The Enlightenment of Positive Psychology to Personality Education in China

Wen-Ying XU

College of Humanities, Zhejiang Business College, Hangzhou, China

helen.0013@163.com

Abstract. Positive psychology is a new trend of psychology development which interests in positive aspects of human being and adopts more positive attitude, experimental methods and measurement methods to research on human being. It has caused an increasing effect in many areas and also has enlightenment to China’s personality education which is more important and urgent to be carried on nowadays. So this research concerns positive psychology with introducing its research object, its researches and then put forward the enlightenment to China’s personality education. The purpose is to provide reference for personality education research.

Introduction

What kind of people should education cultivate has been the focus of education which also launched a series of studies. Since the industrial revolution, the idea of science and technology has been strengthened, the humanistic spirit is relatively weak or even neglected, resulting in many modern social diseases, some scholars criticize education as a tool to make people become modern robots. Now more and more researchers agree that education is not only cultivate a specialist, but also to cultivate a comprehensive person who must take on social functions, they are not only has strong professional skills and expertise, but also has good moral level and cultural accomplishment. Personality refers to the overall mental outlook of a person; it is the sum of the individual's relatively stable psychological characteristics. Because of the important impact of education on personality training, in 1994, China proposed and implemented the "modern personality education". Its core idea is to respect and develop the students’ personality. The basic content of personality education mainly includes human cognitive education, emotional education, and consciousness education and so on. After more than20 years of development, it has achieved some success, but there are still some problems. For example, China's personality education is basically based on the theory of negative personality psychology which focuses on the negative aspects of personality. Personality education goals are general which are hard to operate. Because of the traditional concept, many people think that personality education is equivalent to ideological and political education. The content of personality education is relatively poor, it emphasis on the management and restraint of students, and less attention has been paid on the development of personality and potential. The effect of personality education is not obvious and so on.

And now , the rapid development of society puts forward new requirements to education , how to promote the personality education, how to explore the new ideas and new methods of personality education on the basis of absorbing previous experience is becoming a new challenge to personality education. After long-term study, psychologists found that the basic characteristics of sound personality include: self-improvement of the attitude of life, and actively pursue the spirit of struggle, honest and practical work style, the courage to challenge, the sense of innovation, flexible adaptability, perseverance , good at people with social skills and so on. Positive psychology is a psychological trend to use relatively perfect and effective experimental methods and measurement methods to study the human power, virtue and other positive aspects. The rise of positive psychology achieves the balance and return of psychology in the true value. Its core is more concerned about people's "positive side." Therefore, positive psychology researches have had
far-reaching influence in school reform, family education, psychological counseling and treatment. From the perspective of positive psychology to explore individual health positive personality, the development of individual good personality, will have an important significance to personality education.

**The Research Object of Positive Psychology**

In 1998 psychologist Seligman first put forward positive psychology. As Sheldon and Laura Gold (2001) said, positive psychology is a science committed to the study of human development potential and virtue and other positive qualities. Then, more and more psychologists involved in this field, and gradually formed a positive psychological movement. This movement gradually spread in the world and has spread to the Chinese psychology. In August 2010 Tsinghua University successfully held the first international positive psychology conference.

Positive psychology focuses on the positive subjective experience and emotions: happiness and satisfaction (to the past), hope and optimism (for the future), as well as happy and happy flow (for now), including their physiological mechanisms, ways and the impact on health. Specifically, on the personal level, it studies the positive personal characteristics: the ability to love, the ability to work, interpersonal skills, tolerance, creativity and wisdom and other 24 Characteristics. At present, it focuses on the root causes and effects of these qualities. On the group level, it studies the civic virtue, and the social organization, it explores how to make the individual become a sense of responsibility, altruism, polite, tolerant and how to form the social organization of citizens with professional ethics, including healthy families, well-functioning communities, effective schools, and the socially responsible media and so on. This part of the content is to determine how to make society, family, schools and units conducive to a person to form a positive personality and produce positive emotions.

