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Education as a Tool of Power and Subversion: A Critique of The Sellout

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ABSTRACT

Modern day education system faces a lot of problems in form of misuse of education, curriculum and institutions for power and personal gains. Misusing education can cause a lot of ethical moral dilemmas. This study analyzes Paul Beatty's (2015) *The Sellout* and highlights the moral and ethical dilemmas associated with the misuse of education for personal gains. Works of Michel Foucault (1980), Paulo Freire (1970), Antonio Gramsci (1971), and Martha C. Nussbaum (1970) serve as theoretical perspective for the analysis. Close reading technique is used for the analysis to highlight hidden meanings and themes of the text. The analysis presents that education is misused for power and fame through curriculum and segregated education and controlled administration, resulting in social, ethical and moral destruction of society and individuals. The study finds that intervention in education can be disastrous for society. It is concluded that a neutral and just environment for the provision of quality education is both the demand and the need of time.

Keywords: Close Reading; Education; Intervention; Power; Subversion

Introduction

Education is a very powerful sector of every society. It can build nations and identities, but its quality can disturb the equilibrium of development (Akram & Yang, 2021). Modern world is treating education as a tool for growth, development and power (Akram et al., 2021; 2022; Ma et al., 2024). Powerful groups misuse education for gaining and sustaining power and control in society (Ramzan et al., 2023). Education, though a tool of liberation, is but used by the powerful people of society to subvert and control the intellectual thinking of individuals. They use it to build and support dominant ideologies which can cause cultural and ethnic conflicts among various groups of society. This treatment of the lower-class cause deprivation from equal rights and produces a sense of marginalization in them. Education being a tool of justice and equality thus promotes inequality and injustice. To avoid such catastrophes, education must be free from any kind of intervention of third party, narrow curriculum and unjust environment (Akram, 2020; Ramzan et al., 2023).

Beatty (2015) describes different characters manipulating and misusing education in different ways for their personal interests. Their intervention results in closure of schools and deprivation from equal rights. Mistreating education not only causes cultural and social disturbance but can also cause ethical and moral destruction in any society (Khanam et al., 2022). This novel is a clear representation of modern-day education and the faults in the system of education.

Research Objective

To evaluate critically the ethical and moral dilemmas presented in *The Sellout* (2015) concerning the narrator's use of the education system as a tool for personal or ideological gain.

Research Question

How does the narrative of *The Sellout* (2015) address potential ethical and moral dilemmas, associated with the use of education as a tool for personal or ideological gain?

Statement of the Research Problem

Education, being a powerful sector and a tool of liberation, is misused and corrupted by different groups of society for creating and sustaining power and dominant ideologies. John Gill (2013) highlights the importance of quality education and claims that lower class students face severe consequences of educational corruption. Misusing education for personal interest hinders the development of critical thinking and intellectual power. The characters of Foy and the narrator in *The Sellout* (2015) misused education for their personal interests and for controlling the intellectual power of the young generation and the present study has analyzed how the manipulation of education by these characters has resulted in deprivation of students from equal education and their moral destruction in the narrative. This proposition is substantiated through a study by Marie Lall (2008), who writes about the people of India and Pakistan and notes that they are manipulated, and their thinking process is controlled by their respective governments through narrow curriculum, which results in ethnic and national unrest in both the countries.

Literature Review

Education is considered as a very powerful and transformative tool of society. It has been in focus for a long time due to its significance in building societies and controlling power dynamics of society. The education sector can develop characteristics

of individuals and society but a single mistake in this system can create disastrous outcomes. Education in the modern world has played a pivotal role in the development of power dynamics (Akram & Sohail, 2024; Ramzan et al., 2023) and cultural narratives (Noor et al., 2021). It can create marginalization due to promotion of biased narratives and dominant cultural values. The education system needs a neutral approach towards curriculum and diverse groups of society.

Education and Power Dynamics

Education is a powerful sector that not only imparts knowledge but also shapes society. It shapes the behavior of individuals in society. Foucault (1995) examines the relationship between education and power dynamics in society and analyses that the modern disciplinary methods are the extensions of educational methods. According to him, education creates and controls power dynamics by shaping and controlling the behavior of individuals and societal norms. He argues that different institutions of society control education to control society and culture. Education, being a medium of power development and control, must be free from every kind of intervention and should be revised regularly to reduce marginalization (Ramzan et al., 2023; Nawaz et al., 2020).

