

The Illumination of Tao Te Ching [Modern] Educational Wisdom

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Abstract: Considering the widespread resurrection of ancient cultural backgrounds, the importance of ancestral traditions is receiving a growing amount of attention. Tao Te Ching, as an exemplary of the ancient commonly accepted Taoism lifestyle and culture, has undergone through periods of blossoming, stillness, and resurgence. In contrast with Confucius, Laozi's pedagogical identification has not received widespread support throughout the span of time, and his scholarship on the educational principles found within the Tao Te Ching is typically credited to earlier philosophical pursuits rather than achieving autonomous standing. As a result, further investigation into the educational concepts included in Tao Te Ching might assist to maximize the significance of Tao Te Ching in educational opportunities.

Keywords: Tao Te Ching, educational wisdom, Taoist

1. Introduction

The Tao Te Ching, a sacred Chinese scripture associated with Laozi, is the founding document of Taoist doctrine. Taoism, grounded on principles of equilibrium, peace, and nature circulation, underscores the interconnectedness of every element as well as the need for behavior in accordance with the principles of Tao, or the "Way." Such thoughts provide an innovative viewpoint on the teaching and learning process throughout modern educational settings around the globe (Littlejohn, 2022; Dinga and Luo, 2024).

In this context, Taoism's emphasis on straightforwardness, perseverance, and elasticity coincides with contemporary debates with respect to approaches that emphasize students as well as holistic development. Tao Te Ching advocates educators to establish conditions in which children might develop naturally, without any unnecessary stress. Its wisdom simultaneously resonates with techniques such as mindfulness, particularly improving psychological wellness within ever-changing educational settings. Through incorporating Taoist concepts, modern education can deal with not merely intellectual results yet the greater growth of empathy, imagination, and resiliency, resulting in an even more peaceful and significant experience for students as well as educators (Yu, 2018; Moore, 2021).

1.1 Whether Dao can be Dao - The Theory of Educational Thought Developed in Distortion

Lao-tzu's philosophy is founded on the term "Tao," which has several connotations and refers to the fundamental operative code that governs all things in the cosmos, notably the norms of educational opportunities. Considering the principles of education presented in Tao Te Ching, Laozi posed the initial notched up. Does language accurately convey opinion? For simpler terms, do languages matter in education? Are education influence individual's ethical standards of conduct? As quite a while, numerous individuals assumed that Laozi is anti-education as well as intellect. This viewpoint is clearly incompatible with Laozi's aim. Indeed, the comprehension of Tao Te Ching's educational ideals has evolved throughout time (Miller, 2003; Watters et al., 2021).

Laozi first felt that spoken words could represent ideas, as evidenced by his method of authoring the Tao Te Ching. If he truly believed Tao was intangible, he might not have proclaimed at Lou Guantai. Laozi, according to popular belief at that moment, promoted literacy. Laozi was the person in responsible for the manuscript collection throughout the Western Zhou Dynasty. Following experiencing the fall of the Zhou Dynasty, he chose to travel west. Laozi invaded the territory of Qin by rode a green ox via Hangu Pass. Hangu Pass commissioned Yin Xi to construct an observatory on Zhongnan Mountain to see the northern lights. Once he spotted purple qi moving east, he realized it turned out to be

wisdom, so he greeted Laozi. According to the Grand Historian's Records, "Guan instructed Yin Xi to say," The son will hide himself, but he is forced to compose a manuscript for me" (Tzu, 2021).

As a result, Lao Tzu composed the manuscript's initial and subsequent parts, leaving with over five thousand verses of ethical significance but not realizing where it would conclude. Yin Xi honored Laozi as a follower, instructing him to impart knowledge and draft manuscripts. Finally, Lao Zi waited and penned the Tao Te Ching in five thousand words. He spoke to Yin Xi and fellow students atop the structure's elevated stage in the south. The crowd was so vast and impressive that this well-known talk created and solidified Lao Zi's reputation and personality as an educator. After the teaching was finished, Lao-Tzu drifted away, having no idea where he really belonged. Generations that followed referred to Lou Guan Tai on a Sacred Scriptures Platform as the origins of Taoist thinking (Hoff, 2021).

