

NEGOTIATING DIFFERENCES FOR PRODUCTIVE DIVERSITY: A RELIGIO-ETHICAL STUDY ON STRUCTURES AND MODELS OF HOME SCHOOL LEARNING IN CHINA

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Abstract: From a religio-ethical standpoint, this research investigates the structures and models of home school learning in China, focusing on how they help to negotiate differences in learning towards productive diversity. This study provides insights into the socio-religious considerations and implications of homeschool education in a diverse educational landscape by analyzing the motivations for homeschooling, the unique characteristics of homeschool learning, and its impact on students' learning outcomes and socialization. The Biblical and Confucianist principles are employed for highlighting the religio-ethical impacts of productive diversity. This article thus unveils how the socio-religious cults and codes can influence the social and ethical fabric of the people and society.

Keywords: Homeschooling, Learning Diversity, Educational Structures, Learning Models, Ethics, Christianity, Confucianism, China.

1. Introduction

Does homeschooling have any impact on society? The concept of 'mother's lap as the first school' for all human beings underscores the age-old practice of homeschooling, which dates back to the dawn of human civilization. In contemporary society, homeschooling has gained prominence as an alternative form of education, enabling families to tailor their children's learning experiences. However, within the cultural, religious, political, and

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gender dynamics of China, homeschooling raises several ethical concerns. According to Xiaoming Sheng, "currently, the act of practicing home education in China is illegal because it contravenes the provisions of the China Compulsory Education Law" (Sheng, 2-3). Despite this, homeschooling has garnered significant attention as an alternative education system offering students freedom and personalized learning opportunities. "Homeschooling in China is in an emerging stage" (Global Times 2013). Addressing the challenges associated with homeschooling requires negotiating differences in educational approaches to ensure students receive a well-rounded education while adhering to ethical standards.

Nelson Mandela, the renowned anti-apartheid activist and politician, once said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" (USAID, 2013). Education is a fundamental human right, and its ethical dimensions are crucial in shaping our goals and fulfilling our aspirations. Cultural values significantly influence perspectives on education, particularly in the context of homeschooling in China. When families choose homeschooling, which prioritizes individualized learning, they may encounter ethical challenges posed by traditional norms that emphasize conformity and uniformity. Addressing these challenges necessitates a thorough examination of the ethical principles that support education within the Chinese cultural framework (Sheng, 45-58).

In this regard, it is important to note that religious values significantly contribute to China's ethical perspectives on education. This raises the question: to what extent is religious influence beneficial in homeschooling? Traditions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Confucianism, and Christianity affect educational decisions made by individuals and families. For instance, Christian homeschooling incorporates religious instruction and biblical values, while Chinese Confucian-style homeschooling emphasizes filial piety and traditional conservatism. These approaches can create insular communities that value education and teach children to be leaders and protectors of their faith and culture. This insular atmosphere can expand without reducing choices, potentially resulting in

subcultures that adhere to specific religious and cultural beliefs. Ethical concerns arise when balancing religious freedom with government regulations. Investigating these dynamics is essential for fostering the harmonious coexistence of religious beliefs and educational practices within China's ethically complex society. As Sheng states: "Confucian values and Christian beliefs provide philosophical support for Chinese families who have chosen to teach their children at home" (96).

The ethical environment surrounding homeschooling in China becomes even more complex within the political sphere. While the government aims to preserve educational standards and social cohesion, its laws and regulations may inadvertently restrict the freedom of choice for families seeking alternative schooling methods. Sheng states: "The local people's governments at all levels shall ensure that school-age children and adolescents are enrolled in the schools near the permanent residence of the school-age children and adolescents" (172). Therefore, an ethical analysis is necessary to balance governmental interests and parental rights in determining the best educational path for children.

Gender dynamics add another dimension of ethical complexity to China's homeschooling debate. Social expectations and conventional gender roles can influence parental decisions about schooling, thereby perpetuating disparities and limiting opportunities for both boys and girls. As Sheng notes, "Western literature focusing on gender roles in relation to home education within the family has identified that gender difference exists between wife and husband in their involvement in home education" (128). Addressing these ethical issues is crucial for promoting gender equality and creating an inclusive educational environment that empowers all individuals, regardless of their gender identity.

