

Philosophical Thinking on International Education

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Abstract: As an important component of the educational development strategy, international education urgently requires exploration and research. Philosophy of education provides an in-depth analysis of teaching and educational models from a philosophical perspective and applies philosophical wisdom to improve and enhance education by offering corresponding suggestions. This paper analyzes the essence of international education from the perspective of educational philosophy and proposes optimization strategies.

Keywords: Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology, Educator, Educational Media.

1. Introduction

With the development of society and technology, the distances between countries around the world have been rapidly shortened. Meanwhile, China's education system is undergoing accelerated development in both breadth and depth. The internationalization of education has become a critical component of the national educational development strategy^[1]. For Chinese education, internationalization presents the dual challenges of "lacking a foundational base" and "pioneering new frontiers," while also offering valuable opportunities for students to "broaden their horizons" and "cultivate critical thinking." As the study of wisdom, the philosophy of education emphasizes the use of wise methods in educational practice, encouraging participants to reflect on educational concepts and improve educational methods through a philosophical lens, thus promoting the comprehensive development of international education. Ontology, epistemology, axiology, and logic are key philosophical concepts frequently applied in education, providing a theoretical foundation for educational practitioners to contemplate and implement research methodologies^[2]. Although many scholars have conducted research on education from a philosophical perspective or deeply explored issues of internationalization, there is still a lack of studies that integrate the "three fundamental elements of education," "philosophy of education," and "international education" as a basis for joint inquiry and practical exploration. Employing such a multidimensional perspective to study international education would greatly enhance its scientific rigor and comprehensiveness.

2. Research Background and Significance

In recent years, with the rapid development of education, the internationalization of education has gradually become a key component of national education development strategies. Against the backdrop of significant cultural differences between China and the West, many schools exhibit a tendency toward "Westernization," while others have adopted a proactive attitude in experimenting with internationalized education. Overall, the outcomes of these efforts vary widely in quality, indicating substantial room for further research and improvement^[3].

Conducting research on international education from a

philosophical perspective holds considerable significance. On the one hand, it helps schools and educational institutions cultivate an internationalized management mindset and strengthen administrative capabilities^[4]. On the other hand, it facilitates the construction of internationalized student development models, enabling students to better understand global trends, enhance their confidence in the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and develop a clearer understanding of China's current status and future direction amid unprecedented global changes. Thus, international education presents students with an excellent opportunity to broaden their horizons and cultivate critical thinking^[5].

However, international education also faces considerable practical challenges. One prominent issue is the phenomenon of "blind internationalization," often resulting from poor judgment and flawed management strategies when emulating Western models. This manifests in the excessive glorification of Western theories and values, leading to the uncritical acceptance of certain Western universal values as absolute truths^[6]. Such trends can have serious consequences, causing young people to gradually lose respect for the dignity and value of Chinese education. Therefore, it is crucial to carry out international education in a rational manner and with appropriate methodologies.

Philosophy of education is often referred to as the "study of wisdom," which in simple terms means executing education through wise methods. Educational participants should continuously engage in reflection, delve deeply into dynamic philosophy, and examine international education from multiple philosophical perspectives. This approach fosters the ability to critically and objectively assess the strengths and weaknesses of international education^[7]. Through active philosophical reflection and critical inquiry, participants can evaluate the scope and extent of internationalization, apply professional intervention and control, and promote the healthy development of education as a whole. In particular, research on education must be grounded in real educational issues, phenomena, laws, and the essence of education itself, employing philosophical reflection and inquiry to identify problems and ensure that philosophy effectively serves the practice of international education^[8].

3. Reflections on International Education

This paper examines international education from the perspectives of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and logic. It highlights the necessity of international education, identifies its key directions, and analyzes its main areas of inquiry, as follows:

3.1. Reflections on International Education based on Ontology

Ontology is generally understood as the philosophical study of being or existence itself. According to Hegel, "being" is characterized by "undetermined immediacy," "indeterminacy prior to all determination," and "the most primitive determination." Taking Chinese philosophical ontology as an example, in Chinese philosophy, "being" is synonymous with the "Dao." Chinese philosophers, drawing on Marxist principles, believe that the world is composed of material and that matter is primary relative to spirit^[9].

