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The Ancient Chinese Views of Family Education Recorded in Pre-Qin (before 221 BC) Confucian Classics

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ABSTRACT

The Pre-Qin family education is a long neglected but important research topic in understanding Chinese education and culture. Although Chinese traditional family education is mostly under the influence of Confucianism there is not sufficient discussion in the Pre-Qin period as there are only scattered records related to this topic in various Pre-Qin classics. In addition, most research outputs in the field are on “jiaxun” (family instruction) which normally refers to family seniors’ commandments to their juniors from a cultural perspective. However, “jiating jiaoyu” (family education) can be defined as a mutual learning process in which individuals are socialized in family settings from perspectives of education and sociology. Based on this definition, the paper aims at exploring the special roles and contributions of the early Pre-Qin Confucian classics to the development of family education in China in terms of principle, aim, pedagogy, and role expectation of family member. The result shows that the Yijing (Book of Changes) brings out the views of strict family management style, supreme status of the father and role differentiation in the Pre-Qin period. The Lunyu (Analects) emphasizes the value of learning the shi (Book of Songs) and the li (Book of Rites) while the book Mengzi proposes a couple of innovative views on the parent-child relationship, role models, mutual education, environmental influence, and moral and role expectations in family education. The practicability of impartiality in family education and effectiveness of direct instruction in education are areas that need special attention from researchers and education policy makers.

Keywords: Chinese Culture, Chinese Education, Confucianism, Family Education, Pre-Qin Period.

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1. Introduction

The *Sanzijing* (*Three-word Classic*), a classic of child education in China, is usually attributed to Confucian scholar Wang Yinglin (1223-1296). It states that “feeding without teaching is the father's fault” (Chen, 2007, 3). This quote shows that Chinese take the role of father and family education seriously in raising their next generations. Wang (2006) believes that the Chinese traditional family education is mostly under the influence of Confucianism. However, there is not sufficient discussion particularly in periodic

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studies on this tradition (Li, 1997; Xing, 2003; Chen, 2008). Currently, most of the works in the field are not focusing on “jiating jiaoyu” (family education) but on “jiaxun” (family instruction) that normally refers to family seniors’ commandments to their juniors in ancient China (Chen, 2008). Typical examples are the works produced by Xu and Chen (2003), Zhu (2008) and Wang (2006) and collections compiled by Xie (1997), Li (1998), Zhai (2002), Zhang (2009) and Ding (2010). According to the *Jiaoyu dacidian* (Comprehensive dictionary of education), “jiating jiaoyu” (family education) is “mutual education among family members which normally refers to parents’ or other senior people’s teaching on next generations” (Gu, 1990, 11). From a sociological perspective, Zhou (2006) has summarized five key functions of family education under a sociological approach as follows: the best mode for socializing individuals, an appropriate context for body and mind development, cultivation of talents, contribution to a happy family and prevention of youth misbehaviors. Thus, family education is a mutual learning process in which individuals are socialized in family settings. Based on the definition of the *Jiaoyu dacidian*, although Ma (1997) and Yan (1997) have presented their views on key thought of major Pre-Qin masters and Bi (1997) has collected a series of well-known stories of family education in imperial China up to the end of the Qing dynasty (1912) further studies on their special roles and contributions are needed to sort out the origin and development of family education in the Pre-Qin period. The paper aims at exploring the special roles and contributions of the early Pre-Qin Confucian classics to the development of family education in China in terms of principle, aim, pedagogy, and role expectation of family member. The outcomes can provide a better understanding of how the thought of family education is originated and developed from the *Yijing* to the books *Lunyu*, *Mengzi* and *Xunzi* from educational and sociological perspectives. To achieve these goals, the paper adopts a hermeneutic method to study fragmental records related to family education in the Pre-Qin Confucian classics and compare their views with Daoist and Legalist classics to find out the core elements of family education in the Pre-Qin period. The paper will study the earliest views related to family education in the *Yijing* and then discuss the general views of family education in the *Lunyu* that path the direction for later thought on family education in China. The paper will go on studying the innovative views recorded in the book *Mengzi* and investigate how Confucian views are synthesizing with Legalism in the book *Xunzi* at the end of the Warring States period (c.475-221 BC). To sort out the essential views on family education in the Pre-Qin period, the paper will compare the views among Confucianism, Daoism and Legalism and the special roles and contributions of Confucian classics that can be good reference for policy makers of family education.

