

Management Philosophy of China: Application of Huang Lao School in Enterprise Management

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Abstract. With the development of Chinese enterprises, western management theory research can not fully explain and guide Chinese management practice, and it is urgent to innovate Chinese management thought, which has become a prominent problem faced by management academia. The revolutionary innovation of Chinese management philosophy and paradigm needs to use the rich management philosophy in Chinese traditional culture to help the development and theoretical construction of Chinese management thought, so that Chinese management can be closer to Chinese management practice. The management philosophy of the Huang-Lao School is of great value to enterprise management and helps to construct a Chinese-style management ideology. This paper expounds the necessity and value of Chinese-style management research, the development and present situation of Chinese management philosophy, and focuses on Huang Lao's management philosophy, expounding the previous scholars' research on the connotation and application of four main schools of management thought: Guan Zi, Sun Zi, Han Feizi and Huai Nan Zi.

Keywords: Chinese management, management philosophy, Huang Lao school, human resource system.

1. Introduction

Chinese management research has made great progress on the basis of introducing, digesting and absorbing western management science ideas, and has gradually been in line with western research paradigms and methods. However, the problems of management practice with local characteristics in China are constantly emerging. The new round of scientific and technological revolution and the continuous advancement of industrial transformation have spawned a large number of new industries, new formats and new models in Chinese domestic market, which has made the market competition, including traditional industries, increasingly fierce, which has also put forward higher requirements and challenges for the business development of enterprises in the new era. At the same time, with the continuous improvement of Chinese international status and the expansion of Chinese corporate influence, there are more and more "unaccustomed" phenomena in the western management theory in China, which is difficult to effectively explain and guide the rapid development of Chinese corporate management practice innovation, and it is increasingly necessary for the management philosophy in Chinese traditional culture to guide the innovation of Chinese management research. Therefore, Chinese management ideology is of great significance to the sustainable development of Chinese enterprises and the perfection of scientific management theory system.

2. Chinese management

The development of globalization constantly impacts the old business management system in China and puts forward higher requirements for modern enterprise management. After copying the western management model in the early stage, more and more scholars realize through cruel management practice that the pure western management model can not fully adapt to the China market, and enterprises established with the western management model may not necessarily win in the market competition.

There are significant differences between western and eastern cultures, which leads to the fact that western management theory can not be fully applied to China management practice. Western civilization originated from navigation and trade as the main modes of production and labor, and its national character shows the characteristics of marine culture. In the long-term production practice, it has developed a strict way of logical thinking and is keen on knowledge, rule of law, power and wealth. The source of Chinese traditional culture mainly comes from the Yangtze River and Yellow River valley, and the consanguinity of clans is quite intact, and it has developed an introverted national character, since the enlightenment-style thinking method and psychological characteristics of the unity of ethics and social harmony. It is precisely because of this difference in national character that the ways of thinking and dealing with problems between eastern and western cultures are different, or even completely opposite. For example, when westerners do things, they always "put the villain before the gentleman", which is related to their tradition of rule of law. Orientals, on the other hand, are "gentlemen before villains", and emotional factors transcend contracts.

The existing western management theory research can't fully explain and guide Chinese management practice, and it is urgent to innovate Chinese management thought, which has become a prominent problem faced by management academic circles. Lv Li (2015) pointed out that the research paradigm of management is too mechanical. For more than 300 years, the western scientific research paradigm is mechanical, so is the management research. China introduced, digested and absorbed the western management theory, but also continued the mechanical research paradigm of management. With the rapid rise of big data and artificial intelligence, the mechanical world outlook has led our research to overemphasize information management and digital models, so that the research results are rigid and rigid, unable to reflect the time-changing management practice phenomenon and unable to solve complex and changeable management practice problems. Chen Jin (2020) analyzed the existing problems in current management theory research. In his view, management can't be confined to foreign management research paradigms. Only by following closely the management practice in China and stepping on the land of China can the research value of China management be highlighted.

Therefore, copying the western management model without analysis will lead to two problems: first, the western management research paradigm simplifies, quantifies and institutionalizes management, ignoring people's internal factors; Second, the initial construction of management discipline in China mostly comes from the contents of western management, and more western cases are cited in cases, seriously ignoring Chinese management thought. Once these western knowledge are simply used in the management practice of eastern society, problems will arise. Therefore, it is an inevitable choice under the new situation to take the road of "comprehensive innovation" management science, explore a management model suitable for Chinese national conditions, and try to find the combination of eastern and western cultures and modern management in China on the basis of rich management practice.

