

Analysis on the Difference of Family Education between China and The U.S.A

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Abstract: Talents become more and more important because of increasingly associated competition and cooperation of different economy and culture in the world. Every country attaches more attention to the strategy of rejuvenating the county through talents as well as science and education in order to improve their competitive power and comprehensive national strength. Thus education becomes really important under this circumstance. In the childhood of children, family becomes the first school in their lifetime in which parents are also the first teachers for the children. Parents usually take on all educational responsibility of children before their children start school, thus family education plays an important role in the society. Family education is that parents make educational effect on their children's growth and advancement during the interaction process of family, and is also the vital part of the whole educational enterprise. At present there are many types of family education in the world and each of them shows distinctive features and is closely responsive to its culture. A lot of misunderstandings exist in family education of China, which seriously impacts on the benign development of Chinese children. This paper try to compare some differences of family education in diverse aspects between China and American, analyze the reason of differences of family education caused by the two countries, and put forward some reasonable and feasible suggestions for family education of China. At last, Chinese people hope that we will find a relatively scientific and good family education method with the base of the comparison of the two countries' education differences.

Key words: family education; China and American; difference

Introduction

Labor creates human being as well as society. The complexity of the entire process of labor requires people to use a kind of media, — education to pass down life experience that predecessor summarized. In other words, education is created by labor. Society selects talents based on education level. The generation of education accompanies human society. The advancement of it also goes with the human society. The word “education” originates from the Latin “educare”, meaning education. What is education? In brief, education means that we use some methods systematically and purposefully to conduct some guidance and training for educatee and further develop their physical power and intelligence based on certain social condition and the need of the society. As a matter of fact, every country's scholars have different views and understandings about the definition of education. Famous education expert John Dewey (1882) has said that education is namely life, namely growth, namely the experience. Britain famous poet Spenser (1562) held that education is preparation for the future life of people. Chinese scholar Li Zhuang (1982) thought that education forces or guides educatee to receive some specific knowledge, information and skill. Nie Shengzhe (1995) held that excellent students are taught by education and family education is particularly important. In fact, family education is the basic element for whether one people could establish themselves in society in the future or not.

In people's lifetime, family is usually the first school, in which parents are the first teachers for the children. Children are the hopes of a nation. Parents usually take on all

educational responsibility of children before their children start school, thus family education plays an important role in the society. Family education is that parents make educational effect on their children's growth and advancement during the interaction process of family, and is also the vital part of the whole educational enterprise. There are many differences between China and American in cultural tradition, ideology, lifestyle as well as social customs, which lead to a lot of differences in educational model, educational content and educational purpose between families of China and American. This thesis will compare the comparative study from the differences between America and China of family education, and find out the reasons and the effects of family education between America and China. Family education plays an irreplaceable role in people's education, therefore people should learn correctly the difference of education between this two countries and find a satisfying family education method through comparing the differences between American family education and Chinese family education, which would bring about a really great indicative effect and provide a practical significance to the sound progress of modern family education of China.

1. Differences existing in the Family Education

1.1 The Educational Content

The content of American family education is abundant, and it pays more attention to children's harmonious development in many ways, such as physical power, cognitive ability, sociality, people's emotion and so on. Parents attach importance to organizing outdoor activities and physical exercises as for the enhancement of physical power. Regarding the development of cognitive ability, parents pay attention to practicing a lot of various kinds of sense organ of their children, and open cultural and aesthetic horizon of children as well as children's learning interest. For example, when parents go to library to borrow or read books they usually would like to carry their children together, the purpose of which is to make their children edified and attracted by the surrounding environment, and further help them arouse learning desire and interest. As the aspect of cultivation of children's sociality, parents often ask their children to complete something on their own instead of asking for other's help. In addition, the children are required to learn the ability of cooperation, sharing and mutual assistance. As to the nurture of emotion, children are guided to appreciate the beauty of music, dance, painting as well as literature. For example, American parents usually prefer to accompany their children to art gallery and museum to enjoy all kinds of exhibit. Besides, American parents also often encourage their children to participate in a variety of artistic creation activities.

