

On the Basic Role in Etiquette Education to Enhance Cultural Confidence

Wu Wei, Nie Xiangming

Wuhan University, Wuhan, China

Keywords: Traditional Culture, National Confidence, Etiquette, Higher Education

Abstract: Chinese traditional culture is the key to increase national cohesion. Among them, etiquette culture, as one of the important carriers of Chinese tradition, presents the Chinese nation's confidence and dignified bearing; it continues the influence as well as value of Chinese history. Contemporary higher education not only undertakes the responsibility of teaching professional knowledge, but also should cultivate high-quality talents with good manners. This paper is based on the need to promote excellent traditional culture, and combined with practical teaching experience, it intends to start from the historical process of modern etiquette culture; the relationship between etiquette education and cultural confidence; and how to construct a more systematic etiquette education among schools. It aims to drive the young generation to focus on traditional culture, so that they would inherit national spirit, and inject new vitality into it.

1. New Connotation of Modern Etiquette Culture

For nearly 2,700 years, from 770 BC to 1911 AD, feudal rituals prevailed. The Han Dynasty was an important period for the formation of feudal etiquette in China. Dong Zhongshu of the Western Han Dynasty advocated "dethroning all schools of thought and respecting Confucianism", which was adopted by Emperor Wudi of Han. Under the guidance of Confucianism, the "feudal ethics" which restrained the feudal society of China came into being. [1] Although the constraints on moral ethics and codes of conduct are conducive to stabilizing social order and maintaining state rule, in the long run, such "feudal ethics" are designed to serve the rulers, and the hierarchy is strict. The rule of "King and minister of heaven and earth are close to teachers" seriously interferes with individual spiritual freedom and becomes a kind of shackle. With the development and change of the society, the feudal etiquette has been unable to meet the needs of the society.

The victory of the Revolution of 1911 liberated people from the feudal ethics. With the establishment of the Republic of China, etiquette also entered a new stage with the development. The feudal culture was gradually eliminated, and equality, respect and self-reliance became the new stage content.

For individuals, good conduct can achieve twice the result with half the effort.. For society, etiquette makes good order. During the same period, many provinces and regions in China started to solicit opinions from female schools on the etiquette law in their self-cultivation courses, in an effort to form a more unified national standard for citizens to abide by in daily life. In the areas with more developed education, such as Kiangsu province in China, etiquette practice assessment has

been advocated since primary school.[2] Because young students will one day take the leading role of nation-building, a new generation with good manner can lay the foundation for a peaceful social order. Starting from education, students should pay great attention to their personal deportment and manners, so that more sound citizens could be formed in the future, and the country's civilization would be promoted. Besides, etiquette always plays vital role in social environment from daily entertainment to national management. In 1924, the Republic of China issued the Popular Etiquette Draft, which mainly contains three parts: Wedding, Funeral, and Ritual with 49 specific etiquette items.[3] Before long, the Instructions of this Draft was also issued. [4] The release of the draft further formalizes and systemizes etiquette from the official level, and lays a foundation for the etiquette norms of various activities.

Qian Mu, the famous Chinese historian, attaches great importance to the development of Chinese excellent traditional culture in his whole life, and especially puts the ritual culture in the core position, and appraises it as "a kind of primitive scholarship". He points out that "ritual" is the essence and core of Chinese culture, which is quite different from that in the West. Western etiquette culture is usually a custom differentiated according to ethnic or regional differences. The customs and languages of various countries and localities represent different cultures and are diverse. Chinese etiquette is the inheritance of 5,000 years of traditional culture, the central spirit of which transcends the differences of diverse nationalities and regions, and has a brand influence on every Chinese. In a word, etiquette is generally higher than politeness, and contains more extensive content. As communication rules, it is mainly used to express acceptance and respect between individuals, groups or officials today. Etiquette is not only a standard procedure of life, but also a perceptual interaction, which reflects the inner cultivation of individuals and adjusts various social relations.

