

ТРАДИЦИИ КОНФУЦИАНСТВА В СИСТЕМЕ ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ СОВРЕМЕННОГО КИТАЯ

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Аннотация. Изучается смыслоопределяющая роль конфуцианской традиции в китайской культуре и образовании. Обосновываются методологические принципы анализа конфуцианской традиции как важнейшего компонента китайской системы современного высшего образования. Эксплицируются основные понятия и ценности конфуцианской философии образования. Рассматриваются различные интерпретации роли и статуса конфуцианства в практической реализации стратегии модернизации китайского университетского образования. Подчеркивается мировоззренческий и аксиологический потенциал этой образовательной традиции. Анализируются социальные и образовательные проблемы внедрения конфуцианских практик в современное китайское общество, а также обсуждаются некоторые предложения по сохранению и усилению влияния конфуцианства в системе китайского университетского образования.

Ключевые слова: конфуцианство; китайское образование; высшее образование; философия образования; основные ценности и понятия конфуцианской философии образования.

TRADITIONS OF CONFUCIANISM IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF MODERN CHINA

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Abstract. The paper examines the meaning-defining role of the Confucian tradition in Chinese culture and education. It substantiates the methodological principles of analysing the Confucian tradition as an essential component of the Chinese system of modern higher education. The paper explicates the main concepts and values of the Confucian philosophy of education. It also explores various interpretations of the role and status of Confucianism in the practical implementation of the strategy for modernising Chinese university education. The paper emphasises the ideological and axiological potential of this educational tradition. The article analyses the social and educational challenges of incorporating Confucian practices into modern Chinese society and discusses some suggestions for preserving and strengthening the influence of Confucianism in the Chinese university education system.

Keywords: Confucianism; Chinese education; higher education; educational philosophy; core values and basic concepts of Confucian philosophy of education.

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Introduction

Since the founding of Confucianism by Confucius, Confucian culture has become an important part of Chinese national culture. Its educational ideas, moral ethics, and political philosophy have profoundly influenced China's historical processes, social development, and cultural inheritance. However, with the changes in modern society and the impact of Western culture, China's traditional education system is facing unprecedented challenges and transformations. In this context, the status and function of the Confucian tradition, as an important carrier of Chinese traditional culture, have undergone complex and profound changes.

Since modern times, China has experienced a transformation from a feudal society to a modern one, and the education system has evolved from the traditional imperial examination system to the modern school system. Although the Confucian tradition faces challenges and impacts from Western culture in this transition, its profound cultural heritage and broad social foundation still allow it to occupy an important position in the Chinese education system.

The modern Chinese education system, while absorbing Western scientific knowledge and educational ideas, has also sought to integrate Confucian tradition in an effort to achieve a synthesis of tradition and modernity. In this process, traditional Confucian educa-

tional concepts, morals, and ethics have been endowed with new connotations reflective of the times, becoming an important force in promoting the modernisation of Chinese education.

However, the evolution of the Confucian tradition within the modern Chinese education system has not been smooth. On one hand, with the strong influence of Western culture, some individuals have begun to question the value and significance of the Confucian tradition, viewing it as an obstacle to the modernisation of Chinese education. On the other hand, the Confucian tradition itself faces the challenge of adapting to the developments of modern society.

Therefore, an in-depth discussion of the performance, influence, and future development trends of the Confucian tradition in the modern Chinese education system will not only enhance our understanding of the historical process of China's educational modernisation but also aid in the inheritance and promotion of excellent traditional Chinese culture and the sustainable development of China's educational initiatives. This paper will conduct a thorough study of the status and function of the Confucian tradition in the modern Chinese education system, focusing on its historical background, performance, influence, and future development trends.

The generalise of traditional Confucian education

The role of Confucianism in Chinese culture.