However, Laozi's ideas upon knowledge have been misinterpreted (and indeed debated) by generations after him, primarily in the context of a misinterpretation of the Tao Te Ching's work on wisdom, benevolence, and righteousness; in other words, there is skepticism regarding the necessity and viability of using education to develop ethical people. The Tao Te Ching's initial significance was widely misunderstood by subsequent generations, particularly the statement from the 19th chapter: "To abandon sanctity and wisdom, the people benefit a hundred times; Renounce benevolence and renounce righteousness, and the people will return to filial piety and kindness; The thief has nothing" (Cleary, 2019).

This ultimately resulted in an incorrect interpretation of Laozi's ignorance of learning and knowledge. As a result, despite Laozi's longstanding reputation as a thinker and a philosopher. His works related to the philosophy of education have yet to receive the recognition they merit. This opinion remained unchanged up until the Tao Te Ching was found in Chu's Guodian tomb.

The initial manuscript of the Tao Te Jing discovered in Chu Jane's Guodian tomb reads: "The people will gain a hundredfold if you give up wisdom and argument; A thief who gives up skill and profit will never be caught; if people give up lies and deceit, they will revert to filial devotion and benevolence. In contrast, Mawangdui Silk's Tao Te Ching's Chapters 19 and 63 state that one should "renounce the holy and discard knowledge" and "renounce benevolence and discard righteousness," respectively (Ponce, 2024).

This indicates that in the Guodian condensed rendition, "disputing, falsifying, and cheating" took precedence of "sanctity, benevolence, and righteousness" in the conflict between the Confucian and Taoist values. The Guodian rendition substitutes "disputing, falsifying, and cheating" for the virtues of "sanctity, benevolence, and righteousness," which are valued in Confucian society. The result might represent a significant finding that challenges conventional wisdom if the issue is not a mistake in transcribing blunder (Goldin, 2020; Wang and Wang, 2020).

The tomb of Chu in Guodian dated from the mid- of the Warring States Period, and the abridged Tao Te Ching might have been originally duplicated prior to that. From the standpoint of versionology, the primary literary works of the Tao Te Ching passed on in Chu in the latter part of the Warring States Period distinct from the ones that shared in the beginning of the Han Dynasty, and this could indicate an idea that the earliest form of Tao Te Ching, therefore, the version closest to the genuine proved more moderately at odds with the Confucian school that subsequently believed, despite being a distinct school of thought. However, neither school appeared diametrically opposed. It is documented in The Records of the Grand Historian, The Family of Confucius and The Records of the Grand Historian, The Biography of Lao Zi and Han Fei that Confucius met with Lao Zi and asked him for social protocol guidance. Tian Zifang and Zhibei Tour of Zhuangzi, Heaven and Earth, The Way of Heaven, Heaven Luck, and other volumes contain these narratives (Wang et al., 2021).

Given this, it is undeniable that Confucius and Lao Zi met, and that Confucius asked Lao Zi for ceremonies. In the Records of the Grand Historian, Sima Qian stated: "Confucianism is lacking in Laozi, and those who study Laozi over the world are lacking in Confucianism." Is it wicked that various Daos don't plot against one another? Li Er is quiet and honest, but he doesn't help himself. He was not quite comfortable concerning the contradictory nature of Confucius's and Laozi's studies afterwards. It's possible that the analogy between both Confucianism and Taoism developed through current philosophers merely reflects the circumstances until the late Warring States era, not the actual circumstances in the early days. Lao-Tzu's goal in teaching simply to nurture such qualities throughout humanity, and consequently he was not opposed to scholars, ethical standards, and compassionate emotions (Chang and Zhang, 2019; Liang and Segalas, 2024).