In 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded, the etiquette revolution brought more equal and friendly atmosphere. However, in general, self-discipline and respect for others is a mutable principle. People's observance of etiquette represents the overall interests of the country and society. Etiquette can coordinates social contradictions, stabilizes social order and shapes personality. Cultural confidence is conducive to the improvement of the comprehensive national strength. It is the full affirmation and active practice of the cultural values of a nation, and the firm belief in the vitality of Chinese own culture. Etiquette is an important symbol of a country or a nation's social style, moral standard, degree of civilization, cultural characteristics and citizen quality. The strength of a country should start from the national spiritual quality. Modern etiquette refers to people's externalization and a certain degree of stylized norms. It is a kind of communication language for equal communication, conveying the message of friendship and respect, and striving to express the most authentic feelings and purposes efficiently.

2. Cultural Confidence in Etiquette Education

The influence of Chinese traditional culture on modern etiquette should not be underestimated. First, Chinese traditional culture is the foundation of modern Chinese etiquette and the necessary prerequisite for its formation. Among the six traditional Chinese arts, "Rites and Music", "rites" ranks first, which fully demonstrates the importance Chinese people have attached to the etiquette tradition since ancient times. The Three Character Classic says that children should start learning etiquette for different occasions at an early age. In historical records, there is no shortage of "ancient teachings" and "rules" about the daily etiquette of food, clothing, housing and behavior. For example, in interpersonal communication, in different relationships, how to address each other, how to properly stand, welcome and send. When eating, how to distinguish between old and young, do not lose self-cultivation, such practice is called "food ceremony". Traditional etiquette continues to

this day. In modern social communication, everyone wants to be elegant and polite, so as to leave a good impression on each other and enhance communication. A person's cultivation is shown by his manners. It is commonly believed that a person's moral character is directly reflected in his manner and attitude towards life. Second, Chinese traditional culture and modern etiquette complement each other and promote each other, playing an indispensable role in the formation of individual or group ideal character. Xunzi once said, "When people are not rude, societies are not rude, the country would not be in chaos." In modern society, the principle is also applicable. People's decent etiquette not only reflects the internal cultivation of individuals, but also stands for the overall quality of the nation. Therefore, learning to understand the contemporary etiquette culture, both inside and outside, is a compulsory course from ancient times to today.

Cultural confidence is related to a country's culture security and independence. [5] Cultural confidence is a more basic, extensive and profound confidence. History has proved that only with a high degree of cultural confidence can a nation be powerful to rise and innovate. On the contrary, if a nation fails to preserve its inherent culture, it would be easily to be conquered and assimilated. Thus, contemporary educational institutions should take a considerable responsibility as a repository for preserving culture and a hub for promoting it. National confidence is the driving force for national self-reliance, the modern ideas about national cultural confidence are equally applicable today. History can help inheriting fine traditional Chinese culture that are important to national security and independence. Etiquette, as one of the important carriers of traditional history, serves as the function of inheriting excellent Chinese culture and enhancing a nation's confidence.

Chinese etiquette culture illustrates the cultural confidence in practice. In various exchanges, it reflects the level of national civilization and influences the strength of a country's cultural soft power. First, as a part of the essence of traditional culture, it clearly guides the development of cultural construction and imperceptibly shapes the core value of the people. Also, it also provides cultural experience for other nations, and consolidates the position of Chinese culture in the world culture. In addition, in the cultural competition and exchange, accurate cultural expression is conducive to the spread of Chinese excellent culture, actively grasp the power of cultural discourse, and do a good job in the external communication of Chinese excellent culture. In today's world where various ideas of thought are mixed, for strengthening cultural confidence, building socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is vital to the national rejuvenation, and the connection between China and the World.

3. Suggestions for Etiquette Education

Etiquette bears the responsibility to cultivate talents from higher education. College students will also become the promoters and disseminators of socialist spiritual civilization. They will not only contribute to the construction of their own spiritual civilization awards, but also bring Chinese culture into international exchanges. At present, the problems of etiquette culture education in colleges and universities mainly lies in the following two points: one, schools generally do not pay enough attention to etiquette literacy education, the setting of relevant courses and teachers have not been systematically refined; another, the purpose of teaching in colleges and universities is utilitarian, emphasizing applicability rather than spiritual quality, hence, students can only learn etiquette superficially. Combined with the actual teaching needs, the construction of etiquette education should note the following three main points.

