# Practice and Challenge of China Traditional Etiquette Culture in Modern Society

# Jiayi Zhang<sup>1</sup>, Zepu Zhou<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Shantou University, Shantou, 515063, Guangdong, China <sup>2</sup>Dalian University of Technology, Dalian, 116024, Liaoning, China

**Keywords:** China traditional etiquette culture; Modern social practice; Cultural challenges; Inheritance and development; Coping strategy

Abstract: The purpose of this article is to explore the practice and challenges of China traditional etiquette culture in modern society, and reveal the importance and predicament of traditional etiquette culture in contemporary society by deeply analyzing its historical origin, basic content and characteristics, cultural value and social function. Firstly, the article reviews the long history and profound connotation of China's traditional etiquette culture, and points out its background and significance in the contemporary social revival. Then, it expounds the practice of China traditional etiquette culture in modern society from three aspects: the revival of traditional etiquette in modern society, the education of traditional etiquette in the education system and the application of traditional etiquette in cross-cultural communication. At the same time, it also analyzes the challenges faced by traditional etiquette culture in the process of modernization, cultural integration and conflict under the background of globalization, and the disconnection between practice and theory, and puts forward corresponding countermeasures. Finally, it is concluded that China traditional etiquette culture is an indispensable cultural resource in modern society and should be better inherited and developed.

#### 1. Introduction

As a country with a history of 5,000 years of civilization, China's traditional etiquette culture, like an endless river, nourishes the generations of this land [1]. Since ancient times, etiquette has been regarded as the foundation of building a country and being a man. It not only regulates people's behavior, but also contains profound philosophical thoughts and moral concepts [2]. From the ancient rites of Zhou Dynasty and Han Dynasty to the etiquette system of Tang, Song, Ming and Qing Dynasties, each evolution is deeply imprinted with the imprint of the times, showing the continuity and innovation of China culture [3]. Today, under the wave of globalization, China's traditional etiquette culture has not been diluted, but has given new vitality in the new era background [4]. With the promotion of national cultural soft power and the increasing frequency of international cultural exchanges, more and more people begin to re-examine and attach importance to this precious cultural heritage, trying to re-sow and cultivate this ancient tree of etiquette in the soil of modern society [5].

It is of far-reaching significance to study the practice and challenges of China's traditional etiquette culture in modern society. From the perspective of cultural inheritance, it helps us to better understand and inherit the wisdom of our ancestors and maintain the uniqueness and continuity of national culture. In terms of social harmony, the principles of respecting the old and loving the young and treating each other with courtesy in traditional etiquette play an irreplaceable role in easing the tense atmosphere in modern society and promoting the harmony of interpersonal relationships. In international communication, China's traditional etiquette, as a unique cultural symbol, can enhance foreign friends' understanding and friendly feelings about China, and contribute to building a community of human destiny. Therefore, the in-depth study and inheritance of China's traditional etiquette culture is of great significance for promoting the all-round social progress and the great rejuvenation of the nation.

DOI: 10.25236/ieesasm.2024.023

### 2. Overview of traditional Chinese etiquette culture

## 2.1. The historical origin of traditional etiquette culture

Tracing the origin of traditional Chinese etiquette can be traced back to ancient times [6]. At that time, primitive religion and totem worship gave birth to the earliest forms of ritual, such as sacrifice and witchcraft, aimed at communicating the relationship between humans and nature, and humans and gods. With the progress of society, etiquette has gradually become standardized and systematic, becoming an important component of national governance and social order [7]. During the Western Zhou Dynasty, Duke Zhou established rituals and music, marking the maturity and completeness of Chinese etiquette culture. Since then, whether it was the unification of the Qin and Han dynasties, the prosperity of the Tang and Song dynasties, or the changes in the Ming and Qing dynasties, the culture of etiquette has continued to develop along with the course of history, forming a rich and diverse system of etiquette and a profound cultural heritage.