The comprehension and debate of the educational concepts found in the Tao Te Ching have evolved to a certain point. Scholars must address the notions of "saint," "benevolence," and "righteousness" to uncover Lao Tzu's educational thoughts, together with the hints offered by the special edition of Guo Dian Chu Jian. It has been noted with certain academics that both the "renunciation of sanctity and renunciation of wisdom" and the "enunciation of benevolence and renunciation of righteousness" trigger misunderstandings and distress, yet the "three renunciations and three renunciations" in Guodian Chu Jian motivate human beings, indicating that they are profoundly influenced by Confucianism and view "Shengzhi, benevolence and righteousness" as the ultimate the perfect time (Yang, 2023).

It has been precisely now that we're recognize the occult charade of "sanctity, benevolence, and righteousness" to which Lao-Tzu protested. In addition to criticism of "Zhou Wen" (benevolence, righteousness, and rituals), Lao-tzu's "renunciation of benevolence and renunciation of righteousness" apparently implies a "renunciation of the so-called benevolence and righteousness of the secular world." The modern concepts underlying "benevolence and justice," "sage wisdom," and "Qiuoli" are all in opposition to the inherent worth of "Tao" and ought to be disproved. Laozi actively

promoted ethical standards of generosity thrift, and non-contention in accordance with the doctrine of “Dao” in addition to reflecting on and criticizing ancient benevolence, righteousness, and rituals (Zheng, 2020).

1.2 Supreme Goodness is like Water - The Educational Subjectivity Directly Reaching the Soul (Concretization).

As the greatest virtue possesses the qualities of water, supreme virtue resembles water indicates that the purest morality is like the character of water. According to Tao Te Ching’s eighth chapter, “The highest virtue is like water.” Without question, water is good for everything. Since it is bad for everyone, it is excellent in Tao.” Like another lovely literary poem, which is Lao Tzu’s Tao Te Ching preserves the initial poetry ideas. The fluid is gentle, cascading downward and nurturing everything to juxtapose individuals with virtues (Martin, 2005; Stenudd, 2020).

This is like the Book of Songs’ simile of the good guy surrounded by emerald. Laozi compared humans with great ethical development with the element water, yet his decision of “using water as a metaphor for Tao” illustrates a prudent mankind’s astute and perceptive understanding of the universe. As a result, “water” has a distinctive look significance in Lao-Tzu’s cultural philosophy along with serves as a significant emblem of his development, clarification, and metamorphosis of “Tao.” This is since water possesses three qualities: it benefits all living things and nourishes everything; Water flows downward off its location, is obedient and unobtrusive, and is not competing against other people.

According to Laozi, holy people constitute the epitome of the ultimate virtues and possess the qualities of “benefitting sentient beings,” “keeping gentle and not competing with others,” and “not competing with others.” This is the central idea of Lao-tzu’s “subject theory of education.” He makes demands on educators by using the qualities of water as a metaphor: education ought to function as water, subtly hydrating objects and getting to the minds of students. The Tao Te Ching additionally offers a detailed explanation for how to accomplish this type of mind-first education (Watters, 2021).

Educators ought to initially emulate those compassionate qualities of its nature, accomplish their goals while claiming credit, and help every living thing on the planet. Throughout verse 34, Tao Te Ching states that “a road that is wide may curve left and right.” Everything seems to rely on it; it is the basis of all creatures’ birth, achievement, affection, and nourishment despite constituting the Lord. Frequently, small desires cannot be identified; anything is great if it is not the Lord. As a result, saints are magnificent even when people don’t appear magnificent (Hoff, 2021).

This suggests that such a gateway is present throughout the cosmos, that everything flourishes since of its goodness, and that it tries to support everything while fading towards its surroundings and without taking away everything. The phrase “all things belong to nothing but the main” emphasizes the avenue’s grandeur and splendor, yet “constant lack of desire” characterizes its delicate and nuanced nature. Monastics can always accomplish noble and significant causes as well as realms by imitating the route, unselfish with no ego.

According to Tao Te Ching, we as humans need to strive towards the educative notion as “the highest good is like water” over the field of education, which includes both the teacher and students. Teachers’ ought to imitate the ethos of “heaven selfless overburden, earth selfless planting” by treating all students with respect grasping the “benefit of all sentient beings” attribute of water and refusing to prefer any student above another due to situational differences (Tan, 2020).