First, grasp the theme and strengthen the study of excellent traditional culture. As an important part of the world etiquette culture, with the acceleration of the pace of globalization, Chinese culture is interacting with various cultures in the world. Before the introduction of special etiquette, it is suggested to conduct a detailed review of the definition of etiquette concept and the historical

process of etiquette culture at home and abroad from the historical perspective, so as to lay a solid foundation for promoting excellent etiquette culture. Seriously taking etiquette education in colleges and universities is helpful to strengthen the dual training of talents' specialized knowledge and mentality, so as to make their development more comprehensive and multi-dimensional. Nowadays, it is common to see the group of youngsters who are spoiled in professional knowledge, but also trapped in it without etiquette. In order to reduce the occurrence of the unbalance situation, it is important to organically combine the professional education, ideological study and etiquette culture education according to the actual needs in the University.

Second, strive to achieve the improvement of etiquette teaching methods and textbook content innovation. On the basis of inheriting good traditional morality, etiquette teaching courses should be close to life and enhance practicability. Teaching method with diversity is needed to avoid boring and serious indoctrination. In addition, making full use of the development of science and technology to give etiquette new connotation can enhance the interest of class, so as to attract students' attention in etiquette courses. In the provision of teachers and textbooks, professional teachers with rich experience in etiquette culture education should be matched with professional etiquette textbooks to provide convenience for classroom teaching and practice. Secondly, the teaching methods should be flexible and rich, combining examples with practice, making abstract knowledge easy to understand, stimulating the creativity of new forces, strengthening the responsibility of the young generation for building a harmonious society, and truly realizing the continuous development of traditional Chinese culture.

Thirdly, educators are supposed to be self-cultivated and emerged to a well established educational atmosphere. Cultural confidence is a nation's positive mental state. A high degree of cultural confidence is a prerequisite for a nation to display the cultural innovation and to be able to confidently step forward.[5] In order to fully achieve the educational effect, teachers should be serious about their own behavior during teaching process. Therefore, the university educators shoulder the significant responsibility to be a role model for the young generation to be abided by the etiquette. What's more, teachers should be fully prepared both their physically and mentally, and contribute to timely update their knowledge, and imperceptibly influence the students.

Taking etiquette as the carrier, integrating Chinese excellent traditional culture into it, and absorbing the essence of foreign countries could be conducive to tell the story of Chinese culture to the international community, and enhance the country's soft power competitiveness. With the national rejuvenation, strengthening the international discourse and safeguarding national security are bound to effectively convey China's voice, shape China's image which would contribute China's wisdom to constantly promote world peace as well as development. To sum up, contemporary higher education should produce talents who not only own professional knowledge and skills, but also represent elegant gentility. In short, college etiquette education has a long way to go, and it still needs continuous progress in practice, so as to build a firm base for modern China cultural education.

References

- [1] "Etiquette Hall Planned by the Ministry of Rites ", *Shen Bao Newspaper*, Shanghai: *Shenbao Newspaper Hall*, March 1906, 3rd edition.
- [2] Ma Y. L., "Chronicle of the Conference on the Examination of Manners and Practices", *Jiangdu Education*, Jiangsu: *Jiangdu County Education Bureau*, 1934, No.4, p.1.
- [3] *Draft of the Popular Etiquette of the Republic of China*, *Tsinghua Weekly*, Beijing: *Tsinghua University School Press*, 1924, No. 323, pp. 22-25.
- [4] *Instructions for the Draft of the Popular Etiquette of the Republic of China*, " *Tsinghua Weekly*, Beijing: *Tsinghua School Press*, 1924, No. 323, pp. 26-28.
- [5] Ren L. X., *People's Daily*, 2022, p. 9.

[6] Liu, Y. Y, *Carrying forward the Traditional Culture of the Chinese Nation and Building the Roots of Cultural Confidence*, *The Curriculum Education Research-Learning Teaching Method Research*, 2016, No. 30.