

The Present Situation of China's Art Education in Primary and Secondary Schools

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Abstract: With the rapid development of present society, the demand of quality education of social talents is getting higher and higher. Not only for the traditional cultural curriculum, moreover, artistic and cultural attainments have an increasingly important impact on social work. For example, there are more and more jobs, such as original painters, exhibition staff, gallery workers and so on. These jobs require candidates have a certain degree of artistic accomplishment, artistic appreciation as well as a considerable extent of artistic practice ability. Although under the influence of the “double reduction” policy, the proportion of art courses such as music, fine arts and physical education has increased to a certain extent. However, these measures are too superficial, educational policy makers do not actually put art education as important as traditional culture courses. In addition, some regions have woken up to the problem and increased the proportion of arts courses. But this action is still too superficial, which confining art in both the inherent knowledge and theoretical framework. Furthermore, it fails to give play to students' self-perception and creativity of art.

Keywords: reform, teacher, art educational, prejudice

1. Introduction

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the Party and the country have attached great importance to aesthetic education in schools. In October 2020, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and The General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening as well as Improving Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era. It pointed out that “By 2035, a comprehensive, diversified and high-quality modern school aesthetic education system with Chinese characteristics will be basically formed.” The aesthetic education courses of the school are mainly art courses, including music, fine arts, calligraphy, dance, drama, opera, film and television courses. It aims to cultivate students' aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice and cultural understanding [1].

2. Status Quo

Art education occupies a low position in the whole subject education and is only arranged as an entertainment course. In addition, the educational content of art course is merely limited to traditional and inherent content. It tends to theoretical knowledge, thus ignoring the creativity and activity of

students' thinking which restricts the development of students' own ability to some extent. Schools do not have high requirements for art teachers with uneven abilities and the fairness of teacher allocation in different regions is still to be discussed. It is generally believed that the economically developed areas of a country will enjoy more and better educational resources. Also, in these economically developed areas, the treatment of teachers is generally more generous. Many excellent teachers are more likely to be attracted by high salaries. So, most talents with excellent abilities choose to work in developed areas. In the same country, the relatively backward regions will be short of teachers as well and the quality of teachers will be deviated from the developed regions comparatively.

Faced with the pressure of college entrance examination, some social personnel have prejudice which against art and consider that it is just a shortcut to avoid the risk of cultural courses. In terms of education, due to the high requirement of enrollment rate, students learn rigid test-taking skills blindly which damages the original aesthetic concept of art to a certain extent [2].

The phenomenon of "dislocation" exists in the development of art. Mainly for students lack the ability of independent participation and innovation as art subjectivity. Parents and schools focus too much on the assessment of students' skills and they lack the exploration of their children's real divergence of thinking. Teachers lack the cultivation of students' aesthetic sensibility in most cases and students' pursuit of the ultimate value of art needs to be improved [3].

The power of digital new media causes aesthetic culture to lose its original uniqueness. Although digital media combines imagination with some artistic reality, it also irrationalize and commercializes aesthetic quality, making aesthetic quality quantified which subject to the control of interests. Meanwhile, the deficiency of students' aesthetic cognitive and practical ability will lead to the transformation of aesthetic education from a high level of free thought expression to a low level of skills and tools. The individual's self-perception is greatly reduced. At present, the comprehensive ability evaluation system of art aesthetics in primary and secondary schools is lacking. At the same time, the sensitivity and concept cognition of art aesthetics need to be improved [4].

2.1. School Education

2.1.1. Teachers

Teachers' own ability and professional quality need to be improved. Because basic skills are the basis of teaching and educating students. For example, professional and theoretical knowledge, personal and comprehensive ability, different skills within the same discipline ("symbiotic" discipline), classroom management ability and the ability to control teaching methods and presentation [3].

