

On Confucius' Educational Thought

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Abstract: Confucius is a great thinker and educator in the history of Chinese cultural development, as well as in the history of world cultural development. His advocacy of “teaching without discrimination”; His studious spirit and serious attitude towards knowledge; He emphasized the close combination of learning and independent thinking, as well as the consistency of words and deeds, and the application of learning; His thoughts on “gentleman” personality; His educational and teaching ideas and methods summarized in practice; In the history of Chinese cultural development, it has had an extremely significant and far-reaching impact, and still has its positive significance and value. Careful research and summary can provide rich cultural nourishment for the improvement and development of contemporary education and teaching ideas and methods.

Keywords: Confucius; gentleman; Educational and teaching ideas

Confucius is a great thinker and educator in the history of Chinese cultural development, as well as in the history of world cultural development. His educational and teaching ideas, methods and practices revealed the general laws of education and teaching. Careful research and summary can provide rich cultural nourishment for the improvement and development of contemporary education and teaching ideas and methods.

1. Epistemology

Confucius once said: “Those who are born to know are also good at learning, and those who learn to know are also good at learning.”. This involves the source of human knowledge. From the Analects of Confucius, we can see that what he really pays attention to, discusses and emphasizes is “learning to know”. Emphasizing that people “know” because of “learning” shows his deep understanding and full affirmation of the necessity and importance of education and teaching.

In the history of Chinese cultural development, Confucius first raised the issue of human nature. Point out: “The sex is similar, the practice is far away.” It is believed that differences in people’s knowledge and abilities are not determined by innate humanity, but by differences in acquired learning and environmental impact. He also made it clear that his knowledge was “sought” through diligent and agile learning. When disciple Zi Gong heard that he was a naturally versatile sage, he clearly denied that his talent was because “little is cheap”, learned to survive. Obviously, although he did not discuss the issue of human nature, he defined human nature as “similar”, which established a basic thinking direction for future generations to explore this issue. It is on the basis of this theory of human nature that he put forward the proposition of “teaching without discrimination” .

It is precisely because Confucius emphasized “learning to know”, so he also paid special attention to learning. He made it clear: “If saintliness and benevolence, how dare I? If you are tireless in restraining it and teaching others, you can say that you have already done so. “ The word “do it” here refers to learning. Although he did not dare to call himself “holy and benevolent”, he was sure that he was never tired of learning and was tireless in the practice of education and teaching.

Confucius not only studied hard, but also took a serious attitude towards knowledge. He said, “The Tao listens and the road speaks, and virtue is abandoned.” From a moral perspective, he denounced and criticized this behavior. He stressed that we should take a reserved attitude towards things and problems that we do not know or understand, and we should never make comments based on subjective imagination. It also points out that, on the issue of knowledge, it is wise to stick to an honest attitude.

In the process of acquiring knowledge, Confucius advocated that both learning and independent thinking should be emphasized. He said: “Learning without thinking is useless, thinking without learning is dangerous.” That is, if you only know how to learn but don’t know how to think independently, you are in danger of being deceived by the superficial phenomena of things; If you only know how to think but not how to learn, you will be in danger because your thinking and decision are divorced from reality. Therefore, we must pay equal attention to learning and independent thinking.

He also emphasized the consistency between words and deeds and the application of what he learned. In his view, acquiring knowledge through learning and thinking is not the ultimate goal, but the ultimate goal is “doing”. He said: “Three hundred people recite the Book of Songs, and teach them to govern, but they are not efficient; they can’t be specific when they are used in all directions; although they are many, they are also ridiculed.” It is pointed out that the main measure of a person’s learning effect is not how many books he has read, but whether he can apply what he has learned, solve practical problems and do practical work well. This idea that learning effect should be tested by actual action effect should be fully affirmed and promoted.

It is from the point of view of emphasizing “action” that he requires people to speak carefully and act quickly. He said: “A gentleman wants to be slow in words, but quick in deeds.”. In his opinion, it is a shame to say too much and do too little.

He also proposed that investigators should “listen to what they say and observe what they do”. Don’t just listen to what he says, but see how he acts and whether his words are consistent with his deeds.

