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A Re-examination and Reflection on the Role of Parents in Contemporary Education

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Abstract: In contemporary society, the educational environment has undergone profound changes, and parents' role in education faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities. This article deeply analyzes the current state of the parental role in contemporary education, points out the limitations of traditional role positioning, and re-examines the parental role from multiple dimensions, including as the child's first mentor, emotional supporter, learning partner, bridge between home and school, and learner of self-growth. Furthermore, it offers corresponding reflections and suggestions on the problems parents may encounter during this role transition, aiming to help parents better adapt to the educational needs of the new era and provide strong support for the holistic development of their children.

Keywords: Contemporary education; parental role; re-examination; educational philosophy

1. Introduction

Education is a crucial cornerstone for national rejuvenation and social progress, a meritorious undertaking that benefits the present and future generations. In a child's development, the family is the first school, and parents are the first teachers, responsible for delivering the "first lesson in life" and helping them take the first step in the right direction. However, with the development of the times, contemporary education faces many new changes, such as the rapid development of information technology, the updating of educational concepts, and intensified social competition. These changes place new demands on the role of parents. Therefore, re-examining and reflecting on the role of parents in contemporary education has significant practical implications.

2. The Current Status of Parents' Roles in Contemporary Education

2.1 Limitations of Traditional Role Positioning

In traditional educational concepts, parents are often seen as caregivers of their children's lives and supervisors of their studies. They are primarily responsible for their children's basic needs, ensuring their physical health, while also focusing on their academic performance, urging them to complete homework, and enrolling them in various tutoring and extracurricular classes. This role positioning, to some extent, neglects the development of children's personality, emotional needs, and comprehensive qualities. For example, some parents only focus on their children's grades, criticizing and blaming them when their grades are unsatisfactory, ignoring the difficulties and setbacks their children encounter in the



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learning process, and their inner feelings. This singular role positioning can easily lead to children developing a dislike for learning, affecting their physical and mental health and overall development.

2.2 Extreme Phenomena of Over-Intervention and Laissez-faire

In actual educational practice, two extreme phenomena exist in the parental role. Some parents over-intervene, planning everything for their children, from studies to life, from hobbies to career choices, leaving children with almost no right to make independent decisions. This over-intervention inhibits children's creativity and independent thinking abilities, leaving them lacking the ability to cope with setbacks and difficulties. For example, some parents enroll their children in various tutoring and interest classes, filling their children's time with activities and leaving them no time for free play and exploration, which leads to excessive pressure and rebellious behavior ^[1]. Other parents, on the other hand, let their children do as they please, believing that education is the responsibility of the school and that they only need to provide material support. These parents rarely care about their children's learning and living conditions, lack communication and interaction with their children, which leads to a lack of family warmth and proper guidance, making it easy for children to go astray.

2.3 The Prevalence of Educational Anxiety

In contemporary society, educational competition is increasingly fierce, leading to widespread educational anxiety among parents. They worry that their children will fall behind from the start, and to gain admission to good schools, they spare no expense in spending time and money on school district housing and various training programs. This educational anxiety not only places enormous psychological pressure on parents but also affects the physical and mental health of their children. For example, some parents, in order to help their children achieve good results in entrance exams, assign them excessive amounts of homework and tutoring classes, causing children to study late into the night, resulting in insufficient sleep, weakened immunity, and poor mental state. Furthermore, parental educational anxiety can be transmitted to children, causing them anxiety and pressure, and negatively impacting their interest and motivation in learning.

3. A Re-examination of the Parental Role in Contemporary Education

3.1 As the Child's First Mentor

Parents are the most important mentors in a child's development. Their words, actions, values, and lifestyles have a profound impact on their children. In contemporary education, parents should focus on improving their own qualities, establishing correct educational concepts and values, and setting a good example for their children. For example, parents can continuously enrich their knowledge base through reading and learning, improve their cultural literacy and moral standards, and face life's difficulties and setbacks with a positive attitude, allowing children to be subtly influenced and educated. At the same time, parents should also pay attention to their children's interests and talents, guide them to set correct goals and ideals, help them develop reasonable learning plans and development strategies, and cultivate their independent learning abilities and innovative spirit.

