

Comparative research on middle education between china and western countries

[Education](#), [School](#)



Comparative Research on Middle Education between China and Western Countries Karen Yang 09 Normal English Class One #200942206110 2012.

11. 09 Abstract Education is a topic that people frequently discussed. In China, how to carry out educational reform is a big issue. This thesis tries to compare the middle school education system between China and western countries in some certain aspects, and find out innovational way to reform education system in China. This thesis is divided into five chapters to discuss the contrast of middle education between China and west. By comparing the contrast of social environment, cultural tradition, education structure, teaching form and assessment, Chinese people can get some enlightenment from it. Key word: middle education, contrast, reform Contents

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Works Cited 9 li¼ŽIntroduction Nowadays, science and technology are the first productive forces in our society, talents as carriers of science and technology seem particularly important. Therefore, every country in the world takes great attention on developing the education. Students enter the stage of middle education after graduating from primary school. As an essential part of the foundation education, middle education not only plays an extremely important role on personal development, but also relates to the future of a country and nation. Teenagers are in golden age to acquire

knowledge, thus they should be educated to help them develop their abilities. Most countries pay great attention on teenager education, but they have some differences ideas and methods. To compare the middle education between China and West is of great significance. It's helpful for the development of the Chinese education. It is necessary to transfuse new vigor and innovation to education reform in China. This essay mainly talks about the contrast on middle education between China, America, and Britain. II. Comparison of the Environment and Cultural Tradition 2. 1 Contrast of Social Environment China is the great nation with glorious history and cultural traditions. China has a population of more than 1.3 billion, far exceeded western countries; and suffers a per-capita shortage of resources, including material and mental. "The Chinese person has the excellent moral of modesty, rigorous and implicit, but also has been over cautions and conservative" (Ke 62). Though Chinese economy and technology is backward than some developed countries, it has very strong potential development. In the past more than thirty years of reform and opening up, China has made great achievements. Meanwhile, Chinese has learned from the advanced education experiences to promote the educational reform. On the contrary, America, a typical western country, is open social. The society's openness urges the American to abandon the old education thought which the European traditional schools sticks to, adopt open policy to absorb all advantages from other countries and establishes. Moreover, western countries have a smaller population with a stronger economy. It is easier to provide the children with better education. In the western world, "people concern with practical value, matter reward as well as individual value

realization" (Zhou 46). Generally speaking, western society is more open-minded than Chinese that it quickly accepts other countries' advanced experiences.

2. 2 Contrast of Tradition Education Ideas

The China and West's education has extremely different traditional. China's education thoughts and methods have its strong national characteristics. China's education pays more attention to the instilling and accumulation of knowledge, cultivating "the students' respect to the knowledge and authority and building the ability to inherit the knowledge system" (Ke 62). In other words, students go to middle school and high school to acquire some common knowledge in China. Compared with Chinese middle schools, American pays great attention to train the students' practical ability to utilize the knowledge, cultivating the students' question to the knowledge and authority and "building the ability to extend the knowledge system" (Ke 63). These two kinds of education expressed two different manners of treatment with knowledge. China's middle schools emphasizes on training their students to be strict, rigorous spiritual. Therefore, Chinese students prefer to be "self-fetter, self-control" (Xue 130), as well as accustomed to conservative idea because of worry about the mistake. However, America's middle schools pay much attention to raise their students' self-confidence, independent, spirit of supporting themselves. In this way, western middle education aims to give all students an education suited to their particular abilities, while Chinese middle education aims to give all students certain knowledge.

III. Differences of the Educational Structure and Teaching Form

3. 1 Differences of the Middle Educational Structure

In China, middle education is "generally divided into academic middle education and vocational/technical middle education"

(Education System). It covers schooling from the age of 12 to the age of 18. In general, middle education lasts five to seven years in China. Academic middle education includes academic lower /junior middle schools and upper middle schools /senior middle schools. Junior middle school education consists the last three years of compulsory education in China. After graduating from junior middle school, students can take a locally administered entrance exam to choose to continue their education in a senior middle school or a vocational middle school. Students go to vocational schools to be trained as medium-level skilled workers, farmers, and technical personnel for two or four years. Technical schools usually offer four-year programs to cultivate intermediate technical personnel. In United Kingdom, middle education covers schooling from " the age of 11 to the minimum school leaving age of 18" (Zhang ed. 154). Through modern educational reforms, the present United Kingdom secondary schools usually cover " Grammar Schools¼Comprehensive Schools, Vocational Schools and Secondary Modern Schools" (Zhang ed. 154). The teaching in the grammar schools is much concerned with the business of getting ready for the examinations. In the comprehensive school, pupils study a wide variety of subjects at first and after two or three years they may drop some of them, and study only those they like best. Vocational schools offer many programs to cultivate skilled workers and technical personnel . Secondary modern schools offer general education, including some particular instruction. In most western countries, secondary schools implement the credit-based system and elective system. Therefore, students have more choices to learn what they really interest.

