Confucianism: More Than a Philosophy, A Way of Life

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ABSTRACT

Confucianism, rooted in the teachings of Confucius (551-479 BCE), has evolved beyond a mere philosophy to become a comprehensive guide to life, influencing various aspects of human existence. This study examines the transformation of Confucianism from a system of thought into a way of life that shapes social, political, and cultural structures in China and East Asia. Through literature review and content analysis, the research identifies the manifestations of Confucian teachings in family, education, governance, and social relationships. Additionally, it evaluates the adaptation of Confucianism to changing times and its relevance in the modern context, as well as the challenges and criticisms it faces. The findings indicate that despite various challenges, Confucianism remains relevant and holds a promising future as a value system and way of life.
INTRODUCTION

Confucianism, which has its roots in the teachings of Confucius (551-479 BC), has become one of the most influential systems of thought and ethics in the history of human civilization, especially in East Asia. For more than 2000 years, Confucianism has not only shaped the worldview and values of Chinese society but also significantly influenced neighboring countries such as Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

Although often considered a philosophy or ethical system, Confucianism has much broader and deeper dimensions. The original Chinese term, “Rujiao” (儒教), meaning “the faith of the meek, learned, and virtuous people”, shows that Confucianism is more than just a collection of abstract ideas. It is a comprehensive guide to life that touches on various aspects of human existence. Confucianism emphasizes values such as loyalty to family, respect for ancestors, the importance of education, and the attainment of moral virtue. These teachings not only influenced individual lives, but also shaped China’s social, political, and cultural structures at large. In the field of education, Confucianism became the foundation of the imperial examination system that lasted for centuries, forming the intellectual elite and state bureaucracy.

The evolution of Confucianism from a philosophy to a way of life occurred through a long process. After Confucius' death, his students, especially Mencius and Xunzi, continued and developed his teachings. Mencius emphasized the basic nature of human goodness, while Xunzi emphasized the need for moral training and discipline. These developments enriched and broadened the scope of Confucianism, making it increasingly relevant in various aspects of life. Despite experiencing a period of suppression during the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC), Confucianism revived and reached its peak during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), when it was adopted as the official state ideology. Since then, Confucianism has become an integral part of China’s social and political structure, influencing all aspects of life from daily etiquette to the system of government.

However, the journey of Confucianism was not always smooth. In the early 20th century, as the Chinese imperial system fell, Confucianism faced harsh criticism from intellectuals who saw it as an obstacle to modernization. During the Mao Zedong era, Confucianism also experienced significant suppression. Despite this, core Confucian values persist in Chinese society, demonstrating its resilience and flexibility as a value system.

In the modern era, Confucianism is experiencing a revival, not only in China but also in other East Asian countries. Contemporary scholars and thinkers see the relevance of Confucius' teachings in facing global challenges such as the environmental crisis, social inequality, and international conflict. Confucian values such as harmony, social responsibility, and emphasis on education are considered to make a positive contribution in overcoming various contemporary problems.
The uniqueness of Confucianism lies in its ability to adapt to changing times while maintaining the essence of its teachings. It is not only an abstract philosophy, but it is also not a religion in the conventional sense. Confucianism is more accurately understood as a comprehensive way of life, offering ethical and practical guidance in living daily life, interacting in society, and even in state governance.

Thus, understanding Confucianism as more than just a philosophy, but rather as a way of life, opens up new perspectives in examining its influence and relevance in the modern world. This also explains why, despite being more than two millennia old, Confucius' teachings continue to have significant appeal and influence, not only in China but also in many other parts of the world. Formulation of the problem:

1. How did Confucianism develop from a philosophy into a comprehensive way of life?
2. What aspects of life are influenced by Confucianism and how is this influence manifested?
3. How does Confucianism adapt to changing times and remain relevant in the context of modern society?
4. What are the challenges and criticisms of Confucianism as a way of life in the contemporary era?
5. What are the prospects for Confucianism as a value system and way of life in the future?

