

CONFUCIANISM THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION IN VIETNAM AND ITS EFFECT ON THE EDUCATION OF VIETNAM TODAY

PENSAMENTOS CONFUCIONISTAS SOBRE A EDUCAÇÃO NO VIETNÃ E SEU EFEITO SOBRE A EDUCAÇÃO DO VIETNÃ HOJE*

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Abstract: Confucianism is a socio-political doctrine originating in China, born about 2.600 years ago. One of the unique contents of this theory is the idea of education. Confucianism scriptures show that Confucianism thought on education holds an important position in the entire content of Confucianism. The influence of Confucianism, including thoughts on education, affect Vietnam very early and was received by the feudal dynasties of Vietnam. Historically, Confucian thought on education was used by the feudal dynasties of Vietnam to govern the country as well as train mandarins to serve the court policy. Studying Vietnam's ancient documents will reveal the important place Confucianism in education has played in history and realize how that thought was used by Vietnam's feudal dynasties. If negative factors are removed, Confucian thought on education has certain historical value as well as its value to Vietnam's education in the current period.

Keywords: Confucianism. Confucianism thoughts on education. Vietnam. Education of Vietnam today.

Resumo: O confucionismo é uma doutrina sócio-política originária da China, nascida há cerca de 2.600 anos. Um dos conteúdos únicos desta teoria é a ideia de educação. As escrituras do confucionismo mostram que o pensamento confucionista sobre educação ocupa uma posição importante em todo o conteúdo do confucionismo. A influência do confucionismo, incluindo pensamentos sobre educação, afeta o Vietnã muito cedo e foi recebida pelas dinastias feudais do Vietnã. Historicamente, o pensamento confucionista sobre educação foi usado pelas dinastias feudais do Vietnã para governar o país, bem como para treinar mandarins para servir à política da corte. Estudar os documentos antigos do Vietnã revelará o importante lugar que o confucionismo na educação tem desempenhado na história e perceberá como esse pensamento foi usado pelas dinastias feudais do Vietnã. Se fatores negativos forem removidos, o pensamento confucionista sobre educação tem certo valor histórico, assim como seu valor para a educação do Vietnã no período atual.

Palavras-chave: Confucionismo. O pensamento do confucionismo sobre educação. Vietnã. A educação do Vietnã hoje.

* Artigo recebido em 24/08/2022 e aprovado para publicação pelo Conselho Editorial em 15/09/2022.

1. INTRODUCTION

Confucianism which was founded by Confucius is one of the great philosophical schools of ancient China. It was born in the transitional period from slavery to feudal society (Giau, 1993; Chi & Le, 2003). In that historical context, the primary concerns of ancient Chinese thinkers were issues of the political and moral life of society. In order to govern the country and stabilize the social order, Confucianism introduced many different theories such as human rule, virtue rule, etiquette, etc (Giau, 1993). In particular, the issue of education is highly emphasized and respected by Confucianism. The idea of education is mentioned by the Confucians as an element in the system of other Confucian ideas. Education is not only a component but also closely associated with socio-political thought, moral thought, and the line of German rule (or Human Rule, Ritual Rule). Confucianism considers human education as the most effective means and measure to train people and perfect people to stabilize and develop society (Duy, 2003; Van, 2020; Dao & Van, 2020).

Confucianism has had a huge influence on Vietnamese society. It is one of the three major ideologies along with Buddhism and Taoism. Confucianism was once the weapon of the invaders, once the dominant ideology in feudal society. Confucianism has held a special position and played an important role in the spiritual life of our people throughout historical periods (Giau, 1973); Van & Luong, 2019). To this day, it also leaves behind lingering remnants. Therefore, it is very important and necessary to study Confucianism, Confucian educational thought in Vietnam, and the influence of Confucian educational thought on Vietnamese society (Chi & Le, 2003; Van, et al., 2019).

The characteristics of Confucian education have created a tradition of studiousness and respect for teachers of the Vietnamese people, but Confucian conceptions and educational methods have also left very heavy “successes” education in Vietnam today (San, 2010; Luong & Van, 2020; Van, 2020).

The study of Confucian thought in history allows us to critically evaluate the achievements of Confucianism under the feudal dynasties of Vietnam, and at the same time point out the limitations of this ideology. Researching and discovering the advantages and limitations of Confucianism in history helps us to recognize and evaluate the influence of this ideology on current Vietnamese education. From there, recommendations and suggestions for the development direction of Vietnamese education in the present and in the future.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Studying Confucian classics such as: “Tứ Thư” (The four sets of books containing the philosophy of Confucianism are: “Đại học”, “Trung dung”, “Luận ngữ” và “Mạnh-tử”); “Ngũ Kinh” (consists of five works: “Kinh hi”, “Kinh thư”, “Kinh lễ”, “Kinh dịch” và “Kinh Xuân Thu”. According to legend, these five volumes were all drafted by Confucius and edited).

