Value-creating education and quality of education: Exploring the meaning and role of a *value platform* created by people

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Abstract

Three educational approaches have major influence on current education: human capital, human right, and human capability. However, the three conventional education approaches share the same challenge: despite the fact that in society multiple people are living interactively, the aim of utilizing their learning outcomes, rights and capabilities doesn't fully encapsulate the concept of "otherness". To tackle the issue, there is a noticeable education, "value creating education (VCE)". This paper, referring to Dewey's education philosophy, organizes features of VCE, compares three previous approaches with VCE, and identifies its perspective vital for future education policy. By analyzing practical reports, VCE provides a platform in which people are interacting with each other and create public value through valuable thinking. The reasons are as follows: 1) VCE rests on interpersonal relationship within society. 2) builds on "practical democracy", in which people's diversity and distinction become a driving force for an innovation. 3) seeks to find "value-creation", which comes from people's belief and morale, in interpersonal relationship among people. 4) aspires to embody humanitarian and moral education. 5) its theory is founded on the universality of "agency", or human's intrinsic nature to create value. Hence, VCE can act as a springboard for shaping new identity of education policy.

Key words: Value-creating, Dewey, quality of education

1. Introduction

Value-creating education (also known as "Soka education") is currently generating considerable interest among educational philosophers. Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1972) theorized a concept of value-creating (*kachi-sozou*) and founded the idea of "value-creating education" (*kachi-souzou-kyouiku*), which continued and was later developed as "Soka education." Makiguchi (1972) describes the core principle of value-creating education (VCE) as being divided into three kinds of vision: originating in experience, aiming for value, and based on efficiency, and it is rooted in humanity and a democratic style. "Value creation is the capacity to find meaning, to enhance one's own existence and contribute to the well-being of others, under any circumstance" (Ikeda, 2010, p. 112). One feature is to leverage experiences and social consciousness among people, and another is to emphasize creating value through interactive involvement. Such a model of education is being implemented in some schools around the world. For instance, one school in New York has introduced VCE into its system, while some schools in Japan and Brazil are also adopting the VCE curriculum. Value-creating education is also currently attracting considerable interest from researchers and scholars.

This paper explores an enabling perspective of future education to compensate for the drawbacks of conventional educational approaches: Human Capital, Human Rights, and Human Capability: despite the fact that in society multiple people are living interactively, the aim of utilizing their learning outcomes, rights and capabilities doesn't fully encapsulate the concept of "otherness". The article proceeds as follows: first, it outlines challenges facing education by comparing VCE with Western education techniques, referring to Eastern view of interdependence. Second, it illustrates the main features of VCE, contrasting it with the democratic approach which Dewey describes and

distinguishing between the different facts and values inherent in the views of Dewey and Makiguchi. A number of case studies featuring people interacting with each other are then analyzed, provides a platform to find out the meaning and value in human relationship, and valuable thinking in there can create public value. Finally, the study examines the function of VCE in terms of people's social and moral consciousness.

2. Traditional education

Most educational forms in modern society impose fixed performance norms and place great emphasis on standardized tests. As a result, students are distributed among a number of predetermined arrangements, a one-size-fits-all norm. Such structures aim to sort and categorize them based on fixed a "hierarchical regime of distinction" (Garrison, 2010, p. 46). As Dewey states, castes are classifications of superiority and inferiority within a hierarchical order between which each caste can move, exercised by feudal arrangements. Modern society ranks from great financiers to unskilled workers, and ignores individual capacity served by individual will or purpose (cited in Garrison, 2010) according to interpersonal relationship.

3. Western, Japanese education, and value-creating education (Soka education)

According to noted philosophers of education like Johann Pestalozzi and Johann Herbart (cited in Bethel, 1989), Western education has been dominated by a top-down style of education where students learn from teachers based on texts and curricula. However, as Dewey states, as well as studying passively under the guidance of teachers, it is also important that students learn positively and he emphasizes the importance of experience in learning (Kariya, 2014). In terms of economic development, productive activity by

humans requires elements such as politeness, order, and morality so that people can function well within an organization, establishing positive human relations, and engaging in sensible action and team work (Smith, cited in Makiguchi, Bethel, 1989). In relation to this, Durkheim claims that economic development cannot arise when society and nation are unstable. Thus, education needs to ensure a sensible citizenship and stable society (Durkheim, cited in Kariya, 2014).