2. Methodology

By synthesizing definitions from educationist Gu (1990) and sociologist Zhou (2006), the “jiating jiaoyu” is taken as a mutual learning process in which individuals are socialized in family settings. This new cross disciplinary interpretation widens the scope of current focus on “jiaxun” by drawing reference to educational and sociological theories and would provide a new perspective on ancient Chinese family education. The main primary materials for the research are scattered records in the Pre-Qin classics of various schools of thought. The identified records in the *Yijing*, the *Lunyu*, the *Mengzi*, the *Xunzi*, the *Daodejing*, the *Zhuangzi*, the *Hanfeizi* are analyzed by hermeneutic method according to the proposed interpretation of “jiating jiaoyu” and in terms of principle, aim, pedagogy, and role expectation of family member for contemporary policy makers’ reference. Cross reference study among the classics of Confucianism, Daoism and Legalism is applied to sort out their common views and impact of Confucianism in family education in the Pre-Qin period.

3. The earliest views of family education in the *Yijing*

Before the Western Zhou period (1046-771 BC), family education was mainly a process of transmitting production skills and natural science knowledge such as skills of farming and knowledge of cosmology within the family through oral communication. Chen (2008) regards that period as the initial stage of Chinese family education. In the Eastern Zhou period (770-255 BC), there were state schools in the capital and states providing education of rites, music, archery and horsemanship to children of nobles and commoners before the rise of private schools in the mid Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BC). According to the chapter “Neize” (The pattern of the family) of the *Liji* (*Book of Rites*), basic life skills,

social norms and role differentiation are taught to the children of nobles in families before they go to state schools (Wang, 1984). At that time, some royal family instructions on rulership and personal conduct were recorded in the *Shangshu* (*Book of Documents*) and the *Yi Zhoushu* (*Remnants of the Book of Documents*) and the main function of these royal family instructions is to sustain the sovereignty of the Jis family (Tong, 2015, 2016). However, when education was opened to common people, some more textual information of family education were recorded in the classics of major schools of thought which have not been studied well. The three monographs published by Ma (1997), Yan (1997) and Bi (1997) have provided a basic understanding of family education in ancient China from a historical perspective. The dual function of ancient Chinese education on personal enlightenment and social harmony has been studied by Lee (2000) from a historical perspective with special emphasis on synergy of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism and impacts of civil examination system and family relations. Although Lee has provided a historical account of how traditional families shaped a Chinese person his discussion on Pre-Qin family education is very brief and mainly focuses on family instructions of the early Zhou kings and Duke Dan of Zhou (?-1033 BC). Hence, some more studies on the classics of various schools of thought are needed to sort out their unique contribution to ancient Chinese family education at that time (Chen 2008). Wang (2006) concludes that the Chinese traditional family education is mostly under the influence of Confucianism. Confucianism is one of the schools of thought in the Eastern Zhou period but its supreme status in the Han dynasty (206 BC-220) and later dynasties in imperial China marks it as a key contributor in the history of family education. From perspectives of ideology, core values, social development and state structure, Wang (2006) shows the impact of Confucianism on family education in imperial China.

The *Yijing* is originally a divination manual in the Western Zhou period (1046–771 BC) and becomes a Confucian classic of philosophy that has great impact on Confucian and Chinese people. By quoting the Third Yang of the hexagram “jiaren gua” (The Family):

If the Family is run with ruthless severity, one may regret the degree of it, yet there will be good fortune. But if wife and child overindulge in frivolous laughter, in the end it will result in baseness. (Lynn, 1994, 365)

Ma (1997) argues that the tradition of strict family management culture in China is originated from this hexagram and defines this tradition in terms of six family norms that lay the foundation for family education in ancient China: (1) senior members possess supreme status; (2) members should achieve their responsibility according to their roles; (3) prevention is more important than punishment of misbehavior; (4) severity should be practiced with love; (5) faith should be practiced with dignity; and (6) there should be integration of teaching and self-regulation. Norms 1 and 2 refer to role of family members and aim of family education while norms 3 to 6 refer to pedagogies of family education. As observed by Lee (2000), studies on personality formation in educational theory and history in relation to traditional Chinese society are rare. Although written texts related to royal family instructions of the royal family of Zhou dynasty are available in the *Shangshu* and the *Yi Zhoushu* with focus on rulership and sustainability of sovereignty (Tong, 2015, 2016) studies on how intellectuals see family education are still rare up to date.

