



CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN EDUCATION ON THE PERSPECTIVES OF PAULO FRIERE

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the critical pedagogy in education according to the perspectives of Paulo Friere. Critical pedagogy follows that no dichotomization between cognitive and affective domain can be envisaged, implying an essential internal unity between cognitive emotions. Another implication of this pedagogy is the dialectical unity between cognition and social reality, thereby caking for engagement of the learning process with social action. Paulo Freire advocated this praxis. The forces of globalization are determined to suppress all forms and structures of education of the mass that lead to critical thinking and generation of new knowledge through the experience of the objective world and are linked with humane values and cultural sensitivities. Thus, this is because such pedagogy would promote scientific temper in combination with the values of equality and social justices, thereby supporting social transformation.

Keywords: Critical Pedagogy, Paulo Friere, Critical Thinking, Cognition, Education

Introduction

The concept of 'critical pedagogy' took shape from the wirings of the Brazilian educator, Paulo Friere (1972). Freire's notion of praxis is grounded in Marx's theory of consciousness or formation of ideas. According to Marx, praxis is the theory of dialectical unity - the internal relation between thought and action. The difference between the two theoretical framework- critical pedagogy and uncritical educations is of the way we see the very purpose of education. In former, the purpose is to engage with and transform the reality in which we exist, whereas in the latter, the purpose is simply to conserve and reproduce it. Globalization supports and promotes uncritical education while the other emphases critical pedagogy. Globalization needs only limited number of 'thinking' people –those who generate new knowledge for extending its market agenda.

This attempt shows that it is the education policy that is flawed. It is, therefore politically misleading to find fault invariably with implementation. How can the education system be better if flawed policies are being implemented? We can say that the state is normally quite efficient, that the education system is disaster due to reasonably efficient implementation of flawed policies. The attention must remain focused on the analysis of the character of policy itself and therefore of the state. In the final analysis education prepared the students and others to develop the global consciousness needed to support human rights and ecological sustainability, as well as fight against religiously funded violence and also cultivate a global ethical framework.

If education is basically a process of communication between the sender and the receiver, this process can be effectively carried to its logical conclusion by adopting what Paulo Freire calls, 'the non-banking concept of education' (161). In the traditional banking system of education, which we have been following for generations, the teacher is presumed to be depositor and the students are the depositories. For education to be a real and effective tool of liberation, the traditional concept of the teacher as subject and the students as objects must be reversed. The teacher in the changed role is one who not only teaches but himself is taught in dialogue with the students. The teacher becomes felicitated who not only helps the learner to identify the problem but also enables them to find the correct solutions.

A close association between caste and education existed in the traditional social order in India. Some caste had a virtual monopoly over education while others where excluded from it. Social relations among caste were governed in no small measure by considerations of "purity" and "pollution". Danger school by Paul Freire is another landmark book. For years he taught unschooled adult peasants to read and write in remote and poor villages. His method was a politically radical grown up version of the method. He began by talking with Brazilian peasants about the conditions and problems of their lives and showed them how to read and write those words, which were the most important to them. He found that it took only thirty horses before the wretchedly poor and demoralized peasants were able to explore reading on their own.

Before children can understand a thing they need experience in seeing, touching, hearing, tasting, smelling, choosing, arranging, putting things together and experimenting with real things. Learning by doing is connected to looking more critically at our own reality. It encourages creative thinking, self-expression, originality, the confidence to experiment, the courage to make mistakes, to control and perfect skills.

Paulo Freire in his work on "The Pedagogy of the Oppressed" talks about the revolutionary method of education. For Freire, man's striving for his own humanity requires the changing of structures, which dehumanizes both the oppressor and the oppressed. He made a profound impact not only in the field of education but also in the struggle for national development. Paulo Freire has perfected a method for teaching illiterates that have contributed in an extra-ordinary way to the process. For him, the educational system was one of the major instruments for the maintenance of the 'culture of silence'.

We looked at the justification for introducing the pedagogy of the oppressed, the need to address the contradiction between the oppressors and the oppressed and think of the methods to overcome it. The oppressors exploit by virtue of their power, cannot find in their power the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. It is only the power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed that could free both. The oppressed instead of striving for liberation tend themselves to become oppressors or “sub-oppressor” (Freire 30). Their ideal is to be men; but for them to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity. The oppressed always finds in the oppressor their model of “manhood”. The oppressed internalize the image of the oppressor and adopt these guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom is acquired by conquest. It is a quest for human completion. Their struggle for freedom threatens not only the oppressor, but also their own oppressed comrades who are fearful of still great repression.

The oppressed suffer from duality, which has established itself in their innermost being. They soon discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically.

A pedagogy according to the writer must be forged with, not for, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity. This pedagogy makes oppression and its cause’s objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for this liberation. And in the struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade (Freire 33).

This pedagogy of the oppressed is an instrument that would be beneficial for both.

It deals with the problems of the consciousness of the oppressed and the oppressor,

the problem of men who oppress and men who suffer oppression. As the oppressors dehumanize and violate others, they themselves also become dehumanized. The oppressed while fighting to be human, take away the power of the oppressors to dominant and suppress. They restore to the oppressors the humanity they had lost in the exercise of oppression.

The oppressors always tend to transform everything surrounding him into an object of domination. The author says that only through comradeship with the oppressed can the oppressor understand his ways of living. He gives importance to dialogue and says there should be a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed.

Freire deals with two kinds of education; ‘the banking concept of education’ and ‘problem-posing concept of education’. In banking concept of education the teacher’s task is to “fill” the students with the contents of his narration contents, which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality. On the other hand the student records, memorizes and repeats the phrases without knowing what it really means. The students memorize mechanically and follow the teacher blindly. Education thus becomes an act of depositing. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits, which the students patiently receive. This is the ‘banking concept of education’.

Here, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. The educator’s effort must coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization. But, the banking concept does not admit to such partnership. Only through communication can human life hold meaning. The teacher’s thinking is authenticated only by the authenticity of the student’s thinking. According to the author those who are truly committed to liberation must reject this banking concept, and instead look at men as conscious beings. They must abandon the educational goal of deposit making and replace it with the problem-posing men in relation to the world.

Problem-posing education breaks the characteristics of banking concept of education. The teacher and the students cease to exist, resulting in the emergence of a new team through dialogue. The teacher is no longer the one who teaches, but one is himself taught in dialogue with the students who in turn while being taught also teach. It is a process in which all grow. In this way, the problem-posing education constantly reforms the reflection on the students. Problem-posing education regards dialogue as indispensable to the act of cognition. Banking concept of education treats students as objects of assistance; problem-posing education makes them critical thinkers. It enables teachers and students to become subjects of the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and alienating intellectualism. Thus it enables men to overcome their false perception of reality.

Conclusion

That is why he gives importance to the concept of dialogic. Dialogue is the essence of education as the practice of freedom. Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world. Dialogue cannot occur between those who deny other men the right to speak their word. They must first reclaim this right and prevent the continuation of this dehumanizing aggression. “Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the man, faith in his power to make and remake, to create and re-create faith in his vocation to be more fully human. Dialogue cannot exist without hope because hope is rooted in men’s incompleteness, from which they move out in constant search a search, which can be carried out only in communion with other men. Finally true dialogue cannot exist unless the dialogues engage in critical think

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