From this perspective, ontology determines the necessity of international education. First, education is not eternal or absolutely fixed; rather, its essence lies in its adaptability and fluidity. Philosophers contend that education itself is the cultivation of the "natural person" and is, fundamentally, life itself. The essence of education lies in fostering fundamental connections among people, enabling communication and interaction within a rational framework. Hence, education naturally tends toward "outward development" and "establishing connections," making international education a fitting embodiment of these ideals. Second, education is inseparable from language, and culture serves as the source of language-based education. Human existence itself is a form of linguistic existence, and the ultimate goal of education must align with humanistic science. International education inherently involves the instruction of multiple languages, fulfilling the requirements of ontology. Moreover, expanding cultural and linguistic horizons is a necessary path toward humanistic science. Third, international education facilitates cultural inheritance and integration, especially between Chinese and foreign cultures. Since the essence of education is rooted in development and often embodies distinct characteristics, international education provides a channel for cultural exchange and interaction, fostering both uniqueness and commonality, thus promoting the development of the educational essence and achieving cultural integration.

3.2. Reflections on International Education based on Epistemology

Educational epistemology primarily addresses the practical understanding of educational work. It emphasizes the integration of educational theory and practice, discouraging empty theorizing and advocating for the application of practical principles and methods. It also stresses the importance of flexibility and skillful techniques to achieve educational effectiveness. Educational epistemology is a broad and comprehensive field of study that enables educational practitioners to develop a holistic understanding of education^[10].

At present, international education places greater emphasis on experiential and activity-based learning throughout the educational process. Compared to traditional education, which focuses primarily on theoretical knowledge transmission, international education prioritizes the

cultivation of students' practical abilities and creative capacities. It emphasizes inspiring students' innovative capabilities and their ability to independently complete practical tasks, encouraging participation, practice, and creativity, and fostering the mastery and application of knowledge as practical tools—one of the major highlights of the international education model.

Specifically, international education's focus on practice is reflected in the following aspects:

First, by combining the inculcation of learning concepts with the encouragement of independent practice, students are given the opportunity to understand educational objectives while having ample time to reflect on the purpose of learning. Students come to realize that learning is neither a painful burden nor merely a utilitarian tool for career advancement. They are guided to overcome passive and resistant attitudes and to understand that learning should be an active, flexible, and interest-driven process.

Second, the learning process emphasizes practical outcomes as evaluation criteria. International education focuses on cultivating students' autonomy. For example, in course design assignments, evaluation standards often assess how students complete tasks efficiently and effectively through planning, teamwork, and reflective summarization. This process cultivates not only practical abilities but also teamwork, communication, and social interaction skills, contributing to students' overall development.

Third, emphasis is placed on extracurricular practice. While maintaining a solid theoretical foundation, international education also values the development of students' interests and talents. Interests may include participation in various clubs, arts, sports, science, and other activities. Schools often link extracurricular activities directly to academic credits, thereby stimulating students' enthusiasm and enhancing their practical abilities. Consequently, students' free time is no longer dominated by the "nightmare of supplementary classes" but is instead filled with the "dream of hobbies and passions."

3.3. Reflections on International Education based on Axiology

Axiology, a branch of the philosophy of education, explores the meaning, nature, structure, and developmental trends of educational value. Through the study of axiology, learners can gain a systematic understanding of the significance and functions of education for individuals and society. Axiology posits that education possesses both instrumental and intrinsic value; its ideal and practical value profoundly influence the future goals of educators and students, serving the development of humanity and the needs of society.

Axiology emphasizes the "usefulness" of educational activities. Thus, in evaluating international education, particular attention should be paid to the significance, function, and real-world impact of educational activities. Participants who are well-versed in educational axiology are naturally equipped to discern which forms of education are truly essential, which are dispensable, which are genuinely meaningful, and which are mere time-wasters. Only effective and practically beneficial international education is valuable and worth recommending. Educators should summarize their experiences and cultivate their abilities to discern clearly through a philosophical lens, using sound analysis and judgment to guide the direction of international education.

When countless educators share a common goal, international education can achieve a higher overall standard.

3.4. Reflections on International Education based on Logic

Educational logic encompasses the laws of cognition, thinking, and existence within education. It defines the relationships between education and its concepts and outlines the basic principles for defining education itself. As its name suggests, educational logic emphasizes the logical examination of the essence, views, and activities of education.

Within the domain of international education, educational logic stresses two key areas:

First, in teaching management: Given the internationalized nature of education, international elements and characteristics are pervasive. It is crucial to distinguish clearly between "Chinese-style education" and "foreign-style education" and to integrate them appropriately, forming a distinctive Chinese educational model. Blind imitation or outright rejection must be avoided. Management should be logical, structured, and rule-based, rather than chaotic, unregulated, and arbitrary. International education provides a valuable opportunity for openness, and under proper regulation, it can thrive.

Second, in teaching content: Educational participants are encouraged to emphasize logical structuring in bilingual teaching and other instructional materials. Students, as the targets of internationalized education, are guided to organize and learn educational content logically, helping to prevent confusion and fostering clarity. A logical bilingual environment helps students develop language advantages and broadens their horizons, thereby promoting healthy growth and greater achievements.