Obviously, Confucius’s thought of “similar in nature, different in practice” and “teaching without discrimination”; His studious spirit

and serious attitude towards knowledge; He pays equal attention to learning and independent thinking, and emphasizes the consistency of words and deeds and the application of knowledge; It is worthy of our careful study, summary, study and development.

2. Scholar Theory

The purpose of education and teaching, in the final analysis, is to cultivate and shape the ideal personality. Therefore, to study the educational thoughts of thinkers including Confucius, we must pay attention to the study of their ideal personality. What kind of ideal personality did Confucius establish and shape?

He said, "Sage, I can't see it! If I can see a gentleman, I can see it." This shows that the highest ideal personality established by Confucius is "sage". At the same time, it also shows that the "saint" personality is very difficult to achieve. Therefore, he said that he would be satisfied to see a "gentleman". Therefore, his most talked about personality model is "gentleman". Then, what qualities should a "gentleman" possess?

First, "a gentleman should take care of himself". The so-called "service oriented" means striving to strengthen one's moral cultivation. He said: "There are three virtues of a gentleman. I am powerless: the benevolent do not worry, the knowledgeable do not worry, and the brave do not fear." On the one hand, it shows his modesty, and on the other hand, it also shows the three basic moral qualities that a gentleman should possess. One is "benevolence". The basic meaning of "benevolence" is "love". That is to say, to become a "gentleman", we must pay attention to cultivating our "love" heart. The most reliable way to cultivate the heart of "loving others" is to practice "filial piety". That is, "love" should start from loving the person closest to you. And then promote it to the public, so as to achieve "universal love". At the same time, in order to cultivate their "benevolence" morality, they must also strictly follow the "etiquette". The second is "wisdom". That is to say, to become a "gentleman", you must have rich knowledge and wisdom. And rich knowledge and wisdom can not be separated from learning and practice. Through "learning", "thinking" and "doing", we can understand and grasp the trend and law of the development of things. Only in this way can we keep a clear mind, distinguish right from wrong, and ensure the correct, reasonable and feasible action measures. If the behavior measures are correct, reasonable and feasible, the behavior will be easy to succeed. The third is "courage". He said: "The benevolent must have courage, and the brave need not have benevolence." It shows that "courage" is the courage and courage required to implement "benevolence". Confucius emphasized that with these three basic moral qualities, there would be no regret, worry, confusion, and panic in real life.

Second, "A gentleman is synonymous with righteousness". The opposite of "gentleman" is "villain", "villain is more than profit". That is to say, a gentleman clearly understands "righteousness", and the first thing to consider is to conform to "righteousness"; "Villains" clearly understand that "benefits", and the first thing to consider is whether they can get "benefits". In fact, "righteousness", as a moral category, reflects the "great benefit" beyond personal interests. Confucius clearly warned his disciples: "No desire, no speed, no small profit.". More haste, less speed; If you see a small profit, you can't make a big one. " It is emphasized that we should not blindly pursue the fast and the "small profits" in front of us. Pursuing speed blindly cannot achieve the expected goal and effect. It is impossible to achieve great things by seeking personal and immediate "small profits". The "major event" reflects the "great benefit". The so-called "great benefit" means the collective interest, the national interest and the long-term interest. It is this "great profit" that a gentleman considers and pursues.

Third, a gentleman is "eager to learn". He said: "A gentleman does not want to be satisfied with food, does not want to live in peace, is quick to do things and careful to speak, so he has a way and is upright, and is eager to learn." Here, Confucius clearly pointed out the specific expression of the gentleman's "eager to learn". Obviously, what he emphasized as "eager to learn" was not just reading books, but focusing on learning in practice. He regards "eager to learn" as the basis for realizing various virtues, and says that what distinguishes him from others is "eager to learn". It should be said that Confucius' brilliant achievements are inseparable from his "willingness to learn".

3. Methodology of education and teaching

Confucius is good at "learning" and has been engaged in education and teaching practice for a long time, which determines that he must pay attention to discussing and summarizing the ideas and methods of education and teaching to improve the actual effect of education and teaching. From The Analects of Confucius, it is not difficult to see that he did put forward many specific and profound ideas and methods of teaching and learning based on his own theory of knowledge and theory of gentleman.

