

# Discussion on the Influence of Confucian Culture on College Students' Ideological and Political Education

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**Abstract.** At present, many college students are living in an environment where the pace of life is too fast. Faced with the change of new media information every day, it has become an indispensable part of contemporary college students' life, and this environment has an important impact on their lives, learning and behavioral patterns. With the rapid development of society, college students' pursuit of culture is more and more superficial and rapid, thus ignoring the cognition for Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, this aspect should be paid attention to in the ideological and political education of contemporary college students. "The Analects of Confucius" as a summary of the words and deeds of Confucius and his disciples in the study and life during the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, and they are the classic representative works of Confucianism, which has a profound ideological and political education role for readers. Under this background, from the perspective of ideological and political education, this paper carefully interprets Confucian literature represented by the Analects from the perspective of ideological and political education and analyzes Confucius' educational thought, so it has some values to today's society, moreover, it also has a very important guiding role for us to learn and understand the political and ideological education.

**Keywords:** Confucian literature; college students; ideological and political education.

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of society and economy, people's attention on ideological and political education is becoming scarcer, and people are affected by various thoughts and values in the current society, and moreover, their values are constantly changing, so they need to be educated urgently. Confucianism, as the most classic and profound literary wealth of the Chinese nation with a history of 5,000 years, inspires, deepens and enhances the unique national spirit of our country. Here, Confucian literary works are particularly crucial parts, and also the core of the traditional culture of feudal society; they are the comprehensive embodiment of the mainstream culture of Chinese nation, and for thousands of years, the generations of people accept and recognize the essence of it, so it has a very important guiding role in the practice of ideological education in China. Moreover, Confucianism has a good combination for moral education and cultural education, which plays a key role in our contemporary ideological and political education.

## 2. The Masterpieces of Confucian Literature

Confucian literary works mainly refer to literary works including ideological connotations and literary forms of Confucianism, including "The Analects of Confucius", "The Doctrine of Mean", "the Great Learning", "Mencius" and other masterpieces, and the representative figures of Confucian literature are mainly Confucius, Mencius and Xunzi, and they integrated the thoughts and personal views with their characters into their works, and thus forming the unique and profound literary works with Confucianism in China during the feudal period. Literary works, the Four Books and the Five Classics are outstanding literary works of Confucianism, and are also important parts of Confucianism, especially the contents of "benevolence", "rituality" and "moderation" are perfectly displayed to future generations, and it has played a very important role in building a moral system in China.

Confucianism pays more attention to the educational role in the literary works, and in this process the connotation of literary works and moral and cultural education are closely combined. Moreover, Confucianism also pays great attention to comparing and distinguishing the personal character and

the beauty of things. For example, Confucius praises highly of people's goodness and beauty together; his works usually use the doctrine of the mean as the criterion for morality. As a literary work of Confucianism classics, the Analects of Confucius mainly uses the form of quotations and dialogue as the main contents; it records the words and deeds of Confucius and his disciples, and it also embodies Confucius's political opinions, social ideals, moral concepts, and principles of doing things etc. As a typical representative of the Four Books and the Five Classics, "the Analects of Confucius" has more than 20 articles, and it is the book of words and deeds of the ancient thinker Confucius and his disciples, and it was originally formed in the Warring States Period. When different disciples asked questions about Confucius, Confucius would give different answers to different students. This reflects the scientific education method of Confucius, and also reflects Confucius' deep responsibility for students.

### **3. The Ideological Connotation of Confucian Literature**

Confucian literary works reflect the concern of Confucian thinkers for personal self-cultivation, and its root is to build beautiful and harmonious stable interpersonal relationship. In Confucian literary works, we can see that the proposed "filial piety and fraternal duty" is concern for parents, moreover, people have to show respect for the elders, and be honest to their friends.

People have to firstly know their duties and abilities, and have a loving heart to treat all people and things, and always maintain important morality. In short, all Confucian thoughts can be summed up as "benevolence", and it is a principle to deal with all people who are in contact. We should promote Confucianism; people need to maintain a benevolent heart, and it is necessary to treat people with courtesy when dealing with things. Whether we want to restrain people through moral education or to improve the morality through legal forcible measures, we all need to adopt the idea of "benevolence" to cultivate the mind, so that we can achieve the highest moral standards in our hearts, promoting the harmonious development of society.

Confucian literary works play an important role in thinking patterns, values and behavior patterns of people at present. Its influence is mainly reflected in the current ideological and political education as the main symbol of the ideals of life, value orientation and national spirit established by people in China. Confucianism also gives different ways of education to different students according to actual situations and educational background, and fully demonstrates the tireless spirit of education.

### **4. The Enlightenment of Confucian Literature on College Students' Ideological and Political Education**

In contemporary ideological and political education, we are particularly easy to discard the ideas in Confucian literary works; we have to adapt to the developmental characteristics of modern society and our current social foundation, and explore the spirit of these literary works to adapt to modern ideology and politics, exploring the contemporary ideological and moral and literary values of Confucian literary works in Chinese traditional culture. It is indispensable for the reading of Confucian literary works, and it also gives us some inspiration for contemporary ideological and political education and the research value of modern society.

