

# On the Educational Significance of Dewey's Experience View

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## ABSTRACT

Dewey's experience view discusses the new connotation of experience on the basis of the transformation of the original concept of experience. He thinks that the starting point of education growth is experience, and the final point of education is the constant transformation of experience. The enlightenment of Dewey's experience view is that we should attach importance to the role of teachers in the process of students' learning knowledge, and pay attention to the unity of students' initiative and passivity in learning knowledge.

**Keywords:** Dewey, Experience, Education.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

American John Dewey (Dewey, 1859-1952) is the greatest educator in the history of modern education. The impact of his educational theory on the world has to do with his exposition of experience. On the basis of critically absorbing the traditional educational experience view, Dewey constructed his own experience view and made it the core of his educational philosophy. "Education is due to experience, for experience and belongs to experience." [1] This paper reveals Dewey's view of experience and its significance to education through the exposition of experience in Dewey's works.

## 2. INTERPRETATION OF DEWEY'S VIEWS OF EXPERIENCE

On the basis of his criticism of the traditional view of experience, Dewey set out from the view of pragmatism, this paper reinterprets the concept of experience and constructs a new educational concept based on experience. In democracy and education, Dewey criticizes the rationalist school formed since ancient Greece and the sensationalist view of experience formed since modern times. The rationalists believe that experience is related to the actual events of life, is unstable and constantly changing, and can not provide us with a universal understanding. On the contrary, the rational world of human beings is stable and regular. Only under the guidance of the law of the rational world can

the empirical world develop and be controlled orderly and steadily. Therefore, the value of experience is lower than the value of reason, and often becomes the opposite of reason. Therefore, the expression of rationalism in education is the contempt of "Practical discipline" and the importance of "Knowledge discipline". However, the empiricists formed since modern times have criticized the rationalists and recognized the great role of experience in human cognition. The rationalists emphasized that human beings obtain experience through the senses, and neglected human reason and emotion, think of experience as pure cognition. Dewey's critique of the emphasis on "Intuitive teaching" and "Functional training" has led to a new interpretation of experience. Experience is something that is constantly changing and moving forward, it is inextricably linked to other things, experience is the result of action and acceptance of action, it is practical, not cognitive. [2] "We have to know things based on experience, in our interaction with the environment to constantly change our understanding of the environment, through the cognitive adjustment of our activities." [3] Therefore, Dewey's empirical connotation includes the active and passive interaction of subject and object.

### 2.1 Dewey's Lessons

First of all, Dewey believes that experience is the source of all true education. In democracy and

education, Dewey points out that both the common and personal experiences of human beings are the source of education. The basis of human education is personal experience. Therefore, learning materials should be organized according to the experience of the child during the educational process. If the teaching material in the teaching process has no connection with the original experience of the child, and only relies on the direct rational power of the child and neglects the experiential knowledge, it is a kind of study that can not play a role in students' later life, which is separated from the reality of society. Second, Dewey argues that the learner's original experience is the starting point for education, which constructs the link between the learner's original experience and future experience, and that education should analyze the child's background experience, select experiences that will enable you to be creative later in life and use them as the basis for new experiences that provide the basis for educational growth.

## ***2.2 The Constant Development of Experience Is the End Point of Education***

Dewey was opposed to treating the experience acquired by a child in the moment as fixed, because such experience would not be emancipated and developed. The acquisition and utilization of human knowledge is realized through experience. Experience should grow as a person grows. But the continued development of this experience requires direction and support. The primary function of education is such guidance, education to guide children's needs to continue learning, so that children's experience can be sustained development. From here we can see that the continuous development of children's experience is the final point of education. As a bridge between education and practice, experience makes a close connection between education and the world of life.

## **3. A MEASURE OF THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF EXPERIENCE**

Dewey stresses the continuity of human activities and the interaction between human activities and the environment, and points out that the educational significance of experience can only promote human growth by considering these two conditions. The continuity and interaction of

experience are regarded as two criteria to measure the educational significance of experience.

### ***3.1 The Continuity of Experience***

The continuity of experience is first and foremost based on habit. Habits include attitudes, emotions, and reason, which are our responses to various situations in our lives. Everyone has learned something from the past experience, and to some extent affects the future experience of learning. The continuity of life growth is the benefit of this continuous development in practice experience. However, not all experiences have the nature of education, and some experiences have the wrong role of guidance, limiting the growth of human experience in the future. So Dewey makes a point of identifying where experience is driving. In Dewey's view, educators should first take on the task of identifying the direction of experience. Educators should draw on a wealth of insights and mature experience, and draw on all valuable experiences to help children organize their experiences. Secondly, educators should have the ability of insight and reflection in the teaching process in order to understand children's mind. Thirdly, educators should make use of the effective indirect experience to improve the teaching effect. Make yourself an effective teacher. Only in this way, education can effectively promote the growth of children's experience.

The generative value of educational modernization runs through the whole process of evaluation. The subject comprehends the theory of educational modernization and participates in its practice, the interaction between the subject and the subject makes the concept of value constantly redefined. For example, in the early days of educational modernization, the concept of universal access to education took a large proportion, and with further development, the concept was gradually marginalized, and it is possible that at some future time, will not be counted as the idea of educational modernization. From the perspective of the great historical flood, the definition and understanding of the value concept of educational modernization will be changed and may be replaced by the new value concept, for example, the modernization of educational governance has become a new hotspot instead of the modernization of educational management. In other words, the existence of absolute value is being questioned, but this raises the more vexing question of what to do with relativism of value when there is no such thing;

Since the value is always in a relative state, how to build a stable ideal form of educational modernization? However, the value of educational modernization lies precisely in the change and the generation and creativity. It also shows that it is possible to reconstruct based on one's own cultural tradition, which brings hope to the localization of educational modernization in the non-western world. Another possible solution is to pay attention to the historical consensus of values, through adjustment, transformation and innovation, to form at a certain stage of the appropriate framework of values of educational modernization.