4. The general views of family education in the *Lunyu*

Another key Confucian classic the *Lunyu* is mainly a collection of sayings attributed to the Kongzi (Confucius, 551-479 BC) and his followers. The book is believed to have been compiled and written by Kongzi’s followers during the Warring States period and reached its current form during the Han dynasty. There are two records directly related to family education in the *Lunyu*:

Chen Gang asked the son of Confucius, Boyu: “Have you been given any kind of special instruction?” “Not yet,” he replied. “Once when my father was standing alone and I hastened quickly and deferentially across the courtyard, he asked me, ‘Have you studied the *Songs*?’ I replied, ‘Not yet,’ to which he remarked, ‘If you do not study the *Songs*, you will be at a loss as to what to say.’ I deferentially took my leave and studied the *Songs*. “On another day when he was again

standing alone, I hastened quickly and deferentially across the courtyard. He asked me, 'Have you studied the Rites?' I replied, 'Not yet,' to which he marked, 'If you do not study the Rites, you will be at a loss as to where to stand.' I deferentially took my leave and studied the *Rites*. What I have learned from him, then, are these two things," Chen Gang, taking his leave, was delighted, and said, "I asked one question and got three answers. I learned the importance of the *Songs* (*shi*) and of the *Rites* (*li*), and I also learned that exemplary (*junzi*) do not treat their own sons as special case." (Jishi 16.13) (Ames & Rosemont Jr, 1998, 2000-01)

And

The Master said to his son Boyu, "Have you mastered the 'Zhounan' and 'Shaonan' sections of the *Book of Songs* (*shi*)? Striving to become a person without doing so is like trying to take your stand with your face to the wall." (Yanghuo 17.10) (Ames & Rosemont Jr., 1998, 206)

Kongzi was a renowned teacher and possible owner of a private college in his time. Chen Gang was a minor disciple of Kongzi and Boyu (Kong Li 532-483 BC) was Kongzi's son. In the quote, Kongzi is impartial to his son and disciple in teaching. The action of reminding Boyu to study the *shi* and the *li* when Kongzi meets his son Boyu in courtyard is a common mode of family education that happened in daily family settings. Regarding the aim of studying the *shi*, Kongzi says if you do not study the *shi*, you will not know how to speak. However, in another chapter "Zi Lu", it states:

The Master said, "If people can recite all of the three hundred *Songs* and yet when given official responsibility, fail to perform effectively, or when sent to distant quarters, are unable to act on their own initiatives, then even though they have mastered so many of them, what good are they to them." ("Zi Lu" 13.5) (Ames & Rosemont Jr, 1998, 163)

In teaching his son to learn the *shi*, Kongzi not only emphasizes the importance of speaking skills but also the content knowledge of the *shi* and its application to perform official duties. The chapter "Yanghuo" also records:

The Master said, "My young friends, why don't any of you study the *Songs*? Reciting the *Songs* can arouse your sensibilities, strengthen your powers of observation, enhance your ability to get on with others, and sharpen your critical skills. Close at hand it enables you to serve your father, and away at court it enables you to serve your lord. It instills in you a broad vocabulary for making distinctions in the world around you." (Yanghuo 17.9) (Ames & Rosemont Jr, 1998, 206)

According to the quote, learning the *shi* enables one to know more vocabulary of animals and plants, cultivate one's abilities to associate, observe, get on with others as well as present criticism to others. All these are important content knowledge of the world and communication skills for one to serve his parents and state. Regarding the learning of the *li*, it states in the *Lunyu*:

Master Kong said, "I find inspiration by intoning the songs, I learn where to stand from observing ritual propriety (*li*), and I find fulfilment in playing music." (Taibo 8.8) (Ames & Rosemont Jr, 1998, 122)

Ames and Rosemont Jr. translate this monolog from a perspective of self-cultivation: by learning the songs, ritual propriety and music one can be inspired, position oneself in society and fulfill oneself. Yang (1980) interprets this monolog from a functional approach: songs can make people excited, rites can make people stand firm in society, music can make people complete their studies while Watson (2007) takes this as a process of character development through learning the songs, then the rites and finally music. This is a learning process for mind and talent development in which individuals are socialized. In another chapter of the *Lunyu*, it states:

The Master said, "Someone who does not understand the propensity of circumstances (*ming*) has no way of becoming an exemplary person (*junzi*); someone who does not understand the observance of ritual propriety (*li*) has no way of knowing where to stand; a person who does not understand words has no way of knowing others." (Yaoyue 20.3) (Ames & Rosemont Jr, 1998, 229)