In the field of drama education, the distribution of teacher teams is not reasonable, and the particularity of the subject determines the single strength of teachers to some extent. Teachers' social individual comprehensive ability needs to be improved. In the process of communicating with students, it is easy to produce problems such as lack of professional knowledge. Teachers who engaged in the field of art should be involved in all aspects of knowledge related to art, not just confined to their own professional field [4]. In some areas, teachers in the main course hold multiple positions at the same time which fails to meet students' artistic needs in an in-depth and way accurately [5]. A teacher should learn not only the professional knowledge and skills of the cultural class, but also the content of the art class. Theoretically speaking, the two are not very different. Both are the superposition of theoretical knowledge and practical ability. However, people's energy is limited. What's more, art is a field that requires learners to have certain talent and devote a lot of time. Artists can become artists finally because they not only have a certain sense of art, but also need years and months of practice and accumulation. Subject teachers hold multiple positions at the same time which means they need to spread their focus across different parts of the curriculum. This will make

teachers learn broadly but superficially, failing to meet the requirements of students who want to concentrate on their major area of study.

2.1.2. Educational Concept

Compared with the flexibility of aesthetic education in universities, primary and secondary schools put more attention on the cultivation of art education and schools over-pursue students' artistic skills. For example, in the scope of music and art classes in primary and secondary schools, the breadth and depth of artistic education thinking are too limited.

Aesthetic education, as the crystallization of human aesthetic teaching and artistic aesthetic teaching is supposed to develop students' ability to feel and create beauty through multi-level and multi-dimensional teaching methods. Governments also make the educational goal more inclined to cultivate the independent aesthetic sentiment of young people in the new era. Art education should be rose to a new height instead of limiting to the field of teaching. That is art "aesthetic education", with "virtue" and "beauty" throughout all aspects of art education. The fundamental task of aesthetic education in schools is a reasonable way to cultivate comprehensive talents with all-round development of morality, intelligence, body, beauty and labor. Art education provides educational means and direction for realizing the goal of quality education in China. Therefore, more diversified educational forms and ideas can be used and absorbed by students [6]. No matter in what kind of art field, such as dance, fine arts or drama and so on. Art education should uphold the idea of educating people by virtue. Teachers need to be in awe of their profession, putting the goal of teaching and educating people in the absolute leadership position of work. More importantly, giving an end to the utilitarian industry chaos. So, teachers are supposed to show positive energy to students and avoid showing bad emotions.

The concept of educating people by virtue is infiltrated into the teaching method and students are helped to build up the tenacious spirit to overcome difficulties. In addition, students' psychological education is very important. Traditional preaching and influence cannot cure students' psychological pressure in learning. Therefore, teachers should give students personalized performance opportunities and language affirmation in class which aims to give full play to students' individual autonomy [7].

2.1.3. Curriculum Setting

The existing problems of integrating art curriculum into art classroom teaching in primary and secondary schools, taking local opera art culture as an example. First of all, the teaching method of art is too formalized. Instead of improving the ideological consciousness of art educators, they treat art as a kind of entertainment project which fails to connect the theoretical knowledge of art with students well. Secondly, the innovation of teaching should be improved, and the application of multimedia digital teaching methods should be encouraged to use. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen the teaching decision-making ability of art aesthetic education and the cultivation of talents in the field of professional art education [8].

Schools usually lack a thorough understanding of art curriculum, so they are supposed to strengthen the all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical education, beauty, and labor. In that case, students can be more adept in integrating with other courses and stimulate the potential of art in the process of education. At the same time, art courses should be selected according to students' self-interest orientation rather than generalized to the curriculum as a sample. In the same way, individual aesthetic quality and value ought to be taught on the basis of their aptitude. The practical ability of students in art classes should become a point of focus for education policy makers. The practical ability is linked to the efficiency of life which can be made use of digital multimedia technology [9].

2.2. Social Education (Cram Institutions)

Under the “double reduction” policy, the proportion of arts education in schools has increased. But this is only superficial phenomenon because of the frequent changes made in the training of cultural subjects. In the current stage of the development of high-quality talent education, parents will pay more attention to children’s artistic development naturally, putting emphasis on the all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical beauty and labor. Because all-round development tends to stimulate children’s independent innovation and imagination which help them to explore and learn other subjects, changing their aesthetic attitude and aesthetic taste orientation, improving their aesthetic sensibility.

However, there are still some training institutions, under the guise of cultivating artistic potential in order to take commercial interests as the actual purpose which over-reliance on the embodiment of artistic skills. Judging from the current situation of Chinese parents’ education, parents will try their best to plan their children’s future. Due to the popularity of art exams in China, many parents will take art as one of the most realistic ways to get higher education. Although, some parents know clearly that their children are not interested in art, they ask their children to attend after-school training institutions in order to reduce the pressure of future admission [10]. From this point of view, the social educational nature of art is attributed to one of the most vital means to relieve the educational pressure. The concept of aesthetic education in art education of educating people by virtue will be exhausted.