Third, Lao Tzu promotes the characteristics of “submissiveness” or “no struggle” as qualities that teachers possess. The Book of Songs, which includes the lines “aiming at wine and thinking of meekness, is where the idea of “meekness” emerged in Chinese culture. There additionally exist certain researchers who contend that “Confucians are also gentle.” From promoting masculinity to advocating femininity, a desirable attitude has evolved (Hung, 2020).

A variety of characteristics make up an ideal personality trait, which is the ideal personality that the ancient philosophers spent time studying. Individuals with this type of personality typically behave well in everyday life and represent a flawless manner of behaving and preferring to behave. According to the entire Tao Te Ching, Lao-Tzu promotes a desirable temperament featuring “soft” traits. The qualities associated with the gentler aspect are embodied by water as a tangible appearance, that additionally expresses China’s distinct poetic thought and the analogous rule idea in primordial civilization (Chiang and Karjalainen, 2021).

In Tao Te Ching, Lao-Tzu uses the metaphor of water to teach people how to form a sound ideal personality in society. In terms of educational thought, this means that teachers should realize that students are people in the process of development in actual teaching, treat students like water dripping through stone, be able to overcome hardness with softness, be patient with students, and tolerate their mistakes

1.3 Teaching without Words - Teaching Methodology of Teaching Without Doing.

Regarding educational pedagogy, the Taoist and Confucian schools in our lives have somewhat distinct ideas upon the approaches that educators must apply. Confucianism has a strong emphasis on teaching words and acts, honors ancient documents, and highlights that “the essence of the wisdom is in the individual, and their demise lies in the text.” Taoism, on the other hand, proposes “educating by acts beyond spoken words” to achieve the concept of “educating without

educating.” Laozi thought that by using nonverbal lessons, educators could attain an ideal state of “natural inaction” in the classroom (Xiong and Ju, 2022).

In fact, the most divisive of the many possible meanings of “natural inaction” is the use of the term “just nothing” in the “inaction” phrase. “Nothing” and “existence” are the central dialectic interactions in Lao-Tzu’s philosophical framework. Concerning the idea of “nothing” and how it relates to “being,” “Wei,” and “nothing,” there is currently no conclusion to be reached. The dialectic standpoint is going to be applied throughout this article to attempt to clarify this issue (Yang, 2018). Eventually, Tao Te Ching represents pre-Qin dialectic philosophy. To fully comprehend “being” and “nothing,” we need to start with a dialectical perspective. The essence of dialectical thinking is “relative,” meaning indicates that everything that is changing and evolving; there doesn’t exist a definitive existence, rather it has preliminary requirements.

Nevertheless, the “Tao” which regulates all these alterations is unchanging and eternal. As the father of dialectics, Laozi has consistently analyzed situations with the supreme rule of Tao in mind, as well as participated in extensive debates on the relativity genesis of many occurrences. “Being” and “nothing” have been complementary, primarily in the sense of existence, irrespective of whether it has a successor and substitution; “All things beneath the universe was created by, there is created without it” implying that everything of the transition from invisible to visible, absolutely nothing emanating from not anything; “There is profit, nothing for use” demonstrating which the circumstances possess, the manner in which to perform the part, which means, there currently is a challenge to collaborate via nothingness (Wang and Peng, 2024; Ye, 2024).

Such arguments convincingly point out that “having” as well as “nothing” constantly exist in combinations, supported by one another, and accomplish the aim either “doing” nor “doing nothing” collaboratively. Being and inaction mutually reinforce each other in an extremely ideal set of values for actualizing the Tao of Being of Nature. In Tao Te Ching, “Wuwei” is not a metaphor for “doing nothing,” rather, it reflects the most profound aspect of “Wei.”

