

Enlightenment of Marxist Philosophy Happiness on Contemporary College Students' Happiness Education

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Abstract

As a special group of young people, college students' thoughts represent the mainstream and direction of young people, and affect the future of a country and nation and the social progress. Due to the influence of negative effects of market economy, family and school education and college students themselves, some college students formed an incorrect happiness. Therefore, the university should strengthen college students' happiness education. Marxism view of happiness is the scientific concept of happiness. It thinks that happiness should be the unity of personal happiness and social happiness in which labor is the source of happiness, so happiness is the unity of material happiness and spiritual happiness. This has important significance for the contemporary college students' education of happiness.

Key words: Marxism happiness; College students; Happiness; Education

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INTRODUCTION

People yearn for happiness by nature. What is happiness? People understand happiness in various way. The view of happiness is a reflection of people's world view and outlook on life. The happiness view of the contemporary college students not only relates to their own life path, but also has important influence on society. Therefore, the university should strengthen college students' education of happiness. The Marxist philosophy happiness is the theoretical cornerstone to carry out the work of contemporary college students' happiness education, and it has important guiding significance for the contemporary college students' education of happiness.

1. THE CONNOTATION OF HAPPINESS

Happiness view is people's fundamental concept of happiness, is a reflection of people's world view and outlook on life, and is their stable attitude and ideas about what is happiness and how to be happy. Essentially, happiness is a kind of social consciousness that has the social inherent, determined by the material conditions of the society. It varies with the changing of social material conditions, and is influenced by social and historical conditions. Therefore, people's happiness view is different in the different historical period. With the development of industrial civilization, people's living standards continue to improve, and material wealth increased rapidly. It changes people's understanding of happiness and mormonism, hedonism, and individualism have become more and more popular. Some people put making and spending money as happiness, put money above all else, even they can lose everything in order to get money; some people put the spiritual pleasures and enjoyments as happiness, ignoring the material life. The above two are not the correct view of happiness. The so-called correct happiness view is that the goals and standards of

happiness should be able to meet their actual standards, social needs and characteristics of the times. That is to say, under existing conditions, this kind of happiness can be got through own efforts, but this kind of happiness should conform to society's moral standards.

The essence of Marxist philosophy is seeking truth from facts, concerning about the suffering of the people, and pursue happiness for all mankind. Therefore, the happiness view of Marxist philosophy is a scientific concept of happiness. University teachers should cultivate students to establish Marxist happiness view and make students working hard, and struggle for the common happiness of the people.

2. AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION OF CONTEMPORARY COLLEGE STUDENTS' HAPPINESS VIEW

Happiness is human life's great and significant joys through psychological experience. It has a dual nature of subjectivity and objectivity, and is an emotion and a kind of psychological experience, which belongs to the subjective consciousness. A person who thinks that he is happy is happy, whereas a person who thinks that he is not happy is not happy. In the rapid development of industrial civilization, along with the increase in the condition of the material wealth increase, contemporary college students' learning environment and learning conditions have improved greatly. In this respect they are likely to be happy. But because of some negative effects of market economy, family and school education, some students think that he is not happy, thus the thoughts of individualism and hedonism appeared.

2.1 The Influencing Factors of the Contemporary College Students' Happiness View

2.1.1 The Negative Effects of the Market Economy

We know that all things have two sides. Market economy also has the irrational side, which is bound to cause problems for college student. With the development of market economy, people's material living standard has been improved, which makes the concept of people's lives and consumer attitudes have changed. More and more people pay attention to improvement of the quality of life, value of high-end luxury consumption. So the most people take the pursuit of money as a goal in life. Some college students are affected so that they believe that only wealth is the ultimate goal of the life. On the other hand, the establishment of market economic system, make people's spiritual realm changed. The collective ideas has been eroded. Some characteristics of market economy makes people more and more indifferent to all the things which have nothing to do with yourself. The various forms of extreme individualism emerges from that.

2.1.2 Schools Lack of Happiness Education

The formation of college students' happiness view is closely related to the school education. However, the college students' happiness education in colleges and universities has many disadvantages. First, the content of the schools lack of happiness education. In the current many courses in colleges and universities, there are little happiness education rarely besides some moral education courses. But colleges and universities are not value on moral education, education utilitarian serious, in order to meet the needs of the society, it seems to be the purpose of education is to cultivate people to master production skills, science and technology. Second, they pay attention to the theory of knowledge, and contempt practice education. From education situation of moral education in colleges and universities, teachers still use traditional teaching methods, although this method is very important, it can make the students master the theoretical knowledge effectively. But happiness is a kind of ability, in order to develop this ability, we must have some practical experiences, but the schools pay less attention to student's practice education.

