Problems With Education Essay, Research Paper

Problems with Education

Education is a very important aspect of the lives of all people all over the world. What we learn, not just in the classroom, shapes who we are. We take our education everywhere we go. We use it when talking to our buddies about sports or music, we use it while solving a math problem, we use our education while debating with our family whether or not we should watch TV or got to the movies. Our education is the foundation of who we are, since every decision we make and every thought we think is dependent on what we know. Imagine how different the world would be if everyone craved learning to such a degree that at lunch tables all over the world the topic of conversation isn’t who likes who, or how drunk someone got over the weekend, but it would be what books were read over the weekend, and what new ideas were thought of. This crave for learning would be an ideal but still suggests need for improvement with the current educational system. It seems that the problem with education is that somewhere along the lines the human race forgot (assuming they, at one point, understood how valuable information is) that learning is not just a mandatory process, but also an opportunity to transcend and open the gateway to a better understanding.

One of the biggest problems with education is that it is poisoned in the way people view school. Some common phrases among students are that “school is boring; school is work.” Theses attitudes have a direct effect on the effort that students put into their studies. One will obviously work harder when they aren’t bored with the task. There is a difference between hearing and listening and if students approach school as something that they see as boring and stressful than that student will only be hearing what the professor is saying. They may show up to class but this does not mean that they are necessarily there to learn. If school were fun than students would enjoy learning and thus, would learn more since it would be an enjoyable activity. School is just like a sport or a book in that if the book is well written and enjoyable than there is more incentive to read it, just as someone will put more effort into a sport that is fun than a sport they don’t enjoy. If school were fun, than students would strive to learn more.

School is also a mandatory process. Students are somewhat forced into a relationship with education and just go through the motions because that is what they need or have to do, not what they choose to do. School is also coercive, disciplinary and taught by many unmotivated teachers, so school being mandatory is just icing on the cake. Teachers and the school system completely control the way things are run and leave little room for students to do things their way. Teachers control what they teach, how to teach, how to discipline, what is assigned, etc. Students need to have more of a say in the way things are run since they are the majority. More freedom in decisions would create a more comfortable environment and students would thus have an easier time learning. There is also stress on a lack of communication since school is coercive. It is hard to reach a person if one doesn’t have a relationship with that person, and one way to deal with this is through addressing the students to hear their ideas and views on what direction should be taken. School is very similar to an oligarchy where the faculty is the monarch and students are the populous. It should be more of a democracy where all the students have a say in what happens, but how often is there a vote as to class and school decisions? The current curriculum is one in which a teacher says “jump” and a student responds with “how high.” And if a student responds with anything different, than they are reprimanded or punished.

Three are many aspects of school that are unhealthy to a students life that many teachers don’t see and so these problems going unnoticed, not only affecting a students learning capability but it also hurts the way they are outside school. An example of one of these aspects is grading. Grading and the fears of failure can haunt a student and severe cases can cause a certain depression. Even if a student is putting forth maximum effort, they do not always get the results they want. Falling short of one’s expectations may cause them to give up and put less effort into their schoolwork because they may believe it is a lose-lose situation. The grading system is just one of the many aspects that makes school a hostile environment. There is also a lot of pressure to succeed and this may be very overwhelming to students. By chance a student may, on short notice, find himself or herself with a load of schoolwork that leaves little time for other priorities like rest and an active social life. Students with weary eyes, and no energy show this lack of rest day in and day out of classrooms. This lack of energy in turn, due to an overly demanding workload, can cause a lack of motivation because they become so exhausted that they aren’t capable of doing anything and so they just don’t. There are also many social pressures among peers as well. Conformity and popularity issues often go unnoticed by teachers. This again can be solved with better communication between faculty and students. How is a student supposed to learn if they are over their head coping with such a hostile environment?

Education is also expensive (unless public and state funded). This seems to be the only incentive to really learn the material being taught. “If I’m paying to learn this than I might as well learn it.” This is close but the ideal would be “You mean if I go to school I get to sit down in a group of fellow students who are there for the sole purpose of learning.” This usually is not the case though, because it is known that school is boring. School is thought of as an institution where people go and take tests that are in turn graded and justified with an alphabetical hierarchy that determines who is smart/who is dumb, and who can get a good job/ who can’t get a good job.

One of the biggest problems with the educational system is that it only uses the left side of the brain. Things like reading, writing and arithmetic are all subjects dominated by the left side. The only subjects that can reach the right side of the brain are some art classes and music classes. In Drawing on the Right side or the Brain, expert and award winning author Betty Edwards writes “Even today, though educators are increasingly concerned with the importance of intuitive and creative thought, school systems in general are still structures in the left-hemisphere mode.” Teaching is sequenced: students progress through grades one, two, three, etc., in a linear direction. The main subjects students study are verbal and numerical: reading, writing, and arithmetic. Time schedules are followed. Seats are in rows. Students converge on answers. Teachers give out grades. Not only is this all very mechanical, but it ignores the virtues of the right hemisphere. Student may be a genius because they are dreamers, are good with complex idea combinations, are intuitive and are capable of leaps of insight. But these qualities are never explored in school. So this genius student may be failing in the linear left hemisphere mode and then develop emotional harmful thoughts of failure since they don’t realize their given potential since all they see is failing grades. The left hemisphere of the brain is just half of the brain so why is it the only half being explored in school? This failure to confront the other hemisphere causes weakening in the right hemisphere since the right hemisphere isn’t being exercised.

In an age of rapid change due to so many technology and innovative advances, a revolutionary change in the educational system is as vital as what our next energy source is. Education is the most powerful wealth in the world and it demands more attention, and where better to start with than out youth. The school system will soon go out of date due to the information highway and information availability if there isn’t a dramatic change in the way things are run in our domestic institutional facilities. The reason why college was such a success in the 20th century was because books were all of a sudden available to students on university campus. Now with internet, a student could specialize their profession solely with the computer with the click of a button. Something needs to be done to smoothen the rigid gaps and cracks in the school system before the technological pace at which we are advancing decides to bring the whole thing down.

Bibliography

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