Confucian traditional education plays a significant role in Chinese culture, with far-reaching and lasting influence. Confucianism, which originated in the Spring and Autumn Period, was founded by Confucius. During this time, Confucius lectured in the State of Lu and laid the foundation of Confucianism with the five classics: «Poems», «Books», «Rites», «Changes», and «Spring and Autumn». Through the inheritance and development across various dynasties, a complete system of moral ethics and education was formed [1].

Confucianism emphasises moral cultivation, focusing on the development of virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trust. Xunzi once stated: «Ritual is the major part of law and the main principle of discipline. Without ritual, people cannot survive, things cannot be accomplished, and the country cannot be peaceful» [2, p. 11–12]. This suggests that when dealing with people and situations, one should respect the laws of nature and act reasonably and sensibly. Respecting the laws of nature involves studying objective truths and aligning actions accordingly. In education, Confucianism advocates promoting personal morality through inner cultivation and self-improvement. This focus on moral cultivation profoundly influenced the ethical norms of ancient Chinese society, establishing love, loyalty, respect,

and other virtues as traditional values of the Chinese nation.

Confucian thought promotes the inheritance of education. It emphasises the importance of education as the key to achieving social progress and developing talent. Influenced by Confucianism, the education system in ancient China evolved continuously, forming a comprehensive structure that included private schools, government schools, and imperial school supervisors. In the fifth year of Emperor Wu of Han's Jiyuan reign (136 BC), the five classics doctorate was established, with Confucian classics such as «Poetry», «Books», «Rites», «Changes», and «Spring and Autumn» becoming the core content of education. The rites and music, or the six arts, represented basic skills that ancient Confucian scholars were expected to master. Confucianism also emphasises the importance of the mentor-mentee relationship, ensuring that Confucian culture is passed down through generations.

Confucianism has had a profound impact on shaping educational philosophies [3]. It holds that the purpose of education is to cultivate junzi – individuals of high moral character and extensive knowledge. In the educational process, Confucianism stresses the principles of teaching students according to their aptitude and step by step, focusing on individual differences and the personality development of students.

In summary, Confucianism plays a vital role in Chinese culture. In the realm of education, it not only guides moral cultivation and promotes the continuity of educational practices but also shapes a distinctive educational philosophy.

Understanding the integration of Confucian principles in modern higher education. The Confucian tradition in the modern Chinese education system, particularly the integration of Confucian thought in contemporary higher education, is a topic worthy of further discussion. This integration not only reflects the continuation and development of traditional Chinese culture in modern society but also underscores the important mission of education in cultural inheritance and innovation [4].

With the rapid development of society and the advancement of globalisation, the collision and integration of traditional culture and modern civilization have become inevitable trends. In this process, Confucianism, as a significant part of traditional Chinese culture, requires re-examination and evaluation of its value and significance. When Cai Yuanpei served as president of Peking University, one of his philosophies was that «the university should not only be committed to introducing Western civilization but also to creating a new Chinese culture; not only to preserving the national quintessence but also to reevaluating it with scientific methods» [5]. This illustrates Cai Yuanpei's emphasis on learning from and referencing global knowledge while conducting in-depth research and discussions on Confucianism. Studying the integration of Confucianism in modern higher education can help us better understand its applicability and limitations in modern society, allowing for a reassessment of its value and providing new ideas for the inheritance and development of traditional culture.

While pursuing knowledge dissemination and skill training, the modern education system increasingly prioritises the all-round development of students and the cultivation of humanistic qualities. The educational concepts of benevolence, honesty, propriety, and righteousness emphasised by Confucianism share much in common with those of modern education. By studying the integration of Confucianism in contemporary higher education, we can draw from its excellent educational ideas, thereby providing new educational perspectives and methods for modern higher education and further enriching and perfecting the education system.

The study of Confucianism encompasses philosophy, history, literature, education, and other disciplines. Investigating the integration of Confucianism in modern higher education necessitates in-depth research across multiple subjects. This approach can not only promote the development of interdisciplinary research but also enhance communication and integration between different fields, offering new perspectives and methodologies for academic inquiry [6].

