

Absence and Reconstruction: Exploring the Role Dilemmas of Parental Home Education during Social Transformation

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Abstract: Family education, as one of the fundamental forms of education, plays a crucial role in the growth and development of individuals in society. Therefore, based on an accurate understanding of the importance of family education during the social transformation, this paper delves into the role dilemmas faced by parents in home education. It attempts to propose reconstruction paths for the deficiencies in family education function and the parental role dilemmas during the social transformation. This endeavor is anticipated to have a certain impact on promoting the development of individual family education and contributing to the establishment of a socialist harmonious society.

Keywords: Social transformation; Family education; Role dilemmas

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The family, as the basic unit of society, constitutes social life. It undertakes various social functions such as childbirth and education within the social group based on marriage and blood relationships, significantly impacting the growth and development of children. In other words, the growth and development of any individual member of society are inseparable from "family education," which is the product of human social development at a certain historical stage. Hence, on the basis of accurately grasping the necessity of family education in the period of social transformation, it is of great significance to explore the plight of parents' role in family education, and then to propose a reconstruction path for the lack of family education and the plight of social transformation with the purpose of promoting the development of individual family education and building a harmonious socialist society.

I. Presentation of the Issue

It is essential to clarify the concept of family education and identify its key features. This clarification not only forms the fundamental premise for discussing the deficiencies in the functionality of family education during social transformation and the significance of parental roles in family education but also provides an objective basis for in-depth research into the role dilemmas and potential solutions faced by parents in family education in the period of social transformation.

(1) The scientific connotation and key features of family education

The concept of family education can be broadly or narrowly defined. In the broad sense, family education refers to the interactive and mutually influential practical activities among all family members. This includes the impact of family elders on the younger generation, as well as the influence of younger generation on the elders and the interactions among peers. In the narrow sense, family education specifically refers to the practical activities where elder family members, especially parents, exert educational influence on their children in a top-down manner in the family life.

In summary, family education, distinct from community and school education, generally exhibits three key features:

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A.Authority: The authority of family education stems from the authority of consanguineous ethics. This inherent authority possesses superiority and stability that cannot be equaled by other forms of education such as community and school education.

B.Permeability: Different from school education, family education is not limited by time, place, or content. It permeates throughout the process of individual growth and development, influencing and impacting various aspects of individual growth development. Therefore, it has a strong permeability and infectivity.

C.Continuity: The continuity of family education is reflected in the transmission of some educational content from ancestors to descendants through generations. This content, acting as a carrier through individual family members, continues to affect the growth and development of their descendants .

(2) The importance of parental role in family education

Social roles refer to "a set of norms and behavior patterns of rights and obligations consistent with people's social status and identity, constituting the foundation of people's behavioral expectations towards individuals with a particular identity" ^[1] (107). Due to variations in time, place, and social group types, individuals in society often play a variety of social roles. From the perspective of social role types, according to the different ways people obtain roles, the parental role played by parents as family educators in family education can be called the ascribed role(also known as ownership role), which is a "social role based on congenital or physiological factors such as consanguinity, heredity".^[1] (109)Therefore, from a certain perspective, the roles parents play in family education have a significant impact on the growth and development of their children, who are bound to them by blood ties. This provides a theoretical basis for an in-depth discussion of the three major role dilemmas and potential solutions in parental family education during social transformation .

(3) Functional deficiencies in family education during social transformation

Family education predates community and school education, playing a fundamental role and having significant implications in the growth and development of individual members of society. Thus, the deficiency in the functionality of family education during the social transformation inevitably affects and hinders the growth and development of individual members to a certain extent. This is manifested primarily in two aspects:

On the one hand, the advanced technology and culture accompanied by the social transformation have a strong impact on the traditional family education, thus partially diminishing its social functions. On the other hand, the methods and approaches of traditional family education can not meet or adapt to the dissemination and expansion of the new educational content presented during the social transformation, thus putting forward urgent requirements and realistic basis for changing the concept of family education and means of family education.

2. The Three Major Role Dilemmas of Parental Home Education during Social Transformation

Role dilemma refers to the phenomenon of role imbalance in which social members are not competent for the role and have role distance due to the constraints of subjective and objective conditions in the process of role-playing. Generally speaking, parents, as the main agents of family education, face the following three major role dilemmas in family education during social transformation:

(1) Role substitution

Role substitution is one of the role dilemmas in parental home education during social transformation. Generally speaking, role substitution occurs when the role played by an individual is replaced by another individual member or objective existence with the same role function, leading to the loss of the role function of the original role player. The phenomenon of role substitution in parental home education during social transformation is mainly due to two

reasons:

Firstly, from a subjective point of view, parents, as the main body of family education, often believe that after sending their children to schools and other educational institutions, all the educational problems of their children should be borne by schools, while their own family responsibilities are mainly to work and earn money. Consequently, parents unconsciously and subjectively relinquish their educational role in the family, which is then replaced by the subject of school education. This is particularly evident during social transformation.

