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## ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫЕ КАНОНЫ КОНФУЦИАНСТВА И КУЛЬТУРА ЧТЕНИЯ СТУДЕНТОВ СОВРЕМЕННЫХ КИТАЙСКИХ УНИВЕРСИТЕТОВ

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**Аннотация.** Рассматриваются образовательные каноны традиционного конфуцианства (изменение образования в соответствии с индивидуальными потребностями, образование для всех, сочетание образования с удовольствием, просвещение и наставление, баланс между обучением, мышлением и действием, возвращение к прошлому для открытия нового) и их роль в развитии культуры чтения представителей студенчества. Анализируется культура чтения студентов современных китайских университетов. Обозначаются наиболее острые проблемы в сфере улучшения интеллектуальных способностей обучающихся и их навыков работы с информацией. Предлагаются и обосновываются стратегии совершенствования культуры чтения студентов, заключающиеся в использовании сочинений конфуцианской педагогической классики в качестве образцов для формирования навыков их интерпретации в контексте культурных традиций и нравственных императивов учения Конфуция, а также в адаптации образовательных канонов конфуцианства к современным задачам развития коммуникативных технологий образования.

**Ключевые слова:** образовательные каноны конфуцианства; культура чтения; традиции и инновации в развитии культуры чтения студентов современных китайских университетов; коммуникативные технологии в структуре университетского образования.

## CONFUCIAN EDUCATIONAL CANONS AND THE READING CULTURE OF MODERN CHINESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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**Abstract.** The traditional Confucian educational canons (modifying education according to individual needs, education for all, combining education with enjoyment, enlightening and instructing, balancing learning, thinking and action, revisiting the past to discover the new) and their role in the development of students' reading culture are considered. The reading culture of modern Chinese university students is analysed. Such strategies for improving students' reading culture, as the use of Confucian pedagogical classics as models for the formation of skills of their interpretation in the context of cultural traditions and moral imperatives of Confucius' teachings, the adaptation of Confucian educational canons to modern tasks of development of communicative technologies of education, are proposed and substantiated.

**Keywords:** Confucian educational canons; reading culture; traditions and innovations in the development of reading culture of modern Chinese university students; communicative technologies in the structure of university education.

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## Introduction

At a time of increasing globalisation and informatisation, the field of education is facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. This is especially noticeable in China where in the context of rapid economic development and profound social changes the higher education system is undergoing a major transformation. In this case, the integration of traditional educational philosophy and modern educational technology is particularly important. Confucian educational thought, as an important part of traditional Chinese culture, its profound educational philosophy and rich teaching methods are of great significance in guiding the reading culture of modern university students.

The purpose of this article is to explore how the basic Confucian education canons can adapt to and guide the development of reading culture for contemporary Chinese university students. The article reviews the core canons of Confucian education, including modifying education according to individual needs, education for all, combining education with enjoyment and analyses the application of these canons in modern education. Also, the paper examines the current reading

status of Chinese university students through empirical research, revealing their characteristics and problems in reading habits, reading motivation and reading choices. On this basis, a series of innovative methods and strategies, aiming to promote the overall enhancement of university students' reading culture through the modern interpretation of Confucian educational norms are proposed. In addition, the role of modern media technologies, especially online platforms, in disseminating Confucian educational ideas and promoting students' reading is explored. On the basis of analysis of cases of educational practices in the new media environment, this paper demonstrates how modern technological means can be effectively used to integrate the wisdom of Confucian education into the daily lives of university students, thereby fostering their humanistic qualities and sense of social responsibility. In summary, this article not only provides a practical guidance for the application of Confucian educational thought in modern education, but also offers new ideas for promoting the innovative development of Chinese higher education.

### Reading culture as the most important component of education in the context of Confucian traditions

During the Spring and Autumn period in ancient China, the revered thinker and educator Confucius laid the foundation for what would become the Confucian educational philosophy. At that time, Confucius found himself in a country marked by turmoil and social upheaval. Against this challenging backdrop, he formulated the core tenets of Confucianism, aiming to reconstruct social order and revive a society grounded in proper rituals and etiquette.

