

The Phenomena of "Education Involution" and the Root Cause Cracking

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Abstract: The involution of education refers to the phenomenon that education stagnates or cannot be transformed into another advanced mode after the social or cultural mode reaches a certain form at a certain stage of development. The main source of internal volume is negative sum game, where resources are limited, it is difficult to open source, and competition rules are exclusive. Faced with this kind of competition, people's investment increases but the total amount of society does not increase, so it is impossible to achieve a win-win situation of personal income and total amount growth. The root of the current education involution lies in the fact that the current education system can't meet people's demand for educational resources under the dual contradiction between employment and class. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the zero-sum exam competition represented by the college entrance examination. This paper puts forward that to solve the problem of education involution, we should handle the relationship between class contradiction, education equity, employment situation and education involution as a whole, and the concrete measures can be taken from the aspects of increasing rising channels, reforming the education system and alleviating employment pressure.

Keywords: Education involution, Class contradiction, Educational system reform, Employment, Educational equity.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the word "involution" has become a high-frequency vocabulary in internet and daily life. With the repeated mention of "chicken baby" education, small town writers and academic arms race, "involution" has been used in the field of education. It has been described as a dilemma with high cost and internal friction but no corresponding return-parents' education investment has increased, anxiety has increased, examinations have become more and more elaborate, and children's schoolwork burden has become heavier and heavier. Education involution has become a key research issue in China's educational circles, and the study of this phenomenon is conducive to promoting the reform of China's educational system and improving the quality of education.

At present, different scholars and experts have different views on the causes and solutions of educational involution, but on the whole, just to reduce the burden of education or promote the balanced development of education can't systematically solve the existing problems of educational involution. Therefore, based on deepening the understanding of previous research results and in-depth investigation, this paper systematically analyzes the causes of educational involution and puts forward measures and directions to solve it.

2. Class Contradictions Lead to The Mismatch Between Quality Education Resources and Demand-Group Anxiety

According to the calculation of Professor Tsinghua University Li Qiang and the data of other scholars, the middle class in China currently accounts for only about 25% of all employees. And its research proves that 73% of the middle class in China is on the edge of the middle class. Being on the edge means that once it is hit by the economy, it may fall from

the middle class to the low-income group. For example, the impact of the epidemic caused some middle classes to go bankrupt. "Water flows downwards, and man struggles upwards." For many reasons, such as family, career and social status, the vast majority of the middle class tend to climb up, stabilize the middle class status and move towards the upper class. Moreover, even if children are no longer required to achieve intergenerational upward mobility like their own generation, it is necessary to prevent future generations from falling and being afraid of being thrown out. The middle class is still like this, especially for low-income people and poor groups. However, because the economic and cultural strength cannot compete with the middle class and the competitiveness is weak, the phenomenon of "education involution" is mainly reflected in the middle class.

To break down class barriers, education is the most direct, effective and crucial method, so middle-class parents usually invest a lot of high-quality educational resources in their children. Although nine-year compulsory education has been popularized in China, the resources of high-quality education have generally increased, but they still can't keep up with people's increasing demand, and they are still rare. For example, the "double-first-class" colleges and universities in China only account for 5% of the total number of ordinary colleges and universities, and the gross enrollment rate of higher education is 51.6% (nearly half of the national candidates can't get into universities). Under the unequal situation of quality education resources and demand, fierce zero-sum competition is hard to avoid. In order to obtain scarce and high-quality educational resources, parents have to tighten their belts, and start to enroll in various interest classes and cram schools from their children's kindergartens. Family expenses become larger, the quality of life declines, parents can't enjoy their own lives, and children's childhood is losing. However, despite this, the actual rewards and benefits they get are almost no, which is the group anxiety of the middle class caused by the involution of education. This kind of anxiety has different manifestations in different stages: (1)

Preschool stage: most parents pay too much attention to their children's knowledge reserve and skill training, but neglect their children's own behavior habits and mental health. In order to be ahead of or not behind other children before they start learning, they instill knowledge and skills that do not belong to this stage into their children, which leads to their children being overwhelmed. At this stage, "young convergence" is the main cause of parents' anxiety. (2) Primary and secondary school stage: the pressure of entering a higher school and the scores of grades become the main anxiety of parents and children. It is found that before the "Double Reduction Policy" was issued, about 70% of the students needed to complete the extra learning tasks assigned by their parents and participate in various cram schools and interest classes. However, after the "Double Reduction Policy" was issued, some cram schools and interest classes were banned, which relieved the pressure on parents and students to some extent, but could not fundamentally solve the problem. Following the rise of tutoring after tutoring institutions, many tutoring institutions kept scratching the edge, leaving parents in a dilemma. (3) College stage: employment pressure and family burden come one after another. For middle-class college students whose minds are relatively mature, family pressure appears. Whether for their families or themselves, most of them inevitably join the competition, constantly squeezing themselves to catch up with others, and falling into the "involution" cycle, just to be able to submit a satisfactory resume when they graduate and get a high-paying job.

