

Study on the Influence of Confucian Culture on Macau's Basic Education After the Macau's Return

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ABSTRACT

The traditional Confucian culture has a profound and lasting influence on the Macao region. Although the influence of Western aggression due to historical reasons has made Macao a region where multiple cultures are in harmony, the influence of Confucian culture has been diluted. However, with the gradual development of modernization after the return of Macao, and the importance of the Macao area to Chinese traditional culture, Confucian culture, as one of the outstanding cultures of Chinese traditional culture, its influence is more and more clearly reflected. The influence of Confucian culture on basic education in Macau is mainly reflected in the concept of basic education system in Macau after the return to the motherland, the educational concept of Macau's primary and secondary schools, and various social practices.

Keywords: Confucian culture, Macau, Basic education, Morality, Civic education.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Macau region has been influenced by Confucian culture for a long time. The Macau region has always had traditional Confucian education system models such as private schools, private schools, and academic societies, for the preaching and education of Confucianism, such as The Zhao Family Private School, the first free school in Macau — Jinghu Private School, etc. The Four Books, Five Classics and Confucianism core thoughts of benevolence, justice, etiquette, wisdom and faith have been spreading in the historical land of Macau. With the continuous development of history, the exchanges between China and the West have met in Macau, and the unique atmosphere and environment have also produced a diversified education system. Statistics from the Education and Youth Bureau show that there are 78 schools in Macau in the 2020/2021 school year, including 11 public schools and 67 private schools. These schools can be divided into public schools and private schools, church schools and non-church schools, boys' schools, girls' schools, and mixed schools according to their educational nature, as well as Chinese schools, Portuguese schools, and English schools that teach different languages, and day schools and evening schools according to the

lecturing time. Among them, there are 17 public school divisions (of a public nature and including branch schools), 94 private school divisions that provide free education, and 9 private school divisions that do not provide free education. It can be seen from the statistical data that the Macao region is a diversified education system that is mainly dominated by private schools, and other types of schools meet the requirements of the times and the development of the region. This flexible education system can adapt to the different needs of different students to make choices, and various types can also develop in competition. [1] This kind of system is appropriate at the early stage of the return to China, because this kind of system is conducive to mobilizing all sectors of society to run schools, is conducive to the autonomy of schools, and is benefit for running their own characteristics. [2] At the same time, just as such a diversified and relatively complex education system showed its drawbacks in the continuous modern social development after the return to the motherland. It was not until 1995 that Macau began to implement the "Universal and Tendency to Free Education". Therefore, after the return, the Macau government has also issued a series of related policies and regulations to standardize and promote the

establishment of a more scientific and modern education system in Macau.

Among these various schools, the most influenced by Confucian culture are the private schools that emerged in the late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China. They were mostly founded by overseas Chinese who escaped the war from the mainland to Macau during the war, such as Peizheng Middle School; or branch schools established to continue the scattered students in Guangdong, such as Guangda Middle School and Lingnan Middle School. These schools have taken in and managed fairly scattered out-of-school children. Most of these principals or school administrators have received systematic Confucian education and brought these ideas into the students' talent training and teaching concepts. Most of these schools pay attention to the internal cultivation of students and the cultivation of moral concepts. The construction of moral personality by Confucian culture has affected all aspects of basic education in Macau.

2. THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIANISM ON MACAU'S BASIC EDUCATION POLICY IDEAS

Starting from the social value orientation of valuing education, Confucianism achieves a harmonious relationship between people, between people and society, and between people and nature through the cultivation and shaping of personal cultivation. To improve the stability and peace of the society through the education of individuals, the construction of a harmonious personality of individuals is the most basic part and fundamental guarantee of Confucian ideology and culture. Therefore, from the people-oriented viewpoint of Confucianism, the Macao area has always attached importance to moral education in schools of all levels and types, and strengthened the moral cultivation of students, so as to meet the requirements of the entire society to adapt to the current development of the times and the modernization and internationalization of the entire city.