Secondly, from an objective point of view, during the social transformation period, there is a rapid development in various aspects such as politics, economy, culture, and particularly modern science and technology during. As children who are the objects of family education use computers and mobile phones and other devices to learn about the outside world, they tend to prioritize these activities over receiving educational information from their parents, thus weakening the role of parents as the main subject of family education.

(2) Role dislocation

Role dislocation is another role dilemma in parental family education during social transformation. As far as the dislocation of parents in family education during social transformation, it is mainly manifested in two aspects:

On the one hand, there is a misalignment of roles between fathers and mothers in family education. In the process of the same role play, an individual may experience role inversion or overstepping with other role players, which hinders the proper function of roles. Fathers and mothers, due to their different roles in family education, should also differ in the content and responsibilities they undertake, such as gender education and family responsibility education.

On the other hand, there is a misalignment of roles between the parental roles and the teacher roles in family education. Teachers are the main body of school education, and schools are the primary locations for their educational activities. To some extent, the exertion of their educational functions is constrained by objective conditions such as educational time and location. While parents, as the main body of family education, often fail to recognize the differences between school education and family education. They may neglect family education, and even put aside its contents and responsibilities, leading to a parental role dilemma in family education.

(3) Role conflict

Role conflict is another role dilemma in family education during the social transformation. Essentially, role conflict refers to "contradictions, oppositions, and conflicts that occurring within or between roles during the role-playing process, hindering the smooth execution of these roles" ^[1] (119). Role conflict includes both inter-role and intra-role conflicts. In the context of parental home education during social transformation, role conflict mainly refers to intra-roles, that is, "conflicts that arise within an individual due to the accumulation of various social statuses and roles" ^[1] (119).

Specifically, there are two situations. One is the conflict between the parental role as an educational authority in family education and their roles in professional work. This is primarily because parents, as the main actors in family education, often fail to consciously distinguish between family and work. They frequently bring work-related issues and emotions into the family, leading to role conflict and hindering the realization of role functions. Second, there is a conflict among the multiple roles played by parents in family education. This is mainly due to inefficient role transitions. In the complex and dynamic system of family education, parents are not only the main educators responsible for family education but also listeners, observers, and companions in their children's growth and development. Parents themselves evolve alongside their children's development, influenced and affected to some extent by their children's family education. Therefore, besides playing the role of the main actor in family education, parents also adopt peer roles with their children. When the transition between these two roles is not smooth, it will

lead to role conflict, role imbalance, and further role dilemma.

3. Exploring Paths to Overcome Role Dilemmas and Restructure Family Education

The role dilemmas of parents in family education during the social transformation are a significant factor restricting the development of family education. Therefore, exploring how to overcome these parental role dilemmas and reconstruct family education is crucial for promoting the growth of individual members and advancing the development of family education.

(1) Establishing role awareness and meeting role expectations

Establishing role awareness and meeting role expectations are fundamental requirements for breaking through parental role dilemmas and restructuring family education. On the one hand, as the primary educators of family education, parents should establish the correct role consciousness, which is the prerequisite for accurate role positioning and effective role-playing. On the other hand, besides inheriting educational content from previous generations, family education must also adapt to the requirements of the time, enriching its content to withstand the external impacts of modern science and technology on the functional status of parental roles in family education during social transformation.

Consequently, parents, as the primary educators of family education, are called upon to embrace a lifelong learning philosophy to better align with the psychological needs and role expectations of children regarding the parental role in family education.

(2) Transform educational concepts and form role identity

Transforming educational concepts and forming role identity are intrinsic needs to break through the parental role dilemmas and restructure family education. After entering the period of social transformation, traditional family educational concepts no longer adapt to the growing educational needs of children. Thus, it is urgent to transform educational concepts and form role identity. This transformation involves shifting from traditional family education concepts to modern ones and transitioning from a top-down mandatory and indoctrinating concept of role inequality to an equal interaction between family education subjects and objects. Only by transforming traditional educational concepts and forming correct role identity can family education be constantly and rapidly developed.

(3) Enriching educational methods and facilitating role transition

Enriching educational methods and facilitate role transition are vital safeguard for breaking through parental role dilemmas and restructuring family education. Firstly, the continuous development of modern science and technology demands an urgent change in traditional educational methods and the enrichment of family educational means. Secondly, enriching family educational methods is not only the internal promotion of the concept of lifelong learning methods for family education subjects, but also the external requirement for family education objects to effectively accept the content of education. Finally, adapting to the requirements of the development of the times and enriching family educational methods are significant guarantees for promoting role transformation and break through the role dilemmas of role dislocation and role conflict in parents' home education during social transformation so as to promote family education.

In a word, in view of the dilemma in family education in the period of social transformation, such as role substitution, role dislocation, and role conflict, it is not only an objective need for the development of family education but also an inevitable requirement for promoting social harmony to reconstruct family education from the aspects of establishing role awareness, transforming educational philosophies, and enriching educational methods.

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