



## Herbart's Thought of Family Labor Education and Its Enlightenment

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**Abstract:** In his book *General Pedagogy*, Herbart mentioned that allowing children to carry out family labor education as soon as possible is of great value in promoting the combination of hands and brain, further developing intelligence, improving labor enthusiasm and helping them develop good quality. This paper is to intent to explore Herbart's family labor education thought, which has the following enlightenment on how to carry out and improve family labor education in contemporary times: creating a good family labor education environment and atmosphere, cultivating children's family labor concept and family labor skills, and so on.

**Key Words:** *General Pedagogy; Herbart; Family labor education.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Herbart put forward that letting children participate in family work as soon as possible will help children develop good quality and promote the combination of hands and brain. In order to achieve these purposes, Herbart also put forward some corresponding measures, which has played an important role in parents' family labor education.

### 2. CONNOTATION:

Herbart believes that the influence of loose lifestyle on children's character is harmful, which shows that parents must prevent children from developing a loose lifestyle, and the best way to solve this problem is family work. Labor is the most basic and universal mode of human activity. In the context of the new era, labor has more profound significance. It promotes people's free liberation and all-round development. "Parents can bring obvious benefits to their children by establishing strict norms of daily life through all their arrangements for family affairs," Herbart said in *General Pedagogy*.<sup>[1]</sup> However, such arrangement should be moderate, otherwise it will be particularly monotonous. Therefore, Herbart repeatedly stressed in his book that even if the harm is small, such excessive arrangement is not conducive to the cultivation of children's labor consciousness, and it is also likely to lead to "children's character out of the track intended to lead".<sup>[2]</sup> This makes us clearly realize the necessity and importance of family labor education.

Family labor education means that parents or other elders consciously and consciously carry out labor education for their children, teach labor knowledge and skills, and let their children participate in some labor practice, so as to finally help their children grow into a social person with independent survival ability, labor consciousness and sense of responsibility.<sup>[3]</sup> However, due to the current situation, parents attach great importance to children's learning and believe that children should focus on learning. In terms of family work, they often do it instead, depriving children of their right to work and ignoring their obligation to work to a certain extent. Although in many people's ideas, housework and family labor education are equal, the real family labor education cannot be explained by housework. Housework is only a part of it. If parents even do housework for their children, it is impossible to achieve results in family labor education.<sup>[4]</sup> Herbart mentioned in his book that parents "should try to give free play to their children's energy"<sup>[5]</sup>, and labor is the best attempt. Family labor education is no longer integrated into school education and classroom education as in the past, but presents an independent state; It is no longer a supplement or auxiliary means of classroom education as in the past, but a sufficient and necessary condition for each family in the process of educating their children.

### 3. VALUE:

The idea that "exercise is more important for children"<sup>[6]</sup> is that they should learn to exercise at the same time. As far as children are concerned, family work is closer to their life and more meaningful to try than work in a broad sense. While children learn how to operate at home, with the operation of their brain, their intelligence will also be



developed. At present, many parents are anxious about their children's intellectual development and feel that only by allowing their children to enter learning and life early can they "win at the starting line". In fact, family labor education is the best way of enlightenment. In addition, family labor education is also of indispensable significance for their children's future learning, and learning is also an activity of both hands and brain, Any isolated way of learning, that is, only hands or brain, will not work for children. Tao Xingzhi believes that (family) labor education is to help the educated "grow hands and brains in order to improve their ability of self-reliance"<sup>[7]</sup>, which also confirms the correctness of Herbart's "only when children carry out activities according to the lifestyle and their correct thoughts arranged by their parents, can they find the principle of real exercise"<sup>[8]</sup>.

"Only by enabling young people and even children to take action as soon as possible, it is possible to achieve positive results in the cultivation of children's character, which is directly proportional to the acceleration of character cultivation and its introduction into the teaching stage"<sup>[9]</sup>. This is Herbart's original words. Starting family work as soon as possible is very key to the cultivation of children's character, and whether children can cultivate their character depends on the time when children invest in family work. Of course, the premise of children's willingness to participate in family work is not only the arrangement of parents, but also whether the children's own will is in place. If parents force them to start family work as soon as possible in order to cultivate their children's character, Then the consequence is that "those who grow up only passively as tame children, without the supervision of their parents, will have no character, and then give in to the desires lurking in their hearts"<sup>[10]</sup>. In order to prevent such results, parents should follow the principle of moderation to control the amount of family work. After all, the main significance of Herbart's family labor education thought is to improve children's enthusiasm for work and lay a foundation for the next step of cultivating personality.