Main to Confucianism are principles that emphasise human-centredness, moral development and values, such as benevolence and loyalty. Confucius firmly believed that education played a pivotal role in societal progress. He considered it one of the three fundamental pillars for effective governance, alongside the labour force and the economy [1, p. 43–44]. Beyond his political contributions, Confucius wholeheartedly dedicated himself to innovating and implementing educational ideas that would shape generations to come.

The development of Confucian educational thought gradually enriched and refined over time. It encompasses various aspects related to education, including its purpose, teaching and learning methods, moral education and the relationship of teacher and student.

**Purpose and role of education.** Confucianism places profound emphasis on the social role of education. As one of the earliest educators, Confucius engaged in discussions about the intricate relationship between education, politics and the economy. He identified the following fundamental conditions for effective gover-

nance: the labour force, wealth and education [1, p. 139]. Moreover, another influential thinker Mencius asserted that moral and ethical teachings, disseminated through education, wield greater impact and importance than state laws and punishments. While the latter merely prevents shamelessness, the former instills not only a sense of shame, but also noble qualities in individuals [1, p. 156].

Confucian scholars delved into the role of education in human development by closely examining human nature and its connection to learning. Confucius himself affirmed the pivotal role of education in personal growth. In practical educational endeavors, Confucian thinkers consistently emphasised the purpose of education. According to Confucius, education should cultivate scholars or gentlemen. His student Zixia succinctly summarised this educational purpose as learning for self-improvement, leading to an official post.

**Teaching and learning.** Confucianism typically breaks down the teaching process into the following interconnected stages: learning, reflection and practice [1, p. 1]. These stages occur under the guidance of teachers and reflect Confucian awareness of pedagogical principles. Since Confucius' time, many educators have delved into learning methods and tailored teaching approaches accordingly. They stressed that teaching methods should align with effective learning methods, teachers playing a guiding role during students' learning process [2, p. 205].

Confucian teaching emphasises providing guidance to students. Requirements include the following aspects:

- open-mindedness and eagerness to learn. Confucius encouraged students to approach learning with sincerity and seriousness, adopting an attitude of knowing what you know and admitting what you do not know. He urged students to ask questions and maintain an open mind even in the face of difficulties [1, p. 22];
- focused attention. Drawing from the example of learning chess, Mencius emphasised concentration during the learning process. Dong Zhongshu was so dedicated to learning that he did not even look out of the window at the garden for three years [3, p. 39];
- perseverance. Mencius likened learning to digging a well, emphasising the need for unwavering persistence. Even if one digs a deep well without finding water, giving up would render previous efforts futile [4, p. 39];
- application of knowledge. Confucius believed that learning should extend beyond accumulating knowledge. Practical application, problem-solving and value creation were essential. This efficient learning approach enhances understanding and mastery of acquired knowledge [1, p. 1].

**Moral education and self-cultivation.** Confucian educational thought centres on moral education. According to Confucius, individuals can pursue higher levels of art and scholarship only when grounded in morali-

ty. He emphasised that true scholarly pursuits become feasible only after fulfilling daily practical responsibilities. The Confucian educational system places moral education at its core, distinguishing it from Western educational traditions [5, p. 200].

Confucian moral education involves the following stages: knowledge, emotion, intention and action. Confucius required students to possess moral cognition, understanding benevolence and propriety. Simultaneously, he emphasised cultivating moral sentiments, enabling individuals to distinguish between good and evil and fostering benevolence. Additionally, Confucianism pointed out nurturing moral willpower and habitual behaviour. Confucius urged students to prioritise the perfection of the way (dao) even to the point of sacrificing their lives for virtue. He said: «Having heard the truth in the morning, one can die content in the evening»<sup>1</sup> [1, p. 35]. The Confucian tradition underscores the unity of knowledge and action evaluating an individual's moral cultivation not solely based on words but also on practical deeds. Therefore, Confucian moral education emphasises the principle of aligning knowledge with action. With the continuous development of Confucianism, a human-centred ideological and theoretical system was gradually formed, and in the course of continuous educational practice the unique educational guidelines of Confucianism gradually took shape.