Research Purposes

This research aims to:

1. Analyze the evolution of Confucianism from a philosophical system to a way of life that influences various aspects of people's lives.
2. Identify and explain the manifestations of Confucianism in various areas of life, such as family, education, government and social relations.
3. Examining the process of adapting Confucianism to changing times and its relevance in the context of modern society.
4. Evaluate the criticism and challenges facing Confucianism as a way of life in the contemporary era.
5. Project the prospects and potential contribution of Confucianism as a value system and way of life in the future.
LITERATURE REVIEW
A. The Origin of Ru Jiao (儒教)

Ru Jiao (儒教), meaning "teaching of the learned", is at the root of what became known as Confucianism. The origins of the Ru Jiao can be traced long before the birth of Confucius, namely around 2000 years earlier. Ru Jiao was originally a religious and ethical tradition that developed among ancient Chinese nobles and scholars.

According to historical records, Ru Jiao began to form during the Xia Dynasty (夏朝, 2070–1600 BC), developed during the Shang Dynasty (商朝, 1600–1046 BC) and reached its peak during the early Zhou Dynasty (周朝, 1046–256 BC). In these early days, Ru Jiao was more of a system of rituals, ethics and governance adopted by rulers and elites.

B. Early Development and Important Figures

Before the time of Confucius, several important figures contributed to the development of Ru Jiao, including:
1. Fù Xi (伏羲, 2952–2836 BC): Considered the inventor of writing and the creation of the hexagram Yijing
2. Shén Nóng (神农, 2838–2698 BC): Known as the inventor of agriculture and herbal medicine.
4. Yáo (尧, 2356–2255 BC) and Shùn (舜, 2294–2184 BC): Two legendary emperors who are considered examples of wise rulers.
5. Dà Yú (大禹, 2200–2100 BC): Founder of the Xia Dynasty and known for his success in controlling floods.

These figures are considered to be the founding fathers of the values and teachings that later became the core of Ru Jiao.

C. Confucius and the Transformation of the Ru Jiao

Confucius (孔子, 551–479 BC) was born during what is known as the Spring and Autumn Period (春秋时代, 770–476 BC) when the power of the Zhou Dynasty (周朝) began to weaken and China was divided into various independent states. War. It was in this situation of social and political chaos that Confucius emerged with a mission to restore social and political harmony.

Confucius did not consider himself to be the bearer of new teachings, but rather as the successor and perfecter of the existing Ru Jiao tradition. He collected, compiled, and reinterpreted ancient teachings, adding his thoughts. Confucius emphasized the importance of personal morality, good governance ethics, and social harmony.

Confucius' main teachings include:
1. rén (仁): Benevolence, humanity, love
2. yì (义): Truth, justice
3. lǐ (礼): Proper manners, rituals
4. zhì (智): Wisdom
5. xìn (信): Integrity, trustworthy
Confucius also emphasized the importance of education and self-cultivation as a path to virtue and social harmony.

a. Post-Confucian Developments

After Confucius' death, his teachings continued to develop through his students. Two important figures in this development were:
1. Meng Zi 孟子 (Mencius 372-289 BC): He developed the teachings of Confucius by emphasizing the innate good nature of humans and the importance of government based on virtue.

During the Han Dynasty 汉朝 (206 BC - 220 AD), Confucianism was adopted as the official state ideology, which brought this teaching to the peak of its influence in Chinese society and government

B. Confucianism as a Philosophical and Religious System

Although Confucianism is often considered an ethical or philosophical system, in some countries such as Indonesia, Confucianism is recognized as a religion. This shows the flexibility of Confucianism in adapting to different social and cultural contexts.

As a philosophical system, Confucianism emphasizes:
1. Personal and social ethics
2. Harmony in human relationships
3. Education and self-development
4. Good governance
5. Respect for ancestors and traditions

As a religion, Confucianism has aspects such as:
1. Belief in Tian 天 (Heaven) as the highest power
2. Rituals and ceremonies to honor ancestors
3. The concept of destiny and human destiny
4. Moral and ethical teachings as a path to salvation

The history of the Ru Jiao to Confucianism shows the evolution of ancient ritual and ethical traditions into a complex and influential system of philosophy and religion. Through its synthesis of ancient teachings and the innovative thinking of Confucius and his followers, Confucianism has formed the moral, social, and political foundation of Chinese and East Asian civilization for thousands of years. Despite facing various challenges throughout its history, Confucianism remains relevant and continues to be adapted to answer contemporary problems.

C. Confucian Philosophical Views

1. Basic Concepts of Confucian Philosophy

Confucianism is based on the teachings of Confucius (551-479 BC) which emphasizes personal ethics, social morality, and ideal governance. The essence of Confucian philosophy is the achievement of harmony in the lives of individuals and society through moral cultivation and the proper performance of rituals.