In the Meiji period, the Ministry of Education announced policies to improve learning outcomes and nurtures elite classes in order to strengthen economic activity and productivity. Thus educational opportunity and access to education dramatically increased after World War II. However, Makiguchi pointed out that Japanese education is deficient in intellectual autonomy and criticized the prevalence of authoritarian ideas among professionals in Japan (Makiguchi, 1972). In general, he maintained, they tend to rely on authority and copy the authoritarian ideas of Western philosophers. In such situations, Makiguchi always searches for answers to these two questions: for whom, and for what, is education? Even though Makiguchi employed Western rationality as an analytical tool, he left enough space to consider education from an Eastern point of view (Gebert & Joffee, 2007). For example, Makiguchi's emphasis on interdependence ("between humans and nature, and among humans in their social relations") may represent a reflection of Eastern philosophical ideas (Matsuoka, 2005, p. 202). The following section clarifies the features of value-creating education (VCE), which Makiguchi sees as an ideal form of education, in contrast with Dewey's views.

3.1 Similarities and differences in interactive engagement

It is generally accepted that we tend to evaluate educational achievement in terms of academic outcomes. However, such a view can shrink the potential of education and

restrict the growth of people and the transformation of society by education. As described in the previous section, Makiguchi focused on the relevance of interdependence among humans in society, which is not just an aggregation of people, but constitutes a mental and spiritual unit. According to Dewey, "the person dwells in and through the process that is interest, in and through the space and time that is interest." "The self is not something ready-made," he emphasizes, "but something in continuous formation through choice of action" (Dewey, cited in Hansen, 2009, p. 129). In this respect, it is insisted that human nature is a part of mother nature and creatively participates in its doing and making (Dewey, cited in Garrison, 2010). Self and society, as well as freedom and reason, are not originally endowed; they are created through the engaging activities by humans (Garrison, 2010). Dewey also states that "personality, selfhood, subjectivity, are eventual functions that emerge with complexly organized interactions, organic, and social" (Boydston, J. A., 1989-2008, Vol. 1, p. 162). In relation to this, Ikeda (2001, p. 68) claims that "the individual can only become fully realized through interaction with others." In brief, "genuine individuality is a creative social achievement requiring interaction with otherness and difference, while equality as sameness suppresses individual development by suppressing diversity." We need "others" who are innately different from ourselves. "Self-actualization and creative self-expression are social functions requiring otherness and difference in a pluralistic democratic community" (Garrison, 2010, P. 46).

3.2 People's experiences and an advancing role

Deweyan pragmatists regard dualism as false; there is a subject versus an object and self versus society, as two being independent. They seek to overcome the dualism by creating the space of interaction between the subject and the object, self and society (Garrison, 2010). Just as with Dewey, "Ikeda's perspective collapses dualism between mind and

body, self and other, person and environment, and he views humanity as inherently interdependent with all phenomena" (in Nunes, I. & Goulah, J., Ed., 2021, p.17). Makiguchi (1972) also expressed his appreciation of experimentalism, as he strongly believed in the potential of education based on experiences to create new ideas and values. Experiences cause individuals and their local community to develop. Experiences enable us to discern whether ideas and values can be recognized or implemented in human life (Hickman, 2002). As for the learning of knowledge, we must take account of when and how learning occurs through social involvement with people, for individuals do not learn only in accordance with personal interest and ability, or needs (Hickman, 2002). In Dewey's terms, a school must be a place in which people learn shared ideas. In other words, schools should be defined as places to examine such shared ideas in an exploration of ongoing relevance, and to screen new ideas by applying them to real situations. Thus, such activities as experienced by students in or out of school act as tools to recreate ideas and values.

The second remarkable point is that Dewey focused on the open-ended possibilities of people's experiences (Dewey, 1997). He puts great emphasis upon teaching pupils how to think, rather than what to think. He notices that knowledge and information can be updated in accordance with the times, and such change might sometimes be radical. On the other hand, how to learn is a method and tool, and this tool can have the potentiality to be self-corrective (Hickman, 2002) through experiences. The question is posited: "What does 'experience' mean?" Dewey's answer is "experience is that free interaction of individual human beings with surrounding conditions, especially the human surroundings, which develops and satisfies need and desire by increasing knowledge of things as they are" (Boydston, J. A., 1989-2008), Vol. 14, p. 89). As

Dewey's ideas develop, the interactive experience with increasing knowledge and its surroundings creates enabling aims and methods. Also, Makiguchi wanted people to have experiences and use them as launching pads for creative responses, as if seeking out a middle way. An artful process of experiences (Waks, 2009) can be included with the spontaneous and the purpose-driven (Joffee, Goulah, & Gebert, 2009). Thus, VCE through interactive experiences can be classified as education with a developmental element.

