

This is also a writing 1 level reading. Take notes as you read, look up vocabulary words, write in the margins, and fill out the reading questions as you carefully read this paper. This will take time, and this paper will be used in your upcoming essay.

Western and Eastern Educational Philosophies

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PART 1:

Introduction

Education is the living knowledge, information and skills during the course of life, while an education system is a platform which had been standardized and used as a reference by teachers to teach their students in communicative, informative and insightful way. Developing a good educational system should be the focus in a nation's development, as education is a catalysis (*something that causes change*) for progress in order to produce a valuable and visionary individual.

The Comparison between Western and Eastern Education Philosophies

It cannot be denied that different places have their own different culture and backgrounds. Generally, a Western philosophy of education comprises two schools, which are traditional and modern. It has its roots in Athens, Rome and Judeo-Christianity, whereas Eastern philosophy is derived from Islam, Confucianism, Taoism and Mahayana Buddhism. By looking at Eastern and Western countries, both countries have distinct differences in their ways of developing and shaping an individual, in terms of skills and attitudes. Thus, different cultures will have different philosophies, which results in different ways of doing things, especially in educating the next generation.

Student Involvement within Classroom Activity

Comparing both schools of thought, it can be concluded that Westerners stress active learning on their learners, whereas the Easterners prefer passive learning. Westerners, since the ancient Greeks such as Aristotle, Plato and Socrates encouraged rational thinking. Differently, the Eastern normally obtained the knowledge directly from their teachings of religion, such as Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism and Taoism (Chia Mun Onn, 2009). This is more of a

one-way transmission of knowledge, wherever the belief prepared them with rules and regulations within their life.

Students of the Western education philosophy appear as active learners in the classroom, as the teaching and learning process does not focus on teacher-centered instruction, but more on the active learners in the classroom. It encourages the students to be active in giving and sharing the ideas, which maximizes their role as students than the teacher in creating the effective learning and teaching activity (Joyce Lin, 2008). For instance, they are very much encouraged to think and voice their views whenever they are involved in group discussion or carry out the assignment. The students are then required to present it to the entire class. This enables them to participate not only during class time, but also to help them to be actively involved in the learning process even out of the classroom.

Apart from that, the students are also has been given an opportunity to express their ability and talent by analyzing and solve problems on their own. This is through the effort by the teachers in assigning them beforehand, to do research on their own, regarding certain topics that will be discussed in the following lesson. By doing this, every student is given a chance to learn to search for relevant information. In fact, according to Thornton (1995), the problem solving process becomes one of the basic requirements for children for their critical mental development. Thus, it can be said that education development in the West includes thinking skills, problem solving and communication skills which have been integrated well in the western philosophy itself.

On the other hand, the teaching and learning process through Eastern education philosophy stresses the major outcomes from the teachers. It means that teachers are fully responsible for the class effectiveness by preparing and planning all the activities for their students. For instance, the students are not trained or required to do anything, but all the materials are given by the teachers. Usually, students are not required to carry out any research on the topics that are going to be discussed in the next lesson, but only responsible to receive input from their teachers. Also, students are not trained or encouraged to voice out their own views and perspectives. In certain cases, students are not allowed to even respond to the questions posed by the teacher as the questions are in a way meant only for teachers to answer rhetorical questions (Joyce Lin, 2008). According to Rohaty (1999), one of the reasons why the teachers sometimes don't implement various innovative teaching strategies is due to the excessive attention on theory rather than on practical sense (Rohaty, 1999).

Question #1: In your own words, what do the authors mean by stating “Westerners stress active learning on their learners, whereas Easterners prefer passive learning?”

Question #2: From your own experience, do you think the above claim is true? Why or why not?

The Ways of Teaching Process

From the view of Western education philosophy, the roles of students are recognized by giving them the rights and respects within the teaching and learning process itself. They have the freedom and rights to take charge of their own learning, as they are given the opportunity and freedom to manage their own learning process. Therefore, the teachers play their role as a facilitator than the knowledge producer to their students. Teachers are responsible to help and guide the students in their learning process rather than teaching them what to do. Students are given the opportunity to take control of their own learning process.

Furthermore, schools of the Western education also support and encourage students in self-management and in controlling their own learning process. This is where teachers come in to lead and guide the students by giving them guidelines in managing their learning process. In the classroom, children share more responsibility in their learning process and evaluation and assessment is conducted to see their capability and also how they will apply it (Teel et al.,2001). Teachers of the Western education do play a role in guiding students to discover and develop their abilities and potentials.

Compared to a Western education, an Eastern education philosophy holds on to the concept of teaching. Students receive fully knowledge from the teachers inside the classroom. Students in away receive knowledge in a rigid way as they only seem to learn and study straightly from the teachers. Thus, it is no doubt that a good teacher needs to be very hardworking in delivering ideas, teaching and maintaining good relationship with their children (Gurney 2007).

