

# ***Education Should Not Be Superficially Appealing: An Analysis of Behavioral Intervention Techniques in "Little Red Flowers"***

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**Abstract:** The film "Little Red Flowers" reflects the drawbacks of educational management in the last century. By analyzing the underlying behavioral intervention techniques and educational approaches of teachers depicted in the film, this paper aims to reflect on the theories and practices of intervention techniques in the context of modern education. It explores more appropriate methods to help students lay a foundation for holistic development. The analysis is conducted from two perspectives: the lack of "reason" and the lack of "love." This paper examines the means and issues of teachers' behavioral intervention techniques, pointing out the harm caused to students' physical and mental health by education under egoistic and authoritarian contexts. "The essence of education is a tree shaking another tree, a cloud pushing another cloud, a soul awakening another soul." Education should not be superficially appealing; through the analysis of intervention techniques, this paper aims to provide new insights for their correct use and for promoting students' healthy development.

**Keywords:** "Little Red Flowers", Behavioral Intervention Techniques, Education, Student Development

## **1. Introduction**

As Neil Postman stated, "It is painful and embarrassing to have to watch the innocence, plasticity, and curiosity of children gradually deteriorate and then distort into the inferior faces of pseudo-adults, and it is especially sad." [1] The film showcases an education system lacking in affection, improper intervention techniques, and rough, rigid management methods. These seem to build strict walls of rules and systems, yet they homogenize children into "one-size-fits-all" individuals.

In fact, "Little Red Flowers" not only exposes the shortcomings of kindergarten education management in the last century but also provides a broad platform for reflection through the analysis of its underlying behavioral intervention techniques. It allows us to criticize current issues, learn from experience, and acquire effective intervention methods, truly allowing children to thrive in happiness and freedom. The following text combines theory and practice to analyze the behavioral intervention techniques in "Little Red Flowers" and offers insights and reflections.

## **2. Intervention Techniques Lacking "Reason"**

### **2.1. Lack of Theoretical Foundation**

Early childhood is a critical period for rapid and foundational development in a person's life, where psychological and behavioral issues cannot be overlooked. The question of how to intervene in young children's behavior during early education is crucial. Effective intervention must be based on understanding and mastering the laws governing the development of young children's psychological behavior, enabling targeted and highly operational education and intervention that align with scientific principles and support child development.[2]

Therefore, the proper implementation of behavioral intervention techniques relies on teachers' accurate grasp of early childhood psychological health theories. In the film, not only is the application of these techniques inappropriate, but there is also a lack of relevant theoretical knowledge on child psychological health. For instance, according to social learning theory, the establishment and modification of children's behavior occur through learning and repeated reinforcement, forming conditioned responses. However, in the film, Teacher Li's harsh and aggressive behavior subtly impacts the children, leading to the gradual emergence of violent tendencies and sowing the seeds of violence through imitation.

### **2.2. Reinforcement Techniques**

In psychology, reinforcement refers to the strengthening of a psychological requirement through social benefits, which in turn reinforces the social behavior associated with this requirement.[3] The film positively demonstrates the use of positive reinforcement: praising children for developing normative behaviors and using social reinforcements, such as teacher praise and encouragement. The "little red flower" system is a typical example of positive reinforcement, used by teachers to establish kindergarten rules and regulations. When children perform well, they are rewarded with little red flowers as a form of positive reinforcement; otherwise, they receive none, aiming to reduce undesirable behavior. Through positive emotional experiences and the anticipation of receiving red flowers, children gradually develop good behavioral habits and reinforce excellent regulations.

However, there are several issues with the use of this behavioral intervention technique:

1. The "little red flower" is used as a tool for regulation and motivation, but the reward standards are inconsistent, influenced by teachers' personal feelings and authority. For example, when Fang Qiangqiang pouts and asks, "Why didn't I get a little red flower?" the response is, "You didn't perform well enough." Yet, even after meeting the standards on his second attempt, he still did not receive positive encouragement and education from the teacher. This inconsistency leaves him feeling more wronged and sad, planting the seeds for future rebellious behavior and hindering the development of good habits and judgment.

2. The "little red flower" gradually becomes a symbol of honor, losing its original educational significance. While it appears to uphold the kindergarten's reward and punishment system, it carries a negative connotation of competition and authority. Children's pursuit of the red flower is blind, lacking an understanding of correct behavior. When Qianqian wins with five red flowers, the admiration from other children is driven by a pursuit of honor, rather than an intrinsic motivation to develop good habits. When Wang Ruohai's father visits as a leader, the red flowers are used to curry favor and increase arbitrarily.

Therefore, in the film, the "little red flower" serves as an external reinforcement and honor, but the focus should be on cultivating children's intrinsic motivation and good behavior. Without fair and encouraging use of positive reinforcement by teachers, the educational purpose and significance of

the "little red flower" are skewed, diminishing the positive impact of behavioral interventions on children.

### 2.3. Punishment Techniques

In the educational process, teachers can choose intervention strategies, with reinforcement-based strategies being the first choice and producing ideal long-term results. However, teachers may (intentionally or unintentionally) choose punishment-based interventions as a quick solution to reduce challenging behavior.[4] Notably, the film presents various uses of punishment techniques, but the most distressing is the use of "temporary isolation" or confinement. Fang Qiangqiang's leading of disruptive behavior without remorse indeed warrants punishment, but the teachers fail to master the art and direction of punishment.