### The basic Confucian educational canons

**Modifying education according to individual needs.** Teaching students according to their aptitude is a very important Confucian educational canon which focuses on specialised and targeted education based on the individual differences of students. Since there are differences among people, education should be implemented from a practical point of view, and different education methods should be adopted for different individuals. For example, when students asked what is benevolence Confucius gave different answers according to their qualifications and character. To his favourite student Yan Yuan he replied: «Through self-restraint one's words and deeds are in line with the requirements of propriety thus attaining the realm of benevolence» [1, p. 127]. Also Confucius explained: «Do not look at, do not listen to, do not talk about and do not do anything that does not conform to propriety!» [1, p. 127]. To a good student Zhong Gong he prodded: «Do not impose on others what you do not like» [1, p. 127]. To Fan Chi who was of average seniority and simple character Confucius replied «love for others» [1, p. 127]. The core of teaching according to the ability of the student is to teach flexibly according to each person's character, intellect, interests and according to different times and places, so as to accommodate the individual differences and needs of the students [6, p. 185–186].

**Education for all.** The principle of equality in education emphasises that all children whether clumsy or clever, rich or poor, rural or urban should enjoy the same right to education and equal conditions of study and further education. Confucius also put forward the concept of education for all. He believed that education should not be confined to the children of the nobility, but should be extended to all nationals [1, p. 300]. As a result, Confucius' disciples came from different countries, breaking down the national boundaries of the time. The practice of this educational philosophy broadened the social base of education and the source of talents, played a positive role in promoting the improvement of the quality of all members of society and embodied the simple spirit of equality in education. The implementation of this principle is a fundamental guarantee of the state's ability to cultivate talent and maintain social stability.

**Combining education with enjoyment.** In ancient times, combining education with enjoyment refers to moral education through music, so that students can feel the role of moral edification in the cultivation of music which is also a consistent educational idea of Confucianism. Confucius once said: «Music wraps the spiritual power of touching the heart through the beauty of the senses, reflecting the moral stance of praise or depreciation

<sup>1</sup>Here and further translated by us. – N. Z.

in the changes of tones and rhythms of rise and fall, staccato, and a lot of physical performances contain the ceremonial action of greeting and ascending to dance and music to convey morality and the beauty of human nature» [1, p. 257]. Whether it is the folk songs of the common people or the elegant music of the lords and aristocrats all of them have the intention of persuading people to be good and guiding them to aspire to a better future. In modern times, this concept stresses the fun and vividness of education, propaganda and ideological education are carried out through various enjoyable activities, such as watching films, listening to music, telling stories and learning to sing songs. The purpose is to create a happy, relaxed, interesting, democratic learning atmosphere and to improve the effectiveness of education with twice the effort.

**Enlightening and instructing.** Confucius believed that both the cultivation of morality and the learning of knowledge should be based on the conscious needs of students. He opposed mechanical learning and advocated inspirational teaching [1, p. 72]. Confucius said: «When the student has thought deeply but still cannot understand then enlighten him; when the student understands in his heart but cannot express himself clearly then enlighten him. If the student cannot deduce the other three aspects from the one given, do not continue to teach» [7, p. 86]. This means that before teaching the teacher should allow the student to think carefully. If the students have been thinking for a considerable time but still have not understood, the teacher can enlighten them; if the students have comprehended something but have failed to express it in appropriate words, they can be enlightened at that time. The teacher's inspiration should be based on the learners' thinking, and after the inspiration the learners should think again and gain further understanding.

