

Dewey's "Learning Community" Thought and Educational Enlightenment

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Abstract: Dewey's thought of "learning community" has rich educational implication and important practical value. As a "learning community" based on different backgrounds, community members work towards common goals through communication, practice, cooperation, participation, and mutual understanding to achieve educational activity goals. It is not only an effective way to promote student growth, but also an important carrier of school education functions and a solid foundation for achieving a democratic society. To construct the "learning community", we should respect students' personal experience, guide students to construct themselves and realize the dialogue and sharing between teachers and students.

Keywords: Dewey; Learning Community; Educational Practice; Democratic Community

1. Introduction

Dewey's educational works not only have profound reflection and systematic thinking on the practical educational problems, but also expounded his educational philosophy and educational practice from a philosophical perspective. Dewey hoped to establish a democratic society through school education. Especially in "Democracy and Education", Dewey regarded the democratic society as an important component of his entire educational philosophy, and the "learning community" formed based on school education is an important basis for the realization of a democratic society [1]. In other words, Dewey's thought of "learning community" was formed in school education practice, and relied on school education to realize the construction of "learning community", so as to lay the foundation for the realization of democratic society [2].

2. The Proposal of the "Community of Learning"

As a kind of educational thought and educational idea, "learning community" undoubtedly has important theoretical significance and practical value in promoting the transformation of modern education and promoting the implementation of quality-oriented education. Boyer (Boyer E.L) first used the "community" to education. In 1995, he published a report entitled "Basic Schools: Learning Community", in which he presented a comprehensive and systematic explanation of the "learning community". Boyer believes that "the learning community is a learning organization for all people with a common mission, with its members learning in a common direction, to find a journey to knowledge and understanding how the world works, and to interact and participate in towards the goal of education [3].

Starting from the understanding of social development, Dewey emphasizes the collective and its value as well as the critical relationship between social roles to explore the nature of the community [4]. Dewey believes that "the formation of a community requires people to recognize the common purpose [5], and people care about this purpose, consider this purpose, so as to regulate their special activities [6]. "Therefore, Dewey's concept of community is to place people in the interrelated social process, and to regard the whole society as an organic whole. Specifically speaking, one is to emphasize that the "community" is not a simple combination. He argued that "the cumulative amount of collective behavior does not in itself constitute a community [7]."Second, the interaction between members of a community is a shared behavior, which means that individuals need to eliminate the common disadvantages through cooperation to achieve the common goal. Third, the

"community" needs to be guided by the core values, that is, the members of the community have the same view of things, and can give the same meaning to a thing and a behavior. To sum up, Dewey's thought of "learning community" is based on the members of the community of different backgrounds as an educational activity towards the common goal, enhancing understanding and achieving the goal in communication practice, cooperative exploration and common participation.

3. Educational Interpretation of Dewey's "Learning Community" Thought

The educational interpretation of Dewey's thought of "learning community" is mainly from three aspects: "learning community" is an effective way to promote the continuous growth of students, an important carrier to give play to the function of school education, and also a solid foundation of realizing democratic society based on school education [8].

"Learning community" is an effective way to promote the growth of students. Dewey emphasized that the individual can only grow within the "learning community", that is, to realize the continuous reorganization or transformation of individual experience. But "learning community" to become an effective way to realize students experience restructuring or transformation also need to meet certain conditions, the school education to allow students to actively participate and cause common interest to obtain the students 'true understanding of experience, this is not only a necessary condition to promote students' individual experience reorganization or reform, and can make students really become members of the "learning community". On this basis, the important role of "learning community" lies in the personalized and socialized development through the continuous cultivation of common ideas and interests, and finally realizes the reorganization or transformation of individual experience.

"Learning community" is an important carrier to play the educational function. School education aims to integrate social experience and student experience and maintain a balance between them, in order to complete the individual socialization and personalized development of students. On the one hand,

"the school itself is a social organization, is a form of social life [9]." That is, the school embodies the social life, is the reflection of the social life. On the other hand, the main body of school education is students, but the development of students is not perfect, insufficient, is the development of individuals, so students' perception of social life and the improvement of experience are still growing. But Dewey stressed that "school education must deal with the relationship between social experience and student experience, point to the common interests, balance and coordinate the interests of various communities at the social and individual levels [10]." School education, as an important link between social life and students 'experience, must deal with the balance between social life and students' experience, so that the "learning community" will become an important carrier to play the educational function and role [11].

