

# The Value Orientation of Teaching Reform in the Era of Smart Education

Xinyan Wang<sup>1\*</sup> Jiqing Zhang<sup>2</sup>

1. Cangzhou Normal University, Cangzhou, Hebei, 061001, China

2. College of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Xiamen University, Xiamen, Fujian, 361005, China

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history

Received: 12 April 2021

Revised: 19 April 2021

Accepted: 24 April 2021

Published Online: 30 April 2021

### Keywords:

Smart education

Reform

Value orientation

## ABSTRACT

Based on the influence of the era of smart education on education and teaching, this article discusses the humanistic, social, cultural, and practical rationality of teaching reform in the era of smart education from the development trend of the integration of teaching reforms and information technology. Grasping the theoretical basis of teaching reform under the background of the new era will play a proper guiding role in the practice of teaching reform.

## 1. Introduction

As an important social activity phenomenon, education is undoubtedly affected by the economic, political, cultural and other elements of human society. Among these elements, economy, which plays a fundamental role and has

the most direct impact on the development of education, is “the process that the mode of production of material life restricts the social, political and spiritual life”.<sup>[1]</sup> Using this as a link point, what impact does the current “material life” intelligence have on education? Of course, we should

### \*Corresponding Author:

Xinyan Wang,

female, Master degree of Hebei Normal University, associate professor of Cangzhou Normal University, Hebei Province, 061001, China;

Research direction: teaching management;

E-mail:1004684769@qq.com.

About the other author:

Jiqing Zhang,

female, second year undergraduate of English Department, College of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Xiamen University, Fujian Province, 361005, China;

Research direction: English literature;

Directing teacher: Wensong Liu;

E-mail:2361518143@qq.com.

Fund Project: This paper is the stage achievement of the reform and practice project of education and teaching in Hebei Province “The Research Pointing to Students’ Core Accomplishment on Teaching Reform in Local Colleges and Universities (Project No.: 2018 GJJG557); The Research on the Management System with System-Driven as the Core of First-Class Curriculum Construction (Project No.: 2019 GJJG493)”.

pursue innovation and change in the teaching methods, but how to change? How to stick to the mission of educating people in the reform? A series of related problems are constantly presented in the thinking chain of educators who are concerned about the development of education. This article takes this as the starting point for understanding, and intends to explore the value orientation of classroom teaching reform as a specific activity form of education when smart technology is about to sweep all areas of social life, in order to seek a better understanding of the teaching reform in the new era. The theoretical foundation has a more sober cognition, paving the way for the ongoing education reform practice platform.

## 2. An Irreversible Era

If one word is used to describe the characteristics of the current era, “informatization” or “intelligence” may be the first choice of most people, because it has the most direct impact on people. Nigro Ponti has keenly foreseen the digital development of modern society as early as 1995 in his book *Digital Survival*. In his view, digital survival is a new way of living in modern society based on information technology. In the digital living environment, people’s production methods, lifestyles, communication methods, ways of thinking, and behaviors all present a new look.

In this era of smart education with the Internet as the center and numbers as the king, informatization and intelligence not only bring unspeakable convenience to people’s work and life, but also challenge traditional ideas and values. In the face of this irreversible era, it is no longer a problem to follow the times or fly against the wind. “The history of the development of human education profoundly shows that a rapidly changing society will inevitably require education to make timely and corresponding changes. This is not based on human will. Only by consciously understanding the requirements of the times and taking active actions can we share the same with the times. go ahead.”<sup>[2]</sup>

### 2.1 At the National Level, Information Technology and Intelligent Technology Accelerate the Integration with Teaching

On the basis of digital technology, universities, which are the interface between education and society, have made rapid progress in management informatization and scientific research informatization, which has become an international trend.” The development trend of using technology to support teaching activities in the field of university education is still remarkable. The number of fully online courses has continued to rise over the past

decade, while, more notably, the growth rate of hybrid E-learning has been the fastest “<sup>[3]</sup> especially in the past two years, affected by the new crown epidemic, more and more foreign universities have begun to provide students with various professional online teaching software, and with the university curriculum management system, student information system, library system, campus portal to achieve smooth docking “. At present, under the guidance of government funds and policies, domestic colleges and universities have developed rapidly with intelligent management, intelligent scientific research, and the campus network life style with college students as the main body has also become the mainstream of campus life.

