

# **Confucian Thought Affecting Leadership and Organizational Culture of Korean Higher Education**

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## **Abstract**

This article examines Confucian thought affecting leadership and organizational culture of Korean higher education in order to understand leadership behavior and ethical values in Korean higher education from a viewpoint of educational administration. The writer evaluates that most of educational administrators in Korean higher education prefer hierarchically authoritative leadership to reciprocally humanitarian leadership as well as preferring autocratic managers to moral managers. Also, he estimates that the major characteristics of organizational culture are a hierarchically closed system, an age-ranking system, paternalism, masculine dominant culture, and academic collectivism based on Confucian ethical values and principles.

# **Confucian Thought Affecting Leadership and Organizational Culture of Korean Higher Education**

## **Introduction**

In the history of Korea, Confucianism had a great effect on the whole gamut of Korean culture and society, including education. In particular, Confucianism, as the Golden Rule or a national cult, affected the state's politics, economics, society, culture, and education during the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910). In practice, Confucian thought was a measure of

all things over 500 years under the Confucian Choson society. Up to the present, Confucianism has been a main prop of current Korean society for forming individual morality and for building harmonious community. Based on the Confucian principles with emphasis on self-cultivation and sociopolitical harmony, the Korean people traditionally pursued the perfectibility of human nature, the establishment of the harmonious society and state, the performance of ritual action, and the achievement of the anthropocosmic way, but they generally despised or ignored scientific inquiries, empirical methods, and utilitarian ways.

In current Korean society, however, new social values and organizational cultures among individuals, groups, and organizations are forming. With an influx of global information and multiculturalism, foreign thoughts and cultures have rapidly spread to Korean society and have had a great impact on the Korean people politically, socio-economically, and culturally. Swimming with the current, both the old and the new social values based on the traditional thought and foreign ideas coexist in the present Korean society. Furthermore, the positive Confucian values, such as adoration of learning or passion for education, and emphasis on sociopolitical collectivism, have been focused on the managerial efficacy of Korean business and education organizations. As mentioned by several Western scholars (de Bary, 1996; Hart, 1993; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Psacharopoulos, 1984; Tu Wei-ming, 1996), the positive Confucian values have been viewed as a catalyst of the modernization of Korean higher education as well as of the development of Korean economy.

Hitting upon an idea from the above standpoint, the author attempts to investigate Confucian thought and Korean higher education from the perspectives of leadership and ethical values in organizational culture. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to examine Confucian thought affecting leadership and organizational culture in Korean higher education and to understand leadership behavior and ethical values in Korean higher education from a viewpoint of educational administration. In order to explore the study systematically, the writer will use a literature-review approach. The procedures and limitations of the study are: (1) the author will first describe a historical synopsis

concerning Confucianism and premodern Korean elite or higher education from the early Three Kingdoms (37 BC-AD 668) to the late Choson periods (until AD1900); (2) leadership and ethical values in organizational culture will be secondary examined in the Analects of Confucius; (3) he will thirdly discuss the reflections of Confucianism on leadership and organizational culture in contemporary Korean higher education in terms of educational administration, focusing on leadership and ethical values in organizational culture; and (4) finally conclusion will be briefly noted.

## **Historical Synopsis: Confucianism and Premodern Korean Higher Education**

Confucianism has been the main tendency of traditional thought that deeply spread its roots in Korean society. Throughout Korean history, the Korean people respected Confucian learning and attached great significance to education. This tradition continues to the present time. There is no ancient Korean historical record regarding the introduction of Confucianism, but it is believed that Confucianism was transmitted to Korea through continental China before the diffusion of Chinese civilization (Clark, 1981, pp. 91-94; Grayson, 1989, pp. 60-61; Yun, 1996). According to one important historical record, Samguk-saki (Historical Record of Three Kingdoms, Kim, 1145), the Three Kingdoms, Koguryo (37 BC-AD 668), Paekche (18 BC-AD 660), and Silla (57 BC-AD 935), were learning Chinese ideas and culture that were much more highly developed than Korean thought and culture of that time. Therefore, Chinese systems and ideas pervaded the three early states of Korea and had significant impact on Korean culture and society.