The *li* in this monolog not only refers to ritual propriety but also social norms that help people to be accepted by others in society. This view is also in line with Brezinka's (1997) proposal that the collective aims of education are the personal ideals of a community. The purpose of Kongzi's question to his son in the chapter "Jishi" (16.13) of the *Lunyu* is to guide Boyu to reflect on his study on the *shi* and the *li*. As proposed by Halstead (2011), "the job of educators is to make students solid thinkers and problem solvers" (21). Kongzi's question to his son Boyu is a stimulation that can arouse Boyu to reflect on his progress of study. The follow-up answers are directions for Boyu's independent learning of big ideas from the *shi* and the *li* (Halstead 2011). In this encounter, Kongzi does provide support and challenge on learning the *shi* and the *li* in a family context. His role fits into the concept of mentoring proposed by Hamilton (1991), Freedman (1993) and Rose (2004) who define mentoring as a mixture of support and challenge guiding young people to enter into the world of adulthood by voluntarily seniors. The Kongzi in the *Lunyu* is a supreme and strict father who delivers family education directly to his son through rigorous words to develop his son's moral and social character. The learning of *li* is particularly emphasized as a measure to prevent his son from violating social norms. All these records in the *Lunyu* demonstrate the supreme and strict role of the father that is in line with the "jiaren gua" and the family management norms proposed by Ma (1997). Kongzi's questions and answers to his son also inspire us to think about how to use questions in family education and the importance of learning content knowledge, communication skills and social norms.

5. The innovative views of family education in the Mengzi

About a hundred year later, another great Confucian, Mengzi (Mencius 372-289 BC) also contributed his views on intellectual or middle class family education in the book *Mengzi* that is a collection of anecdotes and conversations of his. In the chapter "Lilou, Part A", it states:

Gongsun Chou said, "Why does a man of virtue not take on the job of teaching his own son?" "The fact is," Mencius (Mengzi) said, "that won't work. A teacher should correct a pupil's errors. If correction does not work, it may be followed up by an outburst of temper. When this occurs, father and son will hurt each other's feelings. The son may also say, 'You correct me in teaching but you yourself, as a teacher, are not correct.' Under such circumstances both will have their feelings hurt. That will be very bad. The ancients taught one another's sons let father and son should expect the best of each other. Expecting the best of each other will cause estrangement, and there is nothing worse than estrangement between father and son." (Lilou, Part A, 7.18) (Yang, 1999a, 166-69)

In the quote, by referring to the ancient practice, it seems that Mengzi's view is to avoid hurting harmony between father and son (Tu, 1998). Ma (1997) argues that Mengzi is just proposing a way to avoid worsening the father-son relationship rather than rejecting family education. The parent-child relationship is vital to the stability of a family but in reality fathers always have problems in being role models for their children. Kuang Zhang is labeled as an unfilial son but Mengzi still holds him in high esteem by saying:

He is only regretful for the worsening of father-son relationship, as he has once tried to admonish his father on a moral issue. To admonish each other on a moral issue is quite common between friends, but it does hurt the feelings of both father and son. (Lilou, Part B, 8.30) (Yang, 1999a, 190-92)

In this case, as Kuang Zhang's father cannot be a moral model for the family Kuang Zhang admonishes him. Kuang Zhang's admonishment to his father can be taken as a form of family education from junior to senior. This is a new idea that challenges the authority of seniority advocated by the *Yijing*. In another chapter, it states:

Mencius said, "Those who keep the golden mean should instruct those who do not, and those who are talented should instruct those who are not. That is why people are glad to have virtuous fathers and elder brothers. If those who keep the golden mean shun those who do not, and those who are

talented shun those who are not, then the gap between the worthy and the unworthy will be too small to measure." (Lilou, Part B, 8.7) (Yang, 1999a, 176-79)

It is clear that Mengzi does have a high expectation (talented and/or virtuous) on the father and the elder brother as they are role models and mentors for junior family members. Role model education aims to "expose target groups to specific attitudes, lifestyles and outlooks, and in particular, to individuals in which these attitudes and lifestyles are embodied" (Rose, 2004) in informal settings. As argued by Bucher (1997), parents and relatives were perceived to have the greatest model effect on his surveyed school pupils. The Mengzi is innovative in proposing that if parents or family elders do not have good moral quality, family juniors can criticize them just the case cited in Part B of "Lilou" (8.30).

Concerning learning outcomes, the chapter "Gaozi" states:

Mencius said, "During a year of bumper harvests, young people are prone to laziness; during a year of crop failure, young people are prone to ferocity. Not that they are evil in nature, but that circumstances make them go evil ways. Take the barley. The seed is sown and covered in the same place and at the same planting time. The barley will all grow luxuriantly, and it will ripen by summer solstice. In case there is any discrepancy in the yield, it is because the soil varies in fertility, the fall of rain and dew is irregular, and the farming methods are not the same quality. Thus things of the same kind are all similar. Why should we have doubts when it comes to man? The sage and I are the same kind. (Gaozi, Part A, 11.7) (Yang, 1999a, 252-53)

Taking barley as a metaphor, Mengzi illustrates the impact of environmental inputs on individual character development. The metaphor tells us different family inputs, including family education, may generate different impacts on individual character development and if these inputs are controlled, well expected learning outcomes can be achieved eventually.