In summary, studying the integration of Confucianism in modern higher education holds significant aca-

demical value and practical importance. This research can enhance our understanding and inheritance of traditional Chinese culture while providing new ideas and directions for the development of modern higher education. It also promotes the advancement of interdisciplinary research, offering strong support for the construction of a modern education system with Chinese characteristics [7].

Approaches to analysing the influence of Confucianism to the modern Chinese education system. When analysing the role of Confucian tradition in the modern Chinese education system, we need to adopt a series of methods. We will describe these methods.

1. Literature review and sorting. First of all, we need to review the literature on Confucianism and its historical development in the field of education. This includes reading and studying ancient Confucian classics, such as «Analects», «Mencius», and the «University», as well as academic literature on Confucianism and the education system from modern times [8]. Through literature review, we can understand the core values and educational concepts of Confucianism, as well as the changes and development of these concepts in the historical evolution.

2. Case study method. The case study method can help us concretely understand the practical application and influence of Confucianism in the modern Chinese education system [9]. We can choose representative educational institutions or educational practices as cases for in-depth research and analysis. For example, we can study the curriculum, teaching philosophy and campus culture of famous universities in modern times, and explore the embodiment and influence of Confucianism in them. Through the case study method, we can more intuitively understand the specific role of Confucianism in the modern Chinese education system.

3. Quantitative and qualitative research methods. When analysing the influence of Confucianism on modern Chinese education system, we can also use quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative research can collect objective data on the influence degree and expression form of Confucianism in the education system through questionnaire survey and data analysis. Qualitative research can be conducted through in-depth interviews, observation records and other ways to deeply understand people's cognition, attitude and emotion towards Confucianism. Through the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, we can evaluate the influence of Confucianism in modern Chinese education system more comprehensively and accurately [10].

In a word, when analysing the role of Confucian tradition in modern Chinese education system, we need to comprehensively use a variety of methodologies, such as literature review and combing, historical analysis, case study, interdisciplinary research, quantitative and qualitative research, to comprehensively and deeply discuss the influence of Confucianism on the education system.

Theoretical and practical integration of Confucianism to the system of education

Core concepts and values of Confucian educational philosophy. The Confucian tradition in the modern Chinese education system, especially the integration of Confucian theory and practice, embodies a profound cultural heritage and educational wisdom. At its core, the Confucian educational concept not only shapes the unique educational philosophy of the Chinese nation but also provides valuable insights for the modern education system.

One of the central ideas of Confucian education is benevolence. Confucianism posits that the primary goal of education is to cultivate benevolence in individuals, enabling them to care for others, respect life, and contribute to society. This educational concept emphasises harmony and symbiosis among people, highlighting the unity between individuals and society.

Confucian education stresses both virtue and knowledge. According to Confucian thought, a person's virtue and knowledge complement each other. As stated in the work of «Analects»: «The Master obtained it by being gentle, kind, respectful, frugal, and modest. Is the Master's pursuit different from that of others?» [11, p. 4]. This reflects the five virtues of gentleness, kindness, respect, frugality, and modesty. Good virtue can guide individuals toward goodness, while deep learning can foster wisdom. Thus, Confucian education emphasises not only the impartation of knowledge but also the cultivation of students' moral character.

Additionally, Confucian education prioritises teaching students according to their aptitude, meaning that education should be tailored to the characteristics of each student's personality, interests, and abilities. This philosophy emphasises the individuality and differentiation of education, recognising that each student is unique and should be educated according to their specific traits.

Confucian education also underscores the importance of self-cultivation, believing that only through continuous learning and personal growth can one become a true gentleman. In the work «The Great Learning», Confucius states: «To cultivate the person is to cultivate one's virtue» [12, p. 22–23]. This emphasises the crucial role of self-cultivation and indicates that the key to this process is nurturing a benevolent heart. Throughout education, Confucianism focuses on developing students' abilities for self-cultivation, encouraging them to pursue noble moral qualities and a higher spiritual realm consciously.

