowledge is thought knowing, expressed orally or in a written form; it is not knowledge in action. Knowing how can therefore not be transferred in a linear and codified form as "procedures" and "rules" but can only be shared through actions in a context between people. The two dimensions of knowledge are not reducible to each other. They are of different kinds. This distinction is important to be aware of when one takes the challenge to write from knowing how: i. e., practice.

I have chosen to review this book as an attempt to write from experience and practice from SQC. I interpret the book as a descriptive "how to do" book, and not as an "academic" book, following academic standards with a methodological discussion and position of the author's own research with a literature review and discussion of main concepts.

The book has different faces or approaches. I have identified at least three. The first is SQC as a philosophy or an idea for the evolution of education, which is presented in chapter one. The second approach is SQC as a leadership challenge, which is presented in chapter five, as how to implement SQC in academia. The third is SQC as a set of concrete principles to follow, presented in chapter three and four. However, as a "how to do" book, I miss a fourth approach, a presentation of concrete practices of SQC, which could have been presented as concrete cases.

Knowing how comes with dilemmas, tensions and conflicts. I miss a presentation and discussions of dilemmas, tensions and conflicts when applying SQC both on the individual and collective level among young people. One example of a tension is such as between the ""I am smart, will win' attitude on the one hand, and on the other hand, the SQC value "I am good, I will serve people". I think a presentation of some dilemmas and tensions and discussion of how they were solved would have been a valuable contribution of the book.

Reference

Ryle, G. (1949). *The Concept of Mind: 60th Anniversary Edition.* Hutchinson & Co.

James Karlsen is a professor in regional development and innovation at the Business School and Law at University of Agder, Norway. His research interest is Action Research in territorial development, regional development and competence development.