

A Summary of the Research on Tan Kah Kee's Vocational Education Thought

Lili Song^{1,2,*}

¹ Xiamen City University, Xiamen, Fujian 361008, China

² Institute of Education, Xiamen University, Xiamen, Fujian 361005, China

*Corresponding author. Email: songlili@stu.xmu.edu.cn

ABSTRACT

Tan Kah Kee's educational thought runs through his school-running practice and educational philosophy. Through analysis and exploration of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thought, it can provide a new development direction and channel for the development and improvement of contemporary vocational education in China. Based on the existing academic research and literature analysis, reviewing the connotation of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, discussing Tan Kah Kee's teaching practice, student management, teacher construction and teaching concepts, it can be found that Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts are contemporary, applicable, and integrated, and the basic characteristics of the system can bring new enlightenment to the contemporary development of vocational education in China. This study combines the literature analysis of Tan Kah Kee's education research, explores the classification of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, analyzes the value of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, and hopes to provide reference and support for the contemporary development of China's vocational education.

Keywords: *Tan Kah Kee, Vocational education thought, Summary.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Tan Kah Kee is an outstanding patriotic educator, entrepreneur and social activist in China, and plays an irreplaceable role in the development of modern vocational education in China. Although Tan Kah Kee did not leave any theoretical works related to education, his education career and practice throughout his life contained profound and clear educational thoughts. Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts are mainly contained in various speeches, letters and school-running practices, covering many propositions such as higher education, vocational education, normal education and basic education. Among them, the vocational education thought is the most distinctive and meaningful educational paradigm among all the

educational propositions of Tan Kah Kee, which can provide the foundation and basis for the innovative development and healthy development of contemporary vocational education. At this stage, many vocational educators and scholars in China have carried out detailed interpretation and research on Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, and achieved remarkable research results. On the basis of literature review, this paper gives a comprehensive explanation of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, so that the value of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education behavior can be more vividly presented.

2. LITERATURE ANALYSIS OF TAN KAH KEE'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION THOUGHT

Tan Kah Kee is a famous educator, social activist and entrepreneur in modern China. He is known as the national glory and the banner of overseas Chinese. He has made great contributions to China's education and revolution in his life. Therefore, the attention and research on Tan Kah

*Fund project: The 2021 project of the Xiamen Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese, "Research on the Thoughts of Tan Kah Kee Vocational Education" (Xiaqiao Federation [2021] No. 16), host: Song Lili. 2021 Vocational Education and Teaching Guidance Committee of the Ministry of Education, Vocational Education Reform and Innovation Project "Research on the Construction of Higher Vocational Education System with Chinese Characteristics" (No. HBKC211002).

Kee in our academic circles has been in the ascendant. At this stage, Chinese scholars and experts mainly explore Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts, management thoughts, sports thoughts and political thoughts from the perspectives of philosophy, history, pedagogy, etc., guided by Tan Kah Kee's spirit, and made historic contributions to China's Anti-Japanese War. Scholars are actively researching and have achieved fruitful research results. Since Tan Kah Kee grew up in the special social environment and historical stage of China, scholars need to interpret and study him from the perspectives of his life, personality formation, thoughts and achievements. It is necessary to explore Tan Kah Kee's family and country feelings, spiritual connotations of cultural, patriotic, charitable, and righteousness concepts from the perspectives of great ideas and historical thinking, so as to provide support and help for the development of contemporary education in China. In terms of literature analysis, the main body of research on Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts is usually organized and group research, with the characteristics of multiple main levels and large scale. Among them, there are many regional and academic collective research activities. According to the literature summary, it can be found that there are 31 conference papers, 14 dissertations and more than 1,600 academic articles about Tan Kah Kee's research in the past ten years from 2010 to 2021. Using Tan Kah Kee, Tan Kah Kee's thoughts, and Tan Kah Kee's vocational education as the subject terms, we searched academic websites such as CNKI, Wanfang, and VTTMS, and found that the research on Tan Kah Kee showed a wave-like upward trend. In terms of time distribution, the number of documents in 2014 was the largest, and the three years of 2016, 2017, and 2018 were relatively few. In 2019 and 2020, there is a trend of continued growth. In terms of subject distribution, the level of research on Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts in China includes secondary education, vocational education, higher education, etc.; the research content covers a wide range of educational practices, school-running ideas, teacher construction, educational spirit and school-running connotations and motivations. Therefore, it can be said that China's current research on Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts is relatively extensive. It can explore the influence and enlightenment of Tan Kah Kee's thoughts on contemporary vocational education in China from the aspects of educational practice, educational philosophy, school-running motives, and teacher construction, and dig up the educational philosophy, educational methods and

school-running spirit which can promote the rapid development of contemporary education in China.