3. Pursuing the So-called "Key Points" Intensifies The Contradictions Among All Parties-a Reflection of Social Problems

Pursuing the so-called "focus" leads to the ecological imbalance between home and school. The ideal home-school ecology should be the same direction of education, complementary advantages, equality and mutual trust, and each family and school should take its own responsibilities, but the reality is often unsatisfactory. As far as secondary education is concerned, junior high school and senior high school are not divided into three grades or six grades in China's education system. However, due to the influence of the score theory and the concept of "high admission rate = good middle school = bright future", the public has divided key middle schools and ordinary middle schools by themselves, which is also one of the manifestations of the anxiety of the middle class. However, as a result, it violates the fairness that should be reflected in the education system. In order to enter the so-called key middle schools, parents have gone across the sea to show their magical powers. Some quit their jobs at home to focus on their children's homework, some give gifts to the leaders of the Education Bureau and school teachers, and some spend money on various tutors. In short, parents and children are exhausted with all kinds of tricks. At the same time, it seems that it is the norm for parents to please their teachers because of the influence of internal volume. The new century's home-school group should have been used as a medium for parents to communicate with teachers, but it has become a news notification. Teachers are in a dominant position, and parents just blindly reply to a series of unhygienic words such as "good, received, and the teacher is fortunate." It is also because of parents' flattery that

the absurd chaos of buying and selling seats, giving gifts during holidays and comparing gifts has been generated. The bottom line of teachers' principles has been trampled on bit by bit, and the relationship between parents and teachers has gradually changed.

Conflicts with parents' ideas and students' ideas have intensified. For most parents, the college entrance examination is the only way out. In order to prepare for the college entrance examination, parents constantly invest time and energy in their children, but they ignore that at this time, the children have entered the most important turning point in their lives-adolescence, when they begin to think about themselves and look at the world, instead of blindly following them. The road chosen by parents may not be what the children want, and at this time, contradictions will break out, parents will force them to suppress, students will resist stubbornly, and family relationships will be stiff.

4. Anxiety Selling, Lost Sheep-the Employment Situation of College Students Is Grim

Many college students generally lack a clear development goal and career plan for their future, and they take it one step at a time, drift with the tide, and spend a lot of time and energy doing meaningless things. Negative popular words such as "lying flat, salted fish" began to appear frequently in the mouths of college students, as if this was their attitude towards life, and their anxiety was evident. However, all kinds of media, in order to seek excessive hype, "roll in" and sell anxiety, aggravate the confusion of college students.

In recent years, affected by the epidemic situation, the living space of small and medium-sized micro-enterprises has been squeezed, the number of jobs they can provide has decreased, and the employment situation of college students has become more and more severe. According to the research data of Zhilian, the number of college graduates in 2022 exceeded 10 million for the first time, reaching 10.76 million, an increase of 1.67 million year-on-year. As of April this year, only 46.7% of job-seeking graduates got offer and 15.4% of students signed up. Meanwhile, in the increasingly competitive employment environment, the average expected salary of graduates in 2022 is 6,295 yuan, and the average contracted salary is 6,507 yuan, which is 6% lower than last year's expected salary. Therefore, in order to get a good job when they graduate, contemporary college students, apart from doing their best in their studies, have to take the lead in various activities and competitions, take responsibility in societies, departments and classes, actively strive for various scholarships, and strive for honorary titles such as "Three Good Schools", "Three Good Schools" and "School Model Soldiers", just like a never-ending gyro, but it is hard to get good results. This In short, everyone is studying hard and studying hard, and the final result is that everyone is excellent. In order to be able to distinguish, they are finally forced to fall into a cycle. However, this cycle is of no help to development, and their involution behavior at school is equivalent to internal ineffective consumption in a negative sense, which is also the main reason for college students' anxiety and confusion.

5. Cracking Methods

5.1. Increase the rising channels and reform the education system

At present, if we want to break the inner volume of education, we have to further satisfy the desire of the middle class to stabilize or promote their status. The best measure in education is to increase the rising channels for students as much as possible. The most direct and effective way is to expand the enrollment scale of high-quality universities, strictly implement the system of lenient entrance and strict exit in universities, increase the investment in education funds, and constantly improve the learning quality and teaching level in higher education.