Some key concepts in Confucian philosophy include:
1. rén 仁: Benevolence, humanity, love
2. yì 义: Truth, justice
3. lǐ 礼: Proper manners, rituals
4. zhì (智): Wisdom
5. xìn (信): Integrity, trustworthy

2. Views on human nature
   Confucianism views that humans are basically good, but require education and moral cultivation to reach their full potential. Mencius, one of the main successors of Confucius' teachings, emphasized that human nature is inherently good and has the "four beginnings" of virtue: compassion, shame, respect, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong.

3. Ethics and Morality
   Confucian ethics focuses on developing an individual's moral character as the basis for creating a harmonious society. Confucius taught that individuals should continually improve themselves through learning and the practice of virtue.

4. Social and Family Relations
   Confucianism emphasizes the importance of harmonious social relationships, especially in the context of the family. The five basic relationships (Wu Lun) emphasized are:
   a. Ruler and people （君臣有 义 jūn chén yǒu yì）
   b. Father and son （父子有 亲 fùzǐ yǒu qīn）
   c. Husband and wife （夫妇有 别 fūfù yǒubié）
   d. Brother and sister （ 兄弟有序 xiōngdì yǒuxù）
   e. Friends and companions （朋友有 信 ）
   In these relationships, Confucianism emphasizes mutual obligations and respect for social hierarchy.

5. Education and Personal Development
   Confucianism views education as the primary means for moral and intellectual development. Learning is considered a lifelong process aimed not only at acquiring knowledge, but also at developing wisdom and moral character.

6. Governance
   In terms of governance, Confucianism emphasizes the concept of "governance through virtue". The ideal ruler, according to Confucius, is someone who has high moral character and is able to lead by example, not through force or punishment.

7. Cosmic Harmony
   Confucianism views that there is a close relationship between the human moral order and the cosmic order. Harmony in human actions is believed to reflect and influence the harmony of the universe.

8. Rituals and Traditions
   Confucianism emphasizes the importance of ritual and tradition as a way to strengthen social ties and preserve cultural values. Rituals are considered a means of expressing and strengthening moral values.

   Confucian philosophy offers a comprehensive view of human life, emphasizing individual moral development as the basis for creating a harmonious society. Despite its roots in ancient Chinese traditions, many aspects of this philosophy remain relevant and continue to influence thought.
METHODOLOGY
1. Research Approach

This research will use a qualitative approach with literature study methods and content analysis. This approach was chosen because the research objective is to understand the evolution, manifestation, adaptation, challenges and prospects of Confucianism as a value system and way of life.

2. Data Source

The main data sources in this research are:
a. Primary Documents: Classic Confucian texts such as the Analects (Lunyu), Xueji (Record of Learning), and the works of Mencius and Xunzi.
b. Secondary Documents: Journal articles, books, and research reports that discuss Confucianism, its history, influence on various aspects of life, and its adaptation to modern contexts.

3. Data Collection Techniques

a. Literature Study: Collect and review literature relevant to the research topic. This literature includes classic texts, academic articles, books, and credible online sources.
b. Content Analysis: Analyzing the content of collected texts and literature to identify main themes and patterns relevant to the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
1. How Did Confucianism Develop from a Philosophy Into a Comprehensive Way of Life?

Confucianism, which originated from the teachings of Kong Zi (Confucius) in the 6th to 5th centuries BC, was originally a philosophy that emphasized ethics, morality and relationships between humans. This philosophy developed into a comprehensive way of life through several significant historical stages. The following is a more complex and comprehensive explanation of the development of Confucianism:

a. Early Period and Basic Teachings

Confucianism began with the teachings of Kong Zi recorded in The Analects (Lunyu). The basic teachings of Confucianism include the concepts of ren (humanity), li (ritual), xiao (filial piety), and yi (righteousness). Kong Zi emphasized the importance of education and individual moral development as the basis for creating a harmonious and just society (Gardner, 1986).

b. The Han Dynasty and its Adoption as a State Ideology

During the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD), Confucianism was adopted as the state ideology. Emperor Han Wudi (141–87 BC) played an important role in institutionalizing Confucianism through the establishment of Confucian schools and an imperial examination system based on Confucian texts (Ebrey, 1999). This marked the transformation of Confucianism from a personal philosophy to an official guide for government and society.
c. Neo-Confucianism in the Song and Ming Dynasties