Regarding the ideal characters of the son and daughter, the chapter "Tengwengong" states:

"How can they be regarded as great men?" said Mencius. "Have you never learned the rites? When a son comes of age, his father admonishes him. When a daughter marries, her mother admonishes her, and, seeing her to the door, she gives her the warning, 'After you get to your new home, you ought to be respectful and careful. Do not disobey your husband.' To see compliance as the correct course is the norm for women. "As for a man, he should live in the most spacious mansion of the world (benevolence-tr.), occupy the most proper position of the world (decorum-tr.), and walk down the broadest way of the world (righteousness-tr.). If he achieves his aim, he will go along the way together with the people; if he fails to achieve his aim, he will adhere to his principles. He cannot be led into dissipation by wealth and rank, nor deflected from his aim by poverty and obscurity, nor made to bend by power and force—all this is characteristic of a great man. (Tengwengong, Part B, 6.2) (Yang, 1999a, 128-31)

In response to Jing Chun's question on great men, Mengzi points out that when a son comes to age, the father should teach him: (1) to be benevolent, observant of ritual propriety and righteousness; (2) no matter successful or not he must adhere to this principle even when facing challenges of wealth and rank, poverty and obscurity, power and force. This is a moral aim of family education presented in the ideal character of a great man. For the daughter, also according to the ritual propriety, when she marries, the mother must teach her to accept compliance as the correct norm for women. The duties of the father and the mother as well as role expectations on the son and the daughter are stated clearly in this quote. Inheriting the view of strict father in the *Yijing*, the Mengzi reinforces the dominant status of the father and the son in the family explicitly through their roles and expectations. According to Wang (2007), China had become a male dominated era in the Zhou dynasty and females were expected to be submissive to their fathers, husbands and sons. The Mengzi may have a significant role in the process. In short, the Mengzi emphasizes mutual education between senior and junior family members on one hand, it also stresses the supreme role of parents on the other hand.

6. The synthesizing views of family education in the *Xunzi*

At the end of the Eastern Zhou period, by synergizing the Confucian concepts of rites and views of legalists, the book *Xunzi*, which is traditionally attributed to be the work of Xun Kuang (313~238 BC) proposes to unify the states by observing ritual principles (Ma 1997). The ritual principles in the *Xunzi* refer to sets of social norms for people of various classes and roles that can stabilize the whole of society (Ma, 1997). In the *Xunzi*, continuation of the family is a major duty of all family members and the mission is always performed and transmitted by the father. In the book *Xunzi*, it states:

The Rites for claiming the Bride. The father stands facing toward the south. His son faces north and kneels. The father offers the pledge cup to his son with the command: "Go now and claim your helpmate so that I may fulfil my responsibilities in our ancestral temple. Treat her generously and lead her with respect, for she is the successor to your mother. If you act in this fashion, then our family will be perpetuated." The son responds: "Yes, sir." Only I fear that I shall prove incapable, though how could I presume to forget your commands!" (Dalue 27.16) (Yang, 1999a, vol. 2: 858-59)

The quote emphasizes that continuation of the family is a major aim of family education and the mission is always performed and transmitted by the father. Although male is the dominant sex in the family, the son is taught by the father to lead his wives with respect in the chapter "Dalue". This implies that the status of the wife is also important in the family. Wei-Ming Tu thinks that the husband-wife relationship should be subsumed under the category of "bie" (distinction) which is based on a principle of mutuality. Under this principle of mutuality, "the underlying spirit is not dominance but division of labour" (Tu, 1998, 127) between husband and wife in raising a family. From the reply of the son in the "Dalue", it seems that the son is an order follower who will try his best to complete his father's instructions. This quote also brings out the Confucian moral concept "sangang" (Three Bonds) advocated by Dong Zhongshu (179-104 BC) in his book *Chunqiu fanlu* (*Luxuriant dew of the spring and autumn annals*): "The relationship between lord and official, father and son, husband and wife is all based on the principle of Yin and Yang. The lord is Yang, official is yin. Father is Yang, son is Yin. Husband is Yang, wife is Yin" (Dong, 1989, 73). In 79, Emperor Zhang (57-88; r.75-84) finalized the concept of "sangang" according to Dong Zhongshu's view in the meeting held at the Baihu guan (White Tiger Pavilion). The key points of the meeting were recorded by Ban Gu (32-92) in the *Baihu tongyi* (*Common understanding of the White Tiger Pavilion meeting*). It is also noted that the father instructs the son to treat his wife generously and lead her with respect, as she is the successor to his mother in the quote. The supreme status of mother is also an interesting research topic for us to understand the Chinese family and gender issues.