Lastly, education needs to deal with a new paradigm that transcends schools dominated by traditional ideology: schools and society are independent of each other. Specifically, what is occurring outside the school is introduced into the school curriculum, and what is occurring inside the school is applied within the society (Hickman, 2002). In the future, schools must also deal with a society operated by artificial intelligence. The inevitable conclusion is that "study is not seen as a preparation for living, but instead study takes place while living, and living takes place in the midst of study. Study and actual living are seen as more than parallels; they inform one another intercontextually, study-in-living and living-in-study, throughout one's whole life" (Bethel, 1989, p. 156). Makiguchi (1972) also insists on the important benefit of half-day schooling, whereby students spend one half-day each week outside school, such as among family and in the local community. This half-day school curriculum would foster an attitude of appreciation for living or working (Bethel, 1989). Makiguchi believes that pupils can redefine the purpose of life and reactivate their study through experiences in diverse situations (Gebert & Joffee, 2007). Thus, study and experiences in interactive environments are not limited to the scope of school, but remain an influence throughout their lives.

3.3 Concluding observations

An school education is not composed of one person's experience, but diverse people's experiences interacting in school. Therefore, it embodies a creative and evolutionary aspect, and it is forced to focus on originating in human experiences (Hickman, 2002) and to nurture social awareness among people. We must not accept the idea that education is merely preparation for future occupations and market activities. Education is the most efficient means for both individuals and communities to grow (Hickman, 2002). In other words, education enables individuals to fully participate in a community, and, in the activating form, democratic process, education is also facilitated by free and open social interactions. As a result of such education, individuals can have "a stake in society" (Hickman, 2002, p. 139). Thus, education can be considered as a tool of democratic practice.

4. Democracy and value-creating education (Soka education)

This section explores the democratic aspect of value-creating education. As Dewey asserts, despite the fact that people seek for the superficial meaning of democracy throughout the world, he defines it as "faith in individuality, in uniquely distinctive qualities in each normal human being; faith in corresponding unique modes of activity that create new ends (values), with willing acceptance of the modifications of the established order entailed by the release of individualized capacities" (cited in Garrison, 2010, p. 44). This view corresponds to the vision of VCE: Dewey and Makiguchi share the faith in their approach to creating values (Garrison, 2010).

As it is often interpreted, the concept of democracy is not just one of governmental ideology. Rather, "democracy" must encompass every aspect of human life, and it must be a method whereby a person can live (Hickman, 2002). As Dewey insists, democracy

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is not a one-size-fits-all system as adopted by a government or authority, and it is not fixed by a particular frame. Dewey itemizes some critical views about democracy. First, democracy is defined as a matter of belief or faith, not a static state of affairs. That is, democratic connection by people's intellectual and emotional experiences promotes the experimental power that individuals and community have to create their own aims and means, while non-democratic association mitigates such power. Second, democracy is a method and a process. As the concept of science shows, democracy cannot be defined in terms of indicators and outcomes. Instead, it always leaves an open space to correct and self-correct, being independent of success and failure. Thus, as Dewey claims, "democracy is a tool or method by means of which our ideas about ourselves and our communities can be continually reformed and reconstructed in the light of emerging needs and opportunities" (Hickman, 2002, p. 137).

From this view, we can see the similarity with VCE. Makiguchi claims that "open-ended problem-centered dialogue enables us to more deeply understand, articulate and commit ourselves to our mission and vision. This form of interaction is a core principle of value-creating education" (cited in Joffee et. al., 2009, p. 187). In other words, it is not a pedagogy or ideology, but a process in itself. There is a remarkable homogeneity in the beliefs associated with both democracy and VCE. As Dewey stated, "a faith that experience can generate the aims and methods by which further experience can grow in ordered richness is also faith in education" (Hickman, 2002, p. 138). The faith can make us grow and develop our communities. It will also have the potential to correct itself. Makiguchi (1972), a pioneer of Soka education, defines VCE as "preparation to develop," which is a right that humans are innately endowed with (Durkheim, cited in Makiguchi, 1972).