Firstly, the choice of punishment should be carefully considered and implemented as a targeted response. Fang Qiangqiang's mischievous behavior and refusal to admit wrongdoing stem from the teachers' long-term lack of loving encouragement and education, gradually fostering rebellion. Labeling him as a "bad apple" and resorting to corporal punishment is unreasonable.

Secondly, the choice of punishment should be personalized, considering the child's character and past behavior. Fang Qiangqiang is a somewhat mischievous and rebellious child; inappropriate confinement may significantly increase his rebelliousness, rendering the punishment ineffective.

Thirdly, punishment should have educational significance and purpose. Corporal punishment should be a last resort; in the film, the teacher does not address the mistake, consider the child's personality, or understand the context, directly confining Fang Qiangqiang, making the punishment meaningless.

Lastly, it is worth reflecting on Principal Kong's use of "social exclusion" as a response cost punishment. Sacrificing children's emotional needs, neglecting their emotional development, and ignoring their personality traits, this punishment and the guidance given to other children undoubtedly deepen Fang Qiangqiang's sense of insecurity and isolation, making it unfair and unloving.

Thus, the choice of punishment should be based on an educational perspective, incorporating the "educational stance." This includes considering whether to punish and how to punish while always keeping the "purpose and mission of education" in mind.[5] As Foucault noted, the harshest punishment is not inflicted on the body but on the soul. In the film's ending, the walls that Qiangqiang wants to escape symbolize the barriers to healthy psychological and personality development caused by the teachers' lack of love and care, urging us to carefully and wisely use punishment techniques.

## 3. Intervention Techniques Lacking "Love"

In the second part, the author analyzed the behavioral intervention techniques in "Little Red Flowers" that lack "reason." However, behind these various intervention techniques, we can also see the absence of "love" in the educational and intervention methods.

### 3.1. Influence of Authoritarianism

In "Little Red Flowers," we can clearly see the rigid walls of rules constructed by teachers and the social system, which precisely constrain the children. The use of intervention techniques by teachers also stems from the purpose of maintaining authority.

For instance, in the use of reinforcement techniques, the "little red flower" becomes an item that can be arbitrarily increased or decreased during leadership inspections. In the use of punishment techniques, teachers more often adopt the method of "confinement" from an authoritarian perspective rather than correctly guiding Fang Qiangqiang's swearing behavior. Principal Kong uses her authority to command children to "isolate" their peers. Under such authoritarian intervention techniques, Fang

Qiangqiang imagines Teacher Li as a monster, which essentially reflects an imbalance in education and intervention.

### 3.2. Impatient Education

"You just wait; no one will help you." "You need to learn to dress yourself." "You must develop this habit." In the film, we hear many similar statements. They seem to be intervening in children's behavior, helping them develop good habits, but the intervention techniques are tainted with impatience. Teachers aim to cultivate children's daily hygiene habits through "shaping" methods but fail to provide continuous encouragement during the intervention process. Instead of nurturing good behavior with small steps towards a big goal, they adopt a "forcing growth" approach.

### 3.3. Influence of Selfishness

When education is tainted with too much selfishness, it inevitably becomes utilitarian and filled with personal desires.[6] Intervening in children's behavior should be based on "love," continuously identifying children's problems and using intervention techniques to solve them. However, in the film, the use of intervention techniques by teachers—such as reinforcement, extinction, and punishment—does not clarify the purpose of the intervention or clearly state the children's problems. Instead, it is driven by the teachers' convenience in managing the children, establishing authority, and imposing harsh expectations and stringent requirements on them.

Although the educational system and its implementation in the film differ from reality, the selfish educational system and specific implementations have their limitations and deficiencies.[7] Teacher Li violently cuts Qiangqiang's braid, ignores the children's needs and abilities, and uses verbal violence as an intervention. She fails to recognize Qiangqiang's positive traits and nurture and shape the children with love. Hence, her demonized portrayal in the film symbolizes the aberration in education caused by a lack of love in interventions. Principal Kong's punishment of making other children not play with Fang Qiangqiang also stems from her failure to recognize the children's emotional needs. "Education is a soul awakening another soul, and love is the driving force of education." We should analyze the historical limitations of intervention techniques from a comprehensive and developmental perspective. This also enlightens us that the starting point and endpoint of using behavioral intervention techniques should be discovering and shaping children with love.

## 4. Conclusion and Insights

In this paper, the author has analyzed the behavioral intervention techniques in "Little Red Flowers" that lack "reason" and "love." Reflecting on the words and actions of the teachers in the film, we can see their expectation for students to develop good habits and their partial use of correct intervention techniques. However, more prominently, we observe unmastered intervention methods and techniques, rough handling, and a lack of loving encouragement and praise. Education cannot be superficially appealing.

Fang Qiangqiang seeks attention and love but gradually becomes rebellious under negative criticism and punishment. His clear realization, "We can't beat Teacher Li," and rebellious statement, "No one taught me to swear," prompt us to consider the deeper issue: the lack of theoretical foundation in intervention techniques and the absence of loving education lead to the suppression of children's natural tendencies.

The story of the film is set in the last century, but as teachers in the new era, we need to constantly reflect on the theories and the art of implementing behavioral intervention techniques. "The essence

of education is a tree shaking another tree, a cloud pushing another cloud, a soul awakening another soul." The skillful use of behavioral intervention techniques is a long-term and challenging task.

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