Discussion of the Postgraduates' Reading Views—Based on Freud's Theory About “Ego,” “Id,” and “Super-Ego”

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Paper based on the psychological structure of personality's three levels: “Ego,” “id,” “super-ego,” which was put forward by Freud in 1923. Through understanding and analysis of the theory, we conclude that the current postgraduates' three reading levels: Ego level of reading view, id level of reading view, and super-ego level of reading view. Due to the lack of purpose consciousness, problem consciousness, and critical consciousness, the three levels are out of balances. The article, through keeping ego, id, and super-ego in balances, aims to correct the current postgraduates' reading problems that are imbalanced or distorted.

Keywords: the postgraduates' reading view, ego, id, super-ego

Introduction

Reading is an important way to cultivate one's academic quality, especially for postgraduates. However, survey shows that the current views of the postgraduates' reading has drastically deviated and distorted (Hao, 2009). So, this paper mainly explores the problems of postgraduates' reading views and puts forward several paths against these issues.

The Problems of Postgraduates' Reading Views

Postgraduates have different stages from other learning times. During those times, postgraduates should read several kinds of books to enlarge their views. Through the study, we found that the distortions of the current postgraduates' reading views are as follows:

Lack of Purpose Consciousness During Reading

Reading is the main way to gain experience, but they usually reading with arbitrary. This way of reading is lack of purpose and leads to the decline on reading effectiveness or a certain degree of blindness and randomness. According to Freud's theory, this reading lack of purpose is a typical “id” level of reading. The id is a physiological or instinctive term that means pursuing happiness. It aims to eliminate or alleviate people's tension, depressions, and unpleasant feeling (Freud, 2005). Academic pressures lead to physical and mental unhappiness of postgraduates and the id level make them choose to read some of interest books to avoid bitterness and relieve stress unpleasant. This supreme and aimless of id reading view represses the “ego” of the postgraduates, and ignores the moral value and the ideal state of the “super-ego,” thus breaking the balance of the three.

Lack of Question Consciousness During Reading

British scholar Popper believes that problem is the logical starting point for scientific research. It can be seen that problem awareness affects the effectiveness of postgraduates' reading. Some scholars' survey showed that lack of question awareness is the crucial of the current postgraduates (Wang, 2009). This poor awareness of the issue of reading was often reflected in the writing of graduation thesis, during which time many postgraduates did not find the direction of research and finally resorted to their tutors about the subject (Qi, 2007). According to Freud's theory, ego is rational and accessible affairs. Because of the depressing of the real study environment, they have to seek a question from their instructors. Much too emphasize the ego that ignores the existence of the id and at the same time, disregards the deep reading of super-ego level, and at the end, lead to the unbalanced of three.

Lack of Criticism Consciousness During Reading

Some scholars have found that most postgraduates' academic critical thinking abilities are very weak, which are reflected in their reading process that are blind and without depth, which leads to the decline of the effectiveness of postgraduates' reading (Liu, 2011). According to Freud's theory, super-ego has the mission of supervising id. Taken the above analysis into consideration, we can conclude that the current postgraduates are into the ego, which overemphasizes the development of their own sense of the problem and ignores the ideal super-ego. When the idea of ego conforms to social and ethical norms, super-ego encourages ego to go forward. When the postgraduates' awarenesses of ego are in accordance with social norms, as they pursue ego too much, at the same time, they drop super-ego and ignore ego, so they break the balance of them.

An Analysis of Reasons of the Deviation and Distortion of Current Postgraduates' Reading

Freud's ego, id, and super-ego can be understood as the three levels of postgraduates' reading and the fundamental reasons of deviations and distortions were the imbalances of them.

Imbalance of Id Level

The imbalances of the id are manifested as follows: On the one hand, they caused by the external complex social environment. On the other hand, they are caused by the imbalance of postgraduates themselves that leads to the academic confusion and emotional confusion. Transforming from a large class group environment during university into a small group in a tutor, they lost of the centripetal force of class groups and had deficiencies in emotion. According to Freud's theory, this situation belongs to the concept of id—the most primitive part of personality structure. The principle of happiness is dominated by id. Though the id of each individual is different when they are born, it is influenced by the outside and at last yields. Therefore, ego begins to rise, which leads to the postgraduates' reading distortions and deviations.