7. Confucianism, Daoism and Legalism: Some shared views of family education

The role expectations of the son and the daughter in the *Mengzi* are sets of personal dispositions. The *Daodejing*, a classic of Daoism produced in the Warring States Period (Ames & Hall, 2003), also emphasizes cultivation of personal dispositions. The *Daodejing* states:

What has been well-planted cannot be uprooted;
 What is embraced tightly will not escape one's grasp;
 And with one's children and grandchildren performing the customary rites
 The autumnal sacrifice will never be interrupted.
 Cultivate it in your person,
 And the character you develop will be genuine;
 Cultivate it in your family,
 And its character will be abundant;
 Cultivate it in your village,
 And its character will be enduring;
 Cultivate it in the state,
 And its character will flourish;

Cultivate it in the world,
And its character will be all-pervading. (Ames & Hall, 2003, 160-61)

The aim of the chapter is to use a metaphor in the opening to illustrate the nature and importance of cultivation of personal disposition. The cultivation of personal disposition is the basic essence of life as only firm cultivation can contribute to development of personal disposition, growth of families, villages, states and worlds and the generation of “enduring consequences for the proliferation of generation after generation of one’s continuing lineage” (Ames & Hall, 2003, 162). This quote indicates that the cultivation of personal disposition and continuation of family are two key responsibilities of family members.

Another Daoist classic the *Zhuangzi* is a collection of chapters compiled by Zhuangzi (c.369-c.286 BC) and his followers in the late Warring States Period (Hamill & Seation 1988, XV). In the book, the parent is always referred to be “dao” (the way). In the chapter of “Da Zongshi”, it states:

Master Lai said, “A child, obeying his father and mother, goes whatever he is told, east or west, south or north. And the yin and yang—how much more are they to a man than father or mother! Now that they have brought me to the verge of death if I should refuse to obey them, how perverse I would be! What fault is it of theirs? (Watson, 2003a, 81)

In this metaphor, the nature (yin and yang) is represented by parent’s love that is always for the betterment of their children (people) and therefore children have to obey their parents’ words. This kind of order is seen in another chapter “Tiandao”:

The ruler precedes and the minister follows; the father precedes and the son follows; the elder brother precedes and the younger follows; the senior precedes, and the junior follows; the male precedes and the female follows; the husband precedes and the wife follows. (Palmer & Breuilly, 1996, 109)

This order of the greater followed by the lesser is a mirror of Heaven. Similar to the Confucianism, the concepts of seniority and supreme status of males are emphasized clearly here.

The book *Hanfeizi* attributed to Han Fei (c.280-233 BC) is a selection of essays on theories of state power that synthesizes the methodologies of his predecessors (Watson, 2003b). Han Fei is considered a representative of the Legalist or Realist school who has left us the most readable exposition of its theories (Watson, 2003b). Regarding effectiveness of family education, Han Fei thinks that the love of parents, neighbors’ scolding and teachers’ instruction cannot change the bad character of their sons:

But let the local magistrate send out the government soldiers to enforce the law and search for evildoers, and then he is filled with terror, reforms his conduct, and changes his ways. Thus the love of parents is not enough to make children learn what is right, but must be backed up by the strict penalties of the local officials; for people by nature grow proud on love, but they listen to authority. (Wudu, 49) (Watson, 2003b, 104)

Han Fei thinks that the love of parents must be backed up by the strict penalties of the local officials to change the bad character of their children. This is the first time in Chinese history family education is linked to state penalties. In the chapter “Xianxue”, it also puts blame on a kindly mother for the bad character of children:

In a strict household there are no unruly slaves, but children of a kindly mother often turn out bad. From this I know that power and authority can prevent violence, but kindness and generosity are insufficient to put an end to disorder. (Xianxue, 50) (Watson, 2003b, 126)

And in the chapter “Bashuo”, it states:

The kindly mother’s love for her little child cannot be surpassed by others. However, when the child has misbehaviors, she sends him to the teacher; when he has serious illness, she sends him to

the physician. Without following the teacher's guidance, he is liable to penalty; without seeing the physician he is inclined to death. Even though she loves his child, this kind of love cannot help save him from penalty and death. Hence, what makes the child alive is not mother's love. (Bashuo, 47)) (Chen, 2000, 1037)

According to the *Hanfeizi*, mother's love is not an effective tool to protect her children. Why is the mother's love not able to keep the child safe? The answer can be found in the chapter "Liufan":