The content of Chinese family education usually includes moral education, intellectual education, physical education as well as aesthetic education; however, parents tend to place intellectual education in an overwhelming position when their children get into school age, which makes the content of family education to go into an unbalanced tendency in China. Chinese parents often buy all kinds of intellectual and interesting reading materials for their children to practice their children's ability of listening, speaking, writing and calculating as soon as children attend the kindergarten. After their children start to receive the school education, family education would take on a schoolization tendency accordingly. Chinese parents start to supervise their learning, examine their homework, and buy a large quantity of problem sets for them, because Chinese parents hope that their children can become the strong performer of study in the eyes of others. As for the cultivation of children's interest, now more and more parents gradually have

realized that it is really vital for their children to own any kind of special acquirement. As a result, Chinese parents are engaged in starting to train their children's artistic talent blindly. For example, Chinese parents take all kinds of drawing classes dancing classes as well as music classes for their children, and children are forced to study these classes. These parents are eager for quick success and instant benefit will not only ignore the real interest of children but also aggregate psychological burden of children owing to spending a lot of time and money. By contrast, American education has an abundant and scientific system, while the content of Chinese education is relatively narrow and not reasonable.

1.2 The Educational Model

Educational model is concrete measure and method for parents accomplishing educational content. American family is based on democratic and equal educational model, while this democratic and equal educational model in china is insufficient.

In American family, parents pay more attention to the way of getting along with their children freely and equally. Parents regard their children, and value giving more personal autonomous right for children so that their children can make decisions personally and independently solve all kinds of problem faced in life. American parents regard their children as the independent individual. They give more regards and understandings for their children, and at the same time, parents spare many times to communicate with their children as much as possible to listen to their heartfelt wishes. In front of their parents, children can speak out freely and express whatever they want to say. When children have said some uncommon opinion, American parents will give some awards for children. In addition, American parents are delighted to praise their children in front of others, because they think that it's an effective way to build up the confidence of children. They adopt a free but not rainless method for their children based on the purpose of enhancing children's ability of independent living. Besides, American parents try to provide some chances and conditions which benefit them a lot for children as soon as they are born. American parents not only take children's learning ability seriously, but also let their children to get more chances to choose whatever they like do. For example, American children own some little places where they can store personal clothing, learning tools and toys when they are young. They can clean their own houses as well as fix up their own little world in person. Parents often put forward some suggestions and warn them on the side instead of taking care of everything of their children. In addition, American parents often encourage them to do household duty in daily life. Parents hope that their children who are from childhood could have a sense of independence and form a good habit of loving labor through their own labor. However, Chinese parents aren't aware of this. Parents always mean authority for their children in China, with family education influenced by the traditional sense of family. In the eyes of Chinese parents, children are always small kids and they will never grow older. Besides they also think that the guidance will last many years until children graduate from school. In addition, children should obey family rule parents drew up, and be obedient to the will of parents in China. What's more, Chinese parents also like to manage everything of their children, such as clothing, food, shelter, means of traveling and so on. Therefore, Chinese children need not do any housework. The cause of this phenomenon is because parents often view household duty as their own thing in the eyes of Chinese parents, and they hold that the central task of children is learning, and if they can achieve a high mark, their children will have a good fate in the future.

1.3 The Educational Purpose

The main purpose of Chinese is to make children become talents, and then they will find a decent and high-pay job in the future, at the same time, parents hope that their children will spend their whole life in favorable circumstances. Due to this kind of demanding and utilitarian purpose, Chinese parents are particularly concerned about academic records of children. In their views parents hold that if you achieve a high mark, you can have a good fate in the future. However, in the process of cultivation Chinese children's talents are often ignored and the creativity of them are also bounded to some extent, thus things often go contrary to parents' wishes. In other words, parts of whose hopes are dashed.

In comparison, the purpose of American education is to cultivate them to become a social man who can adopt themselves to all kinds of complex living environment and live on their own life well. American parents believe that the purpose of education is to prepare for how to live rather than how to earn their money. They emphasize a kind of value to mound Neoma, which has nothing to do with utility and occupation. American parents really value children's personal practice such as the exercise of labor and quality, but the most important thing for children is to learn how to overcome obstacles, strengthen courage and find personal unique skills in complex condition. Only in this way can they step into society smoothly.