Study some typical research works of researchers specializing in Confucianism such as Tran Trong Kim, Tran Van Giao, Phan Ke Binh, Gian Chi, Nguyen Hien Le, etc.

Study some typical books written on the thought of Confucianism on education, which highlights the positive values as well as the limitations in Confucian educational thought.

Research on a number of master theses and doctoral theses on Confucian educational thought, its values, and limitations, and its value to educational innovation in Vietnam today.

The article also uses specialized and interdisciplinary research methods such as Logic, historical, analytical, synthesis, systematization, generalization, etc.

The article also applies the research methodology of dialectical materialism; Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam; policies and laws of the Vietnamese state on education in the context of globalization and international integration.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Confucian thought on education in Vietnam

About the concept of education: Confucianists all believe that education is a way to direct people to noble qualities such as benevolence, righteousness, ceremony, wisdom, and faith. Those are the standard values of people in feudal society. Education is necessary for everyone, so everyone has the opportunity to learn. Education is the most effective tool and the shortest way to train a class of people to rule and dominate society according to feudal ideology (Giau, 1993); Van, 2020). That's the class of warriors. Through education, the Confucians also wanted to spread the feudal

ideology of the ruling class to permeate all strata of society (especially for the ruled class) and occupy a unique position to ensure stabilize the social order at that time.

Regarding the object of education: In the Analects book, Confucius wrote: “Education does not distinguish between the rich and the low, the high and the low) (Lan, 1998, p.588). This thought of Confucius in particular and of Confucianism, in general, wants to affirm equality in education for all people, regardless of high or low. Confucianism not only considers the aristocracy and ruling class to be the object of education and training, but the common people and ordinary people are also the objects of education and training. Confucius said: “For those who bring offerings to learn from a bunch of spring rolls or more, I have never denied anyone or taught them” (Lan, 1998, p.347). This is the progressive thought of Confucius, demonstrating his saving of humanity. In his era, class division and social injustice were irreparable, he always wanted to create new and progressive factors in order to gradually reform the old social institution. Confucius' point of view on education and training is to realize this ambition. Therefore, the main object of education of Confucianism in general and Confucius, in particular, is to train people of the ruling class; train people of a different class but can supplement the ruling class; train the people to know “ethics” (ethics). Therefore, there were also many people who came from the lower class, thanks to their studies, they became mandarins, enjoyed benefits, and were allowed to stand in the ruling class.

Regarding educational goals: Most Confucians believe that the overarching purpose of education is to create people who can adapt to social conditions and perform the right positions, roles, responsibilities, and duties its part. Confucianism has given some specific goals of education as follows:

- First, education is to form the ideal personality.
- Second, education is to train mandarins to help the country.
- Third, education is to show the bright virtues, to reach the good.

Thus, it can be said that the main purpose of education from the point of view of Confucianism is to train ideal people who are perfect in both morality, personality as well as knowledge, and lifestyle. Those people are the ideal pillars that Confucianists still expect.

Regarding educational content: In the face of the historical and socio-economic situation of the Spring and Autumn period - Warring States period in ancient China, there were many changes with many great upheavals, especially in terms of human morality. Confucianism advocated the education of “the way to be a person” for everyone, that is, through education that trains people

who need and conform to the requirements of the ruling class, who always think and act according to ethical standards and codes.

If Confucius focused on education: benevolence, wisdom, courage, ceremony, etc. then Tuan Tu - a student of Confucius who lived mainly in the Warring States period emphasized the role of sacrifice and music in educating people. that character has the most profound connotation. It is considered the basic moral principle to define human nature and establish relationships between people in the family and society. This is profound content, which has the effect of educating people and helping people towards good values.