Because of love, the mother provides sufficient money to her son to spend. Having sufficient money to spend, the son spends it easily. Spending money easily the son indulges in extravagance. The mother loves her son and therefore will not restrict them which makes the son become arrogant. Being extravagant, the son makes his family poor. Being arrogant, the son practices savage acts. This is the disaster caused by sufficient money to spend together with deep love and light penalty. (Liufan, 46) (Chen, 2000, 1017)

In the same chapter, the negative impact of mother's love is recorded:

Mothers love their sons twice as much as fathers do but fathers' strict orders to their sons are ten times more effective than mothers do. Officials who have no love for the people but they can enforce orders among the people ten thousand times more than fathers do. Mothers heap up their love but their orders are not followed; officials exercise their force and the people follow their orders. (Liufan, 46) (Chen, 2000, 1007)

The father shows less love to the son and always teaches the son with bamboo rods and eventually most of the sons are good due to the practice of severity. The emphasis on severity of the father is in line with the view advocated in Confucian classics the *Yijing* and the *Xunzi*. In short, personal disposition, continuation of family, supreme status of parents and the father are shared concepts of family education among the Pre-Qin Confucianism, Daoism and Legalism.

8. Contribution and implication of the Pre-Qin Confucian classics on family education

The earliest transmitted text available related to family education in China is the Third Yang of the hexagram "jiaren gua" in the *Yijing*. Although Ma (1998) has discussed the impacts of the patriarch system and various schools of thought on family education in the Zhou dynasty, studies on its principles, aims, pedagogies, and role expectations of family members at the Pre-Qin period enable us to know more how family education is developed from educational and sociological perspectives before it was dominated by Confucianism in the Han dynasty. Currently, the history of the Shang dynasty (c. 1600-c. 1046 BC) is mainly known from oracle-bone inscriptions (Shaughnessy, 1999) and no records connect to family education. As mentioned above, written texts related to royal family instructions of the Zhou dynasty are available in the transmitted historical books *Shangshu* and the *Yi Zhoushu* with focus on rulership and sustainability of sovereignty (Xun, 1992) but studies on how intellectuals or the middle classes see family education are still rare. The *Yijing* is the earliest discussion of family management and education in China that has strong impacts on later classics of Confucianism.

Regarding the principle of family education, both the *Lunyu* and the *Zhuangzi* emphasize the importance of impartial teaching or love in family education explicitly. This principle reminds parents and policy makers importance of equity in education. By quoting the study of U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2009), Tomlinson and Andina (2015) identified emotional communication skills, positive parent-child interaction skills, discipline strategies and consistent responses as four effective components for improving parenting skills and child behavior but all these components need to be supported by the parents' practicing of impartial love to their children. Two innovative views on mutual education and environmental impact on family education are raised in the *Mengzi*. In arguing the issue of filial piety in the chapter "Lilou" (Part B, 8.30) it states that admonishing parents on a moral issue is not regarded as unfilial although it hurts the feelings of both father and son. This record advocates mutual education between family seniors and juniors which challenges the supreme status of father advocated

in the *Yijing*. The supreme father is still an issue in contemporary China, Japan and, Korea under the influence of Confucianism as well as countries where men are breadwinners. Miller (2011) quoted cases of Finland, United Kingdom and Sweden to point out that men taken as the normative reference point for jobs, employment policies and practices have more “power to choose their involvement in fathering” (179). The father, being a breadwinner, to a large extent is still a supreme figure in a family who cannot be challenged by the mother and children. The mutual learning between the father and the son can contribute to a more harmonious parent-child interaction and hence should be considered by programme designers of parenting education.

In the *Lunyu*, Kongzi asks his son through rigorous words to study the *shi* and the *li* so as to develop his son’s knowledge, skills and attitude according to the societal expectations on state officials. Through learning the *shi*, one can develop speaking strategies and skills, broad content knowledge, ability to associate, observe, get on with others and present criticism to others. One can also be inspired, position oneself in society and fulfill oneself through learning the *shi*, the *li* and music. In addition to this, by learning the *li* that normally refers to ritual propriety and social norms, one can engage in a life-long socialization process learning the way of life of one’s society proposed by Giddens (2001). In the *Mengzi*, moral expectations on the son and the daughter are explicitly stated in Part B of the chapter “Tengwengong” (6.2). These role expectations of the two sexes set clear directions for family education at later periods. The *Xunzi* transformed the major aim of the royal family instructions from “to sustain the sovereignty of the Jis family” in the *Shangshu* to “continuation of the family” for middle class. This aim has become the core aim of Chinese family education since then.