Next, this section considers the interrelationship between faith and morality. Dewey stated that "the democrat with his faith in moral equality is the representative of aristocracy made universal. His equality is that of distinction made universal" (Boydston, J. A. (Ed.) 1976-2008, Vol. 13, p. 300). Dewey also claims that "equality is moral, a matter of justice socially secured, not of physical or psychological endowment" (Boydston, J. A., 1989-2008, Vol. 13, p. 229). This moral shows a person with interest, meaning that "self and world are engaged with each other in a developing situation" (Hansen, 2009, p. 129). We have the right to develop our talents or gifts and must also have an equal opportunity to do so. The democratic belief or morale arises from intellectual and emotional experiences of people. It can make our leadership active. The belief of people is generous and universal (Dewey, cited in Garrison, 2010).

Makiguchi (1972) also interprets VCE as building "a science of morality." It is to nurture people who can proactively create values for the public benefit. As Dewey asserts, owing to a faith in democracy, every single person realizes their original potential and individuals can also contribute to change society to the utmost degree (cited in Garrison, 2010). "The purpose of education, along with equipping students with *some indispensable tools*, was to discover and release individualized capacities so that they might make their own way with whatever of social change is involved in their operation'"(Boydston, J. A., 1976-2008, Vol. 13, p. 297). VCE distributes people to serve for the society, not just in an administrative way, chaining the democratic moral belief (Garrison, 2010), raised from intellectual and emotional experiences of people.

5. Fact as result and value as purpose

The relationship between facts and value is debated by Dewey and Makiguchi. They

contemplate the feature of value and the process of value creation. They deny the traditional idea whereby philosophers in Western nations regard facts and value as self-reliant concepts. Instead, both men hold the common view that "facts are richly endowed with values, and that values are therefore able to be factually based" (Hickman, 2002, p. 134). Makiguchi's research also focuses on the development of human capability to identify and generate valuable meaning in facts and real experiences (cited in Gebert & Joffee, 2007). Only human beings have the capability to create value (Makiguchi, 1972), such as what or how to use knowledge or skill and spend an income, which is the core principle of Soka education.

We turn now to the analysis of the distinction between facts and value. According to Dewey, to be valued (temporarily evaluated) is defined as a merely immediate and uninformed matter (cited in Hickman, 2002). Valuing something is the action which happens in personal space and time. So, it tends to eliminate "a certain space" to for people to exchange experiences and interact with others in public space and time. In relation to the space, Dewey states this remarkably:

> Dewey evinces a profound curiosity and passion for what can be called "the space between." This space resides between the self-that-was and the self-in-formation; between the community yesterday and the community today; between the way of life that had been treated as given and the way of life now seen as art-full. For Dewey, this space exerts a magnetic pull for anyone awake and alert to it (Dewey in Hansen, 2009, p. 128).

What is valuable is created and refined through the interactive engaging process of people's experiences. This means that what is "valuable" is what has been

experimentally tested and proven to be valuable. Thus, what is "valuable" has been worked over, debated, refined, and reconstructed in the public (Hickman, 2002). Likewise, as Makiguchi (1972) also asserts, to discern what is valuable is the result of an action created by human interchange. Makiguchi's belief is that value is embodied in people's interactive experiences through the practical pursuit of knowledge and facts. Knowledge and facts cannot be valued in themselves, but they can be the source of value. Makiguchi also seeks abstract and disembodied "fact" in real experiences. In short, in reference to Dewey's definition, interests can connect knowledge or experiences with value, and value is created through the interactive engagement among humans in their surroundings (Gebert & Joffee, 2007).

There is a critical aspect to considering about the linkage between facts and values. As Dewey points out, true ideas should be concrete and practicable. Ideas need relative contexts. In other words, the ideas become true only when they are put into practice. Thus, true ideas do not work by themselves, but it is us who must put them into effect (Hickman, 2002). Likewise, knowledge has a similar feature. Neither knowledge nor ideas have any value unless they are adopted into human activity. The actual practice depends on a person's moral determination, thereby stressing the significance of education in training human character (Hickman, 2002). Dewey argues that all meaningful education is moral education, and moral education is what prepares us to take our place in a democratic society (in Hickman, 2002). Furthermore, as Makiguchi (1972) describes, the arbiter of people's moral judgments, that is "society," does not assume separate, incommensurable moral universes for different cultures, but is implicitly open to the idea of intercultural negotiation toward the formation of a larger moral consensus.

