A Brief Analysis of Relations between Traditional Culture and Personal Cultivation from the Perspective of Intercultural Communication

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Abstract. It is universally accepted that personal cultivation plays a crucial role in interpersonal relationship and social development. In the 21st century, with the mixture of cultures, the essence of traditional culture should be valued highly. For the purpose of building a homonious, stable interpersonal relations and facilitating people's initiativeness in paticipating social activities, personal marality cultivation is an important issue that should be taken into consideration. In Chinese culture, a lot of outstanding cultural heritage can be learned to develop personal cultivation such as honour the rites, honour the honesty, honour the wisdom.

Introduction

With the development of sociey, there are diversified cultures coexisting with the mainstream culture. In China, thanks to its long history and civilization, the traditional culture as an impotant factor is always facilitating the develoment of society as well as the growth of each individual. In the 21 century, this cultural heritage still plays its important role in buiding personal relations with different societies. In a sense, mastery of the essebce of traditional culture has become a major ideology that impacts a nation's development. As scholars stated" What ethnic is what worldwide".

Man is the main factor of society. A person's morality is closely related to his role in the social activities. In other words, personal cultivation is very important to the development of interpersonal relations and the establishment of healthy, harmonious and stable society. Based on the traditional Chinese culture, there are outstanding cultural heritage can be found to influence the personal cultivation.

The Data Collection through the Questionnaire

In order to have a good understanding of the relations between the traditional culture and personal cultivation, a questionnaire has been designed among the people from different backgrounds. There are ten questions involving peoples' attitudes and cognitions based on their life and work. The following are the details of the questionnaire.

1. How much do you know the intercultural communication? a. a lot b. Just so so c. a little d.
2, In building a good relationship with people, what do you think is the most important? a. Honesty b. Kindness c. patience d. responsibility
3.What kind of Chinese classic books influence you deeply? a. The analects of Confucius b. The book of songs c. Daxue d. Zhongyong
4. Who has influenced your personal quality in your work and life? a. Confucius b. Lao Zi c. Mencius d. Zhuang Zi
5. Why is traditioal culture closly related to the development of personal cultivation? a. because it is rooted in society b. Because it is a guideline c. because it is ethnic d. because it influences our thought

6. Do you think that where does noble character come from? a. knowledge b. Practice c. heart d. self-discipline
7. Do you agree with the idea that etiquette is the basis of personal cultivation a. Strongly agree b. Agree c. I don't think so d. strongly disagree
8. Do you think that a stable society needs to improve people's morality? a. strongly agree b. Agree c. disagree d. strongly disagree
9. How can we form a good habit of addressing or greeting others? a. reading more books b. Attending different activities c. using polite expressions d. showing friendly smile
10. What are problems existing in Chinese society? a. hostile b. Unequal c. open d. generous

Based on the questions above, 157 participants were asked to choose the answer. The result reveals the difference and similarities. For the first question, just 49 % know about the intercultural communication; For questions from 2 to 5, 89% participants answered in the same way. For question 6, the answer is different. For question 7 and 8, participants have the same agreement. Questions 9 and 10 are different.

The Analysis of the Data from Questionnaire

From the results of the questionnaire, it is obvious that personal morality cultivation is mainly determined by different factors such as environment, knowledge, values, beliefs, etc. In the Chinese society, there is a positive setting where each individual seeks his life career differently. However, according to the data analysis, the traditional Chinese cultural values, together with social values, are motivating people to become useful and qualified citizens. There is no doubt that the essence of Chinese traditional culture is spreading in every corner of society, which has cultivated people's character in terms of ethic morality.

Some Major Moral Qualities Influencing Personal Cultivation

Advocating Etiquette Is the Basis of Personal Cultivation

Etiquette is considered to be the basic moral rule in Chinese traditional culture in terms of interpersonal relationship. There are three points from the perspectives of ethics. First is that etiquette is the universal moral rule in society. The second is that Etiquette has its special connotation. The third is that etiquette means how to treat people and to deal with the things. In Chinese culture, Confucianism dominates every aspect of society. The major core of Confucianism advocates morality which includes moral character, justice and integrity. According to the Confucius, he pointed out that the general can be replaced but a person's ambition is not. He also proposed benevolence which is the important quality of how to deal with relations in regard to the parents, brothers and friends. Among the relations of individuals with family, individual with country, he strongly advocated the importance of the public awareness.