3. CLASSIFICATION OF TAN KAH KEE'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION THOUGHT RESEARCH

3.1 Vocational Education Concept

Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts and educational concepts can meet the basic needs of the development of China's socialist modernization, and can provide new development directions and connotations for the healthy development of modern vocational education in China. In the long-term practice of running schools and educational exploration, Tan Kah Kee has gradually formed unique educational concepts and educational thoughts, making vocational education an important force in promoting the development of China's economic and cultural construction. Lei Kexiao and Zhang Bingliang (2009)[1] believed that Tan Kah Kee not only possesses profound vocational education thoughts, but also has rich vocational education practices. His vocational education thoughts and practices were formed in specific social environments and historical conditions, mainly including the propositions of "equal emphasis on morality, intelligence and body", "strictly selecting teachers and principals," "universal vocational education", and "rejuvenating the country through education". Pan Maoyuan (2007)[2] pointed out that the promotion and exploration of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts has far-reaching value in promoting the construction and development of education in China, and can provide conditions for the coordinated development of modern education and national construction. Huangyuan (1997) [3] explored Chen Kah Kee's influence and value on the development of vocational education in our country from the perspectives of "running a school with "will" and "sincerity", "prospering industry must promote education", and "rejuvenating the country through education". Chen Zhihong (2017)[4] believes that in a specific historical period and social stage, Tan Kah Kee was able to start from China's basic national conditions and cultivate talents for the revitalization of China and the nation as a starting point, which fully met the basic needs of China's development and construction, having strong pertinence and pragmatism. At the same time, he also summarized

Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts as "the vision and sense of anxiety for the rejuvenation of the country by education and industry", "the innovation and teaching concept of the unity of knowledge and action", "the world vision and pragmatic thinking of running a school for practical use" and so on. To sum up, Tan Kah Kee's educational philosophy is based on the rise and fall of the country, emphasizing the concept of rejuvenating the country through education and consistent knowledge and action, which can meet the needs of China's construction and development at that time, and has a pivotal function and role in promoting the development of modern vocational education in China.

3.2 Faculty Construction

By the induction and summary of Tan Kah Kee's talks, manuscripts, correspondence, speeches and other materials, we can discover Tan Kah Kee's insights on the construction of the teaching team and the importance he attaches to vocational education teachers. When Tan Kah Kee founded Jimei School, he paid great attention to the quality of teachers, and formed a unique method in managing, training, and selecting teachers. He not only pays attention to teachers' professional skills, professional quality and knowledge ability, but also pays attention to teachers' morality and accomplishment, and cares about teachers' influence on students. Pan Maoyuan (2007)[2] explained Tan Kah Kee's basic practices in focusing on teacher education, respecting teachers, and respecting knowledge, such as subsidizing young people for further studies or studying abroad, and striving to cultivate new types of teachers. As for newly opened subjects and majors, Tan Kah Kee spared no expense to hire well-known teachers and outstanding teachers to teach. Song Jianhua (2013) [5] believes that Tan Kah Kee's practices and measures in teacher management are closely related to his early corporate management experience. Many teacher management and teacher construction concepts and methods are the same or similar to their previous management models, for example, building a conference system and a committee system, encouraging teachers to participate in the process of school management through democratic school management, focusing on the selection of principals, and emphasizing the performance of their duties by principals. Compared with other educators, Tan Kah Kee pays more attention to the training of teachers and the construction of teachers, and pays attention to the influence of

teachers on vocational education. Therefore, he was able to hire more famous geographers, biologists, philosophers, and Chinese scholars in China to teach in the school, such as Wu Xianwen, Sheng Xugong, Qian Mu, etc., to attract more outstanding students from Nanyang and the whole country.