### 2.2 The Traditional One-Way Linear Teaching Method Will Give Way to More Complex, Diverse, and Unpredictable Systems or Networks

With the development of high technology, it spreads to all fields of society. The harmonious and unified social progress and development put forward new requirements for education. To adapt to the ever-changing science and technology, the talents it requires must first have active learning ability, the ability to quickly adjust and control in the rapidly changing modern society, teamwork ability, imagination and innovation ability, and have a certain comprehensive quality. The traditional one-way linear education and teaching method designed for the industrial society has been gradually unable to keep up with the times to meet the needs of the development of the industrial society.

“The current, sequential, and easily quantifiable order system that dominates the education field today-focusing on a clear starting point and a clear end point-will give way to more complex, diverse, and unpredictable systems or networks.”<sup>[4]</sup>As early as the turn of the century, Serena E. Dole, the founder of the postmodern curriculum view, predicted this way. In the new system or network, authority is no longer unique to teachers, but is transformed into a shared, dialogue-based way of sharing between teachers and students. Learning is more embodied in joint communication, inquiry, and cooperation to cultivate students’ ability in the process of problem-solving. Teamwork ability, imagination and innovation ability.

### 2.3 From the Perspective of the Educated and Instructor Groups, the Era Gap in the Means of Cultural Inheritance and Dissemination Methods Is Narrowing

The development of information technology has profoundly changed the way of life, thinking and survival of

post-90s and post-00s students. The free control of mobile phones and computers makes them willing to show themselves, advocating freedom and the right to choose. They pursue personalization and love to talk. They hate preaching and insist on thinking with their own minds. They use Douyin, Weibo, WeChat, MSN to communicate and collaborate. Speed is the norm in their lives, and innovation is a part of their lives. The main body of teachers as instructors is no longer the post-60s and post-70s, but has been replaced by post-80s and post-90s who are more adaptable to the era of smart education. They are more willing to accept the challenges of the times and look for new methods of information technology to replace the old ways in the industrial age.

### **3. The Hidden Worries behind Teaching Reform in the Era of Smart Education**

#### **3.1 Information Technology May Bring People's Self-Lost and Alienation**

Science is a double-edged sword. As for the development of smart education, with the popularization and rapid development of information technology, "utility first" has become the criterion for technical teachers to use information technology in teaching. It should cover the complexity of people examined in information technology activities. The separation, neglect, and exclusion of empirical factors have caused people's self-lost and alienation. Wisdom education and the pursuit of utilitarianism, efficiency, interests, and subjective desires will inevitably be equated, and become an educational form of information technology stacking and abuse.<sup>[5]</sup>

#### **3.2 The Technological Supremacy Point of View Makes the Tool Rationality and Value Rationality Carried by Wisdom Education Imbalance**

Introducing technology and control processes into education and teaching will bring about efficiency improvements. However, secularism and bureaucracy with utilitarian values as the core exaggerate the "efficiency" and quantifiable characteristics of information technology, the pros and cons of digital technology, Good or bad, high or low will become the highest or even the only criterion for judging the rationality of information technology, which will make instrumental rationality serve only its own subjective wishes or other purposes, and gradually depart from the value rationality that is supposed to support, such as morality, concepts, ideas, etc.<sup>[6]</sup>

### **4. The Value Orientation of the Teaching Reform of Wisdom Education**

Value orientation, in essence, is actually the value judgment and selection of the object of discussion from a specific standpoint. Different positions will lead to differences in value orientation.

Therefore, recognizing the different value orientations of intelligent teaching reform under different discourse backgrounds will help reformers to establish the value consciousness of reform actions, explore the ways of value integration and the ability of value action in the context of complex value conflicts, and ensure the teaching in the era of smart education. Reform is moving in the right direction.

Starting from the relationship between the subject and the object of value judgment, the value orientation that teaching reform should follow in the era of smart education is mainly manifested in the following aspects:

#### **4.1 Humanistic Value Orientation**

The historical law of educational development tells us that no matter how the times develop, students will always be the center of education and teaching. The first thing to affirm in education and teaching reform is the power and interests of students' development. For this reason, the value orientation of teaching reform in the era of wisdom education should first be humanism. The value of human life and existence as the meta-value of man, that is, the most fundamental and fundamental value, determines that the meta-value of education must be the value that promotes the development of the meta-value of man. "Regardless of the educational genre and the purpose of education, the basic function of education is to promote the individual development of people. Other functions and values of education are based on the promotion of individual development of people."<sup>[7]</sup> Nowadays, many experts and scholars are still skeptical about whether information technology and intelligent teaching reform can really promote students' growth for they recognize the possible disadvantages of information technology-self-loss, human alienation, self-differentiation in the face of the virtual world, and shrinking of the spiritual world. In this complicated situation, how can teaching reform promote the individual development of people?