2.1.3 The Influence of Family Factors

With the country's family planning policy implementation gradually, the size and structure of family has become reduced while there are more and more one-child families since the reform and opening up. The traditional family structure has changed from the father-centered mode to child-centered form. This transformation could make contemporary college students spoiled by the whole family members, meanwhile, they are easy to form a self-centered consciousness, only pay attention to the realization of personal value and emphasize the self-gratification. In family education, some parents usually give the wrong guidance to children, and equate wealth and success with happiness, thus it would make children's happiness distorted. What's more, parents' behaviors and habits will impact on children. Family education is an important factor that has a great influence on the growth of children.

2.1.4 The Factors of University Students

First, college students' social status and reputation are the envy of contemporaries for a long period of time. However, the higher education started from elite education to mass education along with the expansion of higher education. The era of planned economy with "assigning jobs" no longer existed, meanwhile, college students have become the common civilians, so they need to look for an appropriate job in the competitive social environment. This huge psychological gap always causes their feelings of loss and confuses, and makes their understanding and awareness of the happiness come to a certain deviation so as to have influence on their motivation and means of the pursuit of happiness. Second, part of the modern college students are the only

child, many of them have a tendency of individualism because of the impact of family environment. Third, with the rapid development of economic society, material and spiritual products of the society are constantly enriched, people's philosophy of life and the concept of consumption have changed. Furthermore, college students' expense ideas or attitudes have transformed from survival consumption into development consumption, even appeared hyper-consumption. Because most students are not independent in economy, their advanced consumption concept and lagging consumer strength, will inevitably turn out to be some problems. In other words, this will lead some college students' view of happiness to the extreme individualism, hedonism and money worship.

2.2 The Main Problems of Contemporary College Students' Happiness

2.2.1 Individualistic Happiness

Individualism is also called self-interest, it is the ideological system and moral principle that based on personal interests as the fundamental starting point and end-result. These college students with individualistic tendency think personal value is above all, so they often care about their own happiness too much to be lacking in the sense of responsibility for family, collective and society, even hold that all of this has nothing to do with themselves. Moreover, they take obtaining from their family and collective for granted. Some students only care about their personal needs and insist on "have nothing to do with hanging". While others are self-centered, especially concentrate on their feelings instead of other people or collective. When they encounter setbacks or failure, they would rather always blame everything than to find reasons from themselves and never analyze themselves carefully as to be lack of reflective awareness.

2.2.2 Hedonistic Happiness

Among contemporary college students, part of them is affected by hedonism, and considers happiness as material enjoyment. In particular, these students which is just free from the huge pressure in College Entrance Examination, think that to enter the university means to enjoy themselves fully. Their hedonistic tendency is very serious. They believe that happiness is "spendthrift" and to pay attention to the ostentation. Although those families' economic condition is so poor, they want to wear what their classmates wear beyond their own economic load owing to the comparisons in vogue. They did not realize that pleasure is not equivalent to happiness, and excessive pleasure even will ruin the future happiness. Only through people's own labor to create can they achieve the true happiness. For such a group of college students, the university must give them timely correction and change their thought.

2.2.3 Mammonism Happiness

Due to the influence of "principle of profit maximization in the market economy", some college students excessively pursue personal material interests and pay more attention to material wealth, thus formed the worship happiness which claim "money first" as its slogan. They said that "money can take care of everything". Some college students from well-off homes spend money like water and don't keep the concept of thrift in their mind. Their food, clothing and use are all world famous brands, and also their classmates are often invited to the dinner and receive gifts. These students take the money to live a "so-called happy life" from their parents. This makes the poor more firmly believe that money is happiness. In addition, there are some female students think high of "Marry after graduation, must marry a rich man", "A good marriage is better than well done" and so on. That is to say, they believe finding a good man is more important than a good job. It can be seen that in our college campuses some students have an incorrect happiness. Although we recognize that happiness is dependent on the material foundation or we can say it's necessary for happiness to have material foundation, happiness not only includes the material happiness, but also the spiritual happiness. True happiness is the unity of the spiritual happiness and materialistic happiness. Therefore, in order to correct this negative side-effects atmosphere in campus, university and society should call on them to establish the proper happiness.