## 2.2. The basic content and characteristics of traditional etiquette

Traditional etiquette in China covers many aspects, such as court etiquette, folk etiquette, festival etiquette, etc. Each category has its own unique ritual process and profound cultural connotation [8]. As shown in Table 1:

	_		_	
Category	Etiquette Content	Ceremonial	Cultural Connotations	
		Procedures		
Imperial	Behavioral norms for	Intricate and solemn	Respect for hierarchy,	
Etiquette	royal family members	ceremonies	supremacy of royal authority	
Folk	Daily interaction	Simple and	Harmonious coexistence,	
Etiquette	etiquette for common	practical	respect for others	
_	people	ceremonies		
Festival	Celebration customs for	Rich and varied	Respect for elders and care for	
Etiquette	various traditional	celebration	children, diligence and	
	festivals	activities	frugality, unity and joy	

Table 1 Categories and Cultural Connotations of Traditional Chinese Etiquette

China's traditional etiquette not only standardizes people's behavior, but also subtly conveys traditional virtues such as respecting the old and loving the young, living in harmony and being thrifty.

#### 2.3. Cultural value and social function of traditional etiquette

The cultural value and social function of traditional etiquette in China should not be underestimated [9]. It is an important means to maintain social order. Through the norms and constraints of etiquette, people can be clear about their identity and status and abide by social norms, thus maintaining social stability and harmony. Etiquette culture plays an important role in promoting interpersonal harmony. It teaches people to treat others with courtesy and respect, and to resolve conflicts and enhance friendship through polite words and proper behavior. Traditional etiquette is also an important factor in shaping national character. It contains the unique qualities of humility, tolerance and perseverance of the Chinese nation, which have become the cornerstone of the national spirit from generation to generation.

#### 3. Practice of traditional etiquette culture in modern society

#### 3.1. Revival of traditional etiquette in modern society

In today's society, with the deepening of Chinese people's understanding of traditional culture and the improvement of cultural self-confidence, China's traditional etiquette is experiencing a revival [10]. This revival trend is reflected in daily life: more and more people begin to pay attention to the celebration of traditional festivals and follow traditional festival etiquette. It is also reflected in some important social activities: at important life ceremonies such as weddings and

funerals, many people choose to return to tradition and follow the ancient etiquette process to express their respect and inheritance of traditional culture. Some enterprises and organizations have also begun to integrate traditional etiquette into corporate culture and activities, so as to enhance the cultural literacy and team cohesion of employees.

## 3.2. Traditional etiquette education in the education system

Education is an important way to inherit culture, and traditional etiquette education plays an increasingly important role in the modern education system. From kindergarten to university, all stages of education have integrated the content of traditional etiquette to varying degrees. Through classroom teaching, practical activities, campus culture and other forms, students can not only learn the knowledge and skills of traditional etiquette, but also deeply understand the cultural connotation and moral concepts behind etiquette. This kind of education not only helps to cultivate students' cultural literacy and moral quality, but also lays a solid foundation for their future social life and career development.

## 3.3. Application of traditional etiquette in cross-cultural communication

With the acceleration of globalization, cross-cultural communication has become an important part of people's daily life and work. As an important part of Chinese culture, China traditional etiquette plays a unique role in cross-cultural communication. Whether it's business negotiation, academic exchange or sightseeing, China people can use traditional etiquette as a bridge to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds in a friendly and effective way. By displaying the charm of traditional etiquette, China people can convey the unique charm and profound connotation of Chinese culture to the world.

## 4. Challenges faced by China's traditional etiquette culture in modern society

#### 4.1. Impact in the process of modernization

With the acceleration of modernization, people's lifestyle and values have changed greatly. This change has had a certain impact on traditional etiquette culture. Some people think that traditional etiquette is too complicated and outdated, which does not conform to the rhythm and aesthetics of modern society; Others are indifferent or exclusive to traditional etiquette because of their lack of understanding and understanding. The existence of these concepts makes the inheritance and development of traditional etiquette in modern society face certain difficulties.

## 4.2. Cultural integration and conflict under the background of globalization

Globalization not only promotes economic exchanges and development, but also brings cultural integration and conflict. Under the background of globalization, the communication and collision between China's traditional etiquette culture and other cultures have become increasingly frequent. On the one hand, this kind of communication and collision is helpful to the spread and promotion of traditional etiquette culture; On the other hand, it may also lead to the assimilation or distortion of traditional etiquette culture. How to maintain the uniqueness of traditional etiquette culture and coexist harmoniously with other cultures is an important challenge at present.

#### 4.3. Practice is divorced from theory

Although the traditional etiquette culture has been widely recognized and respected in theory, there are often disjointed phenomena in practice, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the extensive recognition and detailed specification of traditional etiquette culture in theory, the disconnection from practice, and the impact of this disconnection on inheritance effect, people's sense of identity and belonging. This disconnection between practice and theory not only affects the inheritance effect of traditional etiquette culture, but also reduces people's sense of identity and belonging to traditional etiquette culture.

