Assignment 1

This paper seeks to analyze Greville Rumble’s 2007 paper on social justice and education. The first section of the paper presents a summary of the main points of Rumble’s paper. The second part of the essay is a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the author’s paper. The final section addresses Rumble’s value stance as presented in the paper.

The economic reasons for society to provide education include the need for an educated workforce and the modernization theory. The social reasons for increasing access to education is the need to reduce the inequality of wealth between social classes. The moral reasons for providing education are based on the idea of human rights. Rumble supports the expansion of education in society through distance education because of political, social and religious reasons.

Summary of the Paper’s Main Points:

Rumble’s main argument is education needs to be provided by society; because, education is a fundamental human right. This paper discussed the author’s main arguments and the arguments of the opposition. The government saw distance education as a cheaper way to provide education to meet the demand and reach more people than traditional face-to-face education (Rumble, 2007, p. 167). The opposing side, libertarianism believes the government should not use the tax system to reduce competition in the market (Rumble, 2007, p. 169). Libertarians believe the market should increase the choices of the customers, instead of the state providing services (Rumble, 2007, p. 168). Rumble discussed the humanitarian reasons for improving access to education in society. Rumble argues that the government has a moral obligation to use social services to help people who are living in poverty. Rumble used statistics
from the United States Census Bureau to show the need for more education: the poorest people in the United States do not have any assets (Rumble, 2007, p. 175). Rumble supports increasing access to education worldwide because of the various economic, social and religious reasons.

**Strengths of the Paper:**

The arguments in Rumble’s paper have more strengths than weaknesses. The author included the historical context of the expansion of distance education to make the paper easier for the reader to understand. The paper has definitions of the key concepts in the arguments such as libertarianism and welfare state. The author used statistics from various countries such as United States and United Kingdom to support the arguments. The author is an expert in the field of social justice and distance education. Rumble is knowledgeable in the field of distance education because he is professor of distance education at Open University. The paper is objective because the author presented both sides of the main argument.

**Weaknesses of the Paper:**

This paragraph discusses weaknesses of Rumble’s arguments which appear in the paper. The author did not present both sides of the main arguments in an equal amount of detail. The author explained the arguments which supports a welfare state in more detail than the arguments of the opposition, the libertarian argument. An example of the author’s bias is when Henderich’s arguments were explained in more detail than the libertarian’s arguments. Rumble used emotionally charged language such as “bad lives” and “humanitarian mission” as proof for the arguments. Most of the author’s statistics came from two countries, United States and United Kingdom. Most of the statistics in the paper were from developed countries. Rumble barely
applied his arguments to the developing nations. The reader had the assumption that Rumble’s arguments will apply to other countries. The author makes the assumption that a free market cannot benefit the lower classes.

The Value Stance of the Paper:

Rumble supports the growth of educational opportunities in society for economic reasons. Rumble discusses how the British government believed distance education was a cost-effective method for providing education during the 1960s. This government provided distance education in order to increase access to education and reach human capital goals (Rumble, 2007, p. 168). Another reason the access to education was increased in society was modernization theory. Modernization theory states economic growth depends on an educated workforce and the state has an obligation to provide education (Rumble, 2007, p. 169). In contrast, laissez-faire capitalists believed government intervention through taxation reduces competition in the market (Rumble, 2007, p. 169). Competitive individualism defines the success of the market based on how many goods and services it provides (Rumble, 2007, p. 170). Honderich argued society needs to use taxes to redistribute wealth to make sure education meets the demand. Rumble supports the government providing education for economic and social reasons.

There are social reasons why Rumble supports increasing access to educational opportunities. Rumble used statistics from the United States Census Bureau to show the need for education in society. The cost of education should be reduced to help eliminate the financial barrier experienced by poorer students (Rumble, 2007, p. 175). Education is needed to reduce the growing inequality in society, for example, in United States the poorest 10% of people have
only 1.8% of the country’s wealth and the richest 10% have 30.5% of wealth (Rumble, 2007, p. 171). There is a relationship between education and rate of social inequality, for example, the United States has a large number of poor families and a lower average school achievement than countries that have a more equal tax system (Rumble, 2007, p. 174). Rawls said wealthy people are ignorant of their future social position because they can lose money or become sick (Rumble, 2007, p. 171). Rumble’s supports for an education policy was influenced by social and religious reasons.

Rumble supports increasing access to education worldwide due to religious reasons. Honderich believed there is a moral obligation to help the poor through increasing access to education. A good life is defined as when a person has material well-being, freedom, safety, access to culture and a long life expectancy (Rumble, 2007, p. 171). There is a large gap of social equality between the developed nations and the developing countries, for example: the life expectancy in the United States is 77 years, while in Malawi, Africa life expectancy is only 39 years (Rumble, 2007, p. 171). Honderich’s principle of humanity means when people omit to do something right, it is as blameworthy as doing something wrong (Rumble, 2007, p. 173). The government has a moral obligation to create social policies such as improving education in order to help people who are suffering in poverty.

In conclusion, Rumble’s arguments that promote the idea of the government increasing access to education for the lower classes in society are influenced by economic, social and religious reasons. The economic reasons for the state to provide education are the need for an educated workforce and modernization theory. The social reasons Rumble supports distance education is a way to reduce wealth inequalities between the classes. The religious reasons the
author wants more education to be available worldwide is based on human rights and reducing suffering. This essay discussed the relationship between the topics of social justice, economics and distance education. The first part of this essay was a summary of the main arguments in Rumble’s paper. The second part was a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of Rumble’s arguments in the paper. The final part of the paper ends with Rumble’s value stance as presented in the paper. There is a moral obligation for society to increase access to education and prevent worldwide poverty.
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