During the Song 宋朝 (960–1279 AD) and Ming (1368–1644 AD) dynasties, Confucianism experienced a revival through the Neo-Confucian movement. Figures such as Zhu Xi (1130–1200) and Wang Yangming (1472–1529) developed Confucian teachings by integrating elements from Buddhism and Taoism. Neo-Confucianism emphasizes the importance of self-cultivation and li as universal principles that govern the universe and human life (Tiwald & Van Norden, 2014).

d. Confucianism in a Modern Context

In the 20th century, Confucianism faced challenges from modernization and Western influence. However, thinkers such as Mou Zongsan (牟宗三) and Tang Junyi 唐君毅 attempted to adapt Confucian teachings to address contemporary issues such as democracy, human rights, and modern science (Chen, 2006). In modern China, Confucianism remains relevant through the integration of traditional values with government and educational policies (Rozman, 1990).

e. The Influence of Confucianism in Various Aspects of Life

Confucianism influenced various aspects of life, including:

1) Family and Social Relations: The concepts of xiao and li regulate family and social relations, emphasizing respect and responsibility towards parents and superiors.

2) Education: Education is considered to be the main path to attaining virtue and social status. The imperial examination system is a clear example of how education was influenced by Confucian teachings.

3) Government and Politics: Confucianism promotes a concept of government based on morality and virtue. Leaders are expected to be moral role models for their people.

4) Health and Medical Decisions: Confucian values also influence health behavior and medical decisions, such as family participation in medical decision making.

f. Challenges and Criticism

Confucianism faces several challenges and criticisms in the contemporary era, including:

1) Democracy and Human Rights: The hierarchical structure and emphasis on social harmony in Confucianism can conflict with the principles of democracy and human rights.

2) Gender Equality: Some elements of Confucianism are still considered patriarchal and do not fully support equality between men and women.

3) Environment: Environmental challenges are also an important issue, where Confucianism must find ways to respond and contribute to the solution of environmental problems.
g. Future Prospects

The prospects for Confucianism as a value system and way of life in the future looked bright, especially in East Asia. Confucian values such as benevolence, education, and social harmony continue to be the foundation of many societies in the region. Efforts to combine Confucian principles with democracy and Western thought show the potential for creating a more inclusive and adaptive system (Rozman, 1990).

2. What Aspects of Life Are Influenced by Confucianism and How is This Influence Manifested?

Confucianism, as an ethical and philosophical system developed by Kongzi (Confucius), has influenced various aspects of life in China and other East Asian countries for more than two millennia. This influence manifests in a variety of areas, including family, education, politics, health, and corporate culture. The following is a more comprehensive explanation of the aspects of life influenced by Confucianism:

a. Family and Social Relations

Confucianism emphasizes the importance of family relationships and social hierarchy. The concepts of xiao (filial piety) and li (ritual) govern how individuals interact in the family and society, emphasizing respect for parents and superiors. The family is considered the basic unit of society, and relationships between family members are governed by strict ethical principles. Filial piety or filial piety is one of the main values that requires children to respect and care for their parents, both during life and after death through rituals of honoring ancestors (National Geographic Education, 2020; Study.com, 2020).

b. Education

Education is considered the main path to achieving virtue and social status in Confucianism. The imperial examination system in ancient China, which was based on knowledge of Confucian texts, is a clear example of how education was influenced by Confucian teachings. Confucianism emphasizes the importance of moral and intellectual education to form individuals who have good character and are able to contribute to society (Tan, 2016; Liu, 2018). In Japan, Confucian values are also the basis of an education system that emphasizes respect for authority and academic achievement (GMIPOST, 2020).

c. Government and Politics

Confucianism promoted a concept of government based on morality and virtue. Leaders are expected to be moral role models for their people, and government policies must reflect Confucian ethical principles. The concepts of ren (virtue) and yi (righteousness) form the basis for political decision making and state administration. In modern China, Confucian values still influence government policy and social structures, albeit in a form that has been adapted to the contemporary context (Pye, 1999; National Geographic Education, 2020).
d. Health and Medical Decisions
Confucian values also influence health behavior and medical decisions. Family participation in medical decision making and emphasis on caring for sick family members are manifestations of Confucian values. Research shows that families play a central role in medical decisions, including in ethical situations such as organ donation and end-of-life care. Although most of Confucianism's effects on health are positive, some ways of thinking can increase suffering, burnout, and delays in seeking health care (Badanta et al., 2022; PubMed, 2022).