3. Management Philosophy in China Traditional Culture

Management is a kind of culture. As a method and means to solve various contradictions and problems in the real world, management thoughts and methods profoundly reflect the cultural origin on which society depends. Su Dongshui (1992) pointed out that the management essence of Chinese historical tradition can be summarized as "being human and being human", that is, everyone should first pay attention to his own behavior cultivation, and then from the perspective of "being human", he will control and adjust his own behavior to create a good interpersonal relationship and incentive environment, so as to give full play to people's subjective initiative. The establishment of Chinese-style management system should revolve around the central idea of "being human and being human" and realize the modernization of management according to the new social development characteristics.

The important source and development basis of Chinese management is the management philosophy in China traditional culture. It is impossible for any country to completely ignore its own

culture and ideas and form a management system. No matter what kind of management, the core idea is the management philosophy emphasized in philosophy. It is this management philosophy that forms the development and management system of management thoughts, which is unique and practical.

With the return of traditional philosophy, scholars began to notice the wisdom of management philosophy in Chinese traditional culture, and criticized the enterprise management model that was blindly copied and not built according to the actual national conditions in the past. At the same time, the worldwide management movement has sprung up all over the world, and American-style management, Japanese-style management and European-style management have been put forward one after another. When correctly absorbing the essence of foreign management philosophy, it has become a problem that China scholars need to solve to actively explore a management model that suits them.

3.1. The Development of Chinese Management Philosophy

Chinese management philosophy was first put forward by Chung ying Cheng, who formed the C theory of Chinese management philosophy on the basis of Chinese traditional culture, especially hundred schools of thought's, and laid the foundation for Chinese management philosophy. Some scholars have combed Chinese management philosophy. Ge Rongjin (2006) demonstrated the necessity and urgency of constructing the ideological system of Chinese management philosophy from the realistic needs of the development of Chinese socialist market economy. He believed that "comprehensive innovation" was the only way to construct Chinese management philosophy, comprehensively expounded the rich cultural resources of Chinese management philosophy from the perspective of combining theory with practice, and further put forward innovative academic views on the essential characteristics and basic management model of Chinese management philosophy on the basis of in-depth research. Since then, Yan Yu (2010) combined the essence of Chinese traditional management culture with western management tools on the basis of C theory, combined with years of case study and management practice, and put forward the introduction and application system of Chinese management philosophy-China way, which enabled C theory to integrate with practice, and then formed a whole set of theoretical system, namely Chinese management philosophy. This makes Chinese management philosophy an applied discipline with equal emphasis on theory and practice, and its value is also of epoch significance for Chinese management science to open up HarmonyOS.

In the process of constructing Chinese own management philosophy, Chinese management philosophy has many problems due to the development orientation of the discipline. At the same time, the ancient management philosophy is not fully excavated, and there is a phenomenon of blind copying in the process of learning from foreign management philosophy, which leads to the slow development of Chinese management philosophy discipline. Ge Rongjin (2007) proposed that three theoretical problems must be solved: first, the research object of Chinese management philosophy; Second, the research scope of Chinese management philosophy; Third, how to scientifically construct Chinese management philosophy. These three interrelated and inseparable problems provide the direction for the development of Chinese management philosophy. Tan Xiaojun (2009) studied some problems and reflections on the construction of Chinese management philosophy, and proposed that strengthening and improving the study of Chinese ancient management philosophy is the foundation for the construction of Chinese management philosophy, while the study of foreign management philosophy is the frame of reference for the construction of Chinese management philosophy.