The questioning technique demonstrated by Kongzi in the *Lunyu* is a pedagogy for learning the big ideas while the high expectations on quality of parents and senior members in the *Mengzi* are proposals on pedagogy of role model. In the chapter “Dalue” (27.16) of the *Xunzi*, the father just instructs directly the son to observe the ceremony, the role of male descendants, and to treat his wife generously (Yang 1999b). This kind of direct instructions are commonly recorded in many literary texts and seems to be quite effective in China. As pointed out by Donnelly (2014), direct instruction is a common pedagogy in China and China’s success in international tests such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) that seems to remind us about the effectiveness of teacher-directed pedagogy. The Chinese experience may challenge the inquiry approach that is popular in Western countries. I agree with Kevin Donnelly that there is not just one way to teach and depending on learners’ age, character and cultural background, direct instruction could be one of the pedagogies that we can adopt. This is also the case in family education. In setting learning and teaching directions for school or parenting curriculum, policy makers may need to rethink the effectiveness of direct instruction.

Starting from the *Yijing*, the role of father is heavily emphasized in the *Lunyu*, the *Xunzi*, the *Zhuangzi* and the *Hanfeizi* as discussed above. In the book *Mengzi* the son is expected to be a “great man” while the daughter is just required to obey her husband and be respectful and careful. In Miller’s (2011) words, these different expectations are emerged “within a landscape premised on inherited and culturally recognisable ideals of masculinities and femininities, which are and have been powerfully shaped by through expressions of unequal power, privilege and patriarchy” (176). This variation of expectation is a gender issue even though it is difficult to say whether the son or the daughter is being discriminated against.

9. Conclusion

The *Yijing* brings out the views of strict family management style, supreme status of the father and role differentiation in the Pre-Qin period. The Kongzi in the *Lunyu* teaches his son Boyu the value of learning the *shi* and the *li* while the *Mengzi* proposes a couple of innovative views on the parent-child relationship, role models, mutual education, environmental influence, and moral and role expectations in family education. In the *Xunzi*, the father is a supreme figure who has the mission to teach the son the great task of family succession and respect for his wife. The Legalist classic *Hanfeizi* argues that parents’ love

must be backed up by state penalties to change the bad character of their children. The Daoist classic *Daodejing* marks cultivation of personal disposition and continuation of the family the two key obligations of family members while the *Zhuangzi* highlights issues on the seniority of family members, supreme status of males and impartial love of parents. Hence the family education in the above classics could be taken as a learning process particularly for mind and talent development in which individuals are socialized.

Their contributions to the development of family education can be discussed in terms of principle, aim, pedagogy and role differentiation. The Confucian classic *Yijing's* views on the supreme status of the father and strict manner of education founds the basic principle of family education for later Confucian, Legalist and Daoist classics. The principle of impartiality in teaching and practicing love to family members are reflected in the records of the *Lunyu* and the *Zhuangzi* respectively that set the ideal attitude of family education for the parent. The *Mengzi's* view on mutual education between family seniors and juniors challenges the common belief of the supreme status of the father. Its view on the impact of environmental factors on character development in the process of family education is also a unique vision of its time. The *Hanfeizi* takes state penalty as an effective tool of education. The role and status of father, the practicability of impartiality in teaching and child rearing, and the environmental factors on character development are all key factors that policy makers have to take into consideration when they formulate and implement policies related to family and education.

The aims of family education mentioned in the *Lunyu* cover knowledge, skills and attitude, the three key scopes of education in the process of socialization. Under its influence, the *Mengzi* focuses particularly on the cultivation of moral character. The *Xunzi* takes continuation of the family as the main aim of family education and seems to be an extension of the aim of sustainability of sovereignty from the royal family education of the *Ji* recorded in the *Shangshu* and the *Yi Zhoushu*. The *Hanfeizi* aims at cultivation of good citizens while the *Daodejing* focuses on two Confucian aims of character development and growth of the family. Regarding the aim of family education, the Confucian classics have provided a more comprehensive and innovative view than the other schools. Kongzi's questioning pedagogy in the *Lunyu* is still commonly applied in schools all over the world. The *Mengzi's* views on pedagogies of role model and mutual criticism are innovative of its time which are in line with the contemporary trends of role-education and mutual learning in the process of socialization. Although the pedagogy of direct instruction is not encouraged in Western countries, its success in the contemporary international tests calls for reconsideration of its effectiveness. Researchers may need to reinvestigate the effectiveness of direct instruction and make suggestions to teachers, parents and education policies. The parent-child relationship raised in the *Mengzi* and unequal status and expectation of male and female family members in these classics are valuable research areas for understanding Chinese culture.

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