This article aims to assess the religio-ethical aspects of homeschooling within the contexts of Chinese culture, religion, politics, and gender. To address these issues and pave the way for equitable and inclusive educational practices, an ethical consideration requires a comprehensive approach that respects individual choices, upholds human rights, and fosters social

progress. By examining the structure of current educational systems in China and globally, this research intends to remove barriers and propose a new model based on productive diversity, thereby contributing to a more ethical educational system.

2. Historical and Sociocultural Environment in China

China's culture is distinguished by its enduring legacy, diversity, and significant influence on neighboring East Asian cultures. Traditional Chinese values stress loyalty to authority and the group, characterized as "collectivistic or vertical-collectivistic." From a liberal perspective, this emphasis on collective values might be viewed negatively because it can restrict individual freedom of expression. Nevertheless, historically and presently, these values have played a crucial role in uniting a diverse population under a common identity as 'Chinese'. In this cultural and social context, maintaining social stability and harmony is paramount. This context tends to uphold educational and parenting practices that promote social learning, such as teacher-centered instruction, rote learning, parental authority, and strict control over children's behavior (Triandis et al., 275-289). These elements are also seen as supportive for a socio-parental cohesion and conformity within Chinese society.

In China, homeschooling is not widely recognized or accepted compared to other countries. The Chinese Government prioritizes formal education and generally mandates children to attend public or private schools. According to the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), the Compulsory Education Law requires communities, schools, and families to ensure that school-age children and adolescents receive compulsory education, defined as attending a school licensed by the government. The implication is that homeschooling is not permitted (Engle, 2022). It's worth noting that the concept of homeschooling has been present throughout various societies and cultures worldwide. As Keerthika (471) asserts: "Literature symbolizes society," reflecting this universal aspect of education. This notion is evident in Chinese films where protagonists often seek out a guru, sensei, teacher, or master to learn and refine skills in unconventional ways. Such relationships not only elevate the

protagonists to higher levels of proficiency but also enrich their ethical and moral development. This cinematic portrayal underscores the broader cultural appreciation for individualized learning and mentorship in Chinese society.

The Chinese education system is often characterized as emphasizing behavioral conformity, top-down indoctrination, rote learning, and standardized curricula tailored for competitive examinations. Scholars frequently attribute these traits to Confucian teachings (Huang and Gove, 227-246). Following the brief Qin Dynasty and subsequently the Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD), China's rulers focused on centralizing authority and unifying a diverse population. A key objective was establishing a standardized education system based on an official ideology that stressed conformity and obedience. Emperor Han Wudi (141-87 BC) officially embraced Confucianism at the advice of his ministers. The introduction of imperial examinations, or keju, during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) further entrenched Confucian doctrines. These exams, based on Confucian classics, became the primary pathway to social advancement in ancient China.

Throughout the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, the keju examinations became increasingly rigorous and rigid. Contemporary critics, like Lin (xiv), have condemned Confucian education and the keju system for stifling innovation and promoting uncritical conformity. Despite these criticisms, the Confucian-based education system effectively served as a societal "glue," fostering unity among a diverse populace throughout China's history. It ensured that elites across the country shared common cultural values (Fairbank and Goldman, 46-71).

3. Education Laws and the New Foundations

Since the promulgation of 'The Decision on the Reform of the Education System' in 1951, China's education system has undergone a significant transformation, evolving into a 'structured four-stage system'. This includes preschool education (3 years), junior education (6 years), middle education (6 years), and higher education (4-10 years). The compulsory education phase in China spans nine years, covering elementary and junior

secondary schooling. Beyond compulsory education, the system encompasses mainstream and vocational education options.