Table 2 The Disconnection between Theory and Practice of Traditional Ritual Culture

Aspect	Theoretical State	Practical State	Impact
Level of	Widely recognized and	Often overlooked or simplified in practice	Affects inheritance
Recognition	esteemed		effectiveness
Application	Applied across various	Limited practical application scenarios	Decreases sense of
Scenarios	settings		identification
Ritual Norms	Detailed and stringent	Presence of arbitrariness and irregularity	Decreases sense of
		in practice	belonging
Cultural	Profound and abundant	Cultural connotation diluted or forgotten	Impacts overall
Connotation		in practice	understanding

## 4.4. Challenge coping strategies

Faced with the above challenges, this article adopts active and effective coping strategies. This article holds that we should first strengthen the publicity and education of traditional etiquette culture to improve people's understanding and understanding of traditional etiquette culture; At the same time, we should promote the innovation and development of traditional etiquette culture to make it more in line with the needs of modern society. Secondly, we should strengthen etiquette training and guidance in cross-cultural communication, and improve people's etiquette literacy and communication ability in cross-cultural communication; At the same time, strengthen the construction of practical links, provide more practical opportunities for people, and make traditional etiquette culture truly integrate into people's lives. Through the implementation of these measures, it is believed that China's traditional etiquette culture can radiate new vitality in modern society.

#### 5. Conclusions

After in-depth discussion and analysis, this study has a more comprehensive understanding of the practice and challenges of China's traditional etiquette culture in modern society. This article finds that China traditional etiquette culture not only has profound historical background and unique cultural value, but also plays an irreplaceable role in modern society. From the revival of traditional etiquette in modern society, to the etiquette education in the education system, and then to the application in cross-cultural communication, traditional etiquette culture is affecting all aspects of modern society in its unique way. At the same time, we also see the challenges faced by traditional etiquette culture in the process of modernization, such as cultural shock, cultural integration and conflict, and the disconnection between practice and theory. These problems need researchers to face up to and actively seek solutions.

China's traditional etiquette culture has a bright future in modern society. With the country's increasing emphasis on cultural construction and people's deepening understanding of traditional culture, traditional etiquette culture is expected to be better inherited and developed. In the field of education, we can expect more schools to incorporate traditional etiquette education into the curriculum system and cultivate students' cultural literacy and moral quality. In cross-cultural communication, traditional etiquette culture will also become an important bridge to enhance international friendship and promote cultural mutual learning. In addition, with the progress of science and technology and the development of media, traditional etiquette culture can be spread more widely through digitalization and networking.

#### References

- [1] Zhang Fan. Traditional tea etiquette culture and its cultural connotation [J]. Fujian Tea, 2023, 45(5):176-178.
- [2] Hu Zhixuan. Research on the cultivation of etiquette literacy of college students from the perspective of tea culture [J]. Fujian Tea, 2021, 43(11):111-112.
- [3] Liu Hongyu. On the construction of secretary's professional etiquette culture based on tea

- culture [J]. Fujian Tea, 2020,42(09):308-309.
- [4] Qi Yuhang. On the integration and symbiosis of traditional tea culture and etiquette culture [J]. Fujian Tea, 2023, 45(8):196-198.
- [5] Zhang Wei, Yang Guixiang. Excellent traditional etiquette culture to enhance the employment competitiveness of college students [J]. Journal of Shenyang Agricultural University (Social Science Edition), 2018,20(02):206-210.
- [6] Li Mei. The contemporary value and realization of China traditional etiquette in maintaining social order [J]. Journal of Shandong Police College, 2020,32(01):130-136.
- [7] Fu Qiong, Tang Yuan. Fission and reconstruction: etiquette culture construction and rural social governance [J]. Jiangxi Social Sciences, 2020,40(10):210-218+256.
- [8] Wu Xiang. Experience and expression of excellent traditional cultural elements in exercise teaching [J]. Teaching and Management, 2020,(23):32-33.
- [9] Xia Tian. Discussion on the relationship between traditional tea ceremony and etiquette moral education [J]. Fujian Tea, 2016,38(04):186-187.
- [10] Li Mei. Evolution of Chinese traditional etiquette and modern transformation [J]. Shandong Social Sciences, 2020,(05):172-178.