**Balancing learning, thinking and action.** In Confucius' philosophy of education, balance is an important principle. Learning is the way and the only means of seeking knowledge. Confucius stressed the importance of learning, but he did not just emphasise the mechanical memorisation of knowledge; learning should be purposeful and meaningful, and the pursuit of true understanding and comprehension should be pursued. Thinking refers to contemplation which is in-depth thinking and reflection on what one has learned. Confucius believed that learning and thinking should be combined; learning is the basis for thinking, and thinking helps to deepen understanding. Therefore, learning and thinking should not be neglected and should be combined [1, p. 48]. Action means that action is the ultimate goal. Confucius pointed out the importance of applying what one has learned, and that action is the ultimate goal. Learning is not only about acquiring knowledge, but also about being able to apply what one has learned in real life [1, p. 301].

**Revisiting the past to discover the new.** This is a very practical educational guideline which means that new understanding and insights can be gained by reviewing what has been learned, and it also refers to reviewing history for new guidance for the present. For example, Confucius was good at playing the zither and had great attainments in music. Confucius' process of learning the zither was a winding. He learned the content of the music and the playing technique, explored the emotional meaning of the piece and probed into the humanistic spirit of the music's author [1, p. 17]. This is a step-by-step process which also confirms the learning method of learning from the past. This method of learning not only had its value in ancient times, but also applies nowadays. People's new knowledge and learning are often developed on the basis of what they have learned in the past.

### The development of the reading culture of modern Chinese university students

**The reading culture of contemporary Chinese university students.** Zhang Shumei, Wang Liming and Hu Haibo launched a sociological survey on the reading status of university students in the information age [8]. The results show that in terms of book selection 10.0 % of students focus on the practicality of reading, prefer to read professional books and are not interested in non-professional books, ignoring the improvement of their comprehensive ability; more than 70.0 % of students can do both; more than 10.0 % of students think that professional books are esoteric and boring, like to read non-professional books and are not interested in professional books, ignoring the enhancement of professionalism. The survey results also show that 81.35 % of students like to read comprehensive books, 37.10 % of students choose social science books, 33.73 % of students prefer natural science books,

18.45 % of students are more likely to read philosophical books, 14.88 % of students study the thoughts of K. Marx, V. I. Lenin and Mao Zedong. This shows that most of the students have a certain reading awareness, interest and a wide reading range. However, as the contents of books on philosophy, Marxism and thoughts of Mao Zedong are more theoretical, students cannot understand the contents of the books or even read them if they do not have a certain amount of patience and time which leads to their disinterest in these two types of books.

In terms of the choice of reading place the results of the survey show that most students like and are used to reading in libraries and dormitories. Only a small number of students have the consciousness of reading anytime and anywhere. They have not yet developed the habit of reading in parks, subways and other places.

Regarding the choice of reading time, the survey results show that 34.52 % of students read for less than 30 min a day, 46.63 % of students read for 30 min to 1 h a day, and 18.85 % of students read for more than 1 h a day. As students' concentration on reading is generally low, they are easily disturbed by external interference and cannot read patiently and persistently, resulting in shorter reading time and lower interest in reading every day.

In response to the question «Do you have your own reading plan?» – 34.96 % of students chose to have a reading plan, while 65.04 % of students did not have one, indicating that most of the students did not have the habit of making a reading plan. The results of the survey show that 18.18 % of students with a reading plan can read more than ten books in a term, and 15.34 % of these students can read five to ten books; 8.32 % of students without a reading plan can read more than ten books in a term, and 7.62 % of these students can read five to ten books. Thus, that most students do not take reading as a daily learning behaviour, do not have planned reading, each reading lasts for a shorter period of time, and do not develop good reading habits.

With regard to the characteristics of Chinese university students' reading cognition, Zhang Fengjuan pointed out in her article [9] that most of the students chose to read in order to achieve a perfect state of mind and body through self-reflection (76.79 %), to increase their knowledge (82.14 %), to improve their reading and writing skills (67.66 %), to enhance their competitiveness (56.35 %) and to form a good personality and a sound character (62.30 %). It can be seen that students' perception of the impact of reading is more in-depth and comprehensive, reflecting that they have a strong awareness of reading and good values.