e. Corporate Culture
Confucianism has also had a significant influence on corporate culture in East Asian countries. Principles such as hierarchy, harmonious relationships, and high work ethics are reflected in organizational structures and business practices. In many Asian companies, decisions are often made based on group consensus and harmony rather than individual autonomy. Values such as honesty, truthfulness, and loyalty are highly valued in business interactions (Michaillidou, 2022; Ying et al., 2022).

3. How Has Confucianism Adapted to Changing Times and Remained Relevant in the Context of Modern Society?
Confucianism, as one of the most influential philosophies and ethical systems in East Asia, has demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt to changing times and remain relevant in the context of modern society. Here is an explanation of how Confucianism adapted and remained relevant:

a. Adaptation to Modernity and Western Influence
Since the 19th century, Confucianism has faced major challenges from modernity and Western influence. The Opium Wars (1839–1842) marked the beginning of greater interest in Western knowledge, especially to catch up in military technology. Chinese intellectuals such as Kang Youwei and Zhang Zhidong attempted to reform politics and salvage the essence of Confucian learning (Britannica, 2023). Although Confucianism experienced a decline in influence during the Cultural Revolution, Confucian values remain an integral part of the psychocultural structure of Chinese society.

b. Neo-Confucianism and Modern Reconstruction
In the 20th century, the Neo-Confucian movement emerged as a response to the challenges of modernity. Figures such as Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi attempted to combine Confucian values with Western concepts of modernity such as democracy and science. They developed a philosophy that recognized modern values while maintaining Confucian ethics (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2023). This movement occurred not only in China, but also in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea, where scholars attempted to integrate Confucianism with modern social and political contexts.

c. Relevance in Economics and Politics
Confucianism has also demonstrated its relevance in modern economic and political contexts. In countries such as China, South Korea, and Japan, Confucian values such as hard work, education, and social harmony have contributed to rapid economic growth and social stability. The concept of governance based on morality and virtue also remains the basis for government policy in these countries (Liu, 2018; Pye, 1999).
d. Influence in Education and Culture

   Education is one area where Confucianism remains highly influential. The imperial examination system based on Confucian texts has been replaced by a modern education system, but Confucian values such as respect for teachers and the importance of moral education remain. In Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, education systems that emphasize discipline, hard work, and academic achievement reflect the strong influence of Confucian values (Tan, 2016; GMIPost, 2020).

e. Adaptation in Health and Medical Decisions

   Confucian values also influence health behavior and medical decisions. Family participation in medical decision making and emphasis on caring for sick family members are manifestations of Confucian values. Although there are challenges in integrating these values with modern health systems, efforts to combine traditional concepts with modern medical approaches continue (Badanta et al., 2022).

f. Challenges and Criticism

   Although Confucianism has demonstrated great adaptability, it has also faced criticism and challenges. Some critics argue that the hierarchical structure and emphasis on social harmony in Confucianism may conflict with democratic principles and human rights. In addition, some elements of Confucianism are still considered patriarchal and do not fully support gender equality (Britannica, 2023).

g. Future Prospects

   The prospects for Confucianism as a value system and way of life in the future looked bright, especially in East Asia. Confucian values such as benevolence, education, and social harmony continue to be the foundation of many societies in the region. Efforts to combine Confucian principles with democracy and Western thought show the potential for creating a more inclusive and adaptive system (Rozman, 1990).

4. What Are the Challenges And Criticisms of Confucianism as a Way of Life in the Contemporary Era?

   Confucianism, despite its significant influence in East Asian history and culture, faces numerous challenges and criticisms in the contemporary era. Following are some of the major challenges and criticisms facing Confucianism as a way of life in modern times:

a. Challenges to Democracy and Human Rights

   One of the main criticisms of Confucianism is that its hierarchical structure and emphasis on social harmony can conflict with democratic principles and human rights. Traditional Confucianism emphasizes the importance of social hierarchy and obedience to authority, which can hinder the development of democracy and individual freedom. Some critics argue that Confucianism tends to support literati elitism and imperial autocracy, which is inconsistent with modern democratic values (Li, 2014; Shin, 2018).
b. Gender equality