1.4 The Educational Effect

The effects of family education in the two countries also display evident differences because of the differences of education purposes, methods as well as contents. The difference of educational result between China and America are mainly reflected in five aspects, and these differences are as follows: Firstly, most American children can adapt to the society more smoothly than most of Chinese children. American children can overcome setbacks and difficulties more easily when they get into some trouble of life. Secondly, compared with independent American children, Chinese children have particularly much requirements and strong dependence, and they always want to get attention and care from others when they face some setbacks. Thirdly, because of parents' overprotection, Chinese children have few abilities of personal interaction. They are poor at getting along well with other people, while American children are opposite at this point. Fourthly a lot of American children lack a sense of responsibility to support their parents in comparison with Chinese children. Finally, the relationship among Chinese family members is more harmony than that among American family members. The relationship of Chinese family is very close; however, family members look like separated individuals in America.

2. The Reasons of the Difference of Family Education

2.1 Historical Background

In the latter half of the 19th century America became the first great economic power in the world. Prosperous economy provides a solid foundation as well as objective conditions for the innovation and development of education. In the golden age, a lot of industrial entrepreneurs devoting themselves to activities of charity have collected a lot of money for schools, which contributes much to the prosperity of American education business. However, although the economy of China has made great progress, modern education business was just starting in 1990s. In addition, China with a long history has a sort of cohesive and conservative sense of worth, which is lack of spirits of adventure and innovative consciousness. There is a shortage of environment in which people can accept current ideas. By contraries, America is a nation of immigrants that has a brief history, there remains so little traditional culture. With the influence of

multi culture and sense of worth, it is very easy to accept new thoughts and culture for American, so American children are better at taking risks and innovating than Chinese children.

2.2 Economic Foundation

The productivity power of America is so advanced that American people live a small survival pressure because society provides many employment posts for them. What's more, America is a competence society where employment mechanism is very sound and labor force circulates freely, therefore American people own an open and free job-choosing view. They can choose to job-hop anytime and anywhere. American parents hold that it's not necessary for them to divide occupation into different ranks, low or high, if their children can establish themselves in society in the future. The purpose of American parents' education aims mainly at the cultivation of people. In addition, its content also covers a wider range than the content of China.

While China has a large population and the productivity power of it is weaker than America's. There is a big gap between city and country of China. Some places in broad rural underdeveloped region still suffer the problem of food and clothing. They are far away from modern civilization. What's more, there is also a huge gap between the working class and the upper class. Therefore, attending university is the only way for the people who urgently need to change their fate. Therefore, Chinese parents' minds are deeply restrained by the idea "nothing is lofty except reading books", thus, the purpose of Chinese parents' education pays more attention to children' becoming talent in the future. (Talent means one person can achieve high marks, gain a higher educational background, and have a promising future in China).

2.3 Thinking Model

American people value rationalism. Its family education is based on the principle of rationalism to treat family members and affairs. American parents regard the responsibility of bringing up children as the equal obligation of society that parents should do, which is beyond the individual standpoint. And American parents do not treat family education from the interest of family itself or parents themselves. Since American people think that it is their obligation to bring up children, they will not expect to get some things in return from their children. Entering nursing home should be their best result when they become older, they think.

However, China is a society where people pay more attention to the people's feelings and attachment. Family education of China is based on human relationship, so Chinese people tend to regard people's emotion as a principle to treat interpersonal relation of family members. Chinese parents view their children as their private property and educate their children from the point of fame and pension for the aged, so there is no wonder why the idea that Chinese parents hold high hopes for their children is more popular in China than in America. In other words, this is why Chinese people tend to make education become more utilitarian than American education.

3. The Suggestions for Chinese Family Education

First, Chinese parents should transform the view of family education. According to a recent survey, 90% teenagers in shanghai are not satisfied with their parents, and 70% students think their parents not really understand and learn them well. Why are there a vast number of children who don't like their parents? In my opinion, the key of the problem is closely related to parents' idea of education and method of education. There are several various kinds of parents 'view as follows: First, affiliation of their children: In China there is no doubt that children belong to their parents. The only thing that children can do is to obey parents' will. While in America,

children are an independent individual, belonging to parents. They can have own interest, choice, privacy and social circle. Second, limited responsibility and unlimited responsibility: In China all things about children are nearly taken off by their parents from childhood to adulthood of children. For example, parents help do cooking, washing, cleaning, and other things. Chinese parents are very willing to do these things, as long as their children can study well and obtain excellent results. In American parents only take on partial responsibility. They will not take of all things about children. In reverse, children must do some household duty at home. Through the comparison of differences between America and China above, people can make a conclusion that as parents, they need not take on all responsibilities of children. They should let them know their self-value, and get them to learn how to control and administrate themselves on their own.