The results of the survey on reading preferences show that only 20.0 % of students chose the responses «like reading very much» and «do not like reading too much», while only 20.0 % of students chose the variants «like reading a lot» and «like reading in general». The students who choose the responses «like very much» and «like not too much» are only 20.0 %, while those who choose the variants «like more» and «like in general» are 80.0 %. This shows that most of the students do not exclude reading or even like reading, and they have a strong sense of reading.

Zhou Liyuan conducted a survey on seven universities in Luoyang and found that in terms of purpose of reading students chose the answers «leisure and entertainment» (71.23 %), «broadening horizons» (69.84 %), «improving cultivation» (63.89 %), «leisure and entertainment» (71.23 %), «broaden vision» (69.84 %), «improve cultivation» (63.89 %), «professional needs» (53.97 %), «exam preparation» (31.15 %) and «other» (13.49 %) [10, p. 23–24]. According to students reading needs with the intermediary role of consciousness and concept pre-conceive the behavioural goals and results of reading. In the information age, people's reading time gradually decreases, and fragmented information is everywhere, therefore, more

students take «leisure and entertainment» as the purpose of reading, and more students take «professional needs» and «exam preparation» as the purpose of reading.

**Problems in the reading culture of contemporary Chinese university students.** The rise of new media technology and the popularity of digital screens have provided contemporary Chinese university students with a brand new reading platform, and the acquisition of information has shifted from paper media in the past to electronic products, such as tablet computers, smart phones and e-books. With the accelerated pace of life in modern society, the convenience of electronic reading devices, short and concise content coupled with fragmented time have made more and more Chinese university students' reading style show a tendency of fragmentation [10, p. 71]. According to the survey, the most used reading medium among contemporary Chinese university students is mobile phone reading (55.86 %). The social networks *WeChat*, *QQ* and *Sina Weibo* are main reading platforms. This shows that it is an indisputable fact that the influence of traditional information media is shrinking. This fragmented way of reading permeates all fields of social life and the daily life of university students, bringing great changes to the whole society. On the one hand, this change brings richer information resources and more convenient experience to university students' reading and the dissemination of reading culture. On the other hand, it also brings unprecedented challenges [12, p. 59–60].

Chinese university students tend to be superficial in their choice of reading content. The data show that the most popular reading materials among university students are literary books, entertainment books, practical books and news information. Although a considerable number of students chose to read Chinese classics and traditional works regularly, their enthusiasm for reading world classic philosophical works was obviously low. The survey results demonstrate that 81.35 % students like to read comprehensive books, 18.45 % students prefer to read philosophical books. In today's information-rich era, the reading behaviour of university students is not only for accumulating knowledge, but more importantly, it should be an essential way to promote the depth of thinking. The British philosopher Francis Bacon pointed out: «Reading enriches, discussion sharpens, and writing makes precise» [13, p. 10]. However, university students will not be able to realise the true value of reading if they merely indulge in a sea of information and rely on fragmented shallow reading. As a matter of fact, in-depth thinking is a key part of reading towards deeper development and building cognitive structures. In this process, university students need to truly understand the meaning of knowledge through critical thinking and reflective analysis. This understanding not only enhances their academic abilities, but also improves their quality of life [14, p. 475].

Survey data show that university students' motivation for reading is generally good, and the proportion of university students who take seeking knowledge and

improving personal quality as their main reading purpose is the largest. However, there are still a considerable number of university students who take employment, obtaining professional qualification certificates and entertainment as their main reading purposes. It can be seen that the reading motives of some university students are somewhat irrational, showing a utilitarian tendency. A. Erdem claimed that utilitarian reading is a method of reading that involves acquiring information and knowledge as quickly as possible in order to gain immediate and practical benefits. On the one hand, such reading can enable university students to master knowledge and technology quickly. On the other hand, this kind of reading emphasis on quick success thus easily leading to haste and quick profit, poor reading effect and making the social atmosphere more impetuous [15, p. 3985]. In front of the current severe employment situation, in order to find a better job, reading for utilitarian purposes is reasonable. However, taking this as the primary purpose of reading activities and occupying almost all the reading time is not desirable and belongs to unreasonable reading tendency.