3.2 As a Supporter of Children's Emotions

Children's growth requires not only material satisfaction but also emotional support. In contemporary society, children face pressure from various aspects such as learning, life, and social interactions. They need their parents' care, understanding, and encouragement. Parents should establish a good communication and trusting relationship with their children, listen to their feelings, understand their needs and confusion, and provide timely emotional support and comfort. For example, when children encounter difficulties in their studies, parents should not simply criticize and blame them, but rather analyze the problem together, find solutions, encourage them to overcome difficulties, and enhance their self-confidence. When children encounter setbacks in life, parents should give them warm hugs and encouraging words, letting them feel the love and support of their family and helping them establish correct values and a positive outlook on life.

3.3 As a Learning Partner for Children

In contemporary education, learning is no longer a child's sole responsibility. Parents should become their children's learning partners, learning and growing together with them. Parents can read books with their children, watch educational programs, and participate in social practice activities to broaden their children's

horizons and enrich their knowledge. At the same time, parents can discuss learning problems with their children, share learning experiences and insights, and stimulate their children's interest and motivation in learning. For example, parents and children can develop a study plan together, monitor each other's learning progress, and regularly summarize and reflect on their learning to improve learning outcomes together. In addition, parents can encourage their children to participate in various academic competitions and science and technology innovation activities to cultivate their practical abilities and innovative spirit.

3.4 As a bridge for home-school cooperation

Family and school are two important places for children's growth, and home-school cooperation is crucial for children's education. Parents should actively communicate and cooperate with schools and teachers to understand their children's learning and life at school, provide timely feedback on their children's performance at home, and jointly formulate educational plans and measures to form a joint educational force. For example, parents can regularly participate in parent meetings and parent schools organized by the school, communicate face-to-face with teachers, understand the school's educational philosophy and methods, and grasp their children's learning progress and existing problems^[2]. At the same time, parents can also maintain close contact with teachers through telephone, WeChat, and other means to understand their children's dynamics in a timely manner and cooperate with teachers to do a good job in their children's education. In addition, parents can also actively participate in volunteer activities and parent-child activities organized by the school to enhance their relationship with the school and teachers and create a good learning and growth environment for their children.

3.5 As learners of self-growth

In contemporary society, knowledge and technology are updated rapidly, and parents also need to continuously learn and grow in order to adapt to the development of the times and the educational needs of their children. Parents can learn advanced educational concepts and methods and improve their educational level and ability by participating in training courses, reading educational books, and communicating with other parents. For example, parents can learn about child psychology and

pedagogy to understand the laws and characteristics of children's physical and mental development, and master scientific educational methods and techniques. At the same time, parents can also pay attention to the latest developments and research findings in the field of education, constantly updating their educational concepts and providing more scientific and effective guidance for their children's education.

4. Problems and Reflections Parents May Encounter During Role Transition

4.1 The Problem of Conflict Between Educational Philosophy and Reality

During the role transition, parents may encounter the problem of conflict between their educational philosophy and reality. For example, some parents, while recognizing the importance of holistic education, may still unconsciously pursue their children's scores and grades when faced with the pressure and competition of school entrance exams, neglecting the cultivation of their children's comprehensive qualities. To address this issue, parents need to correctly understand the essence and purpose of education, establish a long-term educational perspective, and not be misled by short-term gains. At the same time, parents can communicate and cooperate with schools and teachers to jointly explore how to cultivate children's comprehensive qualities and abilities while ensuring their academic performance. For example, schools can organize a variety of extracurricular activities and social practice activities, allowing students to develop their abilities through practice; parents can encourage their children to participate in these activities and support their development of their interests and talents.

4.2 The Problem of Insufficient Time and Energy

Most contemporary parents face the dual pressures of work and life, with limited time and energy, making it difficult to have enough time to accompany their children's learning and growth. To address this issue, parents need to rationally allocate their time and energy and improve their time management skills. For example, parents can create a detailed schedule to reasonably arrange their work, study and time with their children, ensuring that they have a certain amount of time to communicate and interact with their children every day^[3]. At the same time, parents can also make full use of

fragmented time, such as commuting to and from get off work, lunch break, etc., to have brief exchanges and interactions with their children and understand their situation. In addition, parents can also seek help from family members, friends or professional organizations to share the responsibility of caring for their children.