In summary, the core ideas and values of Confucian education provide valuable inspiration for the modern Chinese education system [13, p. 174–176]. In contemporary society, we should inherit and promote the fine traditions of Confucian education, emphasising the cultivation of students' benevolence, moral character, and

practical skills. This approach aims to develop more individuals with noble qualities and well-rounded capabilities for the construction of a harmonious society.

How Confucian principles are implemented in higher education classrooms. To implement Confucianism in higher education classrooms, it is necessary to combine its core ideas and values with modern teaching methods to achieve better results. We will describe the process of introducing Confucianism in higher education institutions:

1. Course design and teaching objectives. In course design, select key texts from Confucian classics, such as «Analects» and «The Great Learning», to be integrated into the course outline. This allows students to engage directly with the original texts of Confucianism during their learning process.

Teaching objectives should reflect the core ideas of Confucianism, including the cultivation of students' benevolence, moral integrity, and social responsibility [14]. Confucianism should be implemented into relevant professional courses. For example, in philosophy, literature, history, sociology, and other majors, students can explore the embodiment and influence of Confucianism in their respective fields through case studies and thematic discussions. Additionally, focus on the overall development of students, encompassing knowledge, skills, emotional attitudes, and values.

2. Teaching methods and means. Use lectures to introduce students to the basic content and historical background of Confucianism. Combine this with real-life cases to guide students in in-depth discussions. During discussions, encourage students to express their views and promote the exchange of ideas.

Incorporate role-playing or simulation activities related to Confucianism, allowing students to experience its concepts firsthand. For example, simulate ancient etiquette scenes so that students can participate in and appreciate the solemnity and norms of Confucian rituals.

Select typical cases related to Confucianism, such as historical celebrity stories or contemporary societal issues, for students to analyse and discuss. Establish practical courses or activities focused on Confucianism, such as Confucian cultural experiences, readings of Confucian classics, and ethical debates. These activities allow students to experience the richness of Confucian culture and deepen their understanding and appreciation of its principles.

Encourage students to conduct course theses or project research to explore themes within Confucianism in-depth. By writing papers or research reports, students can develop their research skills and critical thinking while enhancing their understanding and application of Confucian concepts.

3. Evaluation and feedback. Implement various evaluation techniques, including assessments of classroom performance, discussion participation, homework quality, and course papers. A comprehensive evaluation approach effectively reflects students' learning progress and ability levels.

Provide timely feedback to students, highlighting their strengths and areas for improvement in learning and discussions. Offer specific suggestions and guidance to help them progress. Additionally, encourage students to evaluate and communicate with one another to promote collective growth.

In summary, the implementation of Confucianism in higher education institution requires a comprehensive consideration of curriculum design, teaching methods, and evaluation practices. Through thoughtful arrangement and effective execution, students can gain a deep understanding of the core concepts and values of Confucianism during the learning process, applying them to practical life and future work [15].

Examples of the Confucian traditions in modern higher education settings. We will consider the following two cases:

1) modern Confucian business education. With the rapid development of commercial activities, combining Confucianism with business practice and cultivating well-rounded individuals with both traditional cultural heritage and business skills has become an important topic in modern education. It is in response to this demand that modern Confucian business education has developed.

The curriculum not only covers fundamental courses such as business management and marketing but also includes courses on Confucianism and traditional culture. This implementation allows students to gain an in-depth understanding of Confucianism while learning essential business knowledge.

Through case analysis, business simulations, and enterprise internships, students can experience the application of Confucian principles in business activities. For example, the principle of «integrity» in Confucianism is applied in business relations. E-commerce company *Shennan Juxin* exemplifies this by clearly marking product information, including materials, sizes, production dates, and shelf lives, to avoid exaggeration or misleading consumers. Additionally, the company has established a strict return and exchange policy, publicly promising «seven days without reason to return or exchange» on its website. In practice, as long as customers meet the regulations, the company responds promptly to ensure compliance with its commitments. This honest business model has garnered widespread praise from consumers and enhanced the brand's image. The welfare of employees is also attended to with a focus on benevolence.