Confucianism is also criticized for its patriarchal views and not fully supporting gender equality. Traditional Confucian teachings place women in a subordinate position in the family and society. Practices such as filial piety (xiao) and rigid gender roles often reinforce gender inequality. Despite efforts to reinterpret Confucian teachings in modern contexts, challenges to achieving true gender equality remain (Batista, 2017; Fisher Digital Publications, 2020).

c. Environmental Challenges

Environmental challenges are also an important issue for Confucianism. Although Confucianism emphasizes harmony between humans and nature, the practical application of this principle in modern contexts is often inadequate. Confucianism needs to find ways to respond to and contribute to the solution of increasingly pressing environmental problems in the contemporary era (Li, 2014).

d. Materialism and Consumerism

In the modern era, Confucianism faces challenges from increasingly dominant materialism and consumerism. Traditional Confucian teachings emphasize non-material values such as benevolence (ren), wisdom (zhi), and loyalty (yi). However, in the context of a competitive market economy, these values are often marginalized by the drive for material success and excessive consumption. This raises the question of how Confucianism can remain relevant and provide moral guidance in an increasingly materialistic society (Chakravartty, 2016).

e. Relevance in a Global Context

Confucianism also faces challenges in maintaining its relevance outside the East Asian cultural context. Although Confucian values such as social harmony and the ethic of hard work have universal appeal, their application in different cultural and social contexts can be difficult. Confucianism needs to adapt and articulate its values in language that is resonant with a diverse global society (Li, 2014; Yao, 2017).

5. What Are the Prospects for Confucianism as a Value System and Way of Life in the Future?

Confucianism, as one of the most influential value systems and philosophies in East Asia, has exciting prospects for the future. Despite facing various challenges, Confucianism remains relevant and has the potential to continue to develop as an ethical and moral guide in modern society. Here are some factors that support Confucianism's future prospects:

a. Relevance in Education and Culture

Confucianism has long emphasized the importance of education and the moral development of individuals. In countries such as China, South Korea, and Japan, Confucian values such as hard work, discipline, and respect for authority remain the foundation of the education system. The imperial examination system based on Confucian texts has been replaced by a modern education system, but the basic principles of Confucianism remain. This shows that Confucianism has continued relevance in shaping the character and morals of the younger generation (Tan, 2016; GMIPOST, 2020).
b. Influence in Economics and Politics

Confucian values such as social harmony, hard work ethic, and moral responsibility have contributed to rapid economic growth and social stability in East Asian countries. In China, for example, the extraordinary economic revival of recent decades has been driven in large part by a strong work ethic and Confucian values that emphasize the importance of education and self-improvement. In addition, the concept of governance based on morality and virtue remains the basis for government policy in these countries (Liu, 2018; Pye, 1999).

c. Adaptation to Modernity

Confucianism has demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt to changing times. The Neo-Confucian movement of the 20th century, for example, combined Confucian values with Western concepts of modernity such as democracy and science. Thinkers such as Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi attempted to develop philosophies that recognized modern values while maintaining Confucian ethics. These adaptations allow Confucianism to remain relevant in modern social and political contexts (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2023).

d. Contribution to Social and Environmental Harmony

Confucianism emphasizes the importance of harmony between humans and nature. In the context of increasingly pressing environmental challenges, Confucian values can contribute to solutions to environmental problems. Principles such as moral responsibility and harmony with nature can form the basis of sustainable environmental policies. In addition, Confucianism can also play a role in promoting social harmony and reducing conflict in an increasingly complex and diverse society (Li, 2014).

e. Global Potential

Although Confucianism originates from East Asia, its values have universal appeal. Principles such as benevolence, hard work ethics, and moral responsibility can be applied in a variety of cultural and social contexts. Efforts to combine Confucian principles with modern concepts such as democracy and human rights show the potential to create a more inclusive and adaptive system. This opens up opportunities for Confucianism to contribute to the global dialogue on ethics and morality (Yao, 2017).
CONCLUSIONS

Confucianism, which has its roots in the teachings of Confucius (551-479 BC), has developed from a philosophical system into a comprehensive way of life and has been influential in various aspects of life in Chinese and East Asian society for more than two millennia. Confucius' teachings emphasize personal ethics, social morality, and ideal governance, with the aim of achieving harmony in the lives of individuals and society.