Imbalance of Ego Level

Imbalances of ego level are mainly manifested in the impact of the postgraduates' own reading habits or other personal factors that failed to cultivate problem awareness. Moreover, the external factors, such as current enrollment system of the school examination, curriculum, teaching methods, and family education concept that influence students, contribute to the imbalances. So, the postgraduates are lack of problem awareness (Wang, 2009). Freud hold that ego is formed based on id that differentiates and develops. Therefore, when the ego in the management of id, they should persuade the id to temporarily endure tension and pain for long-term happiness. Under the influence of social constraints, postgraduates have to choose the reality of the principle of

ego state. However, the rise of the ego would break the balance of Freud's "three-I" theory.

Imbalance of Super-Ego Level

Super-ego level imbalance refers to the lack of critical awareness, here, of postgraduates. Some scholars have shown that the current postgraduates, instead of without a sense of criticism, are equipped with weak criticism, mainly due to the lack of academic critical thinking education or atmosphere (Liu, 2011). As it has mentioned about Freud's interpretation, their pursuit of ego to develop their own senses of the problem would be controlled by super-ego. Super-ego is the moral norms or social orientation. It is dominated by the perfect principle, when one is away from id to choose ego and his mental state is still imbalance. Under the encouragement of super-ego, the postgraduates are too much fostering the problem consciousness and pursuing the ego, so ignore the id and give up the super-ego. At last, they are in an unbalanced state.

The Constructional Path to Balance Reading Bias of Ego, Id, and Super-Ego Level

Scientific research begins with the problem. The first thing a postgraduate should do is to ask questions with purpose, and at the same time, have an attitude of questioning and be critical. The author proposes to correct the current postgraduates' distortions and biases according to Freud's theory.

Strengthening the Awareness of Purpose and Correcting the Reading Bias of Id Level

The modern Britain great philosopher Bacon in *On Reading* said that, "One should read with purpose." Ancient Chinese scholars Xi Zhu hold "the reading of Zhu Xi." They emphasize that the reading should have a certain purpose (Liu, 2011). As id reading view weakens the ego and super-ego, which undoubtedly reduces the effectiveness of postgraduates' reading. The author believes that we should first exclude the interference from the complex social environment and get rid of their confusions, so that to overcome the id of the unexpected. And then, strengthen the sense of purpose of reading and at last make ego, id, and super-ego in a state of balance. Only by maintaining the balance of the three, a real reading state can be achieved. Therefore, in the author's opinion, we may correct the current postgraduates' reading distortions through balancing ego, id, and super-ego and strengthening the purpose of reading consciousness.

Improving the Consciousness of Problem and Correcting the Reading Bias of Ego Level

Problem awareness is throughout the entire process of postgraduate study. Whether in lectures, academic seminars, academic reports, usual reading, or the process of access to information, postgraduates are required to have problem awareness. It requires postgraduates to take the initiative to discover the problem, especially from the id level of reading to the ego view of reading, which plays an important role in the development of problems consciousness. Professor Youquan Lu, a well-known educational scholar in China, attaches great importance to the cultivation of problem consciousness, and advocates that one should have problems before reading books and one should choose reading bibliography according to the questions (Li, 2007). Abiding by Freud's theory, we could use ego to meet id and super-ego to control id, so that make id converted to ego. Moreover, we could change action or thought to id, so that ego does not need to control id. Thereby, we can maintain the balance among id, ego and super-ego.

Cultivating Critical Consciousness and Correcting the Reading Bias of Super-Ego Level

Einstein said in his *On Education*, "The general ability to develop independent thinking and independent critique should always be at the top of the list." Confucius said, "Learning without thinking is indiscriminate; thinking and not learning is lazy." It requires postgraduates to follow the Freud's theory, and avoid the

traditional thinking “the teacher’s words are always true and unquestionable” effect in the id to ego. Reading with a skeptical critical vision and dare to challenge the authority that break away from the traditional thinking that the teacher’s words are always true and no one can question it, and the shackles of the current educational system. In addition, we should overcome the influence of external factors, such as society, school, and family, and control and supervise the id and ego with the super-ego so as to achieve the equilibrium. The theory as well as the famous American psychologist Maslow’s “self-realization” theory contains the philosophical and practical significance.

Conclusion

After analyzing the current postgraduates’ reading situations with Freud’s theory of three level. We know that a wrong way reading equals unreading. Postgraduates’ reading should have problem first. Then develop a habit of critical thinking. At last but not the least, communicate with each other frequently. In short, postgraduates’ reading should be deeply reading. Only reading in this ways, could the Freud’s theory of ego, id, and super-ego be balanced.

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