

Yan Zhitui's View of Family Education and Current College Teaching Research

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Abstract—Yan Zhitui's "Yan's Family Instructions" is the earliest family education monograph in China, and is known as "the ancestor of Chinese family instruction". "Yan's Family Instructions" has a high research value for the elaboration and generalization of family education thought, and has enlightenment significance for modern family education. This paper makes a comprehensive analysis and reflection on Yan Zhitui's family education thought, probes into his family education thought of "strictness" and "love" and the principle of "equal love", and tries to find out the enlightenment of these educational thoughts on modern education concept.

Keywords—family education; college students; quality education; Yan Zhitui; "Yan's Family Instructions"

I. INTRODUCTION

Family education has a long history in our country. Family, as an important area for children's growth, is the first step in their life learning. Family education plays a decisive role in the formation and development of children's personality, and the formation of a correct concept of family education is particularly important. Yan Zhitui's educational theory not only provided textbooks for family education at that time, but also had important influence on modern education. In the era of rapid social development, Yan Zhitui has left us the precious wealth of family education thought. Although there is some dross, it is necessary to take the essence and remove the dross, and explore the ways of modern family education with its enlightening point of view, so as to build a healthy and sound education system for the growth of next generation.

II. THE IMPACT OF FAMILY EDUCATION ON THE QUALITY DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Although Yan Zhitui, as a writer of the Northern and Southern Dynasties, had no great reputation, his "Yan's Family Instructions" pioneered the "Family Instructions" of later generations and provided a model textbook for family education in ancient China. The family education theory among them can be used for reference even today. Yan Zhitui explained the problems that family education should pay attention to as early as in "Yan's Family Instructions", which has an important enlightenment to the enlightenment education that people need in today's society.

A. Parent-child Relationship

All people spend their lives in constant learning and education. Parents are important implementers of family education and should take such responsibilities seriously. From the beginning of prenatal education, pregnant women's words and deeds will have an impact on the fetus; early childhood education has a very important impact on it. Infant and early childhood is the period of children's intellectual development and personality formation. Education at this critical stage helps children to have good behavior habits; however, it is not when children grow up to adulthood and they can let go of their own development. At any time the life experience and perception of parents and elders is a valuable life treasure for inferiors, which can save twists and turns. Family education is a continuous stage. It is not only the best opportunity for the next generation's education, but also a long-term gradual process. Early and late schooling are very important. They should not be neglected or missed at any stage of education.

Yan Zhitui believed that the best time for family education should start when the mother was pregnant. In his "Yan's Family Instructions", he recorded in detail that the ancient holy king had the practice of fetal education. When the pregnant woman was pregnant for three months, she needed to go out to live in a better house, during which her eyes should not see indecent things, and ears should not listen to indecent things casually. She should only listen to elegant music, eat good food and delicacies, and all her acts should be restrained in accordance with etiquette and righteousness [2]. Even if the prenatal education could not be explained scientifically at that time, its "sound and taste" was not the same as that of today's society, but Yan Zhitui's induction of prenatal education as a part of the family education process was actually the progress of family education thought. Modern scientific research has proved that the fetus's auditory system is fully developed at five months, and the mother's mood can be well perceived at seven months. The healthy growth of the fetus is closely related to the mother's behavior, mood and elegant environment. Today, fetal education has a set of systematic and scientific laws, and rich families will follow the imitation, laying a good foundation for the healthy development of the next generation.

Yan Zhitui believed that family education should be carried out as early as possible. If the opportunity is missed and bad

habits are formed from childhood, it will be difficult to get rid of them when they grow up. [5] Therefore, in the process of children's growth, from the beginning of life, parents should always pay attention to educating children's behavior, and put them back on the right track in time when they are not yet on the remote track. After they develop good ideological and moral habits, they will also form good behavior in dealing with people. The rapid development of enlightenment education schools is precisely because many parents have gradually entrusted the responsibility of family education to schools, but they have little time to observe and educate their children in life, which will make children lack education in the most important period of personality formation, which will be detrimental to their growth and personality formation. Don't miss this opportunity. Give them conscious teaching when they "know people's joy and anger", which is an important idea Yan Zhitui gave family education to future generations.

In addition to paying attention to early education, Yan Zhitui also believed that "及至冠婚, 体性稍定, 因此天机, 倍需训诱" [1]¹⁸ (jí zhì guān hūn, tǐ xìng shāo dìng, yīn cǐ tiān jī, bèi xū xùn yòu), which means when people enter adulthood, even though their personality and physique have been basically stereotyped, they still need double education and induction. During this period, "those who have aspirations will be able to hone and succeed; those who fail to perform will be mortal if they slow down." [1]³⁰ That is to say, ambitious people, guided by family education, can accomplish the family's career, but those who have no ambition will be lazy and become mediocre. Generally speaking, this is the key stage of a person's career. Parents still have the responsibility to educate them. When people enter middle-aged and old age, Yan Zhitui thought that people in this period still need to learn by themselves. "老而学者, 如秉烛夜行"[1]⁴⁰ (lǎo ér xué zhě, rú bǐng zhú yè xíng), which means even when they are old, they begin to learn, just like walking with candles at night, but it is better than closing their eyes and not looking at anything. It is the best education for the elders to keep learning and progress. "It's never too old to learn." Learning is not too late as long as it begins. Yan Zhitui's idea of life-long education is consistent with the concept of life-long education advocated by today's society. People should spend their lives in constant learning. Family education should be an extremely important aspect of human development.