6. Teacher and student, valuable thinking, and value platform

6.1 Considering practical reports of humanistic education by Soka Gakkai

Makiguchi, who was the first president of Soka Gakkai, stated clearly that the purpose of education is to pursuit the happiness of students (Makiguchi, 1972), citing the words of Alfred Nobel: "Be inherited heritage can be, but happiness cannot inherited" (cited in Bethel, 1989). Linking wellbeing with value, he also emphasized the fact that human beings can create value. Ikeda, as the third president of Soka Gakkai, wanted Soka Gakkai to keep records of educational practices, and the movement begins in 1984 with the aim of conducting research into and developing its humanistic education policies (Soka Gakkai Education Headquarters, ed., 2015). The number of recorded case studies amounts to more than 140,000. Analysis of these case studies show that five key phrases are used frequently in the records: 1) believe in yourself, 2) accept as they are, 3) keep encouraging, 4) support to the end, and 5) connect hearts (Soka Gakkai Education Headquarters, 2020). The five key words have one point in common: teachers and students are not divided. In fact, the connections between them are seen as a condition. Thus, teachers, being aware of their mission, become agent, and empower students (Soka Gakkai Education Headquarters, 2020). Today, overseas researchers are also paying attention to Soka's style of humanistic education, and name it "Hope and Joy in Education"(Nunez & Goulah, et.al., 2021). This section takes two representative case studies and analyzes them from the aspect of "value platform," which means to find out the meaning and value in human relationship, indicates the change and extent of values by "people's valuable thinking for what purpose."

Conventional educational policy regards the respective roles of teachers and

students as fixed and unchanging, and analyzes or categorizes them based on normative quantitative and qualitative indicators. Even though teachers can perform tasks (mainly teaching) and students can study in the field of education, policies rarely focus on agency, which is that teachers as agents of change can be involved with students so that both teachers and students change from internally and grow as humans sympathizes with others. Two case studies of Soka education highlight remarkable features of "agent and agency." In practical cases of Soka education, you can recognize that, inspired by the idea of "for what purpose," a teacher is aware of being "an agent of change" (Goodson, 2003; Priestley, 2011), who is expected to exercise their agentive role in educational improvement, and they exercise "agency" over students. In this context, "agency" signifies the ability and the will to positively influence one's own life and the world around us (OECD, 2019). In relation to this idea, the following remarkable quotation is significant:

> Psychology is a science, and teaching is an art, and sciences never generate
>
> arts directly out of themselves. An intermediary inventive mind must make
>
> the application, by using its originality (William James, 1842-1910).

In some cases, some students are initially excluded from and not familiar with schools, because of school refusal and problematic school-related behavior, including truancy and delinquency. However, an examination of these two case studies will illustrate how teachers make students change and grow through human interaction.

Case Study 1: Takashi Ueda, primary school teacher, Tokyo: An excerpt from a practical report.

"He was involved with a truant pupil and finally they could participated in the

graduation ceremony together."

<u>A triggering word to reflect a teacher's attitude</u>.

One day, when I (teacher) called (student's) mother as usual, her mother said to me, "Please stop calling me every day." To my surprise, I asked her mother, "why you said so." She said to me (teacher) in her obsessed voice, "The more you (teacher) are involved with my daughter, the more she gets angry with me (mother), saying 'which side are you in?' I (mother) can't stand in this situation more. I don't want to make waves with my daughter." As I (teacher) didn't know how to respond to her mother then, I apologized and hanged up the phone.

A little doubt rose in my heart, "I (teacher) have been making arrangements for Ms. A (student) to come back to school. But, that afflicts her conversely". I became uneasy. At the same time, I had my feeling, "I have done for her this far". At the time, the following sentence caught my attention while I was reading a book by Dr. Ikeda: "A teacher is a person who ignites a flame of hope in pupils' hearts. The teacher is to believe in the potential of pupils. It is solely the human mind that moves the human mind."

I face up with my doubt. "Was I thinking about only … that I compelled Ms. A coming back to school? Would I believe in the potential of Ms. A?" I have determined to again face up with Ms. A seriously and I do believe in Ms. A, without giving up no matter what Ms. A says to me. (Ueda, Soka Gakkai Education Headquarters, 2020, pp. 84–85).

Case Study 2: Kyoko Miyamoto hated horses, but her first assigned school was agricultural high school, where they raise racehorses: An excerpt from a practical report.

"She met a student, and by interacting with her student, she grew up to be a teacher."

<u>What is the meaning of my existence for her</u>?