In 1986, China enacted the Compulsory Education Law to ensure that school-age children and adolescents have access to compulsory education, emphasizing its implementation and improving educational quality nationwide. This law was amended in 2006 to further strengthen these provisions in accordance with the Chinese Constitution and Education Law (Sheng, 585). As of now, China does not have specific regulations governing homeschooling, and it is effectively prohibited under the China Compulsory Education Law. Instances like the closure of the Meng Mu Tang homeschooling facility by Shanghai municipal education authorities in July 2006 underline the strict enforcement against unauthorized forms of education outside the established framework (586).

It's important to recognize that homeschooling has a rich historical legacy and has been practiced for thousands of years, dating back to early educational practices among ancient civilizations. In the context of the United States, homeschooling was prevalent among early American settlers and continued throughout the nation's history. Notably, some of America's prominent leaders such as Abraham Lincoln and George Washington received their education through homeschooling. Even Thomas Edison, renowned for his inventions, was educated at home. However, the prevalence of homeschooling declined with the establishment and expansion of institutionalized school systems in the nineteenth century. Despite this historical ebb, homeschooling has persisted and in many cases is viewed as equally beneficial or even more advantageous than traditional schooling, depending on circumstances and individual needs.

4. Homeschooling Motivations

Individual families in China may opt for homeschooling despite it not being officially recognized or endorsed as a mainstream educational option. According to Sheng, some parents, regardless of religious motivations, choose homeschooling because they believe they can provide a superior education tailored to their children's needs compared to traditional schools (Sheng, 20). This

perspective raises questions about its compatibility with a child's future educational and personal development.

Brian D. Ray, a prominent global authority on homeschooling, supports this view by arguing that homeschooling enables families to personalize education to suit their children's specific needs and interests. This approach fosters individualized learning experiences and cultivates a genuine enthusiasm for learning (Ray, 1-23). Both Sheng and Ray emphasize the importance of evaluating homeschooling in terms of its potential impact on personal learning and overall growth.

4.1 Customized/Personalized Learning

The importance of personalized learning stems from its recognition that one-size-fits-all approaches in education are inadequate. By acknowledging each child's uniqueness, personalized learning adapts educational methods to meet individual needs (Murphy 6). This adaptability is a key reason why some families opt for homeschooling, as it allows parents to customize the curriculum and teaching methods based on their children's specific requirements, interests, and learning styles. William Butler Yeats captures this sentiment with his quote, "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire" (Lyons, 101), emphasizing the crucial role of personalized and engaging educational experiences in sparking a child's passion for learning.

4.2 Academic Excellence

There is another significant concern regarding the evaluation of the homeschooling process. However, before addressing this, it's important to consider how one can achieve excellence in this approach. Some parents opt for homeschooling to provide their children with a rigorous and intellectually stimulating education. The renowned educator Maria Montessori advocates for nurturing a child's innate curiosity and desire to learn through hands-on, personalized experiences. "The goal of early childhood education should be to activate the child's own natural desire to learn" (Massing, 116). Children may perceive homeschooling as a

way to attain higher academic achievement and better prepare for further education or future career opportunities.

4.3 Values and Beliefs

Another challenge is instilling religious and cultural values. The desire to impart specific values, religious beliefs, or cultural heritage can also drive families to choose homeschooling. Some parents believe that homeschooling allows them to provide a moral and ethical education aligned with their values, which they feel is inadequately addressed in traditional schools. This approach is not about narrowing students' visions for personal growth but has broader implications for the community.

Kenyan author and academician, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o highlights the importance of a cohesive preschool system. He proudly states, "...the language of our evening teach-ins, and the language of our immediate and wider community, and the language of our work in the fields were one" (287). He poignantly adds, "And then I went to school, ... and this harmony was broken" (288.). Similarly, a Chinese mother in an interview emphasizes: "We are not aiming for our students to achieve high academic scores, but we work to discover the potential of each student" (Dandan, 2017), focusing on their cultural values and beliefs.

4.4. Flexibility & Individualized Pace

Homeschooling allows families to determine their own schedule and pace of learning, which can be beneficial for children who need extra time to grasp certain topics or who excel in specific areas and wish to progress more quickly. Jess Lair captures this idea well: "Children are not things to be molded but are people to be unfolded" (Martin and Torok-Gerard, 84). This insight emphasizes that personalized education supports children's natural development and individuality, helping them achieve their full potential.