**The Enlightenment of Positive Psychology to Personality Education**

**Improve the Goal: from General to Refined**

For the goal of personality education, it is general, such as create a healthy personality, but in the end what are the elements of healthy personality? How to describe the basic elements of a healthy personality in personality education? How to set the goals of personality education? Some of the questions have not been answered well. The positive psychology studies can be used to refer to these questions. Positive psychology explores the psychological structure of personality and the decomposition of personality psychological factors, as well as the physiological mechanism of subjective experience, the ways and the impact of health. All these can serve the establishment of specific goals in the practice of personality education.

In addition, some researches can be used to correct the goal of personality education. Such as optimistic, people always take it as a characteristic of the positive personality in the past, but positive psychology research suggests that optimism sometimes produces "optimistic bias", which means that assessing your own risk is lower than assessing someone else's risk. Blindly optimistic is not realistic, so we should cultivate the optimistic based on the reality. In addition, for the measurement, on the one hand positive psychology is conducive to measuring the personality of students; on the other hand, it is helpful to develop individual goals in personality education.

**Update the Concept: from Negative Coping to Active Guidance**

In the past, our emphasis on personality education is to prevent and solve the bad personalities; less attention has been paid on the positive personality training and guidance. Positive psychology believes that in every person's heart, there are two forces of struggle. One is negative; the other one is positive. The two forces that can beat each other, the key is to see which one has a new energy injection, which one can be survived in the psychological environment. Positive psychology is concerned about the positive side of personality, it emphasizes to become a balanced personality. In this way, the role of personality education can also have some conversion, from negative coping to
active guidance. To guide students to develop and strengthen the positive forces, with their own positive forces to eliminate or suppress the negative forces, so that they can become a perfect self-realization of the people.

**Optimize the Way of Education: from Single to Integrated**

Positive psychology opposes the idea that "man is developing himself according to a fixed path prescribed by the genetic map", it considers that personality is developed in the process of a complex activity formed by the interaction of human and social cultural environments. It argues that the physiological mechanism has a significant impact on personality, but does not completely determine the development model of personality. The growth of personality is the result of internal factors, external behavior, and social environment interaction.

In addition, at the group level positive psychology focuses on well-functioning communities, effective schools, socially responsible media and other related researches. These studies are conducive to the effective coordination and integration of social and cultural environment resources, to promote the realization of personality education goals.

**Adjust the Focus: from Fixing up to Digging**

In the area of prevention, positive psychology argues that the great progress made in preventive work comes from systematically shaping the capabilities within the individual, rather than fixing the flaws. Positive psychology believes that there is forces in the human body that can withstand mental illness, these forces is courage, focus on the future, optimism, interpersonal skills perseverance and insight, etc. Most of the prevention work should be the establishment of science on human power. Its mission is to find out how to cultivate these qualities in young people.

For example, to prevent drug abuse in juveniles who are prone to drugs, effective prevention is not to treat them, but to identify and develop the forces that they already own. A juvenile who is concerned about the future, good interpersonal relationships, and who can get pleasure from the sport is not going to form a drug abuse. In short, positive psychology argues that effective prevention can be achieved by exploring the strength of the person in distress itself.

**Conclusion**

China's modern educational psychologist Shicheng Liao said: "with knowledge without personality, not as good as with personality without knowledge. Personality training aims to cultivate a variety of good habits, moral and social." Therefore, the goal of personality education in our country is to cultivate people with personality, such individuals should be the individuals who have the potential to be developed, have a goal and often experience happiness. They are full of hope for the future.

After nearly 20 years, positive psychology has influenced many areas of society with a vigorous gesture. Its ideas and opinions have penetrated into the fields of sociology, education, economics, and management and so on. It provides us with a new perspective on the problem, to a certain extent, positive psychology researches can really be used to reference and promote the realization of our goal of personality education.

**References**