On educational methods: Methods of scholastic and dogmatic education. Each month, the teacher assigns a number of teaching days; At that time, students went to the lecture hall to listen to the teacher explain the meaning of the Four Books and the Five Classics. Each month, each quarter has a number of writing sessions. When the teacher finished grading, the students gathered together to present and give grades according to 4 categories: superior, average, secondary, and listed (Binh, 2005). Children who are just starting to learn are taught immediately meaningless sentences. Children must learn by heart; When I grow up at a young age, I study literature, (couplets, verses), etc. mainly studying foreign stories (Trung & Van, 2020). It can be said that, from going to school to taking the exam, students have to practice according to the Confucian framework, and study Confucian classics and the history of the Northern dynasties. For the Confucian class, being a mandarin is the highest ideal; all of their reason, emotions, and behavior must follow the “religion of the sage”. That type of training, of course, restricts the mind to think independently, suffocating the critical reason of people (Vu Hong 2022). From the above analysis, it can be seen that the educational methods of Confucianism in Vietnam stand out in the following contents:

- First, is the method of knowing how to classify students.
- Second, is the method of combining learning with practice, learning with thinking.
- Third, the method values the self-discipline and efforts of learners.
- Fourth, the method of establishing relationships in the learning process, which is the relationship between learners, between teachers and students, teaching and learning.
- Fifth, is the method of “reviewing the old to know the new”.
- Sixth, the method “set an example”.

It can be said that Confucianism has given very specific and practical methods to help students acquire knowledge and constantly improve themselves. It also enriches the contents of

educational thought, which is of great significance to not only learners but also teachers and educational activities in general.

Regarding the role and position of the teacher in the educational process: Confucian scholars also discussed the role of the teacher in education. According to Confucianism, a teacher is a guide for students to self-study. The process of teaching and learning is a process of exchange between teachers and students, helping students to have the knowledge and take the initiative to be able to cope in all situations.

A teacher not only has profound knowledge to teach his students, but in order to have good students, he needs to have good moral character and qualities to set an example for his students to follow (Vu Hong, 2022). The teacher's personality has a strong persuasion on learners, learners will look at the teacher's example and believe that what the teacher teaches is the truth, the right and good things (Giau, 1993; Van, 2020).

Thus, from the point of view of Confucianism, the teacher plays a very important role in the educational process (Chu, 1998). The teacher not only has the role of orienting the student but also helps the student to abandon evil, and accumulate good, towards good values of morality and personality. Therefore, it can be said that in order for education to be truly effective, the role of the teacher is indispensable.

3.2. Characteristics of Vietnamese education today

Vietnamese revolutionary education was born in September 1945, mobilized, and developed in association with the stages of the Vietnamese revolution under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam. In each period of revolutionary history, the Communist Party of Vietnam has promptly raised the main viewpoints, guidelines, and practical solutions to education. Education has the mission of raising people's intellectual level, developing human resources, fostering talents, making an important contribution to the development of the country, and building the culture and people of Vietnam (Trung & Van, 2020).

The 1992 Constitution was born to meet the requirements of the *doi moi* process in Vietnam. The new constitution marks an important milestone in education policy. The 1992 Constitution (amended and supplemented in 2001) defines the goals of education policy as (Article 35): “The State and society develop education in order to improve people's knowledge, train human resources, and foster talents. The goal of education is to form and foster the personality, qualities, and capabilities of citizens; to train skilled, dynamic, and creative workers who have national pride,

morality, and the will to rise up to contribute to making the people rich and strong, meeting the requirements of the construction and protect the country”.

According to the provisions of Article 10, Decree 05/2011/ND-CP, the current educational development policy in Vietnam includes:

Developing education in ethnic minority areas according to the national common program; formulating educational policies at all educational levels suitable to ethnic characteristics;

To develop preschools, general schools, boarding schools for ethnic minorities, semi-boarding schools for ethnic minorities, continuing education centers, community learning centers, vocational schools, and university preparatory schools; study the form of multidisciplinary university-level training for children of ethnic minorities in order to accelerate the training of human resources for the period of industrialization and modernization of the country and international integration;

Prescribing specific and appropriate conditions and measures to support pupils and students who are ethnic minorities; settle accommodation, scholarships, and loans during the study period in accordance with the training occupations and residential areas of ethnic minority students.

Developing education together with science and technology is the leading national policy; An investment in education is an investment in development. To fundamentally and comprehensively renovate education according to the development needs of society; improve the quality of education according to the requirements of standardization, modernization, socialization, democratization, and international integration, effectively serving the cause of national construction and defense. Promote the building of a learning society, creating opportunities and conditions for all citizens to have lifelong learning (Communist Party of Vietnam, vol 1, 2021).

The educational objective is to train Vietnamese people to develop comprehensively, with morality, knowledge, health, aesthetics, and profession, loyal to the ideals of national independence and socialism; forming and foster the personality, quality, and capacity of citizens, meeting the requirements of national construction and defense and international integration (National Assembly, 2019). Vietnamese education is a socialist education with a people, nation, science, and modern character, taking Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought as the foundation and guideline for action.