4.5 Safety and Well-being

Concerns about the safety and well-being of children in traditional school settings, such as bullying, peer pressure, or

insufficient supervision, can motivate some families to choose homeschooling. Homeschooling can provide physical, emotional, and psychological safety. Maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment is crucial in homeschooling. Parents should prioritize physical safety measures, emotional well-being, and opportunities for socialization to ensure comprehensive well-being (Kunzman and Gaither, 4-59).

Personalized learning in homeschooling acknowledges each child's unique strengths, interests, and learning styles, ensuring a more effective and meaningful educational experience. Every child is a unique individual with different needs, strengths, and abilities. Therefore, education should be tailored to meet their individuality (Gargiulo and Metcalf, 59). Personalized education also recognizes and responds to each child's unique learning methods and talents. As Robert Kunzman notes, homeschooling allows parents to provide a supportive and loving atmosphere that fosters holistic development, strengthens family relationships, and encourages children to become self-directed learners (Kunzman, 311-330).

5. Structures and Models of Home School Learning in China

Before delving further into this discussion, we must ask: What is wrong with traditional schools where thousands of children come together to form a community? Schools play a vital role in turning children into "builders of socialism." As previously noted, the concern is not to mold children into a predefined shape but rather to discover and nurture their unique abilities. This approach enhances the capabilities of both children and parents.

It is important to note the growing number of Chinese parents rebelling against the traditional school system. In 2017, for the first time, the education ministry openly criticized homeschooling, calling it "very unfavorable to a child's lifelong development." The ministry reminded parents that unauthorized homeschooling was banned and threatened unspecified "legal action" against non-compliant parents (Xiamen, 2019). Despite these risks, homeschooling is still seen as a highly beneficial endeavor, and various forms and structures of homeschooling persist in many ways. Homeschooling brings positivity to the

lives of both parents and children. It strengthens family bonds and bridges the generational gap. Furthermore, it has broader societal benefits beyond education, fostering a sense of community and mutual support (Yin, 68).

5.1 International Home Schooling

Some Chinese families, particularly those with overseas roots, may choose to participate in international homeschooling programs. These programs often follow the curriculum and standards of foreign education systems, such as those from the United States, the United Kingdom, or the International Baccalaureate (IB). Parents utilize these programs' online tools, textbooks, and materials to guide their children's education at home. This approach goes beyond online teaching alone; it also enhances opportunities for students to interact with peers (69).

5.2 Tutoring or Supplementary Education

Apart from the concerns mentioned above, it is customary for students in China to receive supplementary academic help outside of regular school hours. Families can hire private tutors or enroll their children in tutoring centers that offer personalized education. In some cases, parents may opt for a type of homeschooling where tutors provide individualized instruction at home in specific subjects or areas of study (Lu et al., 2023).

5.3 Homeschooling Cooperatives

In certain areas of China, homeschooling cooperatives have been formed to pool resources and provide supplemental education for children. Parents can rotate teaching responsibilities or hire specialized teachers to conduct lessons. Bridgeway Academy is one example of such a cooperative (Engle, 2023).

5.4 Home Education Associations

Homeschooling, like any other form of education, is a global enterprise. Millions of families around the world have chosen to take control of their child's education (Ibid.). Some Chinese parents have founded home education groups to interact with other homeschooling families and share information, resources,

and experiences. These organizations often operate within legal boundaries and strive to provide support, advocacy, and community for homeschooling families.

However, there are objections to homeschooling. Despite these objections, many families prefer homeschooling due to various concerns. These include issues with grades, inadequate childcare facilities, and religious considerations (Yin, 70). High fee structures in developing nations also pose a challenge. These issues highlight the need for further research to address difficulties and resolve shortcomings in homeschooling.