The most far-reaching impact of Herbart's family labor education on children is that it can enable children to develop good quality. "Parents who let children participate in housework as soon as possible are helpful to the cultivation of children's good quality". The "housework" in<sup>[11]</sup> refers to family labor more accurately. According to the growth law of children's physical and mental development, in the process of participating in family work, children will gradually put their body and mind into work. At the same time, they have developed a stronger will than in the past. Family work is not pure labor, and labor and learning themselves permeate each other. The most important thing is that children see their bad habits clearly in the process of labor. From the moral level, these bad habits, such as not cherishing other people's labor achievements, damaging public facilities, littering and so on, should be abandoned. Only by eliminating bad habits can we promote the formation of good quality. If you can't even devote yourself to basic family work, let alone more complex work, study and research, how to cultivate good quality? The earlier family labor education starts, the more conducive it is to the cultivation and formation of children's good quality. Compared with letting children enter the classroom too early, family labor education is the best preschool education, which is not only the learning of knowledge and skills, but also the development of personality and quality.

#### **4. ENLIGHTENMENT:**

Herbart stressed that parents can bring benefits to their children by establishing strict norms of daily life through all arrangements for family affairs, but he also mentioned that sometimes this kind of life will appear monotonous due to excessive regularity, indicating that in order to prevent children from getting tired of family work, parents need to cultivate their children's concept of family work first, That is to let children know that they can't work for the sake of work, and let them know the true meaning of family work, including what they hope to gain from family work. Parents should help children have a clear understanding of this. Before cultivating children's concept of family work, parents themselves need to have correct labor values. In other words, parents who despise the status and value of family work in education cannot form a scientific concept of family work. The formation of the concept of family work is inseparable from the usual exercise. In addition to arranging basic family work for their children, parents need to arouse their children's interest through these family work, exercise their children's practical ability, and gradually let their children form the habit of conscious work. Over time, children will love family work, This is the most appropriate way to cultivate children's concept of family labor, and make full preparations for the next step of family labor education.

Herbart stressed that parents should start from their situation and find all favorable factors to meet the needs of their children, that is, family work. That is to say, those who have been around and accompanying children for a long time must be good at creating all opportunities conducive to children's labor, create more labor practices, and create an environment and atmosphere suitable for children's family labor. This step undertakes the above "cultivating children's concept of family labor". Even if children are not clear about the concept of family work, they don't have to worry too much. This can't be formed overnight. The best way to solve this situation is to provide children with opportunities to participate in family work and try to let children gradually cultivate the concept of family work in the process of work;



Even if there is no opportunity, parents should make full and effective use of all resources around them to create labor opportunities for their children and create a good working environment suitable for their children.<sup>[12]</sup> Although many family work can be replaced by science and technology at present, because of this, the unique value of people is more and more obvious, and the opportunities for children to practice can be explored in daily life.

At the beginning of the section "the influence of lifestyle on character", Herbart emphasized that a loose lifestyle is harmful to children, which means that parents should try their best to prevent their children from developing lazy habits, and family work is the "good medicine". Unfortunately, parents often take all family work for their children on the grounds of "focusing on study". Therefore, it is not surprising that children lack the concept of family work and do not master any family work skills. There are obvious deficiencies in later learning.<sup>[13]</sup> Parents can arrange some simple family work for their children first, but they should avoid invariance; Then, after children get used to family work, they can start to participate in some complex family work, such as arranging their own rooms, trying to integrate their own aesthetics into family work, or helping to store the sundries in the home, so that children can combine family work with their own spatial perception. With the gradual enhancement of children's practical ability, parents should help children learn to combine labor with their spiritual life. The more educational elements are integrated into family work, the more wisdom children need to pay, and the more family work skills they master. Family work is something everyone should participate in, involving everyone's physical and mental development. The development and popularization of family labor education requires the joint efforts and wisdom of everyone around the child.

## 5. CONCLUSION:

The views and suggestions put forward by Herbart have played an important role in carrying out family labor education for parents, which not only points out the direction for parents, but also makes people pay more and more attention to family labor education.

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