Although education is claimed to reduce inequalities and marginalization in societies, it is still supporting them through narrow curriculum and by supporting dominant values and norms. According to Pierre Bourdieu (1990), education eternalizes dominant cultural trends and dominant power structures, thus creating marginalization and inequalities in societies. It empowers and subjugates different groups of society depending upon the socio-economic position of these groups. Education system through curriculum transforms societies but can also destroy them due to narrow curriculum. The curricula provided to societies are shaped and controlled by dominant groups of society. Education can also create marginalization because of promoting only dominant ideologies. For the development of societies and generations, a neutral and advanced approach towards education is required and is the need of time (Abdelrady & Akram, 2022; Ramzan et al., 2023).

The education sector is in control of powerful groups of societies and ideologies. They control education through curriculum. Apple Michael (2004) argues that curriculum promotes dominant ideologies and marginalizes certain groups of society. His work highlights the importance of understanding power dynamics and analyzing curriculum that can create an equitable and just environment for the development of society. Education being a powerful sector is in control of dominant groups and cultural values. Due to this, values and ideologies of some groups become marginalized and create inequality and injustice in society that can create disharmony in society. For the creation of a just and equitable society, there is a strong need for neutral curriculum.

Satire and Social Critique

Education can transform societies through neutral and strong curriculum. Literature and art help in questioning issues present in societies in a very artistic and reliable way. It also presents different solutions to such problems. Linda Hutcheon (2000) argues that parody and satire help in social commentary and challenge dominant ideologies within a society. Furthermore, she adds that parody holds a transformative power and can destabilize power dynamics in society. Parody being a form of literature and a part of curriculum can build critical thinking in the coming generations. Through critical thinking, society can become a peaceful place to live in. Curriculum should include ways to develop critical thinking and understanding of the socio-political system of society to create an equitable environment within the education system and society.

For the creation of a just and equitable environment, society must go through critical observation and development. Jonathan Swift (1984), through his satirical work, highlights the heartless attitude of a powerful group of society towards the lower class of society and the need for observation and critical analysis of policies and the responsibility of society towards these policies. For a neutral society, power must be distributed equitably and must be challenged. Mikhail Bakhtin (1984) based on French writer Rabelais, argues that authority, repression and power relations in society must be critically examined. His work not only gives comic relief but also gives a great transformative tool which can help in questioning different institutions and resisting oppression within society. Satire and parody help in the transformation of society through highlighting and understanding power dynamics and societal norms which create inequality and marginalization among different groups of society (Ramzan et al., 2023).

Race and Education

The educational system in general and the narrow curriculum in particular seem to encourage differences and marginalization between different groups of society. Curriculum which supports dominant ideologies causes marginalization of the groups that are not dominant. Lisa Delpit (2006) critiques the educational system that treats students based on their color and not considering the inclusion of their cultural and linguistic diversity in curriculum and educational system. This behavior is responsible for the creation of marginalization and inequality that starts developing in the young generation from the very beginning of their life. She further explores the need for inclusive curriculum and teaching strategies that should bridge the gap caused by traditional system of education. Curriculum constructs the behavior and mindset of generations, and it should be unbiased and neutral to develop a society with critical thinkers and not just passive learners. Education, being a basic right of everyone, should be inclusive and critical for the creation of a just society.

Teachers also play a vital role in the development of behaviors (Akram & Abdelrady, 2023; Ramzan & Alahmadi, 2024). They use certain techniques and strategies in the classroom that can empower or subvert individuals in a society (Li & Akram, 2023, 2024). Gloria Billings (2009) explores the teaching strategies used by teachers to teach African American students. She examines the inclusion of their culture identities in teaching strategies to empower them. She demands an educational system that must include the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students to root out marginalization and sense of inequality among different groups of society. The educational system is a sector that plays a crucial role in the development of identities

and power relations in society (Ahmad et al., 2022). Therefore, it must be critically examined and promoted (Akram & Li, 2024). The curriculum also needs careful observation and inclusive material.