The programme employs instructors with rich business experience and a profound understanding of

Confucian culture to ensure the quality and effectiveness of teaching. Modern Confucian business education not only improves students' business skills and competitiveness but also enhances their cultural self-confidence and national identity. Many graduates have achieved remarkable success in the business world, becoming outstanding entrepreneurs who embody both traditional cultural values and a modern business spirit;

2) Quzhou University and the Southern Confucius thought and culture festival. Quzhou University regularly holds the Southern Confucius thought and culture festival, which features rich and diverse cultural activities for college students. The cultural festival is integrated with ideological and political courses for students, including a welcome party each term. This event combines performances by teachers and students, including dance, recitation, preaching, chorus, instrumental music, and fashion shows, effectively implementing southern Confucius culture into the practice of ideological education.

During the party, students at Quzhou University wrote a poem «Ode to the southern migration of Confucius' great clan», which recounts the historical story of Confucius' 48th-generation grandson, Kong Duanyou, who migrated south and settled in Quzhou. Additionally, 20 students recited chapters from «Analects», expressing the mission of young people to learn from the wisdom of the sages. Students from the school radio station recited «Entering the southern clan ancestral temple of Confucius» with deep emotion, illustrating the historical legacy of the descendants of the southern clan of Confucius in Quzhou.

Students also performed the dance «Quiet Orchid» and the song-and-dance routine «There are etiquette all over the world», showcasing the noble character of the sages who maintained cultural continuity while having a global perspective. This performance resonated deeply with both teachers and students present. Representatives from Chinese and foreign student groups showcased various traditional and modern clothing, allowing attendees to experience the unique charm of the fusion of ancient and modern cultures.

Following the welcome party, Quzhou University organised a series of activities, including the Nan Kong culture lecture hall, debate about «Analects», Quzhou University etiquette practice, and teacher ethics theme education. These initiatives further enrich the connotation of the school's Nan Kong culture brand. Such activities not only allow teachers and students at Quzhou University to experience the allure of Confucian culture more intuitively but also promote the inheritance and innovation of Confucius' thoughts and culture in the south, making respecting benevolence and respecting etiquette a common value pursued by both teachers and students.

The challenges, impact, and the future of Confucian education

Social and educational challenges in integrating Confucian practices. Modern society is pluralistic, where different cultures, values, and ways of life intertwine. As an essential part of traditional Chinese culture, maintaining the uniqueness and influence of Confucianism in such a diverse society presents significant challenges. Additionally, effectively spreading and promoting Confucianism while respecting other cultures is a critical issue that requires thoughtful consideration.

The modern education system often focuses on knowledge transfer and examination results, frequently overlooking the importance of moral education. Confucian education emphasises equal importance on moral and intellectual development, yet integrating Confucian moral education into the school curriculum and teaching practices remains an urgent issue. Moreover, ensuring quality education while reducing costs and improving efficiency is another challenge we face in this integration [16].

The rapidly changing social environment increases competitive pressure, and teenagers encounter various challenges during their development. Thus, implementing Confucian education to cultivate students' moral qualities and social responsibilities in this context is essential. Furthermore, guiding students to understand and apply Confucian principles amid the influences of modern technology and media presents additional challenges.

The impact of Confucianism on student outcomes in universities. In recent years, with a renewed appreciation for traditional culture, Confucianism has gained attention in higher education. The core values of Confucianism – such as benevolence, integrity, and moderation, – positively influence the academic performance of college students.

Confucianism emphasises harmony and symbiosis among people, advocating for benevolence [17]. This mindset helps college students develop a positive attitude towards life and foster good interpersonal relationships, enabling them to face academic pressures and challenges with confidence, ultimately enhancing their performance.