#### **4.1 The Influence and Enlightenment of Confucianism on Contemporary Ideological and Political Education**

In Confucian literary works, the key thought is the "benevolence", which is also advocated in our life and study. All the ideas and moral ethics proposed in Confucian literary works are the most basic reflections on reality, and the most advocated in Confucian literature is that we need to treat each other's physical objects with courtesy and resolutely avoid outsiders from imposing political measures on individuals; we urgently need to establish an ideological and ethical system based on benevolence. The "benevolence" mentioned in Confucian literary works has a certain help to our modern establishment of a harmonious and beautiful society. Confucian literary works are the

sustenance of the profound Confucian spirit; they are also a very important literary source for our current ideological and political education and an important basis to build a harmonious society.

#### **4.2 The Enlightenment of Confucianism on Contemporary Ideological and Political Education Methods**

There are many methods and thoughts about education in Confucian literary works, and they still inspire and help us. The ideological and political education methods mentioned in Confucian literary works are of great value for us to learn and they are endowed with the characteristics of modern education and applied to modern ideological and political education, which is the fundamental way for us to carry out political education in new eras. First, Confucian literature promotes the acceptance of the thought of popularization education. Ideological and political education in Confucian literature provides an educational method for the quality and education of contemporary people. In contemporary ideological and political education, if the learners can get excellent social fashion in ordinary education, it will be helpful for us to promote ideological and political education. Secondly, the education methods of rites and music in Confucianism and the proposed “Rites” are mainly for the purpose of revising people’s emotions. While “music” is mainly a reflection of people’s inner feeling, in contemporary ideological and political education, it should be the main method of education, so that people can improve their literacy while maintaining social harmony. Finally, Confucian literature pays attention to the shaping of the environment, which plays a positive part in modern ideological and political education.

#### **4.3 Critically Inheriting Confucian Literary Works**

Confucian literature is a record of the deeds of distinguished writers in our country; it is the essence of the accumulation of our traditional culture in the development process, which has an important influence on the society and the shape of people’s personality. Most of the Confucian thoughts have a great effect on the ideological and political education of the contemporary society, but we know that every coin has two sides and there are flaws and limitations in Confucian literary works. The maintenance and support of Confucianism from the perspective of unified thinking, which eliminates the rights of free development and inhibits the self-innovation.

In ancient times, because of the requirement of Confucian literary works for the norms of human morality and ethics, it was full of strong feudal rigid educational tendencies, and lack of cultivation of the democratic consciousness of people, which made the society more utilitarian and urgent. However, when we read Confucian literary works, we can still find that there are some thoughts which are beneficial to the development and progress of modern society, so when we absorb these thoughts, we should first recognize the basic situation of our society. After we have a certain understanding of Confucian literary works, we should abandon ideas that are not suitable for the development of contemporary society, and combine the suitable Confucian method with the modern college educational method.

#### **4.4 Paying Attention to the Unity of Individual Ideals and Social Ones**

In our country, the ideological and political education of college students is to gradually guide the majority of college students to firmly establish the consciousness of serving people wholeheartedly, so we should not only encourage college students to learn professional knowledge conscientiously and earnestly, devoting to building a better-off society in an all-round way, but also reasonably guide college students to integrate their ideal goals with the development of the society. However, we should also see that there is a gap between the ideological and moral requirements of adapting to social development and the actual ideological and moral standards. As college students, it is impossible to consciously improve their ideological and moral standards; therefore, these problems need to be guided by ideological and political educators such as counselors, etc. We should pay attention to the reasonable understanding of the relationship between personal and social ideals, and integrate the personal ideals with social ideals of college students, so as to solve the gap and

contradiction between the ideological requirements of social development and the actual ideological and moral standards of college students.

#### **4.5 Attaching Importance on the Unity of Theory and Practice**

We should pay attention to the unity of theory and practice, and apply the theory reasonably to practice; moreover, in the practice we should constantly sum up new experience and lessons so as to put them into theory. However, this is difficult to achieve in the ideological and political education of college students, which is caused by two reasons, and one reason lies in the counselor and other educators themselves: because most educators can't see the unity of theory and practice in the process of ideological and political education, and behaviors that are inconsistent in words and deeds often occur, which inevitably misleads students and makes students query the correctness of educational content and the second reason is that most college students don't attach great importance on the unity of theory and practice, and the educational content will not be used to guide their own practical activities after accepting ideological and political education. We should advocate maintaining the consistency of words and deeds in the education process.

### **5. Conclusion**

With the rapid acceleration of the reform and opening up of China, people are not only facing the impact of foreign economies, meanwhile, the ideological values of people are also impacted by the foreign cultures, so it is extremely urgent to carry out ideological and political education of college students. We know that Confucian literary works are all manifestations of Confucianism and represent the essence of Confucianism. Although they are used by the feudal class to oppress the poor, they contain the best ideology and morality of Chinese nation. Thus, it still has an important enlightening effect on the cultivation and improvement of contemporary college students. As the future of Chinese nation, college students need to carefully read Confucian literary works, and meanwhile, we must also correctly treat Confucian ideology and culture, absorbing its essence and discarding its dross, and use a critical attitude to correctly treat the values and cultures in literary works. We know that Confucian culture is the excellent traditional culture of ancient China, which carries the research of many generations of people; it has the needs of ideology and politics, inheriting and developing our traditional culture well, and all in all, it enhances our morality and promotes social progress and development.

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