3. THE INFLUENCE OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS ON CONTEMPORARY COLLEGE HAPPINESS EDUCATION

The undergraduates are valuable talent resource of nation, the wish of people and the future of motherland, how their ideal and belief relates to the development of Chinese future directly and determines the nation's international status and influence as well. At present, the university student is being at the stage which the outlook on the world, life and values shapes and forms, as well as the important period which is to set up the right view of well-being and make efforts under the above guidance, whether the happiness of college students is correct directly affects the whole nation quality and the future of the country. Contemporary university students' understanding of happiness is not consistent because of various factors, so moral education must grasp the development trend of the times accurately, focus on college students' psychological needs under the new situation and thus targeted to strengthen and improve the college happiness education. As the important content of moral education, happiness education is related to the view of world, life and value,

also is the starting point and breakthrough of three-outlook education to some degree. Therefore, the happiness education plays an irreplaceable role in the development of college students themselves and the society. Then how should the teacher's guide students to establish correct happiness? I found the books of Marx and Engels contain rich content of happiness during the process when I taught course named "the History of Marxism Philosophy Development". In Marx's high school graduation thesis *Youth consideration when choosing profession*, he pointed out the unification of personal happiness and social happiness; in *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, he told us that "labor is the source of happiness"; and in *The German Ideology*, he presented the importance of the material life, etc. These contents have important enlightenment significance on how to carry out the happiness education for college students.

3.1 Youth Consideration When Choosing Profession: Happiness is the Unity of Individual Happiness and Social Happiness

The relationship between individual and society is the mutually premise and a dialectical unity, that is to say, the existence and development of the individual depends on the levels of the social progress and vice versa. So when it comes to the relations of individual happiness and social happiness, Marxists think they are interrelated, interdependent and dialectical unity. The realization of the individual happiness, either the process of labor to create or the enjoyment of life, all has some connection with the society. From the moment of everyone's birth, he will inevitably come into contact with the material and spiritual civilization which are created by the previous generation. Namely, he realistic individual has already begun to enjoy the existing wealth of material and spirit before he makes a contribution to society, to some extent, he starts to share the society's wealth in the certain time and space. Therefore, human as the social existence whose happiness only can be achieved in the society, seek happiness for the society is the highest sense of happiness.

In the high school graduation thesis *Youth consideration when choosing profession*, Marx wrote, "As making the career choice, the key pointer which we should follow is the happiness of mankind and our own perfection...generation of human being's nature is just like this; only for himself, contemporary perfect for their happiness and work, he can reach oneself perfect", "History calls those men the greatest who have ennobled themselves by working for the common good; those who bring happiness to the majority of people are the happiest" (Marx & Engels, 1982). Likewise, Dzerzhinskiy who is a Russian proletarian revolutionist said, "It's the greatest happiness of life to be a man who can bring light and hope to others and give everything he had selflessly... Only at this time, human being can get the happiness. Only at this time, human being can afford to put up with any

difficulties and hardships, sickness and poverty. Only at this time, human being does not fear death though it was at this time that he would learn to love life really. Only at this time, human being can look upon the world with a fresh mind, as well as, to see everything, hear everything and know everything. Only at this time, human being can get rid of his little world to see the whole world, and feel the joy and pain of all mankind, meanwhile, human being can become a real person also only at this time" (Dzerzhinskiy, 1980). The most fortunate thing in life is being able to share the communal enjoyment with the majority. It is real true happiness for the whole society and humankind. Only by this way, can I make myself from the ordinary visual angle transcend to a higher level of the best efforts for all the human being's happiness.

Of course, we can't despise the personal happiness, also, the social happiness is not separate from the creation of personal happiness. Only when people continue to pursue happiness can the society develop and advance, and only if individual happiness combined with the needs of society will our society accelerate forward and reach an unprecedented prosperity. As Stalin said, "There is no and should not be irreconcilable antagonism between the person and collective, the interest of the individual and community. That is because collectivism and socialism do not deny personal interests but personal interests is connected with collective interests. Socialism can't put aside personal benefits" (Stalin, 1977). Personal happiness and social happiness are closely related, the latter which contains personal happiness is composed of the former's realization. Therefore, we should not equate the personal happiness and social happiness completely for whatever reasons. It's not scientific for us to only admit personal happiness instead of recognizing the social happiness or only admit abstract happiness instead of recognizing the specific happiness. True happiness is the unity of individual happiness and social happiness.