Second, Chinese should change the model of family education. At first, Chinese should transform the strict educational model into their loose educational model, and transform closed education into open education, not redundantly controlling act of children. Second, Chinese parents should encourage and praise them as much as possible rather than blindly protect or criticize them. When children are in face of obstacles and difficulties, as parents, they should give them some guidance and encouragement in time. Sometimes, maybe a word parents said, for example, "Don't lose heart", "Never giving up or", "you will do it again", "You well done!" can cheer up children and strengthen their confidence. And at the same time parents also become the inspirator and instructor of children. Thirdly, conduct children as much as possible rather than unduly infuse them. Now cramming method of teaching is severely criticized by many teachers and educational experts, because students can only memorize mechanically some knowledge which severely breaks away from reality, and they cannot apply this knowledge learned into practice well. They are short of thinking capacity and innovation ability seriously, thus Chinese parents should pay more attention to the heuristic education, value personality development as well as operating ability and thinking ability of every student. For example, you can say that to your children: "Why does it cause this phenomenon?", "What is your opinion about it?" and "What will you do?" etc.

Third, Chinese parents should value the importance of communication with their children. Communication with your children can build up a bridge that links parents and their children. Parents can understand their children if they want to communicate with their children, and they can know how to encourage them do things that they should do, and guide them to distinguish between right and wrong based on communication. Firstly, parents should use a kind of equal method and try to put themselves in children's position to think problems. Only in this way can Chinese parents achieve the communication with their children, and make further progress in strengthening children's growth and study. Secondly, try to make friends with your children and not to put on airs. Educational experts hold that you could be a qualified parent unless you would like to make friends with your children, however, many parents always like to put on airs in front of their children and blindly ask their children to obey their will and demand. This kind of educational method only forms a gap between children and parents. In addition, it will exert a negative influence on enhancing children's confidence. For example, they tend to become shy and even timid, therefore, we can make a conclusion that contact between children and parents should be based on democracy and equality rather than autarchy. At last, we should listen to the inner voice of children as much as possible. Why does God make human beings have two ears and a mouth rather than an ear and two mouths? As a matter of fact, it means that human beings should

listen to what other people said. However, most people like to say much rather than listen in daily life, which is could be a common phenomenon that when parents communicate with their children they will not listen to inner voice of children. Thus, how to listen to their children becomes a required course of parents. Listening to others not only needs ears, but also the heart. Only in this way can parents learn real idea of children as well as find and further solve the problems in the process of growth of children.

Conclusion

Different educational purposes and methods generate two kinds of entirely different educational effect. It is very clear for us to distinguish which one is better than the other one. To enhance competitive ability of China in the world, Chinese must strengthen the quality of talents, which needs us to pay more attention to the family education. Recently being a hotspot of nowadays society, family education relates to vital interests and urgent needs of people. A good family education is not only directly concerned with quality and morality of children, but also the future of a country, and it is an important part of strategy of rejuvenating China through science and technology and sustainable development. Family education is deeply affected by thousands of years feudal thought in China. They are deeply influenced by Confucianism of China either the value views of parents or the content as well as method of family education. However, with the successful practice of the policy of opening-up and reform as well as change of Chinese social construction, some traditional educational idea, method, content of family education doesn't keep same pace with modern family education of China. Thus, Chinese should carry forward Chinese thousands of years excellent culture and civilization, at the same time learn some cultural differences between China and America. What's more, Chinese should think about advantages and disadvantages of family education between China and America, absorb the essence of family education between the two countries, and try to find an optimal joint point of them. Last but not least, Chinese should also consciously alter laggard educational idea, enrich educational content, extend educational field, and improve educational methods and ways. Only in this way can Chinese advance reform and development of Chinese education, and cultivate an eligible as well as all-round generation.

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