



"The Hunger Games" on and off Campus: An Educational Sociological Analysis of the Documentary Please Vote for Me

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Abstract: This paper takes the three students who participated in the monitor election in the documentary Please Vote for Me and their families as the analysis object, starting from the family of origin, parent-child relationship, school education and so on to explore the causes of vicious competition behind the campus election and the ways to deal with the problem jointly. When the power comes to the underage children for the first time, how the children fight for it in a virtuous and fair manner has become a thorny educational issue which has been neglected for a long time. When parents who have been reformed by society teach their children "campaign experience" in person, the children's campaign in school has become a "hunger game" for adults behind the scenes. Ignoring the educational significance of the campus election process and focusing only on the election results will lead to children's wrong understanding of the original meaning of competition, which will sow the butterfly effect of malignant influence for them to enter the society later. The utilitarianism caused by the highly competitive social environment has created parents anxious about education, and the small class campaign documented in this documentary is an externalized presentation of social and educational issues. The optimization of the social environment, the change of parents' values and the follow-up of school education is a trilogy to improve the character of the next generation.

Keywords: utilitarianism, vicious competition, parent-child relationship, family of origin, social education

1. Analysis of the three children's campaign tactics in the documentary

Please Vote for Me is a documentary directed by Chen Weijun, which was screened at the Toronto Film Festival in 2017. The movie tells the tale of three primary school students contending for the position of class leader at Changqing No. 1 Primary School in Wuhan. This ostensibly straightforward campaign for kids actually conceals the conflict among three families and even the entire microcosm of social issues.

The most "active" candidate in this election is Cheng Cheng. He incisively and effectively captures the competitive methods of the adult world, such as cliques, heckling, canvassing, and cheating. "the monitor has the power in the class, and everybody who is necessary to stand should stand, and anyone who is required to have a seat, he or she must sit down" is the original aspiration of Chengcheng to compete for monitor. Democratic competition is no longer genuine in the first place when kids interpret power as a game of manipulation and dominance.

Being a former monitor, Rory is under additional criticism over his ability to be re-elected. His restraint and harshness in class demonstrate a psychological maturity above that of his contemporaries. Rory's basic campaign philosophy is "Rely on your own strength, don't control others, vote for who you want to vote for". Don't interfere in other's thoughts, which makes people admire the old monitor's character. However, in keeping with the proverb "When the time comes, heaven and earth will work together with you. When luck goes, even heroes will be frustrated everywhere", Luo Lei failed to stick to her refusal of parental support and assistance in the cruel competition. The rational and helpless old monitor later accepted the "gift" from sophisticated police officer parents in the face of the vote crisis.

Xu Xiaofei is the only girl in this election. She is quiet and introverted, as well as shy and crying. She has to be protected from everyone around her like a delicate flower. During the talent show, Xu Xiaofei was heckled by competitor Cheng Cheng and began to cry during the performance. This is when the mother, a faculty member, finally reveals to the camera the sensitivity and fragility of her daughter's character caused by the single parent family. Family problems with three kids: Problems such as single-parent families, lack of self-care ability, forced intervention and parent-child distrust gradually surfaced as the campaign progressed

2. Families of origin operate behind the scenes in the competition

The documentary tracks the election preparations of three families, highlighting numerous educational concerns that are

frequently difficult to observe during routine school visits. Cheng's clever but unfair campaign techniques, Luo Lei's tough discipline of his pupils, and Xiao Fei's versatile but unusually timid personality can all be linked to their original families.

The actions of the three children in this simulated small society campus are exactly the reflection of the magic mirror of their original families. In his study, Zhang Zhilin also makes the following observation: Parents on children's positions inside the classroom also reflected Foucault's concept of rights, and the transformation between knowledge and power have been fully internalized in parents thought and ideology, in the education and life of their daily practice, and they will focus on knowledge and power to the small classroom inside. [1] The little classroom turned into a competitive arena for kids.

