

Cultural Influences on Educational Setting

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Abstract: Different views of education establish different setting to education which in turn are influenced by the values that arise in different cultures. Chinese and western education systems and models have their advantages and disadvantages, and there is no absolute difference between good and bad. This article will make a concrete analysis of the impact of the two cultural backgrounds on education.

Keywords: China and western countries; Culture; Education; Influence; Differences; Change

1. The Relationship between Culture and Education

1.1 Education—Form of Expression of Culture

Many scholars throughout history have tried to categorize cultures. Different people have different opinions. Seligman divided culture into three categories: material culture, language, and moral culture. Rivers divided culture into four categories: material culture, social structure, language, and religion. Boas divided culture into three categories: material culture, social relations, art, religion, and ethics. Taken together, they did not explicitly use the word "education" in the category but included it. For example, Seligman mentioned the "moral culture", Rivers' "social structure" and Boas's "social relations".

Therefore, all major human cultural systems must contain an element of education, and although we cannot say exactly what culture involves, it must first include education. Education is a part of the culture and an expression of human culture.

1.2 Cultural Restricts the Development of Education

1.2.1 Culture Influences the Establishment of Teaching Objectives

The establishment of teaching objectives depends not only on the social, political, and economic system and the level of productive forces, but also on culture.

For instance, in ancient times, the mainstream culture of Chinese society was an ethical culture with Confucianism as the core, which was reflected in talent training. The purpose of education was "to show virtue, to be friendly to the people, and to stop at perfection".

1.2.2 Culture Influences the Value Orientation of Education

The value orientation of education is a tendency held by the educational subjects when making choices on the attributes and functions of educational activities according to their own needs. Because the attributes and functions of education are multifaceted, and the same educational activity has multiple values, people can make multiple choices.

Different subjects are in different economic positions. In addition, they have different cultural backgrounds, practical experiences, levels of understanding, interest needs, and values, so their educational activities have different value orientations.

1.2.3 Culture Influences the Choice of Educational Content

The content of education is human culture. The culture of different periods, cultures of different nationalities, and cultures of different countries affect the different choices of educational content.

As American educator Spengler said, the unique cultural tradition of a certain society permeates all aspects of society, strongly restricting the teaching process and the way people raise children.

1.2.4 Culture Influences the Use of Teaching Methods

Modern education emphasizes not only the social value of education but also its individual value. It advocates the "humanization" and "personalization" of education, and people become the focus of modern education. Under the guidance of this value orientation,

the educational content and methods have great flexibility, emphasizing that people draw knowledge from themselves, and guide them to actively build their own understanding, giving maximum self-expression and self-selection.

2. Introduction to Chinese and Western Countries

2.1 Chinese Culture

2.1.1 Collectivism

Collectivism is an ideological theory and spirit that advocates that individuals belong to society and that individual interests should be subordinate to the interests of the group, the nation, the class, and the state. Its highest standard is that all remarks and actions conform to the interests of the collective.

In traditional Chinese culture, collective interests are higher than individual interests, and individuals should be dependent on the collective to exist. When individual interests conflict with collective interests, individual interests should be sacrificed to ensure collective interests, and the collective becomes the only subject of value. Collectivism emphasizes the individual's responsibility and obligation to the group, the society, and the country. Just as Gu Yanwu said in "Rizhilu" that it is the responsibility to protect the base of the world. Before there is a group, there can be an individual, and an individual can survive in a group. To occupy a place in a group, we can sacrifice our individuality to be accepted by the group.

2.1.2 Agricultural Civilization

Agricultural civilization is not inclined to disturb the existing life order, seeking a comfortable life. In the farming civilization, people can rely on internal resources to sustain their survival, and the desire to seek external survival resources is not strong, so there will be no foreign wars to plunder resources. In China, there has been little outward aggression in search of resources. China has been a unified country since a long time ago. Most of the wars in China were in pursuit of the idea of unity, not for resource looting. Agricultural civilization has been able to meet the basic needs, prone to the breeding of inertia, people satisfied with the present.

2.2 Western Culture

2.2.1 Individualism

Individualism emphasizes individual freedom, individual interests, and self-domination. It is a worldview that starts from the individual first and takes the individual as the center to view the world, society, and interpersonal relations. Its core lies in the moral equality of all individuals.

Western values advocate individual independence, advocate individual struggle, and pursuit of individual enjoyment, and believe that individuals are both the subject of value and the subject to realize value. At the same time, the values of Western civilization also advocate individual standards and believe that the individual itself is the end and has the highest value. When individual interests and collective interests conflict, they oppose the unprincipled sacrifice of individual interests for the interests of the collective and others.^[4]

2.2.2 Maritime Civilization

In Marine culture, ocean-based civilizations cannot be self-sufficient, which requires them to actively seek resources and expand outward, seeking a life state advocating adventure. It is difficult for Marine civilization to survive on internal resources, so it needs to actively expand their territory to meet their living basis, so Marine civilization is more aggressive. As you can see, in the Republic, one of the important reasons for establishing an army is to protect or plunder resources. This is particularly obvious in modern European colonial behavior. Forced by life, Marine civilization is often faced with an unstable environment, so it needs to seek new changes.^[5]

3. Educational Thoughts in China and Western Countries

3.1 Educational Thoughts in China

3.1.1 Confucian Educational Thought

Confucians hold the view that education objects should be taught without discrimination. Confucius did not judge people by their identity, class, or country differences. He believed that all those who were willing to learn should have access to education.