3.2. The research on Chinese management philosophy is insufficient.

At present, there is still a lack of thinking and research on management philosophy in Chinese traditional culture. Chen Jin (2020) pointed out that academic circles should combine the characteristics of contemporary China management practice, not indulge in quantitative research methods and rely too much on data, but think deeply from the macro perspective of philosophy, so that management research can guide the vivid theory of enterprise management practice. Chung ying

Cheng et al. (2012) have constructive views on the concept, system and structure of management philosophy and Chinese management philosophy. They think that management philosophy is the life source of management science, and management philosophy thinking is the foundation of management science development, which ensures the generation of new management knowledge. Sun Xinbo discusses the management paradigm from the perspective of evolution. Based on the analysis of the core characteristics of China traditional culture, he puts forward a self-management paradigm based on the theory of "anti-modesty", "modesty and self-drive" and "plain humanity", pointing out that it is a Tao management paradigm with modesty as its core feature, and its four propositions are "water-based thinking, cloud platform, and self-help management".

Based on the basic philosophical framework of ontology, epistemology, methodology and research methods, Jia Xudong (2019) put forward the "Chinese academic paradigm", that is, the "traditional Chinese learning paradigm". It is believed that the common pursuit of science and Chinese studies is to know the truth, and the paradigm of Chinese studies is significantly different from the paradigm of science in ontology, epistemology, methodology and research methods. The fundamental difference lies in the difference between the ontology of "unitary mind and matter" and "dual mind and matter". Combining with the "management ternary model" he put forward in 2018, Jia Xudong believes that for three different management objects, people, things and things, we should use the paradigm of Chinese studies, science and their combination to conduct management research and practice respectively.

To sum up, Chinese management philosophy and paradigm urgently need revolutionary innovation. This era is an era of organic integration of eastern wisdom and western science. While inheriting the classic theories of western science, we should not ignore our own splendid culture. We should use the rich management philosophy in Chinese traditional culture to help build Chinese management theory, so that Chinese management can be closer to Chinese management practice.

4. Application of Huang Lao's management philosophy in enterprise management

4.1. The study of traditional management philosophy and enterprise management

Although Chinese traditional management philosophy started late, it achieved a lot. Hundred schools of thought-based research papers on Chinese management philosophy have also emerged in large numbers, mainly focusing on Confucianism, Mozi, Huang Lao School and so on. For example, Chen Deshu (2001) studied the Confucian management thought and discussed the modern management function of Confucian "rites". Qiu Zhonglai (2021) analyzed the value enlightenment of Confucian management philosophy to modern management, and put forward that the advanced Confucian concept of justice and benefit plays a positive role in standardizing enterprise behavior and establishing enterprise culture. Although Mohism is the product of the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, it has something in common with modern organizational management thoughts. Universal love, Shang Tong and Shang Xian are the most meaningful parts of Mohism's academic thoughts. Mozi's organizational management thought has certain historical wisdom and contemporary value: loving the practice of putting empathy first, making leaders more humanized; Advocate symbiosis and create an organizational atmosphere of interdependence, mutual benefit and mutual trust within the organization; Treat people as themselves, attach importance to everyone's existence value, and stimulate the initiative and creativity of organization members; Debate and talk are regarded as the necessary qualities of talents, and the ability of communication and expression between leaders and organization members is emphasized.

The Huang-Lao School inherited and carried forward the core concept of Taoism of Laozi and Zhuangzi, actively absorbed other thoughts including Confucianism, famous artists, Mohism and Legalism, and integrated the strengths of various schools under the premise of adapting to the social background, forming a realistic theoretical system of governing the country based on emptiness and being practical. It is an urgent need to explore the value and significance of Huang Lao's philosophy

and modern enterprise management practice, and to construct a Chinese-style management ideology system, which is also a strong requirement for the development of market economy and management. It is of great theoretical and practical significance to actively inherit and innovate the management wisdom such as management ideas, management strategies and ways of employing people contained in traditional culture. Only by finding a management system suitable for Chinese national conditions and characteristics can China enterprises stand in the world business forest.