2.1 Lack of self-care ability

"The habits formed in the young age are as natural and strong as human nature, so that the success and miracle of the future are dominated by habits at that time".[2] Of the three contenders, Cheng's status at home and on campus is the most dissimilar. The parents themselves wrote the speech for the campaign. During the practice, Cheng yelled at his parents and even swore at his mother, telling her to "get away." However, the intelligent and capable parents simply chuckled at the way their 10-year-old son was treated, failing to reprimand or instruct their son about his disrespectful language.

More horrifyingly, Cheng Cheng, who is tall and powerful, asked his father unannouncedly to wipe his bottom. Lacking the capacity for self-care, Cheng Cheng displayed two personas while acting like a "little adult." A renowned pediatrician named James stated that "dependency is simple to create sloth, and it is not benefiting children, but injuring them". [3] It is undoubtedly challenging to keep an upward attitude of self-control and advance in one's academic career when one is a giant in language and a dwarf in behavior. People are left to wonder whether Cheng who exhibits a severe lack of self-care skills is truly qualified to serve as the monitor.

2.2 Post convenience and bribe

In the first scene, Rory, who is already the class leader, declines to assist his parents. The crowd was struck by its independence and perseverance. But Mr. Rory gradually shifted toward compromise after suffering numerous failures on the campaign trail. Father used his influence to encourage everyone to ride the light rail, which significantly increased Luo Lei's rate of support. Rory presented another gift to each student in the class following his last campaign address. The outcome was predictable with Mr. Rory easily defeated his competitors and won by a huge majority.

It's difficult to avoid sighing when such an outcome occurs. Finally, a boy who earlier stroked his chest and stated, "We should rely on our own strength, don't control others," succeeded again by relying on the tree of parents. It is unknown how much of the outcome comes from strength and how much from flattery when humanized power is incorporated into children's election contests. According to their potential to succeed in the educational race, parents of different economic statuses in China's connection society would assist their children. Along with Bourdieu's "capital," this process also incorporates China's "code of conduct" in operation. [1]

2.3 Influence of single-parent families

Single-parent households are a severe issue that requires in-depth discussion. Xu Xiaofei is a calm, accomplished girl in the movie. Her mother is a teacher of the school, and she is careful in her upbringing of the kids. However, Xiao Fei's personality is more reserved than that of the other two contenders without getting into the topic of gender differences. It is her reserve and timidity that give her rivals the upper hand. A careless call from the rival cause Xiao Fei to sob on the stage and perhaps end the match. The girl's lack of heart confidence may be brought on by the disintegration of her original family. However, the child also develops inner hypersensitivity as a result of the mother's obsessive vigilance, which also results in a decrease in stress tolerance. The overprotective parenting style that the mother promotes is detrimental to the child and can easily result in the development of a wary mentality.

In comparison to two-parent families, the single-parent family has fewer opportunities to fulfill its role due to some factors including a lack of a supportive home environment, the absence of a gendered parental role, the parents' negative emotions, a poor home environment, poor educational practices, negative public perception, and improperly adjusted family dynamics. It is likely to have a negative effect on the growth of young people. [4] We may observe Xiao Fei's sensitivity and self-deprecation in response to public pressure and campaign doubts. The mother repeatedly attributed the problem to the negative effects of a single parent's family that allowed the child to deepen the absence over and over again.

3. Absence of the guardian and the teacher's behavior

3.1 Teachers' guidance and actions

"School education-based space is not only a place for the production, distribution, transfer, and evaluation of information,

but also a place for frequent contact among students, instructors, education administrators, and parents," says the National Education Association.[5] The head teacher's function in the film is never explicitly stated. The head instructor simply pretends to host the competition and listen to what the students have to say. However, when it comes to rectifying improper conduct and unfair competition, she hides. As Cheng Cheng turns to face the teacher, he says: "My mother informed me that when Rory performs, shout for go down!" Teacher Zhang, the class's head teacher, did not intervene to stop the unfair competition, but asked in an understatement, "Did your mother tell you?"