1. Evolution and Adaptation

Confucianism has experienced various stages of evolution, starting from the basic teachings taught by Confucius, development by his students such as Mencius and Xunzi, to adoption as a state ideology during the Han Dynasty. Despite facing challenges throughout history, including harsh criticism in the early 20th century and suppression during the Mao Zedong era, Confucianism demonstrated its resilience and flexibility. In the modern era, Confucianism is experiencing a revival, not only in China but also in other East Asian countries, with its relevance continuing to be recognized in the face of global challenges such as environmental crises, social inequality, and international conflict.

2. Influence in Various Aspects of Life

Confucianism influenced various aspects of life, including:

a. Family and Social Relations: Emphasizes the importance of family relationships and social hierarchy, with the concepts of xiao (filial piety) and li (ritual) governing interactions within the family and society.

b. Education: Education was considered the primary means for moral and intellectual development, with the imperial examination system based on Confucian texts.

c. Government and Politics: Confucianism promotes a concept of government based on morality and virtue, with leaders expected to be moral role models for their people.

d. Health and Medical Decisions: Confucian values influence health behaviors and medical decisions, including family participation in medical decision making and emphasis on caring for sick family members.

3. Challenge and Criticism

Despite its significant influence, Confucianism also faces various challenges and criticism in the contemporary era, including:

a. Democracy and Human Rights: The hierarchical structure and emphasis on social harmony in Confucianism can conflict with the principles of democracy and human rights.

b. Gender Equality: Patriarchal views in Confucianism often do not support gender equality.

c. Environmental Challenges: Confucianism needs to find ways to respond to and contribute to the solution of increasingly pressing environmental problems.
4. Future Prospects

The prospects for Confucianism as a value system and way of life in the future looked bright, especially in East Asia. Confucian values such as benevolence, education, and social harmony continue to be the foundation of many societies in the region. Efforts to combine Confucian principles with democracy and Western thought show the potential to create a more inclusive and adaptive system.

Thus, Confucianism is not just an abstract philosophy, but also a comprehensive way of life, offering ethical and practical guidance in living daily life, interacting in society, and even in state governance. This understanding opens up new perspectives in studying its influence and relevance in the modern world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strengthening Moral and Ethics Education:
   a. Implementation of Confucian Values: Education systems in countries influenced by Confucianism, such as China, South Korea, and Japan, can continue to strengthen moral and ethical education based on Confucian values such as ren (virtue), li (ritual), and yi (truth). This can be done through a curriculum that emphasizes the development of student character and morality.
   b. Teacher Training: Teachers should be trained to not only teach academic knowledge but also be moral role models for their students, in accordance with Confucian principles that emphasize the importance of the wise teacher's example and influence.

2. Adaptation of Confucian Values in the Modern Context:
   a. Integration with Democracy and Human Rights: Efforts to combine Confucian values with democratic principles and human rights need to continue. This includes the reinterpretation of Confucian teachings to support gender equality and individual rights in a modern context.
   b. Application in Environmental Policy: Confucian values such as harmony with nature and moral responsibility can be integrated into environmental policy to address increasingly pressing environmental challenges.

3. Promotion of Social Harmony:
   a. Strengthening Family and Social Relationships: Confucian values that emphasize the importance of family relationships and social hierarchy can be used to strengthen family and community ties. Programs that promote filial piety (xiao) and respect for parents and ancestors can be implemented to strengthen the social structure.
   b. Conflict Resolution: Confucian principles of social harmony can be applied in resolving conflicts in society, both at the local and international levels, to create a more peaceful and harmonious society.

4. Development of Morality-Based Government Policies:
   a. Virtue-Based Governance: Governments can adopt Confucian principles of governance based on morality and virtue. Leaders are expected to be moral role models for their people, and government policies must reflect Confucian ethical principles.
b. Transparency and Accountability: Confucian values of integrity (xin) and truth (yi) can be applied to increase transparency and accountability in government.

FURTHER STUDY
a. Comparative Studies: Further research could be conducted to compare the application of Confucian values in different countries and how they adapt to different social and political contexts.
b. Global Influence: Research on how Confucian values can be applied in a global context and contribute to international ethics and morality dialogue also needs to be developed.

REFERENCES