One day, Ms. B (student) was enrolled in a high school to study raising racehorses. She was good at studying, but her emotional ups and downs were erratic. Moreover, she was stubborn and, if she experienced even minor conflict, she became rigid so that she closed her mouth soon. And she began dying her hair, her appearance became messy, and her disorderly behavior was soon remarked upon . I pointed this out in a respectful manner and tried to persuade her affectionately. But she would not listen to me. In the end, she spat out at me, "Students do not exist for teachers." … These words pierced my back like a thorn. In my daily work, I kept asking myself what the meaning of my existence is for her. What should I do to become "a teacher for students," not "a student for a teacher?" In such a time, one day, I realized that a hardship in winter for me would be the time of necessary training for victory in spring to come (based on a specific Japanese proverb). I noticed that a current facing challenge about Ms. B became an opportunity for me to grow, to become a teacher for Ms. B.

Then, I changed myself and I thought in my heart that I was willing to know her more, and carefully listen to the voice of her mind. If I change, a student also changes. As the way I engaged with her changed, Ms. B gradually became more stable.

(Miyamoto, in Soka Gakkai Education Headquarters, pp. 155–157, ed. 2020)

One could not make sense of the simplest intentional action, like making tea, unless it was taken for granted that the way things are does provide grounds for action (Collier, 1998).

According to Carr (1987), "making action and doing action" are distinct activities when teachers judge their work. As you see in the two cases, the teachers simply did their

work based on values of individualism and egoism, or an arrangement-focused view of value. However, by intentionally engaging with the students, both teachers gradually shaped an "otherness" in their minds. Both teachers contemplated "what is the right thing for students?" and their private values turned to a realization-focused view of value. For teachers listen directly to (directly engage with) themselves in school, rather than look merely at the means of (student's) school lives. This can be defined as "valuable thinking." In relation, Makiguchi also states,

"Rather than devise complex theoretical interpretations, it is better to start by looking to the lovely child who sits on your knee and ask yourself: What can I do ensure that this child will be able to lead the happiest life possible?" (Ikeda, 2001, p. 10)

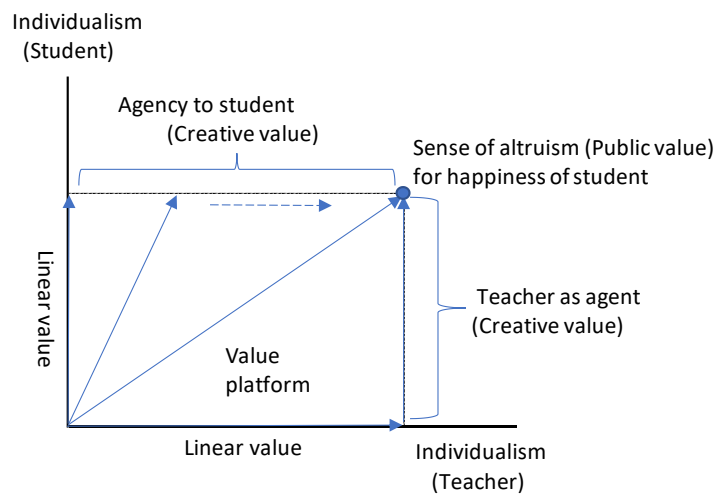This valuable thinking inspires these teachers to put altruism into practice for the

Figure 1: Value-creating Education

sake of students, leaving no one behind. As we can see in Figure 1, the vertical and horizontal axes show teachers and students as static figures, and neither intersect with a linear value on individualism. However, through the interaction with the students, the teachers in both cases were able to find "otherness" in their mind, which means a dialogic engagement with "an internalized other" (Ikeda, 2003, 2009, 2010), so that their sense of

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value was transformed, as did the way they interacted with their students.

Likewise, students see an otherness shaped through the interaction with their teachers, in their minds. And, as the oblique line shows in the chart, the "otherness" expands and empowers the students' value so that they learn to "think of others." In other
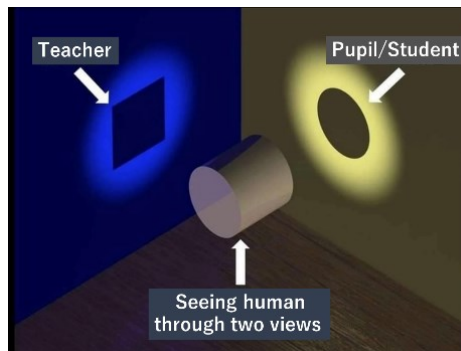

Figure 2: An internalized other and otherness

words, as indicated in Figure 2, an otherness enables a teacher and student to simultaneously see humans as objects from two viewpoints, that of teacher and student.