The differences in society seem to be promoted mainly through the education system. Narrow or biased curriculum and teaching strategies promote class differences in society. Jean Anyon (1981) examines and analyses curriculum and teaching strategies of various schools which show that differences are based on differences in social class. She observes that students from the lower social class are prepared for obedience and low paying jobs while students from high class society are prepared for leadership through instilling critical thinking. She demands an educational reform which is essential for equitable and just outcomes. Differences and segregation in educational system create social disturbance because of promoting dominant groups and their ideologies. It creates skilled labor for the dominant group and a sense of marginalization for the lower social class. This in turn creates social and communal disharmony among various groups. Education, which is supposed to create peace in society, turns into something that creates disturbance in the system. This needs inclusive and critical teaching strategies to build strong identities.

Identity Formation and Education

Education helps in the construction of identities and thinking. Education can build but also can hinder the development of individuals. James P. Gee (1996) argues that education is not only about knowledge, but it also enables the individuals to spend their lives in a society with diverse groups. He further emphasizes the need for an inclusive form of curriculum and education to enable the students to develop identities that are acceptable and not just the imitation of the behavior decided by the powerful group of society as standard behavior. Education must make the student able to critically analyze and choose what is right for them and society.

Curriculum has a very essential role in empowering and hindering the behavioral development of students. Narrow curriculum can create hatred and marginalization, but a neutral curriculum can serve as a solution to the problem. Stuart Hall (1997) explores that dominant cultural representations and narratives have a great impact on behavior and identity development. He presents the need for an inclusive curriculum with diverse cultural content that will make the students able to construct their own meaning and understanding of reality. The basic aim of curriculum and education is not merely reading and writing but to give a critical perspective to coming generations and to reduce cultural and ethnic conflicts. Diverse cultural content will make the students able to understand and respect different opinions and perspectives and will also make them feel free to share their own perspectives regarding anything.

Education and literacy build critical thinking and give voice to individuals for their rights and freedom. The traditional education system seemingly promoted passive learning. According to Freire (1970), there is a need to shift from traditional education to dialogical education to develop critical thinking. He demands for a curriculum that should give voice to the oppressed and marginalized groups of society. He also explores that education must enable the students to challenge oppression, dominant ideologies and build their identities with freedom. Quality education being the basic right of every individual must be free from any kind of politics, dominant cultural values and societal norms. It should promote equality and diverse cultural content.

Authority Figures in Education

Key stakeholders are responsible for the development of behavior within the education system. Among them, the most powerful is the teacher who can develop, transform and challenge identities. Teachers are the authoritative figures in development and subversion of students' behaviors. Henry A. Giroux (1988) claims the transformative role of teachers who can challenge power dynamics within educational structures. He further adds the role of teachers as intellectuals who foster critical thinking and inclusive education in a diverse range of groups in a classroom. Teachers are the most important figures of any society who can challenge and transform dominant social values and build perspectives based on real experiences. Teachers must be unbiased particularly towards different ethnicities within classrooms and must force an inclusive curriculum to remove marginalization and sense of deprivation and protect the coming generations from cultural and ethnic conflicts.

Traditional education seems to promote dominant ideologies and cultural values. It also emphasized passive learning and rarely helped in the development of critical thinking and building students' own perspective of their reality. Freire (1973) argues that education must be transformed from traditional passive learning to a system of learning that builds critical thinking and awareness among students. He further adds that this kind of education must empower students to challenge dominant power dynamics in the education system. A teacher must serve as a facilitator and not just as transformer of knowledge. Bell Hooks (1994) argues for a system of education that must enable the students to challenge and resist the oppression in educational institutions, curriculum and society. She also advocates for a system in which students must develop their own knowledge through a dialogical learning environment. Dialogical learning helps both the teachers and students to co-create their understanding of reality. They can mutually work on the issues faced by students from different and diverse groups of society and challenge the dominant and racist ideologies within curriculum.