B. Ideas of Moral Education

With the development of society, there are many requirements for talents. To sum up, it is the all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labor. Therefore, the content of education should include many aspects. Yan Zhitui's definition of the content of family education is very comprehensive. He believed that moral cultivation is the most important education for one's growth, and that human growth is also a complex process, involving all aspects of children's growth, and every link should not be biased. As Yan Zhitui said, a person with knowledge alone can not necessarily become a talent for the country, but a person must learn the standards of being a person at the same time, fulfill the benevolent and righteous things and have patriotic consciousness in order to contribute to the country. That is "行

诚孝而见贼, 履仁义而得罪, 丧身以全家, 泯驱而济国, 君子不咎也" [1]⁴³ (xíng chéng xiào ér jiàn zéi, lǚ rén yì ér dé zuì, sàng shēn yǐ quán jiā, mǐn qū ér jì guó, jūn zǐ bú jiù yè). It says a gentleman should not hesitate to do things honestly and faithfully even if he is hurt; to do things benevolent and righteous, even if he is punished; and pledges loyalty to the whole family and the country even if he may die.

Yan Zhitui thought that moral education is to form good moral character, including filial piety, benevolence and righteousness, courtesy, frugality and other aspects of education, which is the inheritance of Confucian traditional moral thought, but also to maintain the feudal family ethics and social order. The level of moral education in family education has a direct impact on people's quality, and then has a certain impact on social stability. "夫学者所以求益耳。见人读数十卷书, 便自高大, 凌忽尊长, 轻慢同列; 人疾之如仇敌, 恶之如邱嫂, 如此以学自损, 不如无学" [1]⁵² (fū xué zhě suǒ yǐ qiú yì ěr. jì àn r ǎn dú shù shí juàn shū, biàn zì gāo dà, líng hū zūn zhǎng, qīng m àn tóng li è r ǎn j ízhǐ rú chóu dí, è zhī rú dī niǎo, rú cǐ yǐ xué zì sǔn, bú rú wú xué). It says if one has moral problems, such as arrogance, despising elders and peers, people will treat him like enemies and hate him like evil birds. Such learning is not beneficial but harmful. It is better not to learn. Attaching importance to children's knowledge education also needs to pay attention to their moral education, so that they can complement each other. Starting from every bit of life, parents should establish children's moral concepts, guide them to establish correct outlook on life and values, and finally form good moral behavior, so that family education can play the most comprehensive role.

III. THE IMPACT OF FAMILY EDUCATION MODEL ON THE GROWTH OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Nowadays, with the rapid development of social economy and the continuous superiority of people's material life, the enlightenment education is facing more challenges. It can be said that in family education, parents' attitudes towards children will affect the healthy development of children's body and mind. Yan Zhitui proposed in "Yan's Family Instructions" that family education should be lenient and strict, not too strict or too benevolent, which will lead to a series of adverse side effects of education.

A. Doting Family Education Indulging Inferiorities

Parents' love for their children is natural, but they must restrain their spoiling of their children and be strict with them without losing their love, so that family education can play its best role. Yan Zhitui believed that "父子之严, 不可以狎"[1]³³ (fù zǐ zhī yán, bú kě yǐ xiá), which means father should take their son serious, and it is not wise to not be strict because of close relationship. It is because "狎则怠慢生矣" [1]³³ (xi á z é d ài m àn shēng yǐ). It means the lack of seriousness and strictness between parents and children would make their children treat parents without proper respect, or even filial. [7] Since ancient times, doting on children has been regarded as a mistake, especially in the family education during the growth period of children. Parents' doting educational attitude will have a great impact on children's future moral quality, learning attitude and many other aspects.

Nowadays, parents love their children only in material and life level, but they have no time and patience to go into their children's hearts, blindly satisfy their children's material requirements, and take care of their children "meticulously" so that they deprive their children of the opportunity to learn some life skills within their abilities, and produce a number of children with "high score and low ability". Parents' shelter for their children is temporary. Although in a limited period of time, parents will hope to give their children as much as possible to pave a "stable" way of life for their children in the future, only the cultivation of their children's abilities is the best guarantee for their future happiness. Therefore, parents of children's family education should be given the most appropriate attitude, which has an important impact on their attitude to life, values and personality formation. This is exactly what Yan Zhitui referred to as the "dignified and compassionate" educational thought.