The ideas and methods proposed by Confucius on how to teach mainly include the following aspects.

First of all, in terms of educational objects, he put forward the idea of "teaching without discrimination". This actually confirms that everyone has social value and should receive education. Based on this idea, he created a "private school" and recruited many poor people for education. Such as Yan Yuan and Zi Lu. This is indeed a great innovation in the history of China's education development. Thus, a large number of outstanding talents have been cultivated for the establishment of the Confucian School and the prosperity of academic research. It has made indelible historical contributions to cultural development and social change.

Secondly, we should educate and guide students to be ambitious, establish a strong sense of social responsibility, and actively study, work hard to cultivate, and work tirelessly to build a better society. To achieve this educational goal, educators should take the lead in setting an example and set a personality example for students with their own practical actions. According to the chapter of The Analects of Confucius, Gong Yechang clearly pointed out that his ideal was: "The old should be at ease, the friends should believe in it, and the young should cherish it". That is to build a stable and peaceful society in which every member of society can receive due care and people can trust each other.

Third, we should pay attention to the cultivation of students' moral character. Guide students to be a "gentleman scholar" who can provide positive energy for the society, and never be a "villain scholar" who can bring negative effects to the society. It can be seen that he took shaping the "gentleman" personality as the training goal. For this reason, he made a detailed discussion on the character that a "gentleman" should have.

Fourth, in specific teaching activities, as a teacher, we should pay attention to mobilizing and cultivating students' enthusiasm for learning. This is the basic guarantee to achieve the teaching objectives. We should have a thorough understanding of the specific conditions of students in all aspects, and conduct in-depth and detailed education and guidance according to the specific conditions of students. We should be good at using heuristic and discussion teaching methods, which can not only stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning, promote students to "learn from what they hear", but also realize the mutual benefit between teaching and learning. We should care for students and teach them what we have learned. He made it clear that he never hid anything from the students.

As for how the educatees should learn, the ideas and methods proposed by Confucius can be summarized as follows.

First, to achieve something in learning, we must "aspire". The so-called "ambition" refers to the orientation of the value goal, as well as the perseverance and courage required to achieve the value goal. The so-called "learning" refers to knowledge, theory, learning, and the process of acquiring knowledge, theory, learning. Confucius made it clear that he was "five out of ten and determined to learn". Therefore, we have achieved the goal of "standing at 30, not confused at 40, knowing the destiny at 50, obeying at 60, and following one's heart at 70, not exceeding the rules". All of this is based on the "ambition to learn". The realization of value objectives is not easy. Only through hard work can we achieve it.

Second, in terms of learning content, he particularly emphasized learning "etiquette". He once told his son clearly: "If you don't learn etiquette, you can't stand." He also pointed out that: "If you are respectful and rude, you will be tired; if you are cautious and rude, you will be embarrassed; if you are brave and rude, you will be confused; if you are straight and rude, you will be twisted." It is pointed out that if one does not learn, understand or observe etiquette, his behavior, whether it is "respectful", "cautious" or "brave" or "straight", will be counterproductive and accomplish nothing. Obviously, this kind of thought of Confucius is worth thinking deeply.

Third, in terms of learning attitude, he stressed that we should be serious and realistic, and resolutely put an end to the bad behavior of "listening and speaking". We should "not be ashamed to ask questions", be modest and prudent, not arrogant and not impetuous. At the same time, learning also requires the spirit of seizing the moment. He said, "If you can't learn enough, you may lose it." No slacking.

Fourth, in terms of learning methods, Confucius emphasized the close combination of learning and independent thinking. In the process of learning, it will bring serious problems to neglect either party. He demanded to "learn while learning". It is believed that through "reviewing the past", we can deepen our understanding and understanding, so as to achieve the effect of "knowing the new".

It is not difficult to see that Confucius deserves to be a great educator and thinker. His ideas and methods of education and teaching summarized in practice have had an extremely significant and far-reaching impact on the history of Chinese cultural development. Today, it still has its positive significance and important value.

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