Politics and education in the philosophy of John Dewey

Posted on July 9, 2018

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John Dewey is known as a progressive education father. He was the most influential figure and eloquent advocate of education progressivism. He was a well-known philosopher, educational reformer, and philosopher (Chun). After graduating from Vermont University, Dewey taught various high schools, then later received his philosophy doctorate and resolved to university teaching.

Education as Dewey's Central Concern

In John Dewey's distinguished and long career, he produced over 1000 articles and books, starting from art to politics (Rigney). For all of the scholarly work he produced, none of this work drifted from his main intellectual interest, which is education. Through John Dewey's work, like The Society and The School, Education, and Democracy, as well as the Curriculum and the Child, he articulates distinctive revolutionary education theory reformulations, as well as the major relationship that he believes exists between education and democratic life. Dewy's vision for the school was mainly tied to having a good society that understood education as an investigation, deliberately conducted the practice of society and personal growth, and problem-solving (Rigney). A classroom represents a human being's relationships microcosm that contains the larger society or community. Therefore, John Dewey supposed that the school was the "little democracy" that would create an ideal society (Rigney).

Child Centered Democratic Classrooms

Dewey's highlighting of the importance of democratic relationships in classrooms changed the educational theory focus from school institutions to the requirements of the students in school. This change in American pedagogy attracted education that is centered on the child and was supported by other researchers and progressive educators like Ella Young. In general, these received philosophical customs used by John Dewey deified childhood and then advanced social and intellectual interdependence ideas (Peters).

European Roots in Froebel and Pestalozzi

Second and most vital, Dewey and his associated educational progressives sketched their work from Friedrich Froebel, a German philosopher, and Johann Pestalozzi, a Swiss educator. Friedrich and Johann were the first people to articulate the child education process where learning involved both the subject matter as well as the interests and needs of the child. The two believed right schooling involved nurturing both the heart and the head of the pupil. As a result, the two searched for a rational and fundamental science that integrates these essential principles. Friedrich used the metaphor of the garden in young children's cultivation to maturity. As a result, Friedrich's contribution brought about the kindergarten movement (Rigney). Similarly, Johann popularizes the object teaching pedagogical methods where the teacher starts with objectives relating to the child's world to introduce the child to the educator's life (Rigney).

Influence of William James and Pragmatism

Lastly, John Dewey drew motivation from the ideas of psychologist and philosopher William James. The interpretation of John Dewey of William's philosophical pragmatism, which was the same as Pestalozzi's ideas on objective teaching, integrated doing and thinking, he believed that his philosophy of education would equip every kid with all problem-solving abilities needed in the different situations in life (Chun). Therefore, according to John Dewey, education represented not only the future life of the child but also the full life of education.

Progressive Education Against Traditional Schooling

Taken together, these American and European philosophical customs, aided progressives, integrating democracy and childhood with education. Children taught the relationship existing between doing and thinking would actively participate in a democratic community of society. This reason made the progressive education association break from traditional educationists' ideas that emphasized discipline, drilling, and academic exercises (Peters).

Democracy and Education

John Dewey's well-thought-out two main principles are essential in strengthening democracy: civil society and schools. John Dewey explained that democracy is more than voting. As a result, he formed a public opinion on education that aimed at ensuring effective communication (Chun).

John Dewey claimed that learning and education are interactive and social processes; hence, schools

are social organizations where social reforms ought to or can take place. Therefore, John Dewey made learning places or institutions a residence for gaining content information and a place for learning in real-life situations and solutions to life problems. In his view, education needs to extend beyond the gaining of predetermined skills to the individual fully realizing their potential and utilizing the skills learned (Chun). John Dewey continues to admit that schooling and education are tools for creating social reforms and change.

In his book Education and Democracy, John Dewey expressed the link between education and democracy. According to research by Michael Boucher, this book was written during World War II, when child labor was common in society. This event motivated and fueled John Dewey's philosophy. In this case, John Dewey explained that the community needed complex systems that would transmit the customs and culture to the upcoming generation. Therefore, John Dewey believed critical teaching thinking was a better reform than memorizing information. John Dewey's philosophical belief was evident in the Dewy school (Chun).

Society and School

John Dewey upholds that schools need to reflect society. John Dewey believes that there is a link between social actions and education within a democracy. In his book, Society and School, he explains that the renewal of democracy in every generation is vital, and this needs education as a midwife to accomplish the renewal process (Peters). The school needs to have activities that are essential to the learner. John Dewey realized that the young generation did not understand the fundamental skills and activities that had resulted in the current society or community growth. As a result, he required schools to provide these fundamental principles to enable the students to participate in important social activities. These students needed to use their heads as the most powerful tool that could solve their problems as well as society (Peters).

Under John Dewey's point of view, traditional education made the student or child participate passively in the learning process. The curriculum and the classrooms used in this traditional education system assumed that all students fit in the same group. However, students are unique and different, full of imagination and spontaneity (Peters). The student's mind is naturally inquisitive and active. As a result, when education is just deposited into the minds of these students and retrieval is valued as important, students lose interest in learning, and education turns out to be more difficult. John Dewey's education philosophy emphasizes considering the student's natural urge together with the facilitator's direction (Peters).

John Dewey and Education

John Dewey, together with Jean Piaget, was the father of the meaning of constructivism. John Dewey's concerns were the learner. John Dewey labored to explain that in a learning process, the learner was

a vital agent (Rigney). Therefore, he had an exact vision concerning how education needed to take place. According to John Dewey, educational pedagogy involves two main conflicting school beliefs. The first is curriculum-centered, and the main focus is on the subject matter that needs to be taught in school. In this methodology, he explains that the main weakness is student inactivity. In this case, the child is an immature being requiring information to mature and a superficial being requiring deepening. The second is learner-centered. Therefore, for effective learning, the content must be represented so that the student relates prior experience to the information learned. This learning will enable students to integrate learned information with new experiences (Rigney).

Though John Dewey believed in this second view, learner-centered, he was aware of the effects of excessive learner-centered education. John Dewey explains that excessive child reliance can equally result in a detrimental learning process. The potential effect of this argument is that it can minimize the content and the teacher's importance (Rigney). Therefore, John Dewey tried to balance knowledge delivery with consideration of the student's experiences and interests. The curriculum and the student are two sides that depend on each other. One cannot exist without the other. The teacher is a guide and a facilitator in the process of learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, John Dewey's philosophy showed his view on how education can improve society. John Dewey is the father of progressive education, insisting that the main job of education is to foster students to cultivate their full abilities as mature human beings (Rigney). He argued learning facts only in school was not appropriate and explained that students needed to learn from experience. In this case, learners will not only gain information but also develop habits, skills, and attitudes that will aid them in solving various problems in life.

John Dewey tries to portray the vital connection between politics and education. He argues that active learning can result in people thinking critically and concerned about their community's wellbeing. Therefore, progressive education can contribute to democracy since students learn to think independently. At the same time, John Dewey explains that progressive education will eliminate nature from people (Rigney). Therefore, students must participate in relevant and meaningful activities that aid them in applying the information learned in the classroom.

Work Cited

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