The Confucian educational method is "teaching students following their aptitude". That is, in the teaching process, according to different students' cognitive levels, learning abilities, and own qualities, teachers choose to learn methods suitable for each student's characteristics so that students can develop their strengths and circumvent their weaknesses, and establish learning confidence.

The Confucian education concept attaches importance to classical humanistic education, takes the example of a gentleman as the

imitation of learning, takes virtue over knowledge, and takes the personality of a sage as the training goal of education, focusing on turning a person into a noble person with all-round development. Confucian educational thought is not only a narrow understanding of education, but also contains the understanding of "people" in the classical era.

3.1.2 Taoist Educational Thought

In Lao Tzu's opinion, educational activities follow the natural principle of Tao. That is, the basic attribute of Tao is nature. Educational activities should cultivate natural people in the way of nature and maintain the natural operation order of human society.

Education should also preserve human nature. The role of education for individuals is to return people to the simple state of infant ignorance and disinterest. As the saying goes, "To learn more and more, to learn more and more is to lose the Tao more and more, so that we can do nothing." Only through the process of "losing" can we restore human nature.

Taoist educational thought advocates that people should return to their natural nature through education and form a natural and harmonious society through education.

3.2 Educational Thoughts in Western Countries

3.2.1 Socrates' Educational Thought

Socrates advocates "heuristic teaching", the core of which is that the teacher does not directly tell the students what they should know, but according to the student's existing knowledge and experience, reveals the contradiction in each other's understanding through discussion, question and answer, and even debate, and gradually leads the students to draw their own conclusions.

3.2.2 Dewey's Educational Thought

Dewey emphasized the central position of children in teaching and advocated that teachers should organize teaching around the needs and activities of students with the goal of student development.

He advocates "learning by doing" and learning from problems. The teaching task is not only to give students scientific conclusions, but also to stimulate students' thinking so that students can master the way to discover the truth and solve practical problems.

4. Influence of Chinese and Western Culture on Education

4.1 Differences in Teacher-Student Relationship in Teaching

In China, due to the influence of "respecting teachers and valuing morality" in Confucian culture, school education focuses on cultivating students' respect for knowledge and authority. And then the development of education gradually makes the knowledge in textbooks and teachers become the absolute authority in the teaching classroom. The teacher's explanation of knowledge points is the truth in the students' minds. The teacher-student relationship is the relationship between the leader and the led. Teachers have the right to decide the students' learning process and school life arrangements. In the face of the teacher's instructions and requirements, most students dare not question or oppose and have no opportunity to express their true views and ideas. They can only passively choose to obey, losing their personality and characteristics. To improve their performance, parents and students may even give gifts to please the teacher.

In the West, under the influence of ancient Greek civilization, the concept of "I love my teacher, and I love truth more" has been deeply rooted in people's minds. Teachers are not authorities in learning, but guides and guides. In school education, they emphasize equality between teachers and students, advocate the cultivation of openness, inclusiveness, exploration, and innovation, encourage students to analyze and discuss knowledge and authority, and raise questions and criticisms. In terms of the relationship between teachers and students, they believe that teachers should inspire and encourage students to explore and think, and oppose forcing and suppressing students' nature. The western education concept advocates freedom, pays attention to the cultivation of students' independent ability and pays attention to creating a harmonious, equal, and cooperative teaching atmosphere.

4.2 Differences in Educational Objectives

The fittest survive. The purpose of education in China is to assess and select talents. From primary school, the school will cultivate children's "collective consciousness" and emphasize the "balanced development" of all subjects. Under such an education system, students will take seriously the study of each subject offered by the school, but they are also likely to lose the opportunity for personality development and the cultivation of innovation ability, which is not conducive to individual strengths and advantages and will also cause waste of human resources.

Western education puts more emphasis on the realization of personal value. Western education focuses on cultivating students'

ability to explore and innovate. Under the guidance of this teaching goal, students can better develop their personal talents and better develop their ability and methods to solve life problems. However, this kind of education is not conducive to cultivating the individual's sense of responsibility for society, and students lack the sense of discipline and the necessary spirit of obedience.