Secondly, it can promote the equality between vocational education and general education, and truly practice that "college entrance examination is not the only successful path". In contemporary China, the society still has prejudice against vocational education. The running conditions and teachers' strength of vocational schools are generally lower than those of ordinary schools. In many places, vocational colleges are accepted in the last batch of high-level recruitment. Although the employment rate of vocational school graduates is high, the employment quality is not high and the treatment is low. There are many policy restrictions and discrimination in choosing jobs, entering higher schools and applying for civil servants. These problems have further contributed to the prejudice against vocational education. It is generally believed that "there is no future in vocational education", especially for the vast majority of the middle class who aim to cross the class. However, "all roads lead to Rome". For different types of students, the normal way to go to school may not be the best for them, and the same arrangement may not necessarily have a longer-term development. Vocational education may not be the best choice, but there must be people who are more suitable for this way. Some students don't like the knowledge in books since childhood, but their minds are very flexible. Therefore, the author suggests that the restrictions on the separation of tracks between ordinary middle schools and vocational middle schools should be liberalized, and vocational education and general education should be properly integrated so that they can have two-way communication, that is, before the formal separation of tracks, students can contact and learn about the courses of vocational middle schools and ordinary middle schools at the same time. This will not only promote the development of vocational education, adversely affect the public's concept of vocational education, but also further develop students' interests and abilities, broaden their horizons and ideas, and make students have certain plans for their future.

5.2. Balance the relationship between home and school, attach importance to family education, and establish a good educational ecology

In order to curb the influence of educational ecological disorder caused by educational involution, both home and school should clarify their responsibilities, establish correct concepts and jointly establish a good educational ecology.

Parents should do a good job in family education and pay attention to students' mental health. Junior high school is the golden stage of learning, and it is also an important time to set up three views. In this critical period, parents can't impose

their own views on their children, and they can't just urge them to study their lessons. They should actively communicate with their children, treat them in the same position, continuously pay attention to their psychological needs and health, give appropriate opinions while obeying their wishes, understand their ideas, and let them know their parents' difficulties, so as to gradually form a unique way of getting along with their children.

The school should strengthen the construction of its own education and culture, form a good teacher's morality and style, and adhere to moral education. Schools should improve the quality requirements of teachers, conduct regular ideological training, strengthen the management of school rules and regulations, increase punishment, strengthen teachers' bottom line and principles by combining hardness with softness, and put an end to corruption; At the same time, we should make rational use of information technology, combine the Internet with education, and strengthen the connection between home and school. Teachers should actively communicate with parents in an equal manner, pay attention to students' mental health, and create a good educational atmosphere.

5.3. School-enterprise cooperation to explore the education mechanism, strengthen the docking of supply and demand in the labor market, and promote innovation and entrepreneurship

The employment difficulty of college graduates is also one of the main reasons for education involution. Therefore, this paper proposes to promote school-enterprise cooperation in order to better connect the labor market and ease the employment pressure of college students.

Schools should strengthen the construction of employment platform, optimize disciplines and specialties, and promote the docking construction of school education and employment. First of all, schools should always pay attention to the changes of the labor market, conduct irregular labor market surveys, and accurately locate the talent gap in the market. Then, on this basis, they should make scientific adjustments to the teaching in schools, focusing on disciplines with strong social needs, broad employment prospects and large talent gap, and make timely adjustments to disciplines with too low employment rate and unsuited to market demand. Secondly, we should deepen the cooperation between schools and enterprises and establish a practice base. Practice is the only criterion to test the truth. We cultivate talents who are "down to earth" rather than "armchair strategist". Only by walking along Wan Li Road can we play the role of reading thousands of books. Therefore, after students have learned certain knowledge and skills, the school should strengthen the employment linkage mechanism, play the role of docking enterprises, strengthen the contact with relevant departments and alumni, organically integrate Industry-University-Research with employment practice, set up employment practice bases and sign agreements extensively, so as to provide students with practical learning opportunities, enhance students' practical ability and lay a solid foundation for employment.

Support innovation and entrepreneurship and establish a platform for teachers and students to create together. In order to meet the employment needs and with the support of the national policy of innovation and entrepreneurship, the vast

majority of colleges and universities have basically set up innovation and entrepreneurship incubation bases, and encouraged college students to actively participate in relevant competitions and start businesses, but this is superficial and does not have much substantive effect on college students' employment and entrepreneurship. Most of the students who participated in the competition groped for themselves all the way, the instructor was in a nominal position, the communication between students and teachers was insufficient, and it took a lot of time to learn how to write a simple planning book; However, many college students who are committed to entrepreneurship suffer from failure due to lack of professional guidance, lack of experience, lack of funds and other reasons, which is a very common phenomenon in universities. In this regard, this paper proposes to build a platform group of two-level creative space between universities and colleges, set up a community of innovation and entrepreneurship between teachers and students, and set up a platform for teachers and students to create together with colleges, so as to further deepen the communication between teachers and students. Students with good ideas can take the initiative to contact teachers, and teachers who are interested in setting up competition teams or start-up teams can also make a call on the platform, so as to strengthen the contact between teachers and students, and promote

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