3.3 Vocational Education Practice

Tan Kah Kee attaches great importance to the improvement and training of young students' practical ability, focusing on the integration of teaching and learning, and the concept of vocational education that integrates theory with practice. Through educational practice, it can help students consolidate knowledge and lay a solid foundation from the perspective of educational practice, meeting the basic needs of national development and social construction. In terms of the curriculum, Tan Kah Kee stipulates that internships and skills training must account for 1/3 of the total class hours. For example, the navigation major requires a two-year theoretical course and a one-year internship course. The fishery major needs to go to a specific fishing area for investigation or research after theoretical study. Lin Cunwen (2012) [6] compares Tan Kah Kee's educational practice with modern education from the perspective of practical teaching and innovative education, and finds that the current models of work-study integration, on-the-job training, and post-study guidance are the same as Tan Kah Kee's. The teaching practice concepts and methods are different in approach but equally satisfactory in result, and even part of the practice teaching mode is the same or similar to Tan Kah Kee's practice teaching. For example, first carry out theoretical study, then practical training, etc. Chen Meiqiong (2016) [7] summarized from the first classroom focusing on professional teaching, the second classroom focusing on skill competitions, student unions, and student associations, and the third classroom focusing on production practice and graduation training, inducing Tan Kah Kee's practical education measures: focusing on assessment management and practical training; concentrating on the setting and optimization of practical training courses; paying attention to off-campus practical training management; advocating school-run internship enterprises or factories, etc. Li Guoqiang (2005)[8] believes that Tan Kah Kee's educational practice concept is highly advanced and scientific, is able to integrate school running and industrial development, and pay attention to the influence and guidance of enterprise development

on vocational education. For example, Tan Kah Kee once organized a fishing village delegation to conduct research activities in various fishing villages. The main contents include fishing and waterlogging methods, fishermen's lives, economic conditions, and fishing village organization.

3.4 Student Management Philosophy

Tan Kah Kee pays attention to the interaction between extracurricular activities and regular education courses, such as opening music and art classes, building music pavilions and art galleries, and building art subjects. His vocational education ideas are not only limited to physical education, intellectual education, moral education, etc., but also focus on the overall development of beauty, community, physical, intellectual and moral. For example, in the process of student management, Tan Kah Kee put forward the basic requirements for the healthy development of students, requiring students not only to have patriotic feelings, so as to contribute to the economic development of our country, but also to have the spirit of love and dedication and skilled skills. Wu Fanghong (2011)[9] summarized Tan Kah Kee's student management concepts and methods, summed up Tan Kah Kee's requirements for students' physical fitness, professionalism, honesty and trustworthiness, and cultural literacy, and pointed out that the basic requirement for students' all-round development is to take care of their educational philosophy. Chen Meiqiong (2016)[7] through Tan Kah Kee's indirect auxiliary disciplines, applied disciplines, and indirect disciplines in the aquatic products course, comprehensively analyzed Tan Kah Kee's student management philosophy, and pointed out Tan Kah Kee's "human-oriented ideas and thoughts" in student management. It is believed that Tan Kah Kee pays attention to the subjective feelings of students, pays attention to student development, and emphasizes the function and role of teaching students in accordance with their aptitude in vocational education in the course of curriculum setting and professional education. Chinese scholars Li Dong, Song Jianhua, and Chen Zhihong also comprehensively discussed Tan Kah Kee's student management philosophy in their theoretical works, and compared it with modern vocational education ideas, expounding the advanced and scientific nature of his student management ideas.