The "Learning community" is a solid foundation for realizing a democratic society. The core of Dewey's ideal society is democracy, which he regarded as "a community of everything and penetrating actions and ideas" [12]. The "learning community" is based on the educational process to integrate students' psychological development, ethical development and social development, so as to restore the continuity between the school and the society, rebuild the school into a learning community, and prepare for the democratic society through school education [13]. "Dewey said:" Schools exist for democratic purposes and for the benefit of citizens." At the beginning of his book *Democracy and Education*, "the above chapters on education have actually indicated the result of the discussion on the significance of democratic social education." The ideal element of democracy is the common benefit of greater quantity and variety and the interaction of various social groups." The formation of "learning community" is an important basis for constructing "democratic community" and an important way to realize "democratic community". To sum up, the school, as a reflection of social life, is "an embryonic social life, reflecting various types of social life, full of the spirit of art, history and science.

4. The Educational Practice of

Constructing the "Learning Community"

Dewey's thought of "learning community" contains rich educational implications. At the same time, in the exploration of the relationship between democratic society, school education and personal experience, Dewey not only stays at the theoretical level, but closely combines education theory with practice. It can be found that the construction of "learning community" should respect students' personal experience, guide students to self-construction and realize the dialogue and sharing between teachers and students.

Respect for students' personal experience. Respecting students' personal experience is an important basis and premise for the construction of a "learning community". The school respecting the individual experience of each student means acknowledging the diversity and heterogeneity of members within the community, and "diversity and heterogeneity are the potential and development of the democratic community [14]. "In the" learning community", "learning by doing" is considered to be the way to communicate knowledge and experience. Dewey proposed to obtain the transformation and reorganization of experience by "learning by doing", and stressed that this is an important method to be taken to carry out school education practice. In addition, the formation of "learning community" should also start from the individual and pay attention to the important value of students' personal experience in the growth process, because "experience is the source of all valuable training. Every member of the community will play an important role in individuals due to the influence of different cultural background, family education and living and growing environment. Therefore, the "learning community" needs to tolerate diversity, respect personality, and maintain the diversity and heterogeneity of the community. Guide students to construct themselves. Students are an active learner, with the basic characteristics such as subjectivity and initiative. Students' learning and mastery of new knowledge is based on the acquired knowledge and experience, and they construct the understanding of new knowledge and new things by adopting appropriate ways suitable for themselves. However, under the influence of individual social life and other aspects of

the differences and complexity of different individual experience backgrounds, learners often have great differences in their understanding of new knowledge or new things. Dewey believes that "experience is about completing self-renewal through action on the environment." This self-renewal is in a sense a process of self-construction. Self-construction means to respect students' individual experience and promote the learning communication among members through the "learning community". To sum up, to guide students to self-construction, on the basis of fully respecting students' individual experience, give full play to individual initiative and initiative, so that students' existing experience background and external environment can interact, so that students can obtain self-renewal and complete self-construction, so as to promote the development of students' diversified personality.

Realize the dialogue and sharing between teachers and students. Education is a spiritual communication activity to realize the dialogue and information sharing between people [15]. It aims to "generate for the young generation freely through the transmission of knowledge content, the understanding of life connotation and the norms of consciousness and behavior." Therefore, Dewey attaches great importance to the role of language in educational activities, believes that language is an important way of dialogue and cooperation, is an important way to understand experience, and points out that "language is composed of sounds that can be understood mutually, only this fact itself is sufficient to show that the meaning of language depends on and the connection of common experience." [16] In other words, the relationship between community and language is the goal and means. Community is the gathering of people who have the common life content, and language is an important means to achieve the common purpose. Therefore, language as "a community or society must share purpose, belief, knowledge and mutual understanding." It is also an important way for teachers and students to build a "learning community" through dialogue and communication and information sharing in educational activities. [17]

6. Conclusion

In the exploration of the relationship between democratic society, school education and individual classics, Dewey not only stays at the theoretical level, but closely combines educational theory with practice. It can be found that the construction of "learning community" should respect students' personal experience, guide students to construct themselves and realize the dialogue and sharing between teachers and students, and then realize the construction of "learning community" by relying on school education, so as to lay a foundation for the realization of democratic society.

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