Education and Resistance

Education, due to its transformative nature, transforms ideologies and narratives with the help of educators and curriculum. Education is not only about delivering or transforming knowledge to the next generation but also to make them understand and critically analyze the values and images presented to them. It makes the students able to recognize the reality based on their critical perspective. Peter McLaren (1994) criticizes traditional system of education and advocates for a system of education that must empower the students to challenge the ideologies presented in the curriculum. According to him, classrooms serve as medium to create awareness and resistance regarding oppression. Educators play a vital role in the

development of identities and ideologies and can empower the students to fight for their rights. This can give rise to an environment that is just and the most suitable for a diverse range of groups within a society.

Education is a very powerful tool due to its role in building societies. Its role in any society is not just the transformation of knowledge but its role covers a long list. It helps in providing skills, spreading awareness, building critical thinking and sense of self reflection. Henry A. Giroux (2011) argues that education must be transformative and must prepare students to challenge dominant ideologies. In his view, educators play the role of activists in society who develop critical consciousness in students through critical pedagogy. Education must give the lens of right and wrong to individuals. It must help them to transform their status according to the needs of time.

Desirable outcomes can be achieved through transformation of education from traditional to dialogical learning. According to Ira Shor (1992), education is a tool for resistance and social change. He advocates for student-centered learning which will enable them to participate with each other and critically analyze and challenge dominant ideologies and authorities. Education empowers individuals with their own thinking and ability to resist oppression and marginalization in society.

Education and Social Justice

Inclusive curriculum and classroom environment can create awareness and tolerance among different perspectives and ideologies. Inclusivity is a solution to cultural and ethnic conflicts in society. James A. Banks (2010) examines that inclusive curriculum empowers students to understand and question inequalities in the education system and society. It gives the ability to resist the oppression faced by different marginalized and oppressed groups of society. He advocates for classrooms that should encourage students to believe in cultural diversity and equity in every field of life. Multicultural curriculum and education help in promoting peace and justice.

Education and educators must provide an environment that should promote equity and justice. Education must be welcome to diversity of cultures and people. Sonia Nieto (2012) advocates for an educational system that should acknowledge as well as value cultural and ethnic diversity. It should help in the identification of oppression. She demands the transformation of education and educators to facilitators and agents of social justice. Educators should treat every student equally despite their color, caste and creed. The lessons of social justice received in school will help young generation to accept and understand diversity of cultures and religions in their practical life.

Education gives hope to the marginalized communities. They can build their status through it, but biased curriculum and environment do not allow them to understand reality through their own lens. Freire (1994) demands a pedagogy that should give hope to the oppressed and marginalized group. He thinks of educators as agents of social development and justice. Educators can give hope and voice to the individuals in society. Through critical consciousness, individuals can highlight, understand and resist the oppression in the system of education and can bring justice and peace to societies.

Theoretical Perspective

Foucault (1980) analyzes the dilemmas that arise due to manipulation of the education system for personal interests. Education, being a neutral and basic human right, is easily manipulated and misused for power gains in society. He further discusses that intervention in the education system through curriculum can control power dynamics and thought process of individuals and that it also causes subversion and suppression through promoting dominant ideological structures within society. This kind of behavior also deters the intellectual and critical thinking of society. He further highlights the implication of promoting dominant ideologies in a society. This can lead to cultural and ethnic unrest which in turn leads to resistance and conflicts. This unequal distribution of power and manipulation of education through curriculum leads to moral corruption of society and marginalization among different groups. He also critiques the manipulation and intervention of education and presents its consequences by highlighting that education must enhance intellectual and critical thinking through a variety of ideologies. He provides a framework to understand the dire consequences of suppressing, subordinating and manipulating education for gaining power in society. His theories would allow us to examine the ways in which education and knowledge is controlled and how it effects the society.

Freire (1970) criticizes traditional education system for promoting dominant ideologies which causes limitation of critical thinking of a society. His work helps in analyzing ethical and moral disruption due to manipulation of education for personal interests. Manipulation of education results in social injustice and conflicts due to marginalization of those not in power. This theory helps in understanding a narrative from a perspective of manipulation and its dire consequences faced by different characters and society. He presents the framework of education as a tool for creating awareness and justice and not a tool for power. He emphasizes the use of education as tool of liberation and not as tool of subversion and oppression.