4.2. The main management philosophy of Huang Lao school and enterprise management

4.2.1 Guanzi

Among the representatives of Huang Lao School in the pre-Qin period, Guan Zhong was the representative and founder of Huang Lao School in Jixia. The representative work of Huang Lao Dao's family in Jixia is Guan Zi Si Pian, which mostly involves governing the body and the country. It has strong management value and has a far-reaching influence on Chinese later thoughts. Guanzi, written in the name of Zhong, is rich in philosophical, political, economic and military thoughts, which not only played an active role in the political reform, economic development and legal system construction in Chinese history, but also remains an important ideological resource today, containing rich economic and management thoughts, mainly including: (1) Discussion on the relationship between national wealth and people's wealth. (2) Rational distribution of social wealth. (3) Pay attention to the basic position of agriculture in the social economy and realize the prosperity of the country. (4) On the premise of attaching importance to agriculture, develop other industries reasonably. (5) the idea of respecting the laws of nature, rationally using social resources and making the society develop healthily. At the same time, Guanzi contains rich thoughts on human resource management. Guanzi takes talents as its core and upholds the concept of "people-oriented", which is embodied in the selection, training, appointment and encouragement of talents. His systematic talent theory is not only progressive and innovative in the pre-Qin period, but also can be widely used in the process of human resource management in modern enterprises. Zhang Yanli and Li Guoli (2005) took Guan Zhong as an example, and centered on Guan Zi, explored the people-oriented factors in his talent thought, that is, the talent principle of "let him have his strengths and not let him have his weaknesses", including its causes, manifestations and social impact on future generations. Tang Zeng (2006) used historical analysis and logical analysis to explore the social and ideological roots of Guanzi's economic ethics, and analyzed the influence and operation of Guanzi's economic ethics. Wan Yingmin (2008) studied Guanzi by means of induction and analysis, sorted out and summarized the historical documents about Guanzi, and excavated the management philosophy of Guanzi. Sun Changhong (2009) introduced the financial thoughts and management methods in Guanzi, from which we can see the initial mode of state interventionism. These management thoughts of Guanzi were very positive and progressive at that time, and even now their theories and thoughts still have reference significance.

4.2.2 Sunzi

Sunzi is the pioneer and main representative of the pre-Qin military strategists, and his thoughts are closely related to Taoist thoughts. His book *The Art of War* contains rich management thoughts, emphasizing the art of change, and the concepts of shape and potential, strangeness and righteousness, softness and rigidity, strength and weakness, governance and chaos reflect the opposites of things and their transformation, which makes Sun Tzu's thoughts rise to the abstract stage of Taoism. With the progress of human beings and the high development of commercial civilization, faced with the complicated and turbulent business environment and fierce and multi-point competition, business operators have sought wisdom from Sun Tzu's thoughts. The ideas in Sun Tzu's *Art of War* have also been widely used in the field of business management, which is of guiding significance to the strategic management of enterprises in business wars. "Shopping malls are like battlefields" and "managing factories is like managing the army", and some strategies and tactics in Sun Tzu's *Art of War* are skillfully applied to enterprise management in close combination with the internal and external

realities of enterprises. Sun Lijun (2013) thinks that Sun Tzu's thought is compatible with the enterprise's strategic management concept, that Sun Tzu's thought of "being cautious and fighting for all benefits" is compatible with the rational decision-making view of strategic management, that "seeking information again" is compatible with the integrated thinking mode of strategic management, and that "being resourceful and innovative" is suitable for the strategic management camera. Sun Tzu's thought still exerts a great influence on the strategic management behavior of small enterprises. Yu Deren (2010) put forward the ingenious strategy of "winning by the enemy" in Sun Tzu's Art of War, which can be transformed and applied to foreign competition contingency strategies in enterprise management and play a positive role in obtaining significant economic benefits from the market.

4.2.3 Han Feizi

Han Feizi is a master of pre-Qin legalist thoughts, and his thoughts contain rich management wisdom. He not only put forward a clear management goal, but also has clear means and ideas to achieve this goal. This is what people often call Han Feizi's thought of rule of law. Han Feizi, regarded as "the book of emperors", covers all aspects of state management, among which many pages discuss Han Feizi's thought of employing people. Han Feizi took the law as the principle of employing people, did not shy away from domestic favouritism and foreign hatred, and was not demanding perfection, which was called the "Bole" of the pre-Qin legalists. Zhao Shanshan (2014) analyzed Han Feizi's thought of employing people, and expounded Han Feizi's thought of employing people from three aspects: principle, selecting people and employing people, which has important enlightenment for modern enterprise human resource management. Li Qingxi (2013) gathered Han Feizi's thought of "governing by doing nothing" and thought that enterprise management can be divided into two situations: "ruling by people" and "ruling by law". The idea of "governing by doing nothing" is of great significance for improving the management level of modern enterprises and realizing the harmonious, stable and sustainable development of enterprises. It is not only the internal affairs of enterprises, but also the important content of state-owned enterprises taking the initiative to assume social responsibilities to attach importance to "governing by doing nothing" and maximize the benefits of enterprises by improving management level. Gu Yu's research (2009) combs and analyzes Han Feizi's authoritative management thoughts from three perspectives: authoritative management, institutional norms and political constraints, and expounds that Han Feizi's authoritative management ideology has an important position and practical reference significance in Chinese management thought. Wang Zemin (2010) analyzed a series of fables, aphorisms and unique ways of thinking of Han Feizi, from which he extracted extremely high management enlightenment.