4. How to Better Promote International Education

4.1. Educators: Adapt to Changing Times and Needs

Educators must adjust their teaching methods according to changes in the international situation and educational trends, as guided by philosophical theory. Educational epistemology emphasizes the dynamic application of education. Regarding international education, two aspects are worth considering: first, the use of advanced methods to fully understand and grasp global trends. The world today is undergoing unprecedented changes, and international dynamics profoundly affect the thoughts and directions of educators and students. Educators play a crucial role in disseminating education and should think about how to accurately integrate educational content with global trends, helping students form a correct worldview, maintain a fair attitude, foster patriotism, and evaluate world affairs objectively and relatively accurately. Second, it is recommended that international education should be combined with national educational needs. This means not pursuing internationalization for its own sake but progressing gradually, teaching students according to their aptitudes, and maintaining an open mind. It is important to remember that 'one step should not be too big'; ultimately, international education is still domestic education and must consider the average level of education. The goal is to achieve a complete and scientific form and substantial, advanced content in international education.

4.2. Learners: Emphasize Independence and the Pursuit of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

For learners, education should emphasize independence and the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty. 'Emphasizing independence' includes several aspects: first, valuing the study of independent disciplines, as they usually possess unique characteristics. In international education, independent disciplines are even more diverse and rich. In-depth study of each discipline helps students broaden their horizons, expand their understanding of the world, and explore their own interests across different fields. Second, fostering independent learning abilities is crucial, as it is one of the most important skills for young people today, helping to enhance logical thinking and overall competence. Third, nurturing independent curiosity: students should have an intrinsic desire for knowledge and not passively follow educational models or be constrained by them. They should maintain self-reflection, reasonable skepticism, and provide timely feedback, which not only promotes better absorption of knowledge but also improves the management and teaching of international education.

Education is not only about its unchanging essence but also about life, which is the only source, ultimate pursuit, and goal of education. Learners must establish clear learning purposes, understanding the ultimate goals of education to accurately judge their actions. Therefore, they must pursue truth, goodness, and beauty by connecting learned knowledge with life, thus truly appreciating the wonder of learning and living. In the process of international education, students should be brave enough to break away from past learning habits and methods, continuously make breakthroughs, and eventually experience the joy of learning.

4.3. Educational Media: Keeping Up with and Surpassing the Times

China's 'Belt and Road' initiative provides an excellent opportunity for Sino-foreign educational exchanges, leading to a flourishing scene of international communication and teaching. The Belt and Road is not just an economic link between countries but also a cultural bridge. International education under the Belt and Road context is a meaningful attempt to promote Sino-foreign cultural exchanges. In the tide of the times, domestic international education should seize the opportunity by creating diverse programs and utilizing various educational media to promote traditional culture and attract scholars from Belt and Road countries to study in China. By taking concrete actions to meet the Belt and Road's spirit and educational policy requirements, connecting with the elements of contemporary culture, and surpassing the educational demands of the times, international education can find new balance points and breakthroughs both nationally and internationally.

Educational media refer to the communication tools used for knowledge dissemination, including textbooks, reference materials, printed materials, and audiovisual aids like pictures, slides, recorders, films, and televisions. Educational media are crucial auxiliary tools in teaching. Through electronic, visual, and auditory materials, educators can present a colorful teaching world, allowing students to enjoy learning through multiple senses. During international education, educational media play a significant role. For example, when learning foreign educational concepts, electronic media

provide vivid learning experiences. Comparing domestic and foreign approaches helps students understand commonalities and differences, facilitating deeper learning and improvement.

Moreover, educational media must keep up with the times. Given today's advanced internet world, leveraging the internet for teaching and learning can enhance efficiency and broaden access. International education should be bold enough to surpass the times, encouraging students to explore advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning early on, expanding their curiosity about the future and aligning with both technological development paths and educational philosophies.

5. Conclusion

This paper discusses the issue of international education from a philosophical perspective. As a key component of the educational development strategy, international education urgently needs exploration and research. Current international education practices show varying outcomes, leaving considerable room for improvement. Philosophy of education provides a profound analysis of teaching and education models from a philosophical perspective. This paper uses philosophical wisdom to propose improvements and suggestions for international education. First, it explores the significance and background of international education from a philosophical perspective, emphasizing the importance of applying philosophy to educational practice. Then, it reflects on international education from the aspects of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and logic, comprehensively outlining key points for implementation. Finally, it offers specific suggestions for internationalizing education from the three essential elements: advocating that educators, learners, and educational media fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities to jointly promote the development of international education. Only by educators adapting to changing times and needs, learners emphasizing independence and the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty, and educational media keeping up with and surpassing the

times, can international education achieve higher recognition and reach a high level of excellence.

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