Gramsci (1971) explores that dominant groups control society through controlling the thought process and this is done through manipulation of knowledge and education. He highlights the ways in which education is manipulated, and power is exercised and its consequences faced by society. According to him, manipulated education yields cultural and ethnic conflicts that lead to injustice, marginalization and lack of critical mind. Powerful people control society through displaying dominant ideologies, creating a sense of marginalization and leading to moral and ethical destruction. Manipulated education destroys the root cause of education. Gramsci's theory is a clear demand for a revision of the education sector to provide a just and free environment.

Nussbaum's (1990) theory of narrative ethics highlights the misuse of education by different characters and its consequences. According to her, misuse of education for personal interests can destroy the authenticity of knowledge, social justice and critical thinking. It has severe outcomes in the form of moral and ethical destruction of a society. Nussbaum's theory provides an understanding of the need of a neutral education system to promote intellectual and moral development within a society. Education, being a powerful sector, is often misused by powerful groups of society to promote dominant ideologies and to

shape society as per their choice, but it has severe outcomes in many shapes and degrees. Therefore, education needs proper assessment and organization to create and build a healthy society.

Research Methodology

Research methodology is a process used by the researcher to collect, analyze and interpret data systematically. The researcher analyzed data through close reading technique. Close reading is a technique used to uncover layers of meanings in a text. David Schur (1998) identifies close reading as a strict and minute reading of the text. Close reading according to Catherine Snow and Catherine O'Conner (2016), is the extraction of meaning from the text by examining the language of the text. In close reading different aspects of the text of the text like title, characters, plot, imagery, themes and figures of speech are analyzed. It gives better and deeper understanding of the text. The study is qualitative in nature and selected passages from the novel *The Sellout* (2015) serves as primary data, articles and books serve as secondary data for the study. As the present research is an extension of the principal researcher's MPhil thesis (Laila Gul, 2024), therefore, for the purpose of data analysis and interpretation, the selected extracts from the novel and the analyzed and interpreted passages from the principal researcher's earlier work are taken exactly as they appear there.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. *"Foy touched his fingers picturesque American classic". (Beatty, 2015: p. 96)*

Reference to the Context

Foy, the Head of Dum Dum Donut Intellectuals, discusses his translated work with the members. He wants his translated works recognized as curriculum, and he needs the members' approval to demand the inclusion of his works as a reading curriculum in middle school.

Analysis and Interpretation

The passage is set in the office of the Dum Dum Donut Intellectuals. The character of Foy is presented as a self-impressed person by the first-person narrator. The writer describes the scene through a first-person narrator, who shares his opinions about other characters and discusses them as they appear. The writer presents Foy as the most intelligent person in the members' room through imagery *"touching fingertips together in front of his chest"* (Beatty, 2015: p. 96). This passage contributes to the plot by moving the story into rising action. Foy spoke loudly and intensely to act like the most intelligent person. He is just trying to convince the members to fulfill his desire to become the most powerful and famous person in time and space. He is trying to engage the members in fulfilling his desires without them being aware. He manipulates the members for his desires. The manipulation is done in covert ways, such as Foy did. To fulfill his desires, he wants to include his translated books as a curriculum for every middle school. He will gain fame and money by including his books as a curriculum and quickly replace the world's most famous writers. The book symbolizes power, and Foy uses it for his interest. This behavior is a clear depiction of Foy's mastermind nature. Foy's character uses the word *"politically respectful"* (Beatty, 2015: p. 96) in his translated work. This word quickly discloses his covert desire to become politically influential by implementing his translated works and becoming a great writer. Writers, through books, control the reader's thoughts, and Foy wants that control in his life. Foy makes fun of the original version of the book by using the term *"hilariously picturesque American classic"* (Beatty, 2015: p. 96). This passage carries a theme of third-party intervention in the education system. Third parties use many ways to intervene in the education system and curriculum, one of the many easy and powerful ways to implement one's thoughts in society. The thought process of any nation can be controlled through books and particularly curriculum. Foy is struggling to gain fame and power over blacks and white people in his society. To do this, he uses his covert ways to say that the original versions of the books were unsuitable for students and society and makes fun of these books (Gul, 2024).