Facing the long-term academic pressure, university students can read for entertainment appropriately to help them relax physically, mentally and then devote themselves to the next step of study in a better state. However, recreational reading should follow the principle of moderation. Excessive recreational reading not only lacks nutrition, but also affects the normal study life of university students. From the survey data of the interviewed university students, it can be seen that a considerable portion of the students take entertainment, relaxation, catharsis and passing time as the main purpose of reading rather than as a supplement to other reading which indicates that there is an irrational tendency of over-entertainment in the reading motivation of the above students. Fan Yan pointed out that although appropriate recreational reading can play a role in adjusting the state and restoring energy, but if you are immersed in recreational reading for a long time, you will lose the main significance of reading, and it is not conducive to the development of education and the development of reading culture [16, p. 115–116].

**Promoting the role of Confucian educational canons in the development of reading culture among university students.** It is necessary to use Confucian educational classics as a context for the development of a reading culture among university students. The Confucian classics of education, as a valuable heritage of Chinese culture, have not only shaped the concept of education for millenniums, but also remain influential in modern society, especially among university students. For example, the Centre for the Study and Transmission of National Studies at Tsinghua University has incorporated Confucian classics into its curriculum, and through lectures and seminars, students are able to systematically study and understand the thinking of Confu-

cianism. This practice cultivates students' their critical thinking and moral judgement [17, p. 165–166].

Against the backdrop of an information-based society, the reading habits of university students are being challenged by diversified reading styles and fragmented modes of information consumption. To meet this challenge, some higher education institutions have taken innovative measures. For example, the Peking University Library regularly organises the event «Classics reading month», encouraging students to read Confucian classics (works «The analects», «Great learning», «Meanwhile», etc.). Through these activities, students are not only able to improve their personal qualities, but also develop the ability to think independently through in-depth reading.

Using modern technological means to promote Confucian classics is also an effective way. For example, Fudan University has released a series of articles and videos on Confucian educational thought through its official public number on the platform *WeChat*, bringing the wisdom of Confucian classics closer to the daily lives of university students. The dissemination of these contents through online platforms has attracted a large number of students' clicks and discussions thus stimulating their interest in traditional culture. University students themselves should also actively participate in the construction of reading culture. For example, students of Zhejiang University have spontaneously organised an association «Confucian classics study group» to explore the modern significance of Confucian education classics in group discussions. Through this kind of independent study and collective discussion students develop critical thinking and a sense of social responsibility in practice.

Thus, by integrating Confucian educational guidelines into the modern education system, combining them with the dissemination of modern technological means and encouraging students' independent participation university students can be effectively guided to return to the classics and cultivate the habit of in-depth reading. This will promote their all-around development at the level of thinking and spirituality [18, p. 1–2].

In the context of the information age, modern media has become a key way to disseminate knowledge and ideas [19, p. 263]. Confucian educational thought, as the core of traditional Chinese culture, has a significant impact on the value shaping and moral cultivation development of university students. The dissemination of Confucian educational ideas through modern media can effectively enhance the cultural literacy of university students and guide them to build a sound worldview, outlook on life and values. The event «Cloud festival of Confucius» which held in Shandong province in 2022 invited celebrities from all walks of life to participate in the form of short videos and successfully attracted the participation of students from more than 20 universities with a total of 963 short videos collected and a cumulative playback