B. Too Strict Family Education Depressing Children's Character

From ancient times till now, family education for children is a topic of great concern to parents, which is related to the future growth of children. Yan Zhitui believed that parents need certain prestige, which is an important condition for educating their children. Without a certain deterrent, parents cannot convince their children about their education, and the effect of education is very poor. Modern family education advocates the family relationship based on friendship, starting from caring for children, strengthening communication and exchange with children, fundamentally understanding their own children, and providing them with appropriate education at different ages. Parents' authority decides the effectiveness of children's education, but parents must not let this authority evolve into a kind of arbitrary. Parents should start from children and think reasonably about the best education plan for children's growth.

In family education, Yan Zhitui believed that it is also necessary to educate children, scold and supervise and even punish them corporally. Yan Zhitui compared education to cure diseases. "Medicine has to be used to cure diseases" [1]⁴⁵, that is to say, it is also necessary to educate children with corporal punishment. "Are you willing to be mean and cruel to your own flesh? There is no choice." This practice of educating children in the form of corporal punishment is the product of patriarchal patriarchy and the dross of feudal social education thought. Modern family education advocates changing children's misconceptions from the cognitive and inner perspectives. Corporal punishment can affect the formation of children's personality. Children who are often subjected to corporal punishment tend to be narrow-minded, violent and insecure. Family education will have an important impact on all aspects of children's abilities. If family education is well done, children will be able to stand on their own abilities in the fierce competition of society when they become adults.

IV. ESTABLISHING A HARMONIOUS AND GOOD FAMILY EDUCATION

Since ancient times, China has a tradition of attaching importance to family lineage. Attitudes towards future generations are not the same. There are great differences between men and women. At the same time, there are also great differences between descendants and common people. Yan Zhitui put forward the principle of "equal love" in family education. If there is a preference in a family, it will have a negative impact on both the children who are favored and the children who are not favored, and even lead to more serious consequences. In family education, the principle of "equal love" is an important premise, which creates conditions for creating a harmonious atmosphere in the family and guarantees the normal acceptance of education and personality formation of children.

A. The Educational Impact of Polarization

As Yan Zhitui put it, "People love their children, and few can treat them equally without discrimination, which have led to so many problems since time immemorial." [1]³⁴ For families with multiple children, few parents are able to love them equally. Every child's psychological development and intelligence level are different. Parents usually use smarter children as examples to let poor children learn, and they will double their pity and sympathy for handsome and smart children. Preference for a child is not only harmful to other children, but also harmful to the favored children.

From ancient times till now, it is very common for parents to have preferences for their offspring. Naturally, parents will pay more attention to children who are obedient and smart, and for naughty and dull children, they are more likely to use stick parenting. This is also what Yan Zhitui mentioned: "Children who have both ability and morality are worthy of appreciation and affection, but those who are dull and stupid are worthy of pity and love. For child of preference, although the parents want to treat him better, but hurt him." [1]²³ Every child has its own advantages and disadvantages. With the passage of time, if parents do not pay attention to their children's psychological problems, children's jealousy will gradually evolve into accumulated resentment, hatred for the favored children, hatred for parents, and even hatred for society.

B. The Key Role of the Principle of "Equal Love"

Everyone expects to be treated equally. In society, there is a greater need for an "equal-love" attitude in the family to educate children. Parents are the close relatives of children. Children also need to get the equal awareness of this relationship from family education. Discipline them when they go wrong and love them when they need, so that every child can feel their parents are strong love, but also understand the truth of life. "Yan's Family Instructions" also lists examples of children being hurt because of their parents' spoil. For example, Gong Shuduan in the Spring and Autumn Period and the son of Emperor Wucheng in the Northern Qi Dynasty were doted from childhood because of their smartness. But they are not corrected when making mistake. Instead, their parents rejoiced and praised them without punishment, making them proud at last. Finally, they were killed because of the failure of plotting

treason. [1]²² These historical events are about the importance of the principle of "equal love" in family education. Neglected children are prone to inferiority, jealousy and even resentment. Children who have been loved are always treated specially and take everything they get for granted, forming an overweening character, and even more difficult to share with others and love others. Such two extreme mentalities are formed because parents fail to adhere to the principle of "equal love" for every child, and such a family will eventually find it difficult to have an atmosphere of harmony. Therefore, treating children's growth with an equal attitude is the basic condition of children's mental health, the basis of good family relations between children, and also plays an important role in promoting children's future personality formation and ability learning. The implementation of the principle of "equal love" fully respects children, gives them an equal and pleasant educational atmosphere, and gives them the possibility of a good family atmosphere.

V. CONCLUSION

Today, with the rapid development of the times, material life is very rich. Parents' love for their children reflects more on material satisfaction, but lack of attention in psychological and personality aspects. As a result of family education and other reasons, many students have just entered college life, showing problems such as self-centered, lack of stress resistance, lack of self-confidence, weak moral awareness and so on. In "Yan's Family Instructions", Yan Zhitui believed that family education plays an extremely important role in the growth of students, and family education should have a very important impact on human development, which also coincides with the concept of higher education. Today, based on "Yan's Family Instructions", it is quite important to explore the combination of modern family education methods and university teaching research, to improve the teaching methods, and to promote the healthy growth of contemporary college students.

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