The goal of “Wuwei” is to achieve the condition known as “Tao” by renouncing knowledge and deception in favor of surpassing cursory insight grounded in grasping the supreme rule. In this state of awareness, humans become merely conscious of how circumstances seem, yet mindful with their fundamental causes, and they may respond in accordance with natural rules. This explains why Lao-Tzu stated, “Tao always does nothing, but nothing gets done.” According to Lao Tzu, such an awareness of realities and the qualities of objects, along with the summation of rules, inevitably allows humans to autonomously flit amid realities and rules, appearing as though doing nothing while doing all things, which is “nature” and the ultimate manifestation of “Tao” (Sankheangaw, 2023).

Prior to recommending escapism, Lao Tzu uncovers the shift in procedure between “doing” to “doing nothing” by dissecting the intersections underlying “being” and “nothing” and “Wei” and “nothing,” and proposes techniques for achieving this change whilst demonstrating the obstacles and challenges of the transformation. From this perspective, Lao-tzu does not reject “being” or “having,” but rather highlights the dialectical link across “doing” and “having.” Without the Wei, it would certainly not be an opportunity to discuss Wuwei. “Nothing” is unable to be personified with no “having.” Tao Te Ching promotes “doing nothing” and condemns behaviors that injure humans and are opposing humankind (Stenudd, 2020).

Through the sphere of education, this presents itself through negative actions that involve teachers demeaning children and destroying their individuality. The unwillingness of educators to completely grasp Lao-tzu’s concept of “doing nothing” is at the heart of today’s educational challenges. Given that of the obsessive dedication to achieving real classroom instruction, issues such as stimulating progress, pushing indoctrination, neglecting student differences, and so on arise. Furthermore, in the traditional idea, the educator is regarded as the head of instruction and has the sole authority to explain the instructional material. It is assumed that merely the educator’s viewpoint is legitimate. Such a single approach to instruction overlooks students’ learning traits and cognitive diversity, makes it challenging to pique students’ enthusiasm in learning, and does not encourage the development of students’ diverse capacities Liu and Chang, 2024).

Pre-Qin Daoists’ advocacy of “teaching without words” and “teaching without action” has substantial theoretically guidance significance in the teaching profession and plays a vital part in encouraging a concentration on students’ principal stance and determination. Educators are able to influence students’ thinking and experiences throughout a variety of learning opportunities, inspire them based on their individual circumstances, and prepare them to be knowledgeable about society capable of applying understanding and practicing tasks on their own, proactively, and imaginatively (Zu, 2023).

Furthermore, the power source “no words” within “teaching without words” is not entirely mute, instead suggesting that educators ought to minimize spoken language, further by means of actions to show, placed a precedent, and provide an excellent example, so that students are inconspicuously taught and affected, in order to accomplish the objective of “teaching without teaching” and “no for self-transformation.” This approach to teaching guidelines educators in procedure, requiring them to completely acknowledge students’ subjective nature to successfully encourage their creativity and lead them toward thinking independently of one another, beginning with observing of phenomena and progressively moving to exploring the fundamental nature of objects, from “knowledge” to “the pursuit of true knowledge.” On the other, if students remain passive participants of instruction or are made into educators’ emissaries, even seedlings with the ability to yield fruition might forfeit their life and vigor because of ineffective teaching practices (Miller et al., 2022).

To attain the objectives that follow, educators must initially possess a thorough awareness of the rules governing schooling and instruction, as well as acknowledge every student's unique characteristic despite learning the basic rules. Diverse assessment and mentoring techniques need to be implemented to accommodate various students, with a concentration on inspiration as opposed to indoctrination, not merely to teach insight but additionally to create a compelling personality through diverse chances. Students' innate drive and enthusiasm to study ought to be emphasized to ensure students can encourage one another.

Laozi's "natural inaction" represents the greatest possible degree of education, not simply "quiet inaction." To achieve this state of mind, which involves the states of *Natural*, "non-action," and "no action," educators must persevere while working intensely with all of their life force. With respect to this, it's we can conclude that implementing Lao Zi's educational theory towards reality will ultimately lead to the ultimate position of "Wei" (Hu, 2024).