6. Negotiating Differences in Learning

Negotiating learning inequalities within China's homeschool system requires an ethical approach that respects diverse perspectives and provides a welcoming and inclusive educational environment. While parents may handle these differences to provide their children with a well-rounded education, the larger concern is addressing the difficulties connected with these educational choices. This involves ensuring children receive a thorough education while preserving ethical principles, which is one of the most challenging problems.

Zhao and Badzis discuss homeschooling in China, noting that Mencius (372-289 BCE) advised parents to allow others to educate their children. Only 18,000 students are homeschooled in Mainland China, with 75.42% of homeschooling parents holding a bachelor's degree, though not necessarily in education. There are no official organizations or support groups. The founder and CEO of "chinahomeschooling.com" served as the primary respondent in three interviews with Chinese homeschooling parents. The other two participants, from Beijing and Guangzhou, have been homeschooling for two years. All participants have a bachelor's degree (not in education), two have only one child each (due to the one-child policy), and all their children are in elementary school. Two of the three parents are Christians and chose homeschooling due to a belief that China's educational system emphasizes testing over moral or spiritual development. Assistance and socialization were mentioned as key concerns. One parent expressed concern that homeschooling might

reinforce the stereotype of the rich, exclusive child, while another worried about the lack of support (Zhao and Badzis, 17-21).

The largest study of Chinese homeschoolers to date was carried out by Xiaoming (2019), who interviewed 30 mothers in Beijing. Parental motives varied, with some being "ideologues" eager to impart Christian beliefs and others being "pedagogues" seeking an alternative to the rote test preparation in government schools. Xiaoming identified five main approaches and the preferred curriculum for each. Zealous adult converts often use Bible-based curricula, while Chinese parents with a Western education sometimes use American curricula. Creative parents aim to encourage their child's uniqueness and artistic talents while imparting Christian values. Public school curriculum is often combined with Bible instruction, and church-related education, which can lead to scholarships for higher education, is becoming more popular. Xiaoming values the diversity in pedagogy and curriculum, noting that moral development, rather than academic achievement, is the primary goal for most homeschooling parents. These parents are generally well-educated, financially secure, and English-speaking, and they hope to send their children to Western colleges (220-225).

Junsen Zhang, a well-known economist studying the Chinese economy, highlights the importance of considering cultural differences in homeschooling. Curriculum development must take cultural norms, traditions, and beliefs into account, fostering cultural identification and respect by including Chinese culture, history, and language (Zhang, 79-86).

One drawback of homeschooling is the lack of social interaction compared to traditional schooling. Addressing this challenge involves consciously providing homeschooled children with social opportunities. Planning group activities, outings, and co-learning opportunities can enhance socialization while preserving the flexibility of homeschooling (Sun and Wu, 191-216).

Promoting ethical values and moral education within the homeschool system is critical. Parents should emphasize values such as honesty, integrity, respect, and compassion. Incorporating discussions of real-life ethical dilemmas and integrating literature

or philosophical works can help weave moral education into the curriculum (Wu, 168-185).

Establishing open communication channels between homeschooling families, education authorities, and stakeholders is essential for negotiating learning differences. Developing ethical guidelines and standards for homeschooling in China can provide a framework to ensure a well-rounded education and promote ethical values. Homeschooling parents need professional support and training to design effective curricula, promote ethical values, and address challenges. Workshops, seminars, and online resources can aid in this regard.

7. Suggestive Models

Before delving into the religious perspectives of Christianity and Confucianism, it is essential to propose homeschooling models that cater to the specific needs of families and can be integrated within the socio-political framework of their respective contexts. There exist a variety of frameworks and models for homeschooling, tailored to accommodate different family preferences and requirements. It is crucial to acknowledge that the suitability of these approaches may be contingent upon specific legal and cultural conditions.

7.1 Schooling

Unschooling is an educational approach where parents facilitate learning based on their child's interests, curiosities, and natural inclinations. It fosters self-directed learning, encouraging children to explore subjects that captivate their interest. Unschooling prioritizes hands-on activities, real-life experiences, and personalized exploration to cultivate a child's inherent talents and abilities. Parents play a crucial role in identifying these natural qualities and providing guidance tailored to their child's individual development.