2.3. Bias

Due to the limitation of their major, most artistic talents belong to the entertainment industry and they are more or less subject to social prejudice. Art education may be regarded as the “fish that escapes the net” of the national quality education, including educational background, professionalism, practicality, professional curriculum setting and so on. Higher education in the field of art is often placed in a position of neglect and the cultural stereotype of art persists for a long time [11].

Compared with the quantifiable part of traditional culture, the more powerful in art is about the tension and expression of subjective emotions. Creativity is the core of social human group. The process of artistic creation is the aesthetic education and the cultivation of artistic accomplishment in beauty finding. When other industries are unable to accurately measure the ability of artists or does not have a deep understanding of the field, the judgment on them may affect the psychological imbalance of the practitioners in the art education system. Thus, causing social contradictions between different groups. This can happen between students who are on their way up to school or among artists who have fallen out of the education system. In view of the overall employment situation in China, art practitioners still account for a minority after all, and the mainstream ideas cannot be guided by artists. Then, the prejudice against art in the society will be launched from a small point and then gain a high voice, which will lead to the prejudice and disregard of the art education industry in the whole working environment.

3. Advice

The local government is advised to issue corresponding policies or appropriations to support the development of art education. These measures can be reflected in encouraging those engaged in art education to improve their comprehensive quality and enrich their research experience. From the perspective of the age of the students, the government’s encouragement of art education which as one of the compulsory courses in primary and secondary schools is a very worthy measure to be included in the scope of education reform. This is because it not only enhances students’ theoretical knowledge, but also enriches their practical ability in the field of art. In addition, in order to standardize the professionalism of art education as a curriculum means, schools and local education departments are

encouraged to carry out basic educational activities so as to influence students' aesthetic education concept subtly from an early age [4].

Taking morally, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic work as an all-round factor to measure artistic quality. Educators should adjust compulsory education from a basic and average state to a high-quality development at first. Then, governments make radical improvements in art education developing atmosphere for school aesthetic education. Based on the aesthetic domain and adapted to the new aesthetic view along with the height of the new era, educators are required not only to be good at discovering the potential aesthetic ability of students, but also to take the high-level aesthetic standards of contemporary social groups as the goal with the purpose of going beyond the aesthetic ideal state. Art educators are supposed to have a clear understanding of the positioning of their own abilities and should not ignore the differences of individual students. It is suggested to teach students in line with their aptitude, bringing their emotions into the scope of reference.

In order to achieve the goal of cultivating students' independent innovation ability and high artistic aesthetic level, making full use of students' enthusiasm in class as well as improving their participation. Practitioners in the field of art should pay more attention to students' deep artistic behavior cultivation and enrich students' artistic sensibility as well as further personality quality. It is the fundamental goal of contemporary art education to cultivate high-quality talents with all-round common development. However, in addition to the knowledge field and skill learning which covered by art education itself, parents should not ignore children's aesthetic aspirations and cultivate children into a high-level social group with independent aesthetic consciousness as well as attitude [5]. Educators are supposed to perfect the evaluation system of art education aesthetics, including the quality of the content, the diversity of the evaluation personnel and the creativity of the evaluation way [7].

4. Conclusion

Indeed, there are many drawbacks in art education, such as lack of teachers, backward courses, imperfect evaluation system, excessive reliance on commissions of skills, and lack of perception of one's own artistic quality.

Today with cultural diversity and highly developed information, art education should be in line with international standards. Traditional teaching modes and methods can no longer meet the needs of the masses for art education. Therefore, new integration arrangements should be made in all aspects of art education. To cultivate comprehensive talents, schools and society should complement each other with their advantages. From the aspects of teacher resources and teaching methods, reasonable systems should be put in place to improve the level of art education and promote the improvement of the level of aesthetic education jointly. Moreover, online art education should be made more standardized and reasonable, not driven by commercial interests, and have a complete teaching system. At the same time, students need to improve their own aesthetic perception.

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