4. RESEARCH ON THE CONTEMPORARY VALUE OF TAN KAH KEE'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION THOUGHT

4.1 Value Overview

The contemporary value research on Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thought is generally reflected in the education practice. Yang Jianhua (2013) [10] believes that Tan Kah Kee, in the process of establishing vocational education and emphasizing infrastructure construction, pays attention to the connection between society and school, pays attention to students' moral education, quality education and skill education, and can provide support in carrying out various education for contemporary vocational education in China. Yang Ying (2014) [11] believes that his vocational education thoughts have enlightening and guiding value for the development of contemporary vocational education in China, which is embodied in: adjusting the settings of disciplines and majors in accordance with the trends and forms of social and economic development. Make the school's majors always in line with the overall needs of modern social and economic development; summarize school experience, promote the reform of the practical teaching system, pay attention to the influence of the development of the times on vocational education, and make vocational education show distinctive characteristics of the times; pay attention to capital investment, improve the basic construction, provide help in offering students better internship training activities; pay attention to moral education, pay attention to the cultivation of students' ideological, moral and humanistic qualities, so that vocational education can develop and build faster. Yang Jianhua (2013) [10] systematically induced and summarized the formation and development of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, deeply analyzed the influence of Tan Kah Kee's spirit on modern vocational education, and extracted Tan Kah Kee's radiation, shaping, cohesion and leading value in modern vocational education, and pointed out that contemporary vocational colleges should give full play to the educational significance and rich connotation of Tan Kah Kee spirit for vocational education practice. Generally speaking, in the research on the classification of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, we deeply analyzed the research results of Chinese scholars on Tan Kah Kee's educational philosophy, education practice,

student management and teacher construction, and discussed the influence of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts on contemporary vocational education. However, under the background of the new era, we need to analyze and summarize the contemporary value of its educational thoughts in an all-round way, and clarify the enlightenment and value of its vocational education thoughts to our country's contemporary vocational education.

4.2 Educational Philosophy

Chen Zhihong, Li Dong, and Su Guoxin explored Tan Kah Kee's practical education, student management, and teacher construction thoughts, deeply analyzed Tan Kah Kee's unique vocational education ideas, and also compared Huang Yanpei's educational ideas with Tan Kah Kee's, and made clear that the formation and development of Tan Kah Kee's educational ideas are closely related to his "industrialist background". Especially at the level of teacher team building and teacher management, there are obvious similarities between the management methods and management concepts adopted and corporate management. Li Dong (2020)[12] believes that in contemporary vocational education, schools should take the interdisciplinary concept as the starting point and pay attention to the application of the multidisciplinary concept in vocational education, so that contemporary vocational education methods and technologies are featured with diversification. Liang Xinchao believes that Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts are diversified, and are closely related to his early experience and exploration. He also pointed out that Tan Kah Kee's thought or concept of "running a school to rejuvenate the country" was determined by the historical conditions and social environment at that time. Therefore, in the development of contemporary vocational education, vocational colleges need to closely follow the pulse of the development of the times, and integrate the educational elements required to different links of contemporary vocational education. For example, in the context of "One Belt One Road", vocational education should focus on training skilled and technical compound talents with the ability to use English. In the process of mining and refining the value of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, many Chinese scholars also pointed out that Tan Kah Kee's thoughts have relatively distinct application characteristics, meeting the needs of local economic

development and cultivating high-quality talents for regional economic development.

4.3 Talent Training

Tan Kah Kee puts "integrity" and "loyalty" at the forefront in formulating the "Ten Guidelines for Students", and in the teaching goals and school goals, he has repeatedly talked about the important value and role of students' professional quality and ability in vocational education. However, looking at the collections, writings and papers of modern education research in China, we can find that vocational education, higher education and basic education in our country have always emphasized intellectual education and neglected moral education; emphasized the problems of examination-oriented education and neglected quality education, and seriously affected the advancement and speed of development of modern society. However, in the context of changes in the modern social and economic environment, major vocational education colleges have to increase their emphasis on quality education. Wu Fanghong (2011)[9] believes that although modern vocational education generally advocates quality education, it attaches importance to the cultivation of students' professional qualities and vocational abilities. However, there is a lack of corresponding methods and directions. Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thoughts, student management methods and school-running ideas can provide a clear development direction for modern vocational education to carry out quality education activities, so that vocational colleges can combine the development demands of students and improve their own moral quality and professionalism. Chen Zhihong (2017) [4] took the Xiamen University founded by Tan Kah Kee as an example, by summarizing the connotation, methods and principles of Tan Kah Kee's talent training system which mainly focuses on "character education" and "entrepreneurship education", explored its value in modern quality education.