3. 2 Differences of Class Size and After-school

Assignments The class sizes and teaching styles in China vary from that in the west to a large degree. There are about 40 to 60 students in a class in Chinese secondary schools. The classroom teaching is common in China. Teachers focus on the whole class, sometimes "ignore some laggards" (Zhou 47). Generally, the homework arrangements are to check whether the students have understood the content. What's more, some homework can be very boring that students get tired of them, for example copy the new words for several times or recite a competition. Students can easily find the answers in the book rather than thinking out by themselves, or through team-work. Besides, Chinese students have lots of homework to do, and they have great pressure on examination. However, a class is only about 3 to 15 students in the western secondary schools. Students in western countries not only study in classroom, but also "have a great proportion of extra-curricular practices in factories, laboratories, museums" (Zhang ed. 154). Western students also have some after-school assignments, but they don't face heavy pressure on examination. These assignments usually guide students to think independently that they do not have a certain answer. The assignment can be very different, for example to observe the growth of a sapling and take some photos. The assignment can be simple but interesting, so that students enjoy doing it and would learn something from it. Students can have their own answers, and teacher may just encourage them to be creative. Therefore, westerners focus on the realization of the value of the individual, respect for human character development. Compared with Chinese middle school students, western students have more freedom. Schools and teachers offer more time let students to practice by their own

instead of feeding them knowledge. Chinese middle school students usually have advantage on answering the question, but they are weaker in putting forward innovational ideas than western teenagers. In China, a large proportion of students tend to follow some common rules to keep safe. Therefore, Chinese students have stronger dependency.

3. 3 Different Styles of Teaching Lessons

The teaching model in western countries is various, and more active than that in China. Many British teachers tend to be a guide who put forward the questions, let students think about on their own and lead them to find out the answers independently. Teachers usually get on well with students just like friends. They tend to be helpful and genial that students would like to talk with them. On the contrary, some Chinese teachers get used to feed their students some knowledge directly. They want to be strict so that the students may not disobey them. As a result, some teenagers are afraid of their teacher. They would find the teacher's class is boring and hard. It Most western teachers make the students to think about the problems independently. It can "arouse the enthusiasm and develop creative thinking of the students" (Zhang ed. 155) and create a fun, exciting, and healthy atmosphere in the class. If students have any questions, they can ask the teacher in class, thus students could understand it well. Besides, it makes the lessons more impressive. However, it is hard for teacher to control the learning progress, and it might leads to a situation that teacher cannot finish certain teaching contents. Sometimes it would waste a lot of time on meaningless questions. Many Chinese teachers make good use of the limited time, so that students can learn more knowledge. If students have some questions, they usually wait after class to ask the teacher. It

won't disturb the teacher's teaching plan. However, students' puzzle could not be solved in time. Students have to concentrate all the time to avoid miss some key points. As a result, the quality of instruction would be lowered. Chinese secondary schools concern more on truth and knowledge, while western secondary schools concern more on independent critical thinking and analysis. IV. Different attitudes towards the assessment China is one of the populous countries. Chinese face great competition, therefore, the society put great expectation and pressure on the youth. Teenagers in China are facing two essential entrance examination called Zhong Kao and Gao Kao, which has a great influence on the schools that they can go to study (Xue 130). In order to improve students' ability to take those exams, Chinese schools and teachers usually give students numerical scores. In a way, it encourages students. However, students have to work hard to get a high point, and they usually compare with each other. In China, most middle school students have great pressure on facing various assessments. Various assessments push them to study hard and seriously to gain a high mark. Secondary schools place undue emphasis on the proportion of students' entering school of a higher level. Parents always remind their children to work hard rather than to their individual development. The society cares too much about the grade and behavior that student in schools. It also leads to the students concern more on their grades. Though this situation has improved somewhat because of a revolution of " quality education", it is still a serious problem in China. Relatively speaking, western students do not need to worry too much about the assessments, because schools and teachers would like to give students more encouragement. Students also

have different tests in class, but they don't need to worry about that because the teacher just wants to know how much they had learnt. Parents concern much about the development of their children in all aspects instead of how much point they get. Though American teenagers still have entrance examination, they have fewer burdens than Chinese teenagers'. In western country, the assessment for students just divides into several levels instead of specific points. Schools pay more attention to cultivate a well-round student. Students might enjoy more in learning rather than focus on their scores.

V. Conclusion As middle education is an essential part of people's life, both the government and the society should pay a high degree of attention to improve the quality of middle education. China's middle education is shift from the " examination-oriented education" to the " quality education" in recent decades. China can learn some advanced experiences from west. Chinese need to pay more attention on practical levels. The individualized education in the quality of education should be promoted. In this aspect, Chinese should make some effort, for example, to reduce class sizes. Every student has talent in different aspects, so every student need fair chance. The teacher's role should be changed into a guide instead of a knowledge transmission. Schools should focus more on cultivate well-round students. Meanwhile, the assessment system needs to make a reasonable change. China's education reform is a long tough task which needs more successful experiences from other countries and establishes.

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