

A Brief Analysis on the Spirit of Freedom in School Education

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Abstract: Freedom is a will of power to which every human being aspires. Education is a special activity for the cultivation of human beings, which is intimately close to freedom. Freedom in the educational process refers to an attitude and core value. In education, teachers, students and schools are the main free subjects. However, the freedom of these subjects is largely the relaxing state. We should return to human education, balance humanistic spirit and the utilitarianism, and build a better system to find and protect freedom in education.

Keywords: Freedom; Education; Freedom in education

1. Freedom and freedom in education

Each human being is a freedom-seeking individual. Freedom is the characteristic that distinguishes human beings from animals; man is an appendage without freedom. What is freedom? What is freedom in education?

Freedom is a right: "Only freedom is set as a fundamental right of man, and it is deemed as a claim on politics and education, can the inviolability of individual freedom be institutionally guaranteed."^[1] From this perspective, freedom means that it is available to everyone and everyone can exercise his or her rights in life without being violated by others, as long as they do not interfere with others.

Freedom is a kind of will: "Freedom is that person chooses the means and ways of active life, pursues the own life prospects and goals, conduct social interactions, participate in the common life, without being arbitrarily coerced and oppressed in individual life, based on his own experience, wisdom and judgment."^[2] From this point of view, freedom is the foremost judgment and choice of ego, the inner departure of the individual soul, and the will from the inside out. While Kant believed that free will is a good will, which will have a positive, active and beautiful direction.

From the above two perspectives, freedom, whether as a right or as a will, it is not difficult to find out that a person must have the ability of freedom before the individual has the freedom, which includes not only the knowledge and skills to realize freedom, but also an inner attitude, spirit and values. With the ability of freedom, people could have the opportunity to be free in practice. However, as a right, freedom can only be realized in practice, and a person can truly have freedom by practice.

2. Relationship between freedom and education

Education is a special practical activity that cultivates people and occupies an inestimable position in living of people. Human beings are individuals who pursue freedom. Therefore, the education inevitably involves the issue of freedom. As for the relationship between freedom and education, many scholars have different views, some of them believe that freedom is the purpose of education, education is the means of freedom, while some of them believe that education is freedom.

Education means to the pursuit of freedom. The essence of education is to cultivate people's practical activities, and the particularity of education lies in the fact that the object of education is people, people are yearning for freedom, and human subjectivity contains the characteristic of freedom, so that the practical activities of cultivating people must be an activity that follows the development of human characteristics. The ontological value of education should "motivate the individual to become the master and creator of the own cultural progress". From the perspective of the fundamental purpose of education, the education intends to promote the all-round development of people, which includes a positive choice and the ability to take the

initiative to be free, which is accomplished through education, and the cultivation of the ability of freedom is also the core and way to liberate people through education. Therefore, only when the purpose of education is facing towards freedom, the process of education is the process of cultivating the ability to freedom. Only when the value of freedom penetrates into education, education can be indicated as the real education. Through education, we can come out of our narrow world and catch sight of more possibilities for life. As a role of liberating eyes, ears and brains, education can increase our yearning for freedom, improve our ability to choose freely by cultivating the various skills, and lead us to yearn for freedom and have the hope for the future by the various spiritual guidance. Therefore, the education is a means and way to freedom.

Education is freedom. According to the perspective of "freedom is self-discipline" advocated by Kant, "freedom inspires human being to become a real subject of self-legislation, self-regulation, and self-obedience."^[5] For education, only when education becomes self-education, cultivates oneself rationally and sensitively, critically accepts oneself and distinguishes oneself from external things, the cultivation of the individual self-ability can be realized, so that everyone can realize self-realization, and education can be regarded as real education. Human beings are an unique creature in the world, whose free consciousness can not only adapt to the real society, but also create and explore the unknown world with any possibility. For education, education can only be regarded as true education if it becomes a future-oriented education, stimulates the infinite possibilities of people, so that people can master an activity that explores the possibility. From the above two perspectives, the proposition that education is freedom holds. Since education is freedom, the process of education must be a process of freedom as well as a process full of possibilities.

3. Free subjects in education

"Freedom is individual, rather than being collective. All freedom is the individual freedom."^[7] Since freedom can be seen as a right and a will that belongs to everyone, freedom in education should also belong to everyone who participates in the educational process. The free subject of education should contain many components, not only teachers, but also students, schools, education administrators, and all other related subjects.

3.1 Freedom of teachers

In education, teachers occupy a dominant position that cannot be underestimated in education. Therefore, the freedom of teachers is essential. The freedom of teachers is the foremost manifested in the values that teachers can choose. "The more freedom of people's hearts, the more freedom can bring to children."¹ Ideas determine attitudes, while attitudes determine behaviors. The view of freedom guides the teacher consciously, so that the values of freedom permeate teaching activities. In addition, teachers also have the freedom to teach and educate. "From the perspective of existence, freedom in the process of education has its own special manifestations, such as the blank of time, the openness of space, the democracy of atmosphere, the phase out of content, and the plurality of methods."^[8] In the current process of education and teaching, it is a portrayal of reality.

3.2 Freedom of student

In education, students are also extremely important subjects. A student's view of freedom largely determines whether students have more self-actualization and self-responsibility in their future life. Therefore, the freedom of students in education is essential. Freedom is divided into positive freedom and negative freedom based on the view of Isaiah Berlin in most current literature. "Active Freedom" can answer the question of "the source of some control or interference to determine that someone becomes this way, rather than other way". "Negative freedom" can answer the question of "An individual is allowed or must be allowed to do what the one is capable of without interference from others."^[9] In education, the positive freedom is the freedom for students to choose a way to study and the specific content can be received from their own perspective, based on their own rationality and thinking, so that they could better develop themselves; Negative freedom is the freedom that students can be free from any coercive, necessary, unwilling form or content of education.

Feng Jianjun believes that students enjoy "three-dimensional freedom" in education, that is, subject freedom, social freedom and personality freedom. "Subject freedom is the freedom that man manifests in the subject-object relationship in the face of the object. The object that children face in the process of education is the influence of education, including the content of education, the form of education and the influence from teachers."^[10] Students enjoy the status of subjects in the educational process, they are the subjects of learning, the subjects of the classroom, and the subjects of education, so that students have the corresponding freedom to make their own choices about the content, form and influence of teachers." Social freedom refers to the relationships among people, which is a relationship of equality.^[11] In the process of education, students can enjoy freedom

in the relationship between teachers and students. Whatever the relationship, freedom is first expressed in the equal status of students. In relationships, the equality is based on a kind of freedom of the student as a human being, and the student is the subject of freedom. Therefore, in terms of personality, students and teachers have equal status, and in dialogue, students and teachers have equal status to communicate. "Freedom of personality is the embodiment of free will in the development of spiritual realms, including human demands, morality, wisdom and aesthetics. The educational process includes the satisfaction of demands, moral freedom, intellectual freedom, and aesthetic freedom."^[12]

3.3 Freedom of school

The school is a place where teachers and students are integrated. As the main bearer of education, it also has freedom in the educational process. Increasing school autonomy, which has been advocated in recent years, is a protection of school freedom. This autonomy is reflected in all aspects of running schools, managing and teaching. The freedom of school subjectivity is reflected in the corresponding introduction of independent development plans of major schools, which highlights the freedom of schools in management planning; Some schools conduct independent enrollment, which highlights the school's freedom in admissions; The corresponding development of the school-based curriculum of each school highlights the freedom of the school in the selection and development of curriculum resources. The freedom of the school as a subject could be visible from the series of measures.

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