4.3 Differences in Educational Methods

In China, school education is more focused on the teaching of knowledge by teachers, that is, students learn new knowledge following the teacher's explanation. In the classroom of China, teachers will indoctrinate students with the contents of textbooks according to the requirements of curriculum standards, and students spend most of their time recording and understanding the knowledge points given by teachers. After class, Chinese students need to memorize and consolidate the theoretical knowledge they have learned by completing a large number of exercise tasks. In this process, students can firmly grasp the basic knowledge, improve their examination results, and meet the requirements of exam-oriented education. However, the learning process is boring, the learning burden is heavy, and the theory cannot be well combined with practice, which is not conducive to the cultivation of students' questioning spirit and innovative spirit.

In western countries, school education emphasizes student-centered, that is, students ask more questions and express opinions, while teachers teach less. This teaching method has a low sense of pressure on teachers and students, a relaxed and pleasant classroom atmosphere, and flexible teaching progress. After class, teachers rarely assign exercise assignments, but require students to participate in social practice and interest project research. Such an education mode is conducive to cultivating students' practical skills, innovative spirit, and critical thinking. The disadvantage is that the students' grasp of basic knowledge is not strong enough, and the theoretical accumulation is not rich enough.

4.4 Different Teaching Evaluation Standards

In China's school education, the standard for evaluating students is examination results. Teachers' content is the answers to theoretical knowledge points and related exercises involved in the normal teaching process, and the answers to test questions usually have standard answers. Such an evaluation system is conducive to achieving fairness in talent selection and testing students' mastery of basic knowledge. However, this method can only effectively evaluate students' learning levels and cannot be multi-dimensional and objective.

In the West, the assessment of students is mostly conducted in the form of papers, project achievements, curriculum design, etc. Compared with the mastery of basic knowledge, they pay more attention to the cultivation of students' practical abilities. This assessment method is more inclusive and open, which is conducive to the cultivation of students' independent thinking and hands-on skills and the realization of innovative thinking and critical thinking.

5. Summary and Personal Views

Based on the above analysis and comparison, we can see the differences between Chinese and Western cultures and the impact of different cultural backgrounds on education.

After an objective and fair exposition, please give me a chance to share my personal views and opinions on this topic.

From my perspective, there is no absolute difference between Chinese and Western education. Both educational system models have their advantages and disadvantages. Due to this reason, please never persuade others to be good without suffering them. As a matter of fact, China and western countries have their unique national conditions. Different cultures, goals, economic development, and other factors may affect our education system. We cannot judge at will by individual likes and dislikes.

However, frankly speaking, I believe that Western education can function as a reference for Chinese education. In the new era, we can try to learn from and absorb the excellent achievements of western education and improve the shortcomings of Chinese education according to the current situation.

First, in my humble opinion, we can change the concept of judging students only by their examination results in the past few decades. In the course of the English teaching method this semester, the teacher told us many times that every child is different. Students all have their areas of expertise and incompetence. Just as the old saying goes, "The dragon has nine sons, and the nine sons are different". To some extent, In-school examination results can only be used to measure the mastery of subject knowledge. Many students may not have the same test scores as their peers, but this does not mean that they are so-called "poor students" and "problem students". They must also have their characteristics and highlights. Chinese education should shift from examination-oriented education to quality education, pay attention to the development of students' personalities, encourage children to play with their special skills, cultivate their hobbies, and find a career path that truly belongs to them. I believe that in my future career, what society wants and needs is not everyone's "average level" or "balanced development", but those abilities that can not be replaced by

others embodied in different people.

Second, I believe that Chinese education should focus on cultivating students' independent spirit and critical thinking, adjusting the relationship between teachers and students, and making students dare to express themselves and love to express themselves. We can learn from the flexible and diverse classroom forms in western countries, avoid the situation of "one word" and "full room" of teachers, and try to carry out a flipped classroom so that the "hero" of the classroom can truly change from the teacher to the student.

In my previous education experience, many teachers did not accept the questions and rebuttals from students. Even in classroom interaction, once they could not get the opinions and answers they wanted to hear, they would show terrible "animalism" and severely criticize or punish students. Even if there are problems with teachers' words or practices sometimes, they will only use an explanation of "My starting point is for you" and refuse to apologize or explain to students. I think this phenomenon is very sad. Teachers will firmly believe that they are sacred and inviolable authority, and students must follow their instructions. And students lose the right to be themselves. Their voices were not heard, their emotions were not understood, and their real ideas could not be expressed... Over time, their thoughts were quoted by teachers. They no longer could distinguish right from wrong, and they also lost the necessary conditions to cultivate the spirit of exploration and innovation. What they have lost is far more valuable than the basic knowledge of a few pages of books.

If education prospers, the country will prosper; if education is strong, the country will be strong. I love my motherland. What's more, because of more than two years of experience in learning English, I have formed a strong interest in English teaching. The study of the course intercultural communication has given me "two weapons". In this course, We have seen the charm of Chinese culture and appreciated the essence of Western thought.

Here, I would like to thank Teacher Yu for her care and help. I have seen the road I want to take and make clear what kind of person I want to be. We will have a bright future!

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