Confucianism asserts that «people cannot stand without trust», highlighting the importance of integrity. College students who adhere to principles of good faith in their studies and lives earn the trust and respect of others, fostering a positive academic atmosphere and interpersonal relationships. This integrity helps students maintain a rigorous approach to academic research, improving both their academic standards and performance.

The doctrine of the mean in Confucianism emphasises balance and reconciliation, advising against excessive or biased behaviour in the pursuit of academic success. College students are encouraged to follow

the golden mean in their studies, maintaining a calm mindset and steady pace to avoid issues stemming from a blind pursuit of high grades or excessive anxiety.

To verify the influence of Confucianism on college students' academic performance, this paper employs questionnaire surveys and data analysis.

The study examines the positive impact of Confucianism on university students' academic performance. Questionnaire surveys revealed that recognition of Confucian values (such as benevolence, integrity, and the Doctrine of the Mean) is positively correlated with academic achievement. Further analysis indicated that students who actively practice Confucianism in daily life demonstrate better academic performance. The conclusion emphasises the importance of strengthening Confucian education in higher education. In conclusion, Confucianism positively influences college students' academic performance, underscoring the importance of strengthening the education and inheritance of Confucian principles within higher education.

Strategies for sustaining and enhancing Confucian influence in higher education. To maintain and enhance the influence of Confucianism in higher education, the following strategies can be adopted:

1) strengthening Confucian culture courses. Colleges and universities should offer more courses on Confucian culture, including the interpretation of classics, ideological research, and cultural inheritance. This will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of the connotations and values of Confucian culture. Additionally, integrating Confucian culture with other disciplines, such as philosophy, literature, and history, can broaden students' learning horizons;

2) creating a Confucian cultural atmosphere. Institutions can foster a strong Confucian cultural atmosphere by organising cultural activities, constructing cultural landscapes, and conducting lectures. For instance, hosting Confucian culture week or cultural month, with activities like reading Confucian classics, calligraphy competitions, and tea art performances, enables students to experience the charm of Confucian culture firsthand;

3) strengthening teacher training. Colleges and universities should focus on training teachers with a deep understanding of Confucian culture. This can be achieved by offering relevant courses, organising training sessions, and inviting experts to give lectures. Additionally, teachers should be encouraged to integrate Confucian culture into their classroom instruction, subtly influencing students;

4) conducting Confucian cultural practice activities. Institutions can organise students to participate in Confucian cultural practice activities, such as volunteer services and social practices, allowing them to apply Confucian principles in real-life contexts. Through personal engagement, students can better understand the

connotations and values of Confucian culture, internalising them into their behaviour;

5) strengthening international exchanges and cooperation. In the context of globalisation, universities should enhance international exchanges and cooperation to promote Confucian culture. Collaborative studies with foreign scholars and institutions, through international academic conferences and cooperative projects, can facilitate the global dissemination and exchange of Confucian principles.

In summary, maintaining and enhancing the influence of Confucianism in higher education requires concerted efforts. By implementing strategies such as strengthening Confucian culture courses, creating a supportive cultural atmosphere, enhancing teacher training, conducting practical activities, and promoting international cooperation, we can better inherit and promote Confucian culture, contributing to the development of college students with high moral character and academic excellence in the new era.

Conclusions

The Confucian tradition still maintains its influence in the modern Chinese education system, after thousands of years of development and evolution. Through an in-depth study and exploration of Confucian traditional education, we can clearly recognise the core position of Confucianism in Chinese culture and the necessity and importance of implementing Confucian principles into modern higher education.

The profound Confucian tradition in the modern Chinese education system continues to hold significant value and enduring relevance. We should therefore fully explore and strategically utilise the essence of Confucianism, systematically implementing it within contemporary higher education to collectively make greater contributions to cultivating talents with a global vision and a strong sense of national identity in the new era.

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