volume of 12 964 000 times. This activity has not only been widely disseminated in official media at home and abroad, but also aroused heated discussions on new media platforms, effectively creating a social atmosphere that actively advocates and carries forward the excellent traditional Chinese culture, and has become a model for the dissemination of Confucianism in new media. One portal dedicated to Confucianism (<https://confucianism.com>) has published 2675 articles since 2016 with a total word count of 17.53 mln words, covering a wide range of aspects, such as ideological scholarship, cultural commentaries and practical messages, reflecting in a timely manner the dynamics of the development of Confucianism and the latest results of Confucianism research. In Chinese universities, traditional cultural dissemination activities, such as recitation of Confucian classics, lectures on nationalism and practice of nationalism, have become increasingly active, and these activities not only promote the inheritance and development of excellent traditional culture, including Confucianism, but also become a common interest of teachers and students.

The Report on the development of traditional culture education in contemporary China (2018)<sup>2</sup> noted that the dissemination of Confucian education classics has been reflected in different education stages, including primary and secondary schools, high schools and universities, and has become an important part of promoting excellent traditional culture education. For example, Peking University's project of compiling the collection of Confucian works which compiled by a number of universities within the United Nations and abroad is an important academic project for the rejuvenation of Confucian culture that has attracted the attention of the whole society through the dissemination of new media.

In summary, the use of new media has provided a new platform and opportunity for the dissemination of Confucian educational thought. Through the network guidance of professionals and the integration of new media resources the Confucian education philosophy has been able to be effectively disseminated and deeply understood among university students thus promoting the overall development of university students in terms of values and moral cultivation [20, p. 703].

Confucian educational thought, as the core of traditional Chinese culture, plays a unique and crucial role in enhancing the moral and cultural qualities of individuals. In the current educational environment, combining Confucian educational guidelines with modern educational communication technology is not only a task of inheriting culture, but also an inevitable requirement to adapt to the development of the times.

The canon of tailoring education to the needs of the student has been given a new lease of life with the sup-

port of modern educational technology. With the help of big data analysis tools educators can now identify and respond to student differences with greater precision. These tools are able to track and analyse students' learning habits, ability levels, and interest preferences in order to provide a customised educational experience for each student [21, p. 7]. For example, with an online learning management system teachers can monitor students' progress and identify their strengths and weaknesses in specific subjects. Based on this data, teachers can recommend reading materials for students that match their current learning level and provide targeted tutoring resources. This personalised approach not only improves students' learning efficiency, but also stimulates their interest and enthusiasm for the content. In addition, the implementation of personalised teaching plans helps to develop students' independent learning skills, enabling them to learn at their own pace and style under the guidance of teachers. The flexibility and adaptability of this learning style is important in promoting students' lifelong learning [22, p. 68].

The concept of education for all which emphasises the universality and inclusiveness of education has been newly interpreted and expanded in the digital age. With the rise of digital resources, such as massive open online courses and e-libraries, access to educational resources has become more convenient and equal. These platforms provide all students, with access to high-quality educational content. According to the Report on the development of digital resources in China's higher education<sup>3</sup>, the establishment of digital libraries and the free sharing of online resources have had a significant impact on promoting educational equity. The report notes that through these digital resources, students from different economic backgrounds are able to access rich reading materials and thus enjoy equal learning opportunities. In addition, the spread of digital educational resources has also helped to narrow the education gap between urban and rural areas, enabling students in remote areas to access the same learning materials as their urban counterparts. This equalisation of educational resources not only enhances the quality of education, but also provides strong support for the cultivation of talents and dissemination of knowledge in society as a whole. Therefore, it is necessary to promote the development of digital education resources to ensure that all students can acquire the necessary knowledge and skills on this platform.

Combining education with enjoyment are strongly supported by modern media technologies, thus becoming more diverse and interactive. Educators can use online platforms to design and implement a variety of innovative reading activities, such as online book clubs

<sup>2</sup>Yang Dongping, Bao Geli, Liu Huquan. Report on the development of traditional culture education in contemporary China (2018) [Electronic resource] // QQ. URL: <https://book.qq.com/book-read/26322249/19> (date of access: 21.10.2019) (in Chin.).