It is clear that the class director is unprepared to cultivate and supervise the students' moral and ideological development. In addition, the work of home-school communication is not in place. Teacher Zhang should stand up in time when she knows that the parents are educating students in vicious competition, communicate with parents as soon as possible in an effective time to destroy the negative conduct in the cradle.

Within the scope of primary schools, teachers hold a particular level of power and religious significance. It can be noticed that the students in the film are very concerned about the recognition and evaluation of teachers no matter how domineering they are at home. However, teachers can make use of the particularity of their own status to effectively guide students, and the effect is often twice the result with half the effort.

3.2 Parents are samples for children to imitate

"The family is the most important place because it is from the home that people enter society for the first time", according to former excellent educator Makarenko of the Soviet Union.[6]

What makes people terrified in the documentary is that the parents face the naked desire for power, and even they are more eager than a few small candidates to "take the test of heaven". And parents in the struggle for power forget, behind the children are quietly learning and imitating them.

The distance between parents and children, or even whether the person standing in the classroom is an unsophisticated student or an intelligent adult, can be difficult to discern when children stab their opponents in class while repeating the words their parents taught them at home. Nobody wants their child to grow up to be a sophisticated craftsman, but many parents fail to consider how their own education has affected them.

4. What should we do?

4.1 Causes of society.

High social pressure constantly encourages minors' rivalry for social resources because of society's rapid development. Anxiety over education and pressure to enter higher education have emerged as a persistent topic. Parents have to follow the social trend and bear more pressure to help their children gain more attention, existence, and class status.

According to Hai Ziyi, parents are often helpless in the face of structural societal pressures and are compelled to participate in this competition to ensure their children for the best lives.[7] The definition of the phrase "inner volume" is derived from the relationship between the social problem and the personal problem with the ongoing pressure.

Therefore, the Ministry of Education issued a "Double Reduction" policy in 2021. The Guidelines made it clear that grades should be assigned to examinations to overcome the scores-only tendency. [8]

4.2 Family efforts are important

"In the study of family education, we should not only bring back the family, but also bring back the society, and we should reflect on the relationship between the problems in the family and the social environment, and think about the social soil in which healthy family relations can grow." [7] The competitive pressure that primary school pupils face nowadays is significantly influenced by social external pressure, but all families and parents must take a course on how to handle excessive pressure to develop a healthy psychological mechanism.

First and foremost, families should strive to maintain harmony and democracy, allow children to play freely, and enjoy their space for expression. Secondly, families should work to increase their understanding of how to manage their children on their own. "Although many parents are aware of the value of autonomous management, there are no proven methods for putting it into practice." [9] The first objective is also to find efficient means of fostering children's autonomy. Third, parents should limit their indulgence, especially the generation of only child. "The only child in the family tends to behave as the one who gets everything they want and has never had to assume the roles of an older or younger sibling and they are less inclined to consider helping others." [10] Due to the competition among social models, it is easy to be rude and careless. They also treat their parents without respect or filial devotion. From an early age, parents should instill in their kids a sense of responsibility so that they can actively manage their own lives and even participate in family issues.

5. Conclusion

Every parent expects that their child will develop into a passionate, accountable, bold, and sincere teenager with the combined efforts of society. The writer Zhang Xiaofeng once wrote in her essay: "School, when I give my child to you, what kind of education do you promise to give him? This morning I gave you a happy, honest and enlightened little boy. What kind of young man will you give me back so many years from now? ... Will you drink it with nectar, pour it with light, or feed it with dross? Will he thus become honest and faithful, or will he become crafty and deceitful? When I give my child to you, when he is thirsty for the world, what will you give him?"[11] It is said that "it takes a community to raise a child" in the West. [12] A child's development can be aided by the efforts and focus of the entire society. Let's wait and watch how our efforts will shape the future generation of education.

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