T. S. Eliot stated that "Human kind cannot bear very much reality. Human kind should be able to face a bit more reality than a picture of a world in which there is only one good thing." The words can be interpreted as meaning that a reality to which people face is not composed of the sole values, "your values or my values," but a reality is based on value of relevance between people (Makiguchi, 1972), "your and my being together." According to Wider (2017), codependent origination resounds with the concept of "Ubuntu," the belief that I am what I am because of who we all are. Such interpretation is defined as the threshold of "value platform." The platform, identifying value in relevance, fosters the thought of what is beneficial to people.

6.2 Agent by valuable thinking and agency in value platform

As you can see in the two case studies, each teacher becomes an agent; in other words, a teacher who is awakened to their mission of change who does not leave students with

challenges, includes their views, and thinks through the eyes of their students. As a result, teachers create an agency whereby students can grow toward their shared right values, that is public value (sense of altruism), which is mutually beneficial to both, as we can see in Figure 1. Such co-agency can be also defined as "interactive, mutually supportive relationships that help students (including school managers and parents) progress towards their shared goals" (OECD, 2019).

Conventional education regards humans as independent existence in the process of policy-making, and does not sufficiently take account of the concepts of agent and agency, which arise from the fact that people find out the meaning in relevance and create a beneficial value to them. When policy makers make proposals or promote reforms, they prioritize solving problems that are can be more easily quantitatively categorized and recognized, such as the improvement of students' learning outcomes, teachers' qualifications. At times, such an approach may install the interpreter in a position of rhetorical authority in place of the intentional human such as a learner with agency and a teacher as agent, as if discourse-without-*a speaker* and *listener*, and texts-without-*an author* and *reader* are (Archer, 2000).

In light of the earlier case studies presented in this article, policy makers should reconsider the quality of education from the following two perspectives in value platform to find out the meaning of relevance among people and create public value. First, to see teachers as "agents" with a will and interest. When teachers act as such agents in their educational activities (teaching), that is, when they play an active role in deciding what they contribute to students as educational activities and how, they tend to show greater motivation to work and are more likely to define objectives for their work. These teachers are also more likely to have learned how to do directly for their students (OECD, 2019)

in valuable thinking. The second perspective is that of "agency," which is an emerging functional involvement brought about by "agents" in value platform. This agency is not something that people have, it is something that people achieve, a "quality of the engagement of actors with temporal-relational contexts for action, not a quality of the actors themselves" (Priestley & Drew, 2019, p.6). This platform, including agent and agency, extends the scope of values, private values to public values, so that people can develop the ability and exercise the will to positively influence their own lives and the world around them.

Without these perspectives, the ontological connection between teachers and students, their experiences of what they learned through the agentive interaction, their growth or development, and every attached feeling and emotional memory developed as a result of their interactive engagement would be eliminated. According to Tikly (2015), there is a need to separate what learning is and how we recognize learning. If it is not so, in our current situation where an epistemological approach focused on learning outcomes dominates, the thing such as daily learning, that we cannot recognize, can be inexistent and seen as bubbles. Consequently, only learning outcomes are seen as real. Also, in terms of learning in schools, knowledge and information are far less likely to remain in students' minds unless supported by associated ideas, feelings, and stories (experiences) with people (Ibora, in Soka Gakkai Education Headquarters, 2020). Students also learn particular things within particular relationships and particular reasons in the relevance among people.

More than 145,000 case studies of humanistic education by Soka view humans through people's feeling and mind, as if Saito describes that you perceive the nature through your mind, attach a meaning to the nature projecting your mind, and you perceive

space in which you are (Saito, 2021). For instance, you can take Mount Everest from physical point of view as just a landform produced by magma accumulation, but we also sometimes see it as sacred mountain. Likewise, in terms of humanistic approach, VCE is to perceive humans through other's feeling and mind, attaching a meaning to the facing relationship, and to perceive people as agents. To identify the meaning or mission of person's being may become a source of humanistic education. As Sen (2013, p. 18) claims, "The medieval distinction between seeing human beings as 'agents' and as 'patients' has not lost its relevance in the contemporary world. The reach of reasoned and interactive agency can indeed be remarkable extensive. It can be particularly crucial for our transition to sustainability." We can see that this agent and agency by agent resonate with the way humans are perceived in VCE.

As described in the previous section, conventional educational approaches (Human Capital, Human Rights, and Human Capability) have emphasized learning outcomes, guaranteeing a right to education, and acquiring capability and functioning, or achievement, in terms of the existence of freedom and opportunity. These approaches tend to regard education as "an object to analyze" like diagnosing a patient. Human beings cannot simply be measured using categorized indicators, just as mangoes cannot be measured in units of apples (Sen, 2009).