<sup>3</sup>Wang Feng, Wang Fan. Report on the development of digital resources in China's higher education [Electronic resource] // Baijiahao. URL: <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1793847664080172130&wfr=spider&for=pc> (date of access: 18.03.2024) (in Chin.).

and virtual literary salons which not only stimulate students' enthusiasm for reading, but also help develop their communication skills and teamwork. To ensure the effectiveness of this pedagogical approach educators should carefully design the content of the activities to ensure that they are both interesting and educational. At the same time, consideration should be given to the diverse needs and interests of students and how these activities can be used to promote critical and creative thinking. In addition, educators should evaluate the actual impact of these activities on students' learning outcomes in order to continuously adjust and optimise teaching strategies. In the implementation process, educators can make use of various online tools and platforms, such as interactive whiteboards, real-time voting systems and collaboration software, to enhance student engagement and interactivity. Through these tools students can actively interact, share ideas and ask questions during readings and discussions, thus deepening their understanding and analyses of reading materials in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

In the field of modern education, the traditional educational canon of revisiting the past to discover the new has been significantly enhanced by educational technology. With the help of intelligent revision systems and online knowledge management tools students are able to review and consolidate their existing knowledge more efficiently and build on it to construct a more comprehensive and in-depth knowledge structure. By providing personalised learning paths and real-time feedback these technological tools support students in identifying and reinforcing knowledge weaknesses during the revision process, thereby facilitating deeper understanding of new knowledge. Existing research has shown that intelligent revision systems can effectively enhance students' learning outcomes. For example, according to a study published in the «Journal of Educational Technology and Media», students adopting intelligent revision systems made significant progress in knowledge acquisition and in-depth understanding. Educators and researchers should further explore how these technological tools can be integrated with traditional teaching methods to

maximise learning outcomes. Attention should also be paid to the application of these tools in different learning environments and student groups to ensure their universality and inclusiveness. Through continuous optimisation and innovation the educational guideline of learning from the past is expected to achieve greater potential with the support of modern educational technology, providing a solid foundation for students' lifelong learning and knowledge renewal.

The canon of balancing learning, thinking and action emphasised by Confucian education aims to achieve the unity of knowledge and action which is particularly important in the development of the reading culture of contemporary university students. This principle advocates that students should not only absorb the knowledge and aesthetic value of literary works, but also transform this knowledge into concrete actions in real life, so as to cultivate and improve their own humanistic qualities. In practice, this means that when reading literary works, university students should think deeply about the themes of friendship, love and responsibility embodied in the works and internalise them into their personal emotional experience and moral code. For example, by reading novels about friendship students can reflect on real-life relationships and explore how to build and maintain deep friendships in modern society. As educator J. Dewey emphasised, education should be a continuum of experience, and through engagement and practice, students are better able to understand knowledge and apply it to the real world [23, p. 175–176].

In summary, Confucian educational guidelines, supported by modern educational communication technologies, are not only better adapted to the needs of contemporary education, but also promote the overall development of university students. Through the effective integration of Confucian educational canons and modern educational technology it will be possible to cultivate a new generation of university students with moral and cultural qualities, as well as innovative spirit and practical ability, and contribute to the sustainable development of the society.

## Conclusions

This article delves into the application and value of Confucian educational canons in the development of a reading culture for modern Chinese university students, emphasising the importance of combining traditional educational concepts with modern educational techniques. By analysing the application of Confucian educational canons, such as modifying education according to individual needs, education for all, combining education with enjoyment in current educational practices, this paper reveals the positive effects of these canons on the cultivation of students' interest in

reading, critical thinking and sense of social responsibility. At the same time, the article also points out the challenges that exist in the reading habits and information processing skills of modern university students and proposes corresponding strategies and methods to promote the overall enhancement of reading culture. Through these findings this study provides the field of higher education with new perspectives on promoting the overall development of students and offers useful insights for future educational practice and research.



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