4.3 Difficulties in Communication with Children

As children grow older, they gradually develop their own thoughts and opinions, which may lead to communication difficulties with parents. For example, children may resist their parents' guidance and be unwilling to share their feelings. To address this, parents need to learn effective communication skills, respect their children's individuality and ideas, and establish an equal and democratic communication relationship. For instance, when communicating with children, parents should listen attentively to their opinions and thoughts, avoid interrupting them, and make them feel respected and understood. Parents can also strengthen their bond and bridge the gap with their children by participating in activities together and sharing life experiences. Furthermore, parents can pay attention to their children's interests and hobbies, starting with topics that interest them to engage in conversation and communication.

4.4 Coping with Educational Anxiety

Educational anxiety is a common problem among contemporary parents, and how to cope with it is an important issue that parents need to address during their role transition. To address this, parents need to adjust their mindset, establish correct educational concepts, and avoid excessively pursuing their children's grades and rankings. Parents must recognize that every child has their own unique characteristics and strengths, and generalizations should be avoided. Meanwhile, parents can alleviate their anxiety about education by attending mental health lectures and communicating with other parents. Furthermore, parents can guide their children to view learning and competition in a positive light, cultivate their resilience and psychological adjustment abilities, and help them maintain a positive and optimistic attitude when facing setbacks and difficulties.

5 Suggestions for Promoting the Transformation of Parents' Roles

5.1 Strengthen Parent Education

The government and society should strengthen the

education and training of parents to improve their educational literacy and abilities. Scientific educational concepts and methods can be taught to parents through parent schools, family education lectures, and distribution of family education publicity materials, so as to help parents establish correct educational views, talent views and parent-child views. For example, the education department can work with communities, schools and other institutions to regularly organize parents to participate in family education courses, invite experts and scholars to explain knowledge of child psychology, education and other aspects to parents, and answer questions encountered by parents in the process of education. At the same time, online parent schools can be opened using Internet platforms to provide parents with convenient learning channels.

5.2 Improve the Home-School Cooperation Mechanism

Schools should further improve the home-school cooperation mechanism and strengthen communication and cooperation with parents. Parent committees can be established, parent meetings can be held regularly, and parents can be informed of their children's learning and life in a timely manner, and their opinions and suggestions can be heard. At the same time, schools can also carry out parent open days, parent-child activities, etc., so that parents can enter the campus, understand the school's education and teaching situation, and enhance the relationship between parents, schools and teachers^[4]. For example, schools can organize an open day for parents once per semester, inviting parents to enter classrooms, observe their children's learning, and have face-to-face communication with teachers. In addition, schools can establish a parent volunteer system to encourage parents to participate in school management and educational activities, contributing to the school's development.

5.3 Creating a Positive Social Educational Atmosphere

Society should create a positive educational atmosphere to alleviate parents' educational anxiety. The media should play a guiding role, promoting scientific educational concepts and methods while avoiding excessive emphasis on academic competition and anxiety. Simultaneously, society should strengthen the balanced allocation of educational resources, narrowing the educational gap between urban and rural areas, regions, and schools, and providing equitable

educational opportunities for every child. For example, the government can increase investment in education, improve school conditions in rural and impoverished areas, and raise teachers' salaries and qualifications. Furthermore, it can encourage social forces to participate in education, developing diversified educational services to meet the different needs of parents and children.

5.4 Parents' Own Reflection and Growth

Parents themselves also need continuous reflection and growth to actively adapt to the requirements of their changing role. Parents should regularly reflect on and summarize their educational practices, identifying problems and making timely adjustments. Parents can also exchange experiences with other parents, learning from each other and improving together. For example, parents can join parent exchange groups to share educational insights and experiences, learning from others' successes. In addition, parents can continuously improve their educational level and abilities by reading educational books and attending training courses.

Conclusion

In contemporary education, parents should transform from caregivers to mentors, emotional supporters, learning partners, and bridges for home-school cooperation in their children's growth. This role transition involves challenges such as conflicting

philosophies, limited time, and communication difficulties, requiring proactive solutions. The government, schools, and society should strengthen parent education, improve home-school mechanisms, and create a positive educational environment. This role transformation is a long-term process requiring continuous learning to adapt to the educational needs of the new era, support children's holistic development, and jointly promote educational progress.

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