7.2 Montessori Homeschooling

Montessori homeschooling is based on the principles of the Montessori method, which prioritize child-centered learning and hands-on activities. In this approach, parents create a Montessori-

prepared environment and guide their child's learning through careful observation and gentle instruction. The focus is on fostering independence, creativity, and a lifelong enthusiasm for learning (Witcher et al., 2008). It's important to note that in Montessori homeschooling, the role of the instructor is not to control the entire learning environment but rather to facilitate and support the child's natural curiosity and self-directed exploration. The classroom setting encourages students to manage their own activities and take responsibility for their learning experiences.

7.3 Classical Education

Classical homeschooling follows the classical model of education, which is structured around three stages of learning:

- **Grammar Stage:** This stage focuses on foundational knowledge and memorization of facts, laying a strong groundwork in subjects such as language, history, and science.
- **Logic Stage:** In this phase, critical thinking skills are developed, emphasizing reasoning and analysis across various subjects. Students learn to evaluate information and construct logical arguments.
- **Rhetoric Stage:** The final stage emphasizes effective communication and expression of ideas. Students learn to articulate their thoughts persuasively and coherently, applying the knowledge and reasoning skills acquired in earlier stages.

Parents who choose classical homeschooling typically use traditional curriculum resources and methods that align with these stages. The approach aims to provide a comprehensive education that develops both intellectual rigor and effective communication abilities in children.

7.4 Parent-Led Homeschooling

Parent-led homeschooling is the most popular type of homeschooling, where parents take on the primary role of instructors for their children. They select the curriculum, design lesson plans, and personally teach the subjects. However, a critical

question arises: what criteria should be used to determine a child's progression? Therefore, the primary concern with this model is not just about imparting knowledge but fostering critical and constructive thinking.

The curriculum in parent-led homeschooling is crafted to encourage students to develop new approaches, engage in deep thinking, and cultivate critical reasoning skills. This model advocates for a shift in assessment methods from a traditional exam-oriented approach to a system that emphasizes ongoing formation and continuous development (Fern and Salleh, 62-63). This strategy offers flexibility, enabling parents to tailor education to meet their children's unique needs and interests.

7.5 Online/Virtual Schools

Some parents opt to enroll their children in online or virtual schools, which offer a structured curriculum and access to teaching resources. These schools are typically accredited and provide a wide range of courses taught by qualified instructors. Students engage with their courses and assignments through an online platform, while parents oversee their child's progress. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the global shift towards online learning highlighted the importance of access to computers and internet connectivity. This model of education is viable in countries where these resources are readily available. In contrast to traditional methods such as radio, television, or films, online schooling provides a dynamic environment that allows for direct interaction with educators, fosters collective knowledge-building among students, and facilitates active engagement with course content and participation in discussions.

7.6 Hybrid Homeschooling

Under this paradigm, home education is supplemented by part-time attendance at a traditional school or participation in community-based programs. For example, a child might attend a local school for certain subjects or extracurricular activities while receiving homeschooling for the rest of their curriculum. This approach blends autonomous learning with social interaction and enrichment.

The key principle of this model is to foster creative learning through inquiry and questioning, rather than simply absorbing information for academic improvement alone (63). It encourages students to engage actively in their learning process, leveraging both structured academic settings and community-based learning opportunities to enhance their educational experience. This hybrid approach aims to provide a well-rounded education that supports both individual growth and social development.

7.7 Co-ops and Learning Pods

Homeschooling co-ops or learning pods bring together groups of families who collaborate to educate their children. In these setups, parents take turns teaching various subjects or enlist specialized instructors. Co-ops and pods foster collaborative learning, facilitate socialization among children, and allow families to share educational resources. This model emphasizes community well-being and has broader social implications, encouraging students to understand their responsibilities within the wider community. An example of this community-focused approach can be found in the Bible, where Acts 4:34 emphasizes resource sharing, illustrating a concern for the well-being of all members of society.