2. *"From the other side put a sign on a public bus"*. (Beatty, 2015: pp. 195-196)

Reference to the Context

When Foy spotted the narrator on the street, he asked the narrator about the board of Wheaton Academy and the person doing all this. The narrator told him that he knew who did this segregation. Foy was shocked by this action; he called it a conspiracy against him.

Analysis and Interpretation

The passage is set in front of The Wheaton Academy, and the narrator is on the opposite side of the academy. This setting symbolizes the opposition between the two characters, Foy and the narrator. From a personal point of view, the writer pictured the scene when Foy spotted the narrator on the street and called out for him. The traffic made it difficult for the narrator to see and hear Foy. Foy asked him about the board. The narrator replied that he knew about the person who started this. This passage helps the plot move toward the climax because it depicts the disturbance caused by The Wheaton Academy. Foy is disturbed by this board of The Wheaton Academy and considers it a conspiracy against him. Foy compares the person with *"evil"* (Beatty, 2015: p. 196) who placed that board in a black-dominated area because of promoting communal differences. Foy is also upset due to the issue that white people are not supporting him and his curriculum, and due to communal division, he will lose money and fame in a big community. He considers this action a conspiracy against him, increasing the understanding of the character of Foy, who is very self-obsessed and aware of his inner self and his conspiracy against the school curriculum. He fears his thoughts and the fulfillment of his desires. His ambition is to become his enemy. He calls the narrator *"Sellout"* (Beatty, 2015: p. 195), which shows his relationship with the narrator. He hates the narrator from the very first day. The issue of The Wheaton Academy is so significant for Foy that he compares it with *"CIA conspiracy"* (Beatty, 2015: p. 196) and *"HBO documentary"* (Beatty, 2015: p. 196). The use of such terms represents Foy's seriousness regarding

the issue. Foy is so serious about his curriculum implementation issue and cannot tolerate any hindrance in his way. The writer foreshadows something dangerous in the future using words like **“Some nefarious shit is afoot!”** (Beatty, 2015: p. 196). This phrase indicates something is happening in the background or the characters’ minds. The passage gives rise to the theme of conflict of interest because both the central characters are working for their interest rather than considering the issue of society. Fulfilling one’s desire hinders another’s desire and causes disturbance for both. The narrator and Foy are both struggling for their interests but also doing it covertly, which makes it questionable and harmful. The story reveals their desires, and the characters gain fervor (Gul, 2024).

3. **“What happened next was abyss for no apparent reason”. (Beatty, 2015: pp. 256-257)**

Reference to the Context

The governor shut down every high school in the city and did not follow the law of integrated education. The schools were closed because the deprivation of upper-class students from education was a significant issue for the officials and the media.

Analysis and Interpretation

The passage is set in Dickens. The narrator disclosed the consequences of his actions of segregating the education sector and manipulating the people in the surrounding area. The plot has raised conflict because the governor has closed every school. His manipulation resulted in the governor’s closure of every high school in the area after a year. The governor also corrupted the education sector by not following the rules and laws of integrating the education sector but only acted outrageously. The shutting of the schools is a very harsh and destructive decision from the governor because every student will face deprivation of education in the area. The narrator also highlighted the reason behind this closure of schools despite segregation, which is that if only lower-class students are going to have access to quality education and the upper class has no access, then there is no need for the lower class to attend schools and learn anything. Black students, being symbolic of the lower class, have no superiority over upper-class students. Deprivation of an upper-class student can create a storm, and deprivation of lower-class students cannot affect a single person. The narrator is justifying his hideous crime of insertion of racism in a robust sector. The governor is also corrupting the education sector because he is going against the laws of reintegration. This difference in education cannot yield desirable outcomes, particularly in the education sector. Education, which is a fundamental right of everyone regardless of color, religion, or nation, cannot face such severity and corruption, particularly from the officials. This issue must be resolved by laws and regulations, but everyone is just dealing with the education sector as a tool for their desires and not in students’ interest. The narrator mentioned that the officials do not want to make them learn and that they do not teach learning in schools but teach lessons on the inferiority and superiority of one group over another. They do not talk about issues that are of grave concern to learning. The main idea of the passage is manipulation and its outcomes. Manipulation has destructive outcomes because every student will face the deprivation of quality education due to the closure of every school. Education is not a tool for playing but a solemn responsibility to look upon. The characters and the governor do not consider their responsibility as worth taking (Gul, 2024).