Advocating of Honesty is Another Basic Quality in Building Well-Off Society.

In the eyes of Pre-Qin Confucianism, honesty is highly preferred. Mencius said "Honesty is the principle of the heaven and the fundamental of the man." Xunzi also stated that A good man is relying on his integrity instead of other things. Honesty expresses that one should be true to himself. In the Chinese traditional culture, it advocates the righteousness which indicates the spirit of personal

morality cultivation. Xuncius proposed that a man of noble character is expressed through his integrity which is learned from the daily practice. If so, a man of noble character is called selfishless and he always thinks of others.

Advocating Self-Introspection and Tolerance

According to the Chinese culture, the ultimate aim of morality is to reach the combination between heaven and earth. It stresses that as an individual living in society, he should be making progress and be tolerant in dealing with things and getting on well with each other. Only in this way personal cultivation will be done. In order to realize one's personal cultivation, he should abide by the rules and constantly change the bad behaviors to acquire the etiquette. Based on the Confucian teachings, one should emulate those better than himself and get rid of prejudice on those who are better or bad.

Advocating an Attitude of Removing One's Worries and Controlling One's Desires

In the traditional Chinese culture, it advocated that a man is required to live in a moderate way both in life and work. Do not worry about what is going on around you. He should remove anxieties or worries by means of thinking moderately. Do not desire so much which will lead to a greed. In terms of materialism, try not to be voracious. Maintain a happy state of mind and life. Man is encouraged to pursue life value which is the high peak of personal cultivation.

Advocating a Spirit of Striving to Become Stronger

According to the Book of Changes, man should follow heaven to become stronger. Universe is vigorous. Man should be like universe to make himself struggle constantly. To have self-motivation, self-esteem, initiative is what a person should constantly do in his lifetime. Lao said that knowing others is called wise while knowing oneself is wiser; conquering others is powerful, while finding one's mistakes is more powerful.

Advocating the Wisdom

Wisdom is the basic morality in the traditional Chinese culture. In the eyes of Confucianism, wisdom means people should be clear of what is wrong and what is right. Wisdom warns people not to be confused and deceived. In dealing with situations, people should have prediction of what potential problems will arise. In other words, when conducting things, people are required to check erroneous ideas at the outset. If everyone realizes this, he or she is called a wise man. Mozi advocated in his works: "a wise man focuses on thinking instead of talking and doing more instead of taking credits". Boasting and exaggerating is not preferred. For it will cause a kind of inharmonious.

Advocating Self-Discipline and Social Commitment

In the Chinese culture, there is one statement that is a man of noble character always behaves himself based on self-discipline and social commitment. This strongly expresses what a man should do in society. In social setting, a man as an individual is closely related to the social activities including participation, involvement, role play, etc. In order to reach a certain goal of achievement, man is required to possess self-discipline which is the basis of moral character. In social life, an individual involves himself by showing his philanthropism such as friendly communication with others, taking care of others, thinking of others and developing interpersonal relations with others. For achieving life value, an individual should make constant efforts to realize his aim, then his harvest in career can make himself enjoyable and successful. This harvest means that an individual's growth is in relation to the

development of society. That is to say, social commitment reflects an individual's devotion or contribution.

Advocating the Concept of Knowing Ones' Mistake and Correcting It.

According to Laozi, he proposed that it was a wisdom to know other people's character, and it was wiser to know oneself. In our daily life, man always ignores his shortcoming and fails to identify his problems. This really does harm to a person's character cultivation. In society, being a wise man will bring much benefits to the environment.

Summary

Personal cultivation or personal morality is of importance to the development of society. In China, with the increasing growth of economy, people's morality or personal cultivation is being improved. However, a few of Chinese citizens behave in a rough way, which has damaged the image of China. So for protection of Chinese image on the world stage, it is our obligations to learn more good virtues from the traditional culture and to develop our personal morality.

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