<p>Question #3: The authors believe Western teachers are more like “guides” or “facilitators” than actually teachers. What do you think this means?</p>
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<p>Question #4: Underline the transition sentence in the third paragraph above</p>

The Expression of Learning Process

People in the West believe that the best education is meant to form a society to become a cultural nation in regard of their educational aim, where the children will be open minded and tend to give ideas (Kruger, et. al, 1990). They will critically evaluate rather than just memorizing. Thus, in the Western education philosophy, students learn by understanding. They do not memorize what they have learned but rather understand what they are learning. This gives the students opportunities to understand the topic that they are learning in a deeper way. In addition, they also have more time to have group discussions with their fellow classmates and also to do some research on the topic assigned. The lifeless textbook is replaced whenever they are trained to take notes directly when the teachers are teaching. Thus, students could pay attention to the teachers and eventually lead them to understand what has been taught.

Nevertheless, in Eastern education the students practice the concept of memorizing, as this philosophy focuses mainly on book learning and memorization within the teaching and learning process (Joyce Lin, 2008). The system of education is exam oriented, and teachers have to rush through the textbooks to prepare students to sit for the tests. As a result, students tend to memorize the facts in the textbooks rather than understanding it due to time constraint. In addition, the Eastern community has the concept that scores and certificates represent ability (Joyce Lin, 2008). Thus, it will create a healthy competition among the students and demonstrates the great effort that has been made by them as they struggle to understand and gain knowledge in order to obtain a good score in their examinations.

<p>Question #5: In the section above, “The Expression of Learning Process”, what are the key differences between the East and West educational philosophies?</p>

Capability of Students for Both Philosophies

Western education encourages individualism and creativity towards the practitioner. Since students are given freedom to express their creativity, they are not afraid to be different or make mistakes, as the Western education looks at students mistakes positively and the way to learn.

Different from Western education, Eastern education philosophy emphasizes conformity. Students have tons of school rules to follow and such rules main aim is to produce perfect students. Eastern education still prefers the absorption of good manners and moral support to the children in order to make the children to get used to any rules especially in schools, and it is a teachers' responsibility to show their example on this (Dahlin & Regmi, 2000):

<p>Question #6: Do the differences above also reflect cultural differences of countries, such as the United States and China, for example? If so, how?</p>

Encouragement for Students

On one hand, the Western education philosophy believes that providing compliments to students is important in encouraging them to excel in education. For instance, compliments are especially given when students score well in their examinations. However, even when the students did not do so well in their studies, compliments will also be given to them as an encouragement for them to work even harder in future. The Western education believes that by providing such encouragement to the students, students will not give up easily and will continue to put extra effort in their education.

On the other hand, the Eastern education philosophy is stricter, as students will be criticized whenever they fail to achieve the expected results in their examination. Criticizing is given to the students because the Eastern education believes that criticizing serves as a motivator to the students to work hard and to prevent students from being arrogant and lazy. However, according to Abdullah Sani (2001), criticizing can lower down students' motivation, unless they turn the criticism into information for self-improvement and to become braver to face various types of negative admonitions.

Question #6: Why do Western educators value using compliments a bit more and Eastern educators value using criticism a bit more?

Question #7: Underline the two transitional phrases used to begin each paragraph above

Question #6: Which style, compliment or criticism, do you want your teachers to use on you? Why?

Relationship between Teachers and Students

Research conducted in Tajistan shows that Muslim children prefer teachers from the West compared to local teachers as they are more friendly, caring, more knowledgeable and always assisting children to succeed (Niyozov and Pluim, 2009). Niyozov and Pluim added that they are all even willing to help solve the Muslim children's problems. It is because the Western education philosophy believes that student-teacher relationship is more open and the students are more willing to talk to their teachers. It is known that a teacher in a Western school does a good job of assessing their effectiveness in teaching (Garcia, 2000).

In Eastern culture, the teacher-student relationship is a position of trust in which the teacher is in a position of authority and the student is in the position of being obligated to comply with the legal directives of the adult (Chory & McCroskey, 1999). Teachers are meant to be respected and sometimes students even have to deal with the teachers' bad temper. In fact, teachers do act as a big boss who does not talk with the workers (students) directly most of the time. This is in contrast with some research, such as Chory and McCroskey, that suggest that teachers need to have more initiative to communicate with children, to increase the delegation of decisions to children, and to be in the class more frequently.

Question #7: Even though the authors present this paper as an analysis, they seem to be adding their own personal **bias** (*judgment based on previous experience*) into their writing. They seem to **be biased towards** (*have favorable thoughts about*) a Western Educational system. Go back and read this page and page 7 and circle two sentences which show **this bias** and attempt to convince that the Western style is superior (*better*).