Educational activities must be carried out according to the principle of learning coupled with practice, education combined with productive labor, the theory associated with the practice,

school education combined with family education, and social education. association (Hac 1994). The educational content is comprehensive, practical, modern, and systematic; attaches importance to ideological education and civic consciousness; preserves and promotes the traditions and cultural identity of mankind; suitable for the psychophysiological development of the learners' ages (Hang & Van 2020). The educational method is to promote the positivity, self-discipline, initiative, and creativity of learners; foster self-study ability, passion for learning, and the will to rise.

The educational program is concretized into textbooks and curricula, suitable to the educational goals of each educational level, level, and level of training, ensuring stability and consistency. The national education system includes preschool education; general education (primary level from grade 1 to grade 5; middle school from grade 1 to grade 9; high school from grade 10 to grade 12); vocational education (including professional secondary and vocational training); higher education (including 2 levels: college and university); postgraduate education (including master's and doctoral degrees). There are formal and non-formal education methods. Diplomas in the national education system include diplomas of primary, secondary, high school, professional intermediate, vocational, college, university, master, and doctorate. Certificates of the national education system are granted to learners to confirm their learning results after being trained and fostered to improve their academic and professional qualifications.

3.3. Some influences of Confucian thought on education on Vietnamese education today

Positive influence

Confucian thought on education has positive aspects for Vietnam's educational cause today, specifically as follows:

First, regarding the concept of education, Confucianism has advocated “righteousness without exception” (anyone can be educated). It can be said that this is the policy of popularizing education in Vietnam today. That perspective has transcended caste and status in society to contribute to bringing the cause of human education to all classes and classes in society. Also from this point of view, Confucianism broke the privileges of mandarins and aristocrats, making education universal.

Second, for educational purposes, Confucianism has recognized the important and decisive role of education in the general development of society. Therefore, the purpose of education from the point of view of Confucianism is very correct and practical (Van, 2020; Van, 2021).

Third, in terms of educational content, mainly human education. Confucianism aims at teaching people how to govern the country with the important purpose of training virtuous and talented people to supplement the mandarin team. That has made each learner have a sense of responsibility, a will to strive, and always respect the spirit, honor, morality, and temperament.

Fourth, in terms of educational methods, there are many positive and progressive points. Confucianists have given very specific methods such as teaching from far to near, from easy to difficult, depending on each subject, different teaching methods are applied, combining learning and thinking, and practice, promote the consciousness and creativity of learners, combining teachers and students in education, etc.

In addition to the method of learning combined with practice, Confucian education also refers to the method of inspiring learners, the dialogue between the teacher and the learner, and between the learner and the learner also has the effect of maximizing the learning. dynamic and creative features of learners. This is a process of interaction and mutual learning between teachers and learners, between learners and learners, not just passive, one-way reception as today. Inheriting this lesson for the current educational method will contribute to creating a class of people who actively adapt to the market mechanism and meet the practical needs of the country.

In traditional education in the spirit of Confucianism, there is a method that is extremely important for Vietnamese education today, which is the method of setting an example. This method is especially important because it has a strong impact on the learner's consciousness through the teacher's own example. The teacher is not only a person who imparts knowledge but also a shining example of moral cultivation for students to follow. Thereby, laying the basis for traditional education in human education and training.

In the current situation of Vietnam, when the manifestations of deterioration of moral qualities of a part of the teaching staff are increasing, the research back to traditional education, understanding and applying Using the example method is very necessary and meaningful. Confucian education also demonstrates the tireless learning spirit of Confucius (Giau, 1993; Lan, 1998). The teacher is always a shining example for the students to follow and look forward to. The teacher, in addition to cultivating himself in terms of morality, cultivates the qualities of a teacher. Teachers not only constantly improve their qualifications but update new achievements and results in their major to convey to students. The teacher also aims to inspire the learners, demonstrating the

relentless learning spirit of Confucius. The educational method of Confucianism has left valuable lessons for Vietnamese education today.