4. **“The joke is that, depending to be decided”. (Beatty, 2015: p. 279)**

Reference to the Context

The narrator got stuck in a never-ending case for his crime of committing segregation and slavery. He was out of jail on bail. Marpessa arranged a welcome home party for the narrator and invited his neighbors to the party. The narrator is upset because the Supreme Court’s decision is not clear.

Analysis and Interpretation

The passage is set in the home of the narrator in Dickens. Marpessa, a minor character and girlfriend of the narrator, was at the narrator’s home. The plot moves toward resolution, and the narrator gets stuck in a never-ending case. The narrator considered the court’s decision a joke because the issue was clear, and the court also set him free on bail, but the case is still ongoing and does not seem to end. The narrator was charged with reinstating slavery, but he did not enslave Hominy. Hominy enslaved himself to the narrator with his own will, but the court did not consider his voice. The narrator received the fruit of his deeds through the court case, but the results could have been more precise. Marpessa, the narrator’s girlfriend, arranges a welcome home party for the narrator, but the narrator considers it as going to a jail party. The narrator is unclear and upset about the situation. Marpessa placed a banner over the kitchen doorway. The banner mentioned **“CONSTITUTIONAL OR INSTITUTIONAL — TO BE DECIDED”** (Beatty, 2015: p. 279). This statement is a symbol of confusion. The court’s decision is unclear, which means that the narrator can be made accessible but can also go to jail. The narrator gets stuck in a never-ending case and loses peace of mind. The theme of the passage is confusion. The narrator’s manipulation was successful because he got his hometown back on the Californian map, but he turned his peaceful life into hell due to engaging in slavery and segregation. Manipulation is a severe act, and the results of manipulation are severe. The narrator’s manipulative acts caused him to stick in a case that does not seem to end because of its severity, and he also lost his peace of mind due to the unclarity of the court’s final decision. Manipulation can benefit the manipulator but can be destructive in the long run, just like in the narrator’s case. The destruction caused by manipulation can be physical, mental, or financial, but it can also cause moral destruction. The manipulation of education done by the narrator causes him physical and mental destruction that will lead to a miserable life. The manipulation of education caused the narrator to suffer from mental confusion and caused insanity to the Foy (Gul, 2024).

Findings and Discussion

Education is used as a tool by powerful groups of society to exercise their power and ideology. The character of the narrator used education for gaining his identity and the character of Foy used education for gaining power and imposing his ideology through his curriculum. Both the characters used education for their interest resulting in destruction of moral and ethical values of society. They also caused destruction to themselves in the form of a court case and insanity. They brought destruction to their society and people through depriving them of quality education. Their use of education as a tool to achieve their goals, caused them to lose their peace, integrity of education and the wellbeing of society.

Education, being a powerful sector, is always subject to misuse by different groups of society. It is corrupted through funds, curriculum and teaching strategies. Governments develop curriculum the way they want to structure society and control the young generation through that biased curriculum. Almost every person misuse education for their interests like corruption in funds, teaching, curriculum and policymaking and implementation. These interventions and misuse of education not only disturb society and students but also cause destruction to the powerful groups in the form of revolt and resistance. This creates cultural and ethnic conflicts because of the promotion of various unwanted ideologies. The manipulators of the education sector mostly end up in courts and jails. Education can give power to them but can also destroy them if its integrity is destroyed. Therefore, a clear and just environment for education is the need of the day and upcoming generations. Education must be neutral and free from any kind of intervention.

Conclusion

Education is a powerful sector that builds identities and nations. However, it is frequently misused by powerful groups of society for gaining power. This study gives clear understanding of education being used as a tool. Theories of Foucault (1998), Freire (1970), Gramsci (1971) and Nussbaum (1990) serve as a theoretical framework for the study. The study is qualitative in nature and the method used for analysis is close reading technique. The analysis shows that various characters from the novel used education for their personal interests and gaining power in society but due to their interruption in curriculum and the education sector, not only was the integrity of education harmed but their own life also became miserable. Education, being a basic human right can easily give power and alter the intellectual power of society. Therefore, powerful people use it to gain power and subvert individuals and society.

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