The best approach is to adapt to the times instead of doing things backwards. Since crushing all modern technologies and returning to the basics are just fantasies, we may wish to use information technology as an important tool and means to lead students to better learning and growth, and give full play to its role in promoting educa-

tion equity. Respect the students' personality, and enhance the positive role of students' sustainable development ability.

#### **4.1.1 Promote the Realization of the Ideal of Educational Equity**

Restricted by various conditions such as politics, economy, culture, and geography, education still has a great imbalance in the distribution of excellent teachers and curriculum resources. The modern teaching methods appearing in the teaching reform in the era of smart education can make knowledge achieve the state of "global sharing" with the support of hardware facilities, so that students in areas with weak educational development can break through the education unfairness caused by objective conditions and achieve better development. The advantages of informatization teaching beyond space and geographical restrictions have become the consensus of experts.

#### **4.1.2 Respect for Students' Personality**

The era of informatization and intelligence has created an industrialized society that is consistent with the pursuit of a cultural atmosphere that emphasizes individual rights and individualization. From the perspective of learners, intelligent teaching can provide necessary for independent learning and cooperative learning support. In the network environment, learners' personalized presentation and the satisfaction of their individual needs avoid substituting commonality for individuality, and carry out uniform and one-of-a-kind education. Learners can acquire knowledge and show themselves according to their own thoughts, interests, hobbies, and abilities. The individual learner's learning will turn from passive to active.

#### **4.1.3 Enhance Students' Capacity for Sustainable Development**

Compared with the industrial age, the most significant feature of the information age is the explosion of knowledge, and the amount of information has doubled. Instead of vainly instilling knowledge into students' minds to understand and adapt to the ever-changing modern society, it is better to enable them to acquire the ability of sustainable development through education, so as to better create a better life and obtain development with more survival value.

In this sense, the teaching reform in the era of smart education will open a skylight for students. With this skylight, students can, under the active guidance of teachers, realize the important role of information technology not only in life, but also in their learning career, and then im-

prove Competence required for lifelong development. Of course, in this process, it is our educators' responsibility to keep them clear-headed in learning under the information environment and to promote their healthy and active growth in the information environment.

### **4.2 Social Value Orientation**

Just like "The social analysis of the value of curriculum reform should be based on a globalized society to reveal the social conflicts, the specific manifestations of social differences, and the social roots of curriculum value, and on this basis, reach a consensus on the value of curriculum reform by the country, society and schools."<sup>[8]</sup> Similarly, the social value of teaching in the era of smart education should also be agreed upon in the insights into the impact of various social strata, industries, and various social contradictions, and reveal its universal significance.

#### **4.2.1 Value to the Country and Nation**

Since the reform and opening up, with the continuous deepening of economic system reforms, economic supremacy and scientific and technological rationality have gradually become mainstream social thoughts, and science and technology and economic benefits have been given priority in value selection. In terms of education, the informatization teaching reform that catches up with the science and technology of developed countries to adapt to the current economic development and scientific innovation demands of our country has achieved remarkable results. The most authoritative official news media from China's education sector passed it to us that the country is the leader in the reform of informatization and intelligent teaching. On the national level of social value, it represents the interests and practical needs of our country and strives to benefit. It is the educated groups from top to bottom, from the central to the local areas, and at all levels, which also reflects the mainstream value of society.

#### **4.2.2 Impact on the Industry**

The goal of teaching reform in the era of smart education is to cultivate new talents with active learning capabilities, rapid control capabilities, and unity and cooperation capabilities required by the digital and information society, which are consistent with the current industry development's demand for modern talents.

#### **4.2.3 Impact on the School**

The reform of informatization and intelligent teaching is an important part of the informatization of education development. The reform and update of teaching methods

and methods will help schools improve the educational informatization system, fully achieve the in-depth integration of education administration, scientific research, teaching and evaluation, and establish an excellent environment for digital learning of students.

### 4.3 Cultural Value Orientation

Regardless of whether the value subject of teaching reform in the era of smart education is students, teachers, schools, or the country and society at a macro level, there are actually deeper cultural needs behind all these groups.