The long history of educational modernization, the many fields it covers, the complex problems it involves, and the many subjects it involves, make the evaluation of educational modernization not a simple problem, the government-led monitoring and evaluation alone can not deal with these complexities, nor can it promote the modernization of education. The process of value discussion is the process of dealing with differences and disputes, and also the process of defining the value standard of educational modernization evaluation. The obvious feature of the educational reform is that the educational theory not only exists in the Ivory Tower of colleges and universities, but also is accepted, understood and even created by front-line educators. Therefore, whether it is to discuss the actual problems or to choose the theory, we must pay attention to the understanding, cognition and perception of the front-line educators. The modern understanding of education of teachers and principals is not perceptual and random, but rational knowledge with own understanding, this is the basic support of China's educational modernization from "Theory-oriented" to "Practice-oriented". The evaluation of educational modernization should not only change the top-down evaluation mode led by the government in the past, but also fully allow the participation of many subjects (including parents, students, teachers, social organizations, etc.) , listen to, respect and value their voices, talk, communicate and negotiate on an equal footing, constantly deal with conflicts, and then clarify the values of China's educational modernization, but we should avoid the mainstream and non-mainstream as the criteria of negotiation, to prevent the monopoly of certain values.

### ***3.2 The Interaction of Education***

The interaction of experience refers to the interaction of internal and external conditions of

experience. Education in the past was either internal or external. Dewey argues that context is different from environment, which refers to the objective world we live in, and context, which refers to the inner needs of children with certain experiences. It is not the environment but the situation that forms the interaction with people. The generation of experience must be based on the interaction between situation and people. In Dewey's educational thought, he combined the two, on the one hand, he should pay attention to the students' internal condition, that is, the subjective condition, on the other hand, he should pay attention to the objective condition. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the educator to guide the students to take into account the adaptation of subjective and objective conditions, and to take into account the learning objectives and abilities of the students when selecting experiences conducive to the growth of the students, it is necessary to constantly adjust the external conditions and create situations that enable students to have direct experience. At the same time, we should pay attention to the teaching of indirect experience.

The value orientation of educational modernization evaluation urges us to pay attention to the deepest educational problems in the field of practice, at the same time, it can reflect the ideal form of modern education and outline the gap between ideal and reality, with the intervention of experts, schools at all levels are urged to explore the possible paths between "Means and ends" and "Conditions and results".[4] Unlike the monitoring and evaluation imposed on schools by external forces, the valuable evaluation of educational modernization can promote the self-awakening of educators, promote passive, negative task behavior to active, positive change behavior change. The major may lead to a systematic and comprehensive reform of regional or school educational practice, while the minor may affect teachers' educational ideas and daily educational behavior. In practice, every kind of subtle and daily educational modernization of teachers is fresh, especially for the realization of some values. For example, the realization of educational process equity depends on the way teachers treat students and specific teaching behavior, and its significance can not be ignored because of its small.

Thinking about the essence, process and function of educational modernization evaluation is not only a starting point but also a fundamental problem, which will affect the choice of evaluation orientation, evaluation method and procedure, will

bring about changes and transformations in the entire assessment paradigm. In the evaluation of educational modernization based on value judgment, we can not only understand the development level of educational modernization in China, it also creates a new channel to discover the demand, desire and expectation of the subject of educational practice for modern education, an expectation that contains a more profound, more valuable and better ideal education, and in many consultations, communication and practice of this expectation gradually into reality. In this mode of educational modernization, the demand and the value expectation of the subject are the core problems to be dealt with in educational modernization, but in the field of education to students, teachers and principals as the main body. In a sense, this way of education modernization, which is led by evaluation and guided by bottom-up value, is different from the technology-and investment-driven education modernization in early-developing countries. China's modernization from the early with a strong western color, gradually "Westernization", [5] stumbling, rolling, in the new century, China is taking a road of educational modernization which is different from the west but more "Educational flavor" and more "Chinese characteristics".

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The revelation of experience plays an important role in Dewey's educational thought. Experience permeates the whole process of education. This kind of experience education has important enlightenment to our modern education.

First of all, in the teaching process, it is to promote students in the learning process of the initiative and passivity of the combination. Because children's practice, wisdom and ability have great limitations, and children's indirect experience is also narrow, so the teaching process must be inculcated.[6] To promote children to learn indirect experience, which has a greater role in promoting the growth of children. Second, in Dewey's view, to promote the growth of the mind and body of students is the fundamental goal of education. The teaching materials used in the course reflect the social experience and historical experience of human beings, and are the media of Students' growth. But the fixed teaching materials can not combine the students' initiative and passivity in learning experience. In order to make students have a free learning atmosphere, students must be given

the initiative to learn. Make the learning process a free experience.

In addition, Dewey points out that in order for children to learn experiences effectively, the role of teachers must be valued. On the basis of students' original experience, teachers should construct the situation that can help students to think. This new situation can cultivate children's judgment and observation, and promote their learning of future experience. In this process, the educator should become the promoter and the guide of the children's experience.

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