Therefore, in terms of natural teaching, education might be viewed as a method of seedling cultivation. Every seed, in its journey of evolving and growing, should not only pursue the truth, become a "real person" and a "whole person," yet also deal with its current needs pragmatically and thoroughly, so that students may discover their own growth motivation and cultivate their habit, awareness, and ability to actively explore true knowledge while paying attention to nature and the law of the evolution of things.

2 Continuous If the Survival - Benefit Lifelong Education Goal Theory.

There is no question which ideal education is continuous education rather than a one-time education. In the *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu wrote, "If there is continuous existence, it is the root of heaven and earth." This statement is the standard for all nations, and it additionally has the potential to highlight the supreme importance of educational opportunities (Cleary, 2019; Hoff, 2021; Littlejohn, 2022).

To achieve the aim of lifetime advantages associated with education, educators need to possess a clear concept of their professional purpose, which is possibly determined by their drive, motivational competencies, and self-awareness. The occupation of educator is linked to challenges of daily life, the accomplishment of obligations, and the formation of personality traits, all of which vary across educators. Certain educators perceive their profession as a way of earning an income and are unconcerned with their student participation overall advancement.

As a result, these individuals focus on the educational institution's objective metrics, take delight in achieving or surpassing them, and strive for professional advancement and recognition from the outside. In terms of self-positioning, these educators view themselves as education chauffeurs, with the completion of the educational duty as their ultimate objective. Despite their academic skills highly knowledgeable, since the Eastern Han Dynasty Wang Chong "on Heng" said, "hidden book master," they struggled to break into the sphere of creativity (Ruhel et al., 2024).

Excellent educators prioritize education along with questioning oneself using an overwhelming sense of ethical obligation and dignity. Such educators would aggressively accomplish their personal and commitment to the profession, carry out every obligation to outstanding standards, and demonstrate an immense feeling of accountability in students' families, the educational institution, as well as society. They may maintain consistency of commitment and attentiveness in the classroom practices. At the same time, they see teaching as a form of happiness, are eager to explore knowledge with students, maintain on liberating students' natures, cultivating their autonomous reasoning and judging abilities, and viewing education as an avenue that encourages mutual advancement and frequently encountered development across human lives (Choo, 2020).

Following such inspiration, educators will regard itself as the earth that nurtures various seedlings and allows every seed to flourish. Educators instruct students with different personality types in unique methods. By contrast, omitting to impart knowledge to children based entirely on their capacity, which such educators do, is analogous to cultivating crops of rice exactly the precise method that grain is grown. The outcome would turn out fruitless. Each seed is distinctive and deserves the opportunity to flourish, develop, and thrive. Educators shouldn't presume that all kinds of seeds are created equally identical, and approaching cultivating wheat using the identical perspective as cultivating maize would make it difficult successful in accomplishing greater things with fewer (Okafor, 2022).

At long last, excellent educators focus not simply on imparting knowledge yet additionally on the educational experiences of their students, possess an extensive comprehension of students' personalities and psychological needs, and can integrate art, technology, competence, code of conduct, and insight into guiding the overall growth of students. They allow students to experience the ambiance that education provides in their everyday lives even when students quit educational institutions, and subsequently pass this feeling on to other people and the community, thereby representing the pinnacle of education. Here introduce the paper, and put a nomenclature if necessary, in a box with the same font size as the rest of the paper. The paragraphs continue from here and are only separated by headings, subheadings, images and formulae.

3. Conclusion

Tao Te Ching represents an enigma of Chinese culture, yet the educational concepts embedded within it are likewise an infinite resource that requires further investigation. Numerous notable quotes in *Tao Te Ching* have implications that might be extrapolated to various areas of pedagogy and used as aphorisms by educators. As part of customary society,

educational ideas included in the ancient texts of Taoism in the pre-Qin Dynasty ought not to be fully dismissed, either could they be entirely duplicated and digested. Rather, we as humans ought to look at and acquire the important, beneficial, and sensible concepts found throughout Lao Zhuang's outstanding works with a keen intellectual and critical perspective. Eliminate any views that are detrimental to the advancement of modern educational institutions and continue to keep up with current trends. This represents the deeper significance of our shared cultural past.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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