
Educational And Political Ideologies In The Pedagogy Of The Oppressed

'The pedagogy of the Oppressed' by Paulo Freire is a complete mishmash of more educational and a bit of political and philosophical ideologies of 70's. Freire introduces a theory of oppression and suggest another theory for liberation as a solution or way forward. An individual's thinking method and the arousing of critical awareness are the keys to the liberation of an individual. It is possible through a different education where there is collaboration within teachers and students.

The book is organized into four chapters (including Preface). The book starts with a fear of freedom as the problem within the oppressed that are sunken in a situation of oppression. The main point of this book lies in chapter one where the author questions what if education is remodelled to fulfil the needs of the oppressed instead of the oppressors by using the term 'pedagogy of the oppressed'. Here, the author gives a message to the oppressed people for needing to see the real world and think about it which could only happen through a 'dialogue' in education. 'Dialogue' helps human beings to get valued in life. Here, the author states dialogue as a solution to attain freedom or equality from superiority and inequality. Focussing on education the author points out that effort to education can only succeed through a 'dialogue' just like the efforts to freedom which can be attained on the basis of a 'dialogue'. However, one can put their efforts of achieving freedom without a dialogue but such movements will not reach any destination.

The author also emphasizes the need for his theory and to accept his perspectives, one has to welcome the factor of change.

In chapter two, the author suggests that there is always stress in between individuals trying to become themselves and a rival who continue coming in their way. He puts forth an opinion that oppression is making both the oppressor and the oppressed uncivilized and it has compelled oppressed individuals to struggle for their freedom. In this regard, the oppressed ones have to leave behind their primitive thoughts on the way of living which is moreover influenced by a hierarchical system of oppression. Here, the author introduces the 'banking model of education' as a tool for oppression and compares with the problem posing model which is explained in detail in the next chapter. For me, the differentiation made by the author here is necessary to be aware of these two concepts which are primarily based on accepting or rejecting 'dialogue', understanding students and creativity or raising consciousness.

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The author also discusses on how a primitive method of teaching leads to passiveness among the students in learning their subject matters. The teacher-student centered teaching method according to the author need to be replaced with a problem posing method of learning which will not be based on the static facts taught on the books in schools but rather would give opportunity to gather all ideologies and learn together as a group. This group activity will start a 'dialogue' among the oppressed and expand their consciousness.

In chapter three, the author discusses replacing a primitive authoritarian 'banking model of education' with the 'problem-posing model' where all are learners and teachers at the same time. The author states how a 'dialogue' can be the solution to the banking model of education. There cannot be proper communication without a dialogue and without any communication there cannot be a true education. The chapter also includes ideas on creating a free society through a combination of reflection and action which the author stated while describing liberation, praxis, and dialogue.

In Chapter four, Freire discuss on various dimensions and theories on dialogical and antialogical action. Concepts like conquest, divide and rule, manipulation and cultural invasion are explained by the author as anti dialogical measures while cooperation, unity for liberation, organization and cultural synthesis are explained to tackle them. Freire starts his analysis with the Lenin's statement, "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." Author opines that a revolution cannot be achieved with verbalism or activism but can be achieved with praxis which is the combination of reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed.

Freire begins with the efforts of oppressors towards oppressed to make them believe the reality as divided. The author mentions how an oppressive system works by making a distance between the oppressors and oppressed and also in between the oppressed. Also, the Author stresses on populism being used as a tool for manipulating the oppressed when they start questioning the oppressors. On the other part of this chapter, the author puts forth a critical framework with revolutionaries in a similar way he did with educators in previous chapters.

The author's efforts to change society or liberating through replacement of primitive 'banking model of education' with his own learning concept merely based on 'problem-posing' might be a boon for revolution in education. However, his model did not emphasize what would be the role of a teacher whose role has been the center of the older education system. Overall, the book did not only cover up the implications of politics in education but rather the book is able to discuss the sociology, radical theory and psychology and others. This makes the book being an interdisciplinary one having inspired from different subjects of knowledge.

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