#### 4.3.1 From the Perspective of Commonality

Smart teaching helps to enhance the cultural literacy of value subjects, enrich the ways of cultural inheritance and communication, and promote the coexistence of diverse cultures.

#### 4.3.2 From the Perspective of Differences

Different nationalities have different cultural needs. From the perspective of the big cultural divide between the East and the West, Western culture emphasizes individual freedom and focuses on personal growth, which is reflected in the reform of informatization and intelligent teaching, emphasizes the existence and development rights of individuals, and its humanistic care is stronger. Eastern culture emphasizes the harmony between groups and the relationship between humans and nature. Therefore, the emphasis on social development and social order and on people's sense of patriotism, collective honor and social responsibility in the reform of information technology teaching has its own natural and inevitable significance in highlighting the needs of the country and society.

Different classes have different cultural needs. From the perspective of the cultural needs of different classes of Chinese society, the demand for Informatization and intelligent teaching of the bottom working people in remote areas is to change the unfair and unbalanced education, and to improve their own cultural level; the people in developed urban areas place more emphasis on informatization Teaching meets students' individualized, interesting and innovative growth needs. When carrying out teaching reforms, it is necessary to comprehensively consider the different needs of different cultural groups, strengthen dialogue, communication and understanding, in order to reach a perfect consensus and lay a good theoretical foundation for subsequent practice.

### 4.4 Practice Rational Value Orientation

As explained in the previous article, we are stepping

into a new era irreversibly and irreversibly-an era embraced by informatization and wisdom education. "Intelligent" technology and "big data" based on information technology have been involved in our politics, economy, culture and daily life on a large scale and meticulously, and various intelligent application technologies of "Internet +" education are coming.

However, in the practice boom of teaching reform in the era of smart education, if there is no in-depth knowledge and reflection on information teaching technology, if one-sidedly fall into the religious enthusiasm for the Internet, and regard it as an omnipotent god that can help us solve all problems, if Like Yevgeny Morozov's description, the technocrats or problem-solvers regard it as a very powerful sledgehammer. No matter what you see, you can't wait to hear you yell "There is Nails", so that we are excited to use the technology invented in Silicon Valley to solve all problems. It is very likely that this kind of technology worship will soon lead us humans into a dead end of development.

Therefore, it is necessary to adopt the value orientation of practical rationality and regard informatization as a tool or means to improve the efficiency of this special labor of education, and it is necessary to constantly think about its educational effect for students in practice. "Teaching is not simply a process of downloading data resources from one place to another, but an interactive social interaction process. Network-based communication is conducive to creating and strengthening the communication link of teaching, but it is not a panacea." [9] Therefore, in this sense, we must deeply understand the nature and limitations of teaching in the era of wisdom education, step out of the practical and utilitarian understanding of "efficiency" and "technological supremacy", and be vigilant in practice. Reform is not the goal, and adulthood is the center and ultimate goal of the practice of education reform.

In summary, due to differences in perspectives and positions, the judgments and choices of the value orientation of teaching reform in the era of smart education are different. We should fully understand and evaluate the complexity of factors affecting value orientation, comprehensively weigh, make careful choices, seek effective ways of value integration, try to meet the reasonable needs of multiple stakeholders, and make teaching reform in the era of smart education develop steadily and rapidly in the right direction and achieve transcendence as soon as possible.

### References

- [1] Karl Marx. A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1995.

- [2] Ye Lan. Exploratory Research on New Basic Education[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Joint Publishing Press, 1999.
- [3] Michael Zastrocky, Marti Harris, JanMartin Lowendahi. E-learning for Higher Education: Are We Reaching Maturity[J]. Industry Research, 2008(27).
- [4] William Jr. E. Dole Post-modern Curriculum View[M]. translated by Wang Hongyu. Beijing: Educational Science Press,2000.
- [5] Wang Junmin. Weber&apos;s rational “progress” and its significance[J]. Sociological Studies, 2011,25(02): 102-133+245.
- [6] Yu Chunling, Chen Fan. The Logical Process of Modernity Inquiry in Marx&apos;s Critical View of Technology [J].Chinese Social Sciences,2015(10):29-50.
- [7] Huang Ji. General Theory of Educational Philosophy[M]. Taiyuan: Shanxi Education Press, 2011.
- [8] Hu Dingrong. Cultural Studies on Curriculum Reform[M]. Beijing: Educational Science Press, 2005.
- [9] Zhao Guodong. Digital Campus: Ideal and Realistic[J].Beijing University Education Review, 2007(01):81-91.