The happiness of Marxist philosophy has an important guidance significance for contemporary college students to overcome their individualistic happiness. So the campus should take cultivation of the collective consciousness as an important content of happiness education, thus makes the students realize the individual happiness depends on the social happiness and the power of the collective, and to seek the happiness for the whole society is the truly happiness. As Marx said, "If we choose the career for human well-being which we can work for the most, then we won't be overwhelmed by the heavy burden because it's dedicated to everyone; while the fun what we feel is not poor, limited and selfish, our happiness will belong to millions of people, and our cause will quietly but eternally play a very important part and go to exist, so the noble person will shed tears in the face of our ashes" (Marx & Engels, 1982). In the special process of teaching and learning, teachers ought to give precept or example and at

the same time play the relevant propagandas so that these moving stories deeply rooted in the hearts of the peoples can provide a guiding light. As long as in the pursuit of personal happiness the students also fulfill individual happiness with the social integration, the unity of personal happiness and social happiness will come true eventually.

3.2 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844: Labor is the Source of Happiness

On Marx's opinion, happiness is not given by the gift of nature or other people, and hardly reaps where one has not sown. The real happiness is a reflection of the practice activity which is based on labor. Labor is unique to humankind, "Human being is the only animal who is able to get rid of the pure animal state owing to labor, whose normal state can adapt to his consciousness and be created by ourselves" (Marx & Engels, 1971). Hence, the creation with autonomy is the fundamental characteristics of humankind and creating is the greatest pleasure of life. As the famous educationalist of Soviet Union, Sukhomlinskii in the *Mentioned in The Letter to His Son* wrote, "What is the greatest joy of life? I think this kind of fun resides in the creative labor which is similar to the art and lies in the superb skills. If a man loves the work what he engaged in, he must go to great lengths to make his labor process full of beauty, which contains the great happiness in life."

In the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Marx established his original framework of the human essential theory which animadverted and absorbed requirements of human being of Hegel and Feuerbach as its foundation. Hegel attributed human's essence to self-consciousness from an idealist standpoint. Marx thought, "Hegel makes people become the self-consciousness rather than makes self-consciousness become people's own self-awareness and the realistic person, namely, which lives in a real life filled with all kinds of entity and is conditioned by this world. Hegel puts the world upside down, so he will be able to eliminate all boundaries in the mind; but in the terms of the bad perceptivity and real person, this does not interfere with the continued existence of these boundaries completely" (Marx & Engels, 1957). Therefore, "human is a natural existence in the first hand", "Human regards the realistic and perceptual object as his own essence which is the object of his life. Only by the realistic and perceptual object can human show his own life" (Marx & Engels, 1979). Marx thought that the happiness of mankind cannot independent on the wholeness of practice. Because real person is the objective existence who knows and remakes the object world through their own consciousness and labor, then they will realize and perfect their own kind's life. For the problem of human's happiness, the Marx's "practice over-all structure of the inherent personal" has surpassed the Hegel's "absolute spirit"; "the real person itself" has taken the place of "human collective from absolute spirit". Feuerbach "understand (the happiness) just from

the objective or intuitive form rather than practice which is treated as the human's perceptual activities" (Marx & Engels, 1995). Hegel's "absolute spirit" was reduced to Marx's "human", human beings is not only viewed as the natural and spiritual nature, but also studied from object realization of man's activity. It follows that the proposition of "The unique nature of man is just free and conscious activity" (Marx & Engels, 1979).

In conclusion, Marx believed that "happiness" for human's nature state of life, is a kind of state which people always want to pursue. It is not only a kind of feeling also a process. "Happiness" should be created and found by your own practice. The free and conscious activity is the premise of human happiness.

However, the workers during the labor process lost their basic conditions which are helpful to make full use of their talents and strength freely in the capitalist society, so they would feel more sad than happy under this circumstance. Just as Marx said, "The laborer in his own work is not self-affirmation instead of self-denial, feels more misfortune than happiness, and not free to take advantage of his physical and mental strength but make his flesh hurt and spirit ruined" (Marx & Engels, 1980). Of course, the state will be changed in the development of history, the world we live in continually suspends its own unilateralism and the alienation statement, thereby becomes more and more authentic and complete. With the development of society, labor with the human nature was truly revealed. When people achieved their goals and ideals through labor, it is equivalent to self-realization so as to enjoy the greatest joy and satisfaction, briefly the "happiness". "The true happiness is not the satisfaction of material needs, but one's talent and wisdom is fully developed and utilized in the free and independent labor activities" (Yan, 1987). So labor is the source of human happiness. No work, no material conditions what's human survival needs; no work, no development and creation of the society; no work, no society's advancement, let alone the happiness.