3.4. Negative influence

Despite many positive factors, Confucian views on education still have negative effects on Vietnam's education today. Specifically:

The learning direction of Confucianism is towards the old life, the ancient people, and the old things. If you have a problem, you have to find out if the “*tiên vương*” (the kings of the previous generation), “*tiên thánh*” (the sage of the previous generation), and “*tiên hiền*” (talented people of the previous generation) which problem raised and how to solve it. In our country, until the middle of the 19th century, some Confucianists went to France to talk about “vehicles without people pushing and running”, “lamps that don't need anyone to burn which burn brightly”, etc. are all considered strange and mythical things. deeply ingrained in the learning habits of the old society. Up to now, that antiquated influence still causes many obstacles to intellectual development on the way of development. For new things, just review the old carefully and deeply, it is possible to know (Giang, 2003). From Confucius, Mencius to later Confucianists, people keep “*ôn cổ đi*” and “*ôn cổ lại*” (relearning the old things over and over again). Their way of learning is repetition, repetition, memorization like a “parrot”, remembrance, and upstairs, even if they don't understand it, it's okay. The content of the lesson must be recited for months, years, or decades. Those who do not understand are due to poor academic qualifications.

Today, that way of memorizing (the Vietnamese have an idiom “*học vẹt*”) is still encouraged and applied to young people, to the masses. If you go back to the ancient, the better, the more “*tập kỳ đại thành*” work, the better. If you combine many, many achievements of the ancients, what is in the present and in the future can also be properly known and can be done successfully. Many people still believe in the practice of “*ôn cổ tri tân*” and believe that combining the good, the morals, and the doctrines, will definitely achieve the perfect things in this world.

In fact, Confucianism has always been vicious, not escaping from the “unchangeable” frameworks of the old society. Learning by “revisiting” (relearning the old knowledge of the predecessors of Confucianism, mainly the “Four Books” and “The Five Classics”) is both cramming carefully, for sure, for fit, for much, giving all kinds of things that are beneficial to themselves, thought and said by others. After learning, teach those who do not know. The teaching method is the same as the “review”. Just like that, the generation of magicians is exactly the same

as the next generation of students, the generation of students who have finished their studies will become the same narrator for the next generation of students. By such “narrative”, development and creativity are very poor. Dynasty after dynasty, generation after generation, but only “add” or “reduce” a little bit of the thought of “sage”. Today, Confucian thought on education still has certain consequences in education due to the “modest” way of learning of previous Confucians.

The very limited ideas of Confucianism on education, it has greatly affected the education of Vietnam and caused many negative effects on educational activities. That is specifically expressed as follows:

First, regarding the concept of education, although education is considered equal for everyone, education distinguishes different types of people.

Second, for educational purposes, Confucianism always underestimates the cognitive ability of the lower classes compared to Mandarin and aristocrats. Therefore, the purpose of educating them is to obey and listen to those in authority. This is the ideological platform for the ruling class in society.

Third, in terms of educational content, although promoting moral education in the social context at that time was very important and necessary, it was not enough, more idealistic than today. real. The content of education again separates education from the production of material wealth. That view has shown that the Confucianist's oriented people in one direction, upholding the role of the spiritual factor, away from material activities and natural reclamation activities. Therefore, the content of Confucian education is not really complete, not pay attention to the education of knowledge about natural sciences, production, and farming techniques for people.

Fourthly, in terms of educational methods, the most obvious limitation is that despite the policy of applying a method to promote the positivity, initiative, and creativity of learners, the Confucianists have limited their creativity. created in a predefined framework. That has made the educational methods of Confucianism, although very advanced, not really radical.

4. CONCLUSION

Confucianism is a socio-political theory dating back to ancient times, Confucian thought of Confucius affects all aspects of social life, in which it has a significant influence on the education

of people in feudal society. Confucianism is still affecting the lives of every citizen in modern Vietnamese society.

The concept that all people living in society must “tu thân” and be equal in morality is still valid in the education and training of people today. Therefore, in the cause of education and training in our country today, in addition to equipping and improving people's knowledge and understanding of science and technology, and improving their understanding of the world, it is necessary to focus on moral education as both a prerequisite and a long-term goal in human training strategies.

It is obvious that Confucian education cannot continue as it has in this day and age. But what to remove, keep, and improve is something to consider and choose carefully. Because surely we will still have to continue to study and decipher the reasons for the success of this educational philosophy.

While lacking a lot of educational conditions such as books, schools, teachers, and methods of knowledge transmission, there are no theories of educational science, a simple and even crude training model. But why did Confucian education over a long period of time produce many talented people, great educators, contribute to society with decent salaries and have a great influence on the social development of the country? so?

We are also fully aware of the downsides and weaknesses of academic education, but perhaps within these limitations, there are still elements that cannot be overlooked. For example, the knowledge of the place, to the place of things, is sometimes considered to be books, dogma, ruminating on old knowledge, lacking in applicability, etc. It is also a lesson for adjusting our programs and goals. Because, if you want to criticize, improve or change something, you still need to know it thoroughly to make an accurate decision. This is still a matter of science, not just a matter of behavior.

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