VCE, on the other hand, assumes an interpersonal connection in schooling and sees people (teachers) as agents who do valuable thinking. It also emphasizes on that the change in and growth of agents can cause similar changes in students. VCE opens the space and time for humans, as Dewey claims, to perceive people as an agent who can bring about personal change and growth, elements that the conventional educational approaches—Human Capital, Human Rights, and Human Capability—have hitherto

neglected at policy level. What the two case studies examined have in common is how teachers achieve their inner changes and transform students through the interactive engagement. Caring for students and teachers' diligent action makes students change and grow. I keenly feel that education is "to grow together" (Goulah, in Soka Gakkai Education Headquarters, 2020).

VCE can represent a paradigm shift for the quality of education, from a passively "giving" approach that diagnoses teachers and students to an approach that proactively "creates" agents and agencies in value platform.

7. Rebuilding the education system through a value-creating approach

This section deals with the issue of moral education and creating value. Makiguchi (1972) interprets Soka education research (VCE) as exploration for "a science of morals." As shown previously, "what we can create, however, is value and value only. When we praise persons for their 'strength of character,' we are really acknowledging their superior ability to create value" (Bethel, 1989, p. 6). In this respect, human morality is deeply relevant to creating value. According to Makiguchi's educational philosophy of value (1972), it underlines the human capacity to create three core values: "beauty is authentic value, gain is private benefit, and good is public benefit," to improve the lives of people (as cited in Gebert & Joffee, 2007) and to share co-existence and prosperity. Makiguchi's philosophy also appeals for individuals' morality to create value: "beauty," "gain," and "goodness." In order to do so, individuals are required to nurture a moral sense, the ability to build a connecting relevance in personal, cultural, and social contexts. As for the relationship between education and morality, Makiguchi (1972) holds that education, based on an awareness of the connections between human life and social environment, can contribute

to cultivating moral sense. In value platform to be aware of otherness, creating value is also compulsory invitation for open-ended engagement with diverse people in complex environments. Owing to finding out the value in human relationship, it is in such dynamic engagement that individuals can create value perpetually (Gebert & Joffee, 2007) and morally. As Dewey claims, "Intelligence is the key to freedom in act" (Boydston, J. A., 1976-2008, Vol. 14, p. 210). VCE is the provision of keys to unlock the value of knowledge (Bethel, 1989), including facts. The act of unlocking is always done through the filter of collective morality or value within the intersection of people's experiences in social contexts. As a condition, VCE sublimates personal ideas and experiences to create value in accordance with appropriate social consciousness. Thus, VCE has the potential to bring about a universal moral education, which can create value based on the faith in capability that human beings innately possess. Such people only pursue those values considered universal, "beauty, gain, and goodness."

We finish with one more quotation. Joel I. Klein, the chancellor of New York's Department of Education, stated that rather than "a great school system" he was trying to build "a system of great schools" (cited in Joffee, 2009, p. 189).

8. Conclusion

One problematic issue in modern education is that it lacks a defined purpose (Bethel, 1989). Is education the means or the purpose, and for what? Ikeda (2001, p. 174) states that education is "to be human in the full sense of the world and is to lead a creative life." The goal of Soka education is to change the world for the better by creating new values (Garrison, 2010). It is not implemented under a top-down education framework suited for a particular society or a nation, but focuses on humanity to democratically transform people and society. In terms of analysis of theoretical concepts and practical cases, VCE

roots its faith in the universal capability of human beings and aims to create values based on that belief through social engagement between people.

All people must have the right to an education and access to basic education. Every single person must be qualified to have equal capability such as literacy and numeracy. This is defined as universal education (Ward, 1883). However, VCE is achieved through people's interaction and involvement in society. VCE does not put education in the position of "something merely received," but builds an education by inspiring human interaction, so as to create public value, including human views and their living society, organically, without concern for private interest and values. VCE can be also defined as universal education of future-oriented system. In terms of humanistic education, the time is coming to reconsider the quality of conventional education. As Hansen insists, the fact "that some individuals and communities have historically been denied the opportunity or resources to participate in this creative space reflects its compelling human value" (2009, p. 128). Instead, VCE clarifies value platform to find out the meaning and create value in human relationship, which urges people and society to develop valuably, delivers courage and hope to practical actors and scholars in education, and brings about an innovation of education policy around the globe for the future.

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