Marx's view of happiness tells us that happiness is the unity of creation and enjoyment, also to create happiness by labor is the highest happiness and labor is an important way to realize the happiness. Marx's theory of happiness advocated attaining true happiness through hard work and sweat. Similarly, to be happy, the college students must start from labor practice. So we should take the theory of education into consideration, and moreover enrich the practical classroom-teaching during happiness education in campus. Since happiness is a subjective experience, practice is the only way to perceive the real happiness. College teachers can call on students to take part in some volunteer activities, like visiting the nursing home to help the old, going to the orphanages and special schools. These can let the students feel the happiness in practice and understand labor could create happiness.

3.3 The German Ideology: Happiness is the Unity of Material Life and Spiritual Life

Before Marxist concept of well-being come to being, people had a tendency to think material and spiritual life were mutually contradictory. There are mainly two categories: one is the asceticism happiness which holds that human's material desires and physical needs are evil so that they need to be suppressed; the other is the hedonistic happiness which focuses on the individual's physical enjoyment of life but denies the healthy spiritual life. However, Marx thought happiness is the unity of the material life and spiritual life, and the both are interdependence and interacting.

Happiness is based on material life. Marx once said, "All the first premise for human's survival, which is the first precondition of all history is: in order to 'make history', people must be able to live. But to live, first of all, you need food, housing, clothing and else. So the first historical activity is the production to meet these needs, i.e. the production of material life itself" (Marx & Engels, 1995) Material subsistence is a necessary condition for human being's survival and development, then as long as people's basic requirements are satisfied, that is under the condition of the body life's keep, human will engage in spiritual production activities. Therefore, the meet of material needs is the precondition of happiness, and we oppose that happiness which despises material needs or even denies the importance of material needs deserves special attention. As Engels said, the desire to pursue happiness can be a small part of the subjective thoughts, but mostly depends on the material way.

Marx's view of happiness has affirmed the importance of material happiness, also emphasized the significant influence what spiritual life brought to people. The realization of the happiness is dependent on the material life, but we cannot simply equate happiness to material enjoyment. For example, people whose material life is extremely rich but spiritual life is so desperate, even if is thought they live a happy life, that is the empty and pale happiness instead of the real happiness. As the natural existence and social existence, man is different from animal, people's happiness is not only from the full material enjoyment but also comes from the pursuit of spiritual life. When a person has a certain amount of material wealth, this will not necessarily bring the expected happiness to him, in contrast, seeking for the spirit world is what he attach importance to. As a result, we should pursue a lasting spiritual happiness which is based on a certain amount of material and beyond it. A society without spiritual pursuit is not a perfect society, meanwhile, a person without spiritual pursuit is not a perfect person. Only the more richer and freedom spirit can we ensure the realization of our life's value

and perfection. Therefore, if material happiness and spiritual happiness are organically combined, as well as, the person's material needs and spiritual pursuit are all satisfied, we can get the real happiness.

It can be seen that part of students pursue material life too much and regard money as the goal of life through the above analysis of the related factors. Therefore, teachers should take the following measures according to the student's actual situation. On the one hand, they should encourage students to learn professional knowledge and master the practical skills, so as to meet their own basic material needs; on the other hand, they ought to help college students set up the scientific world outlook, the outlook on life and values, and make them to understand the importance of spiritual life, so that they won't be confused about the future and they will pursue the realization of self-worth and true happiness.

CONCLUSION

In the teaching process of Marxist philosophical history, learning the main content of the happiness of Marxist philosophy, not only makes students to understand what is the right concept of well-being and how to establish the correct happiness, but also changes the teacher's education mode. Under the teacher's instruction, students learn the content related to happiness by studying Marxist classic works, overcome the idea of individualism, hedonism and money worship so that they can establish a scientific concept of happiness consequently. After the long teaching practice, teachers found that just learning the concept of happiness in theory, cannot effectively enable students to understand what is the true happiness because of happiness is a kind of subjective feeling in a sense. So the teacher should take the teaching method which is the combination of theory and practice, such as lectures, knowledge contests, experiential theme activities, campus moral model character selection, volunteer service, go to visit, and other forms of rich and colorful education. This can make the college students further understand what true happiness is in practice, generate a deep sense of identity to Marxist happiness, and establish a correct concept of happiness finally.

College students, as the builders and reserve capability of the future society, whether their concept of happiness is correct or not related to the modernization steps forward, even have a very important impact on harmonious society's building. Hence, the study of contemporary college students' concept of happiness has a strong practical significance. Under the guidance of Marxist philosophy concept of happiness, every college student can know, understand and finally get happiness in correct. This makes everyone's daily life full of sunshine of happiness during the rationally pursuit of it.

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