4.2.4 Huai Nan Zi

Huai Nan Zi, also known as the Biography of Lie Hong in Huainan, was called a sage by later generations because of its contents involving politics, economy, military affairs, philosophy, astronomy and many other fields. (1) But the book is not chaotic. It tries to find a theoretical thought suitable for the social development road at that time on the basis of summing up the experience of Qin's death and Han's prosperity. And the core of this thought is precisely Taoist thought. Huai Nan Zi continues the Taoist school's theory based on "Tao" and fully integrates and absorbs other schools, which is of great theoretical value to modern management. Yan Kaiwen (2010) explained the idea of "doing nothing without doing anything" through the study of Huai Nan Zi. To carry out this idea, leaders need to hide themselves first, then have no desire, and finally need a spirit of being behind. Another key point is to employ people, make full use of subordinates according to their characteristics and select talents with a sound system, which is the way to appoint Huainanzi. In dealing with subordinates, Huainanzi emphasizes not to interfere with subordinates too much, as long as the subordinates don't make mistakes, the leaders should be satisfied, and strictly demand these basic viewpoints and be cautious about rewards and punishments for small things. Huai Nan Zi finally requires leaders to have three basic qualities: prudence, sincerity and self-protection. Li Yuyong and Liu Keyan (2014) explored the management wisdom in Huainanzi, such as "people-oriented" social

management values, "legislation on the world" social management scale, "promising public opinion" social management means and "making the best use of people's talents", and expounded its reference and enlightenment significance for modern and contemporary management in China.

4.3. Insufficient research on Huang Lao's management philosophy

Compared with the research results obtained by other philosophical schools, there are not many scholars and monographs studying Huang Lao's management thought at present, and a relatively complete system cannot be formed. At the same time, there are still some shortcomings in the research: first, most of the research on his thoughts is only from the political aspect, not from the enterprise management aspect. Secondly, because Huang Lao's thoughts are compatible with each other's strengths, the time span and background of related thoughts from the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period to the Western Han Dynasty are too broad. Therefore, there is no clear understanding and grasp of the political, economic and social conditions of his thoughts, so it is difficult to peep out the reality of enterprise management and practice in Huang Lao's thoughts. Thirdly, many researchers did not consider the influence of Huang Lao's philosophical thoughts on economy and management when studying his philosophical thoughts. In the history of Chinese philosophy, people's world outlook, epistemology, values and morality are all integrated. Many economic and management problems are actually philosophical problems, such as the origin of morality and the good and evil of human nature. Fourthly, for a long time, the research on modern management has been based on the western knowledge framework. Although this model has its inevitability and rationality, it ignores the independence of oriental thought. China wants to develop, and companies in China want to compete with global companies. Without independent and excellent management ideas, they can't succeed. Therefore, while respecting advanced western ideas, we should develop management ideas that integrate the essence of eastern and western management ideas through traditional regression. Only the leading idea can provide better theoretical support for enterprise practice. However, in the actual academic research, due to various limitations, either the oriental thought is brought into the western framework or the oriental thought is simply explored, but the two can not be well integrated.

5. Summary

In contemporary society, many outstanding enterprises have emerged in China, which plays an important role in the regional economic development and industrial structure adjustment in China. The enterprise management thought that conforms to the development of the times and the historical trend and adapts to the market environment undoubtedly plays a vital role in the healthy development of enterprises. Huang Lao's management philosophy is of great value to enterprise management, which is helpful to build a Chinese-style management ideology and is an urgent need to find a way to combine Chinese traditional culture with modern enterprise management.

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