After the return to the motherland, the Macau government, after reviewing and thinking about the previous education system, and consulting the society from all walks of life, promulgated the "Outline of the Non-Higher Education Law" in December 2006. Article 4 of the bill is the general goal of education in Macau and provides macro

guidance and requirements for primary and secondary education in Macau. The general goal of Article 4 stipulates: "Relevant entities are committed to cultivating and promoting educated persons' patriotism, love of Macau, ethics and integrity, and abiding by laws and regulations, so that they have ideals, culture, and knowledge and skills that meet the needs of the times and develop a healthy lifestyle and a strong body." [3] The general education goal reflects the educational values of the Macao region for cultivating Macao students. It prescribes the development direction and expected development results of educational objects. It guides the direction of education in the region and is also the basis and criteria for educational evaluation. The "complete goodness" in the "Outline" comes from the "The Analects of Confucius: Bayi": "Confucius said that 'Shao' is perfect and the most kind-hearted. It is said that 'Wu' is perfect, but not the most kind-hearted." Here is a distinction between beauty and goodness. Although beauty is very important, goodness is the more fundamental core. Goodness as the core of beauty makes it more than just the sensory enjoyment of appearance, and provides beauty with deeper social meaning and value. The "Outline" directly uses the content of the Confucian classic text, which shows that the pursuit of social value in education is a requirement for good morality.

With the rapid economic development, as well as the progress of globalization and modernization, traditional ethical concepts are gradually declining, and serious social problems such as bad behaviors of young people continue to appear. In response to this situation, the focus of the outline is to strengthen moral education based on traditional Confucianism and to respect individual spiritual cultivation. Its content focuses on basic etiquette, self-establishment, respect for others, democratic consciousness, etc. [4] Its focus is based on five parts: "(1) cultivating its sense of responsibility to the country and Macao, so that it can properly exercise its civil rights and actively fulfill its civic obligations; cultivating their good morals and democratic qualities, so that they can respect others, communicate frankly, live in harmony with others, and actively care about social affairs; (2) making it possible to take Chinese culture as the mainstream, recognize and respect the characteristics of Macao's culture, including the coexistence of multiple cultures such as history, geography, and economy, and cultivate its worldview; (3) comprehensively improving their scientific and humanistic literacy, so that they have innovative spirit, critical

awareness, sustainable development concepts and practical capabilities; cultivating their lifelong learning attitude and ability; (4) cultivating their good physical and psychological qualities, promoting the development of their personality, and establishing correct values; (5) cultivating their good aesthetic taste and ability, as well as the quality of living in harmony with nature." In the implementation, in addition to carrying out education in different subjects such as morality and citizenship, it is also widely carried out through teacher training and various social service activities, such as moral education training camps and moral education lectures, to strengthen moral education in all aspects. These focus on education from the most basic personal politeness and basic order to civic education, including respect for others, public legal order, and education for global citizens that is further in line with the development of Macau's international metropolis, such as helping students to correctly understand the diversified international relations, world peace education, international etiquette and foreign language education, etc. [5]

The harmonious relations between people, people and society, and people and nature advocated and emphasized by Confucianism have also been fully reflected in the educational development of Macau. Now, the idea of cultivating and improving scientific and humanistic literacy at the same time has become a consensus. Confucius' view of righteousness and benefit is manifested in education, which is to integrate knowledge of production technology into the curriculum of moral education. Mencius also paid attention to the close connection between economic development and morality and education. However, the development of Confucianism to the extent that it only paid attention to moral education and neglected science and technology education, still did not meet the management and requirements of modern education. The people-oriented core of Confucianism can make up for the shortcomings of Western professional and technical education that pay too much attention to knowledge and technology training without paying attention to human nature. Therefore, the unique historical environment of the Macao region provides a good inclusive environment for this. Macao education combines the Confucian culture's humanistic care and the strengths of the Western technology education system to learn knowledge. Vocational and technical education has been cultivating relevant talents, such as Sino-Portuguese vocational and technical schools, which provide a steady

stream of fresh blood for the cultivation of professional talents in Macau. As education and economics become more and more closely linked, the education of science and technology subjects and the education of moral quality mutually influence each other.

3. THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN CULTURE ON THE EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MACAO

The content and implementation of Article 23 of the "Outline" stated that: "The curriculum implementation of elementary and junior high school education should pay attention to the integration of curriculum content and the mutual penetration of subjects. In particular, moral education and artistic literacy need to be integrated into the curriculum through various teaching methods". Therefore, the primary and secondary schools in Macau place great emphasis on ethics courses and humanities courses in curriculum design, and they also attach importance to the cultivation of morality in the process of cultivating students. In the setting of morality courses, different schools have set up different moral and civic education courses according to their own actual conditions. [6] Different types of schools have different curriculum designs and the proportion of class hours. [7] The textbooks used are mostly based on the requirements of their own schools. The courses offered are even more diverse, including civic education, moral education, religious education, self-cultivation and other different categories. The morality and civic education in primary and secondary schools in Macau has achieved certain results in cultivating students' personal accomplishment and promoting the development of students' personality, but it still needs urgent improvement in cultivating students' morality and promoting their group development. [8] Softbase's moral education attaches great importance to personal character and behavior, and in the process of moral education, it educates the individual to become a person of good conduct. Rather than educating an individual to be a good citizen, becoming a person of good character is a higher priority. [9] Although it has undergone more than 400 years of colonial rule and the integration of Eastern and Western cultures, different types of schools in Macau still adhere to this tradition when implementing moral and civic education. [10]

However, in order to truly improve personal morality, especially the moral standards of student groups, it is obvious that both "private morality" and "public morality" need to be taken into consideration without being partial. In the practice of strengthening moral and civic education in Macau, it also follows Confucian culture, especially Confucian personal cultivation and social ethics requirements, through the modernization of the two to achieve the goal of completing the good spiritual outlook of Macau youth in the new era. [11]

The influence of Confucian culture is also prominently embodied in the educational philosophy of the secondary schools in Macau. The secondary schools in Macau have their own official web pages, in which the school introduces the philosophy, aspirations and objectives established by the school or the mission, goals, directions, approaches and characteristics of the school, etc., which also clearly expresses the school's educational philosophy. Many primary and secondary schools use Confucian classic terms, words, etc. between lines, or use Confucian cultural ideas. Religious mission schools often use traditional Confucian vocabulary and views on their web pages, which are more prominent and close to the influence of Confucian cultural concepts in Macau, a special multicultural area. The homepage of Escola Católica Estrela do Mar's official webpage has a very prominent content of "Discrimination and Reflection, Achieving Oneself and Helping Others". "Discrimination and reflection" also comes from the "learn it, interrogate it, reflect it, discern it, and do it" in "Book of Rites The Doctrine of the Mean". In the school profile on its official website, the history of school development uses the expression of "following Confucius, teaching without differences" [12]to express its school's educational philosophy, which pays attention to the students themselves and the necessity of education. As a girls' school, Sacred Heart Canossian College's "educational principle of this school is to enable people to live with dignity throughout their lives, to stand on their own feet". The way to reach the standard is to require students to learn meaningful things and to apply what they have learned by analogy." It also quoted the content of the traditional Confucian classic "The Analects of Confucius": "Point out one aspect to a person, if he can't infer the other three aspects from this, then don't teach him anymore."

At the same time, it is also necessary to pay attention to the shortcomings of traditional Confucian culture and its inappropriateness. As

Confucian culture is mainly aimed at elite culture, the learning content and requirements between men and women are different. However, in the current era, equality between men and women is a very important aspect. The Macau region has a clearer view of the better Confucian culture and the integration of the times. As a girls' school, in the Sacred Heart Canossian College's subject introduction: "the requirement of the discipline of Literature and History is to "look at the world and have a sense of society", it requires students to be able to reflect on the vision and mind of the past and knowing the present, comment on social and international events as a standard level". [13]It also shows that in the current era, Confucian culture integrates the characteristics of the development of the era, abandons the traditional ethical education of patriarchal, different training goals and methods between men and women, and emphasizes that men and women are treated equally.

4. CONCLUSION

The influence of Confucian culture on the educational philosophy of Macao is mainly reflected in the cultivation of personal cultivation and civic morality, and always attaches importance to the spiritual cultivation of individuals as the smallest unit in society. It is necessary to let people actively and correctly participate in social construction and development, so that people can communicate and learn from each other more smoothly, promote effective discussion of social public issues, and provide suggestions for major social issues and development directions. [14] Confucian culture plays an important role in the process of educational modernization in Macau. The improved personal quality will also enable more people in this city to follow the development of the times and better integrate the excellent traditional culture with the characteristics of the times and the environment, making it more suitable for the current era and regional development characteristics.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Jiepei Chen.

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