8. Biblical and Confucianist Implications and Considerations

Homeschooling, viewed through a biblical lens, encompasses several spiritual and ethical dimensions. It involves recognizing the parental responsibility to educate children, nurture their spiritual growth, establish biblical values and perspectives, promote discipleship and mentorship, engage with the Christian community, and uphold accountability and integrity. The following biblical passages provide a foundation for parental stewardship in education and spiritual upbringing:

- Deuteronomy 6:6-7 emphasizes the importance of parents imparting God's commands faithfully to their children, guiding their spiritual and moral development.
- Proverbs 22:6 instructs parents to teach their children the right path, ensuring they remain steadfast in righteous living.

- Ephesians 6:4 advises parents to raise their children in accordance with the teachings and instructions of the Lord, fostering their spiritual and intellectual growth.
- Colossians 2:8 warns against being captivated by worldly philosophies and encourages believers to let Christ guide their thoughts.
- Proverbs 27:17 underscores the importance of mutual fellowship, highlighting the role of community in homeschooling.
- Romans 12:17 encourages Christians to live honorably in all circumstances.

While homeschooling primarily occurs at home, active participation in the Christian community remains crucial. Engaging in church activities, joining homeschool co-ops or support groups, and fostering healthy social relationships align with biblical principles of fellowship and community. These activities help children grow in their faith and develop social skills and obtain holistic development within a supportive Christian environment.

Confucianism provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the ethical implications and challenges of homeschooling. Central to Confucian thought is the concept of *Filial Piety*, or *Xiao*, which emphasizes respect, obedience, and care for one's parents. Confucianism underlines the idea that parents bear significant responsibility in shaping their children's education and moral development, a notion that resonates deeply in the context of homeschooling. "When your parents are alive, comply with the rites in serving them; when they die, comply with the rites in burying them; comply with the rites in sacrificing to them" (2.5).[†] Confucius emphasized the unity of knowledge and learning. "In instruction, there is no separation into categories" (15.39).[‡]

Confucianism places a high value on the interaction between teacher and student. Confucius saw the teacher's role as moral

[†] D. C. Lau (Trans.), *The Analects: Sayings of Confucius*, 2.5.

[‡] Lau, *Analects*, 15.39.

counselor and mentor. In the context of homeschooling, parents serve as their children's primary educators and moral advisors. Confucian beliefs urge parents to create a respectful and loving connection with their children, guiding and educating them. "Observe what a man has in mind to do when his father is living, and then observe what he does when his father is dead. If, for three years, he makes no changes to his father's ways, he can be said to be a good son" (1.11).[§] Within a Confucian religio-ethical framework, these ideas can shape values, educational methods, and parental obligations. "The stronger the urge to go back to the original goodness that is peculiar to man's nature, the greater the need to bind his subjectivity" (Finazzo, 100).

9. Conclusion

Homeschooling, rooted in ancient civilizations, has encountered barriers despite its historical foundations. Other than our own biological mothers, religions also have played an important role for promoting the notion of homeschooling as evidenced in Confucius' Analects, emphasizing the intimate bond with teachers by constantly mentioning 'Master.' Similarly, St. Paul proudly acknowledges his education under Gamaliel, illustrating this phenomenon (Acts 22:3). Jesus' teachings to his disciples further exemplify how spiritual guidance encourages steadfastness and doing good. From a metaphysical perspective, the birth and evolution of the Christian Church illustrate the Holy Spirit's continual guidance. Humans have no authority over their culture and language when they are born, but as we progress, we make decisions and design our paths. Negotiating learning differences within the Chinese homeschool system necessitates a religio-ethical approach that takes cultural, social, and moral factors into account. As humans progress, they shape their cultural and linguistic paths. Addressing learning differences in Chinese homeschooling demands an ethical approach that integrates cultural, social, and moral considerations. Incorporating Chinese cultural elements, fostering social opportunities, and promoting ethical values are crucial. Effective

[§] Ibid., 1.11.

communication, ethical guidelines, and expert support enhance the homeschooling experience, ensuring comprehensive education and ethical development for Chinese homeschooling children.

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