4.4 School Development

Tan Kah Kee's vocational education ideas and concepts provide a clear reference for the development and construction of modern vocational colleges, especially in terms of educational practice, student training, and infrastructure construction. Tan Kah Kee established "school-run enterprises" and "school-run factories" in order to better carry out practical activities, provide support and help for students. Therefore, in the future

development of vocational colleges, China's vocational colleges should develop in the direction of school-run enterprises or factories. Su Guoxin (2020)[13] believes that the current form of "medical school affiliated hospital" has the shadow of Tan Kah Kee's school-run enterprise. Why don't vocational colleges set up corresponding enterprises in combination with their own characteristic majors and advantageous disciplines? And Song Jianhua (2013)[5] based on Tan Kah Kee's school-run enterprise philosophy and proposed the establishment of service-oriented and innovative subject studios or working groups in vocational colleges, specifically assisting local enterprises in technical research and development, market expansion and theoretical research to improve the practical ability of students and enhance the quality of the school in the process of the school serving the enterprise.

5. CONCLUSION

In the context of the healthy development of vocational colleges in our country, in-depth exploration and review of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education ideas can provide a basis for our vocational colleges to update their school-running ideas, innovate educational models, and broaden their development directions. Especially at the level of in-depth exploration of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education concepts and practical education measures, contemporary vocational colleges can combine the overall demands of the development of the times and economic construction, optimize traditional educational methods, educational concepts and educational mechanisms, and better promote the comprehensiveness of students' development.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Lili Song.

REFERENCES

- [1] Lei Kexiao Zhang Bingliang. Tan Kah Kee's practice in promoting school and educational thoughts[J]. The 20th Anniversary of the Founding of "Research on History of Education" and the Seminar on the Sixty Years of Research on History of Chinese Education, 2019, 2:1215-1219.
- [2] Pan Maoyuan. A new exploration of education thought by Tan Kah Kee, an educational entrepreneur [J]. China Higher Education Research, 2007,10:7-8.
- [3] Wasteland. Tan Kah Kee and modern Chinese vocational education [J]. Chinese Vocational and Technical Education, 1997, 09:31-32.
- [4] Chen Zhihong, Liang Xinchao. The enlightenment of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education thought on the training model of applied talents — Taking the School of Finance and Economics of Jimei University as an example[J]. Journal of Jimei University (Education Science Edition), 2017, 1803: 53-58.
- [5] Song Jianhua. The educational value of Tan Kah Kee's spirit and its enlightenment to higher vocational education[J]. Journal of Wuyi University, 2013, 3203: 74-78+92.
- [6] Lin Cunwen. Tan Kah Kee's practical teaching innovation ideas and enlightenment[J]. Journal of Henan Institute of Science and Technology. 2012, 10: 69-71.
- [7] Chen Meiqiong. The reference significance of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education concept to modern vocational education reform[J]. Strait Science, 2016, 03:77-79.
- [8] Li Guoqiang. Tan Kah Kee's Higher Education Thought Research [J]. Coal Higher Education. 2005, 01: 83-87.
- [9] Wu Fanghong. The enlightenment of Tan Kah Kee's school-running thoughts on the development of vocational education[J]. Journal of Jinhua Vocational and Technical College, 2011, 1104: 10-12.
- [10] Yang Jianhua, Sun Fangzhi. The history and characteristics of Tan Kah Kee's educational thought and practice research[J]. Journal of Jimei University (Educational Science Edition), 2013, 1401: 65-71.
- [11] Yang Ying. The enlightenment of Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts on the development of vocational education in our country[J]. 2014,27(16): 7-8+10.
- [12] Li Dong. The enlightenment of Tan Kah Kee's educational thoughts on the construction of talent training mode in higher vocational

colleges[J]. Brand and Standardization, 2020, 06: 36-38.

- [13] Su Guoxin, Miao Xiongping, Lin Shanqian, Lai Defu. The characteristics and enlightenment of Tan Kah Kee's vocational education[J]. Journal of Ningde Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), 2020, 01: 96-100.