After Confucian thought had been transmitted to the early Korean states, the first formal elite education, as the origin of premodern Korean higher education, began in the Three Kingdoms period (37 BC-AD 668) after the adoption of the Chinese educational systems and ideas (Iryon, 1285; Kim, 1145; Lee, 1984; Lee, 1986). The first formal institution of the elite education in Korea was known as Taehak (National Confucian

Academy), built by King Sosurim of Koguryo in AD 372 (Iryon, 1285, p. 177; Kim, 1145, p. 279). The institution taught the Chinese letter and the Chinese classics, such as Confucian texts, Chinese historical records, and Chinese literary selections. Since the purpose of the institution was mainly to foster prospective government officials, its door was opened only to the scions of the aristocratic class. Next, in the Paekche Kingdom (18 BC-AD 660), although there is no early Korean historical record in which the state had a similar institution like Koguryo, the writer would believe that Paekche also had the Confucian Academy, as K. Lee (1984, p. 58) and B. Lee (1986, p. 19) assert. Based on the ancient Japanese records (Nihongi, Vol. I, trans., Aston, 1896, pp. 262-63; Kojiki, trans., Chamberlain, 1973, p. 306), there is no doubt that Paekche also educated the Chinese *literae humaniores* and produced various Confucian academic scholars, many of whom contributed much to the development of the ancient Japanese culture. Two representative scholars among them were A-Chikki and Wang-In (Wani). The former was a teacher of the Japanese prince who became Emperor Ohohjin of Japan, and the latter brought ten copies of the Analects of Confucius and one copy of “The Thousand Character Classic,” a basic text for teaching Chinese letters, to the Japanese.

On the other hand, in terms of the classical Confucian education, Silla (57BC-AD935) was far behind Koguryo and Paekche in adopting Chinese educational systems. The National Academy (*Kukhak*) was established by King Sinmoon in 682 (Kim, 1145), following the unification of the Korean peninsula. The Silla academy, after the pattern of the Chinese *Tang* Dynasty’s (618-906) educational system, taught the Chinese classics like Koguryo’s Taehak (National Confucian Academy) not only to build authoritarian political structure but also to sustain traditional aristocratic privilege. It was opened to scions of the aristocratic class between the ages of fifteen and thirty. During the period of King Kyongduk (742-765), the national institution was renamed the *Taehakgam* (National Confucian Academy) (Kim, 1145, p. 582). In the 4th year of King Wonseong (AD 788), the first state examination named the “*dokseo-sampumkwa*”(three gradations in reading) was held in order to select government officials through testing in the three levels of proficiency in reading the Chinese classics (Kim, 1145, p. 165). Although the

examination was modeled on the Chinese Tang's examination system, it had a significant meaning as the first national examination that became a sample of the state or public examinations in the Koryo (918-1392) and Choson (1392-1910) Kingdoms.

Like the Three Kingdoms, Koryo (918-1392) was a Buddhist state, but the Kingdom had a National Confucian institution, *Kukchagam*, to foster the elite who lead its aristocratic society and to keep their hereditary sociopolitical privileges. The *Kukchagam* (the National Academy or University), including three colleges: *Kukchahak* (Higher Chinese Classical College), *Taehak* (High Chinese Classical College), and *Samunhak* (Four Portals College), was established in 992. Subsequently, during King Injong's reign (1122-1146), the institution added three more colleges: *Yurhak* (Law College), *Seohak* (Calligraphy College), and *Sanhak* (Accounting College). The six colleges all came under the *Kukchagam*. Each college had different entrance qualifications, curricula, and instructors. The *Kukchahak* admitted the sons and grandsons of higher civil and military officials. The curricula of *Kukchahak*, *Taehak*, and *Samunhak* were mainly the Chinese classics. The other schools' curricula were technical areas, such as law, Chinese calligraphy, or accounting. The instructors of the first three institutions were "*Paksa* (Learned Doctors)" and "*Chokyo* (Assistant Teachers)," while the second three schools' instructors were "*Paksa* (Learned Doctors)."

In the Koryo Kingdom period, the national and local educational systems were closely related to the civil service examinations originally devised in China as ways for selecting the governmental officials. The examination system was established in the 10th year of King Kwangjong (958) and composed of three basic examination types: *Chesul-up* (the Examination of Chinese Literary Composition) concerned Chinese literature, *Myong-kyong-up* (the Examination of Chinese Classics) related to Confucian canonical works, and the others called *Chap-up* (the Miscellaneous Examinations), such as law, accounting, calligraphy, medicine, divination, and geomancy (Lee, 1986; Lee, 1984; Seongmoo Lee, 1994). The first and second types were given for the purpose of choosing government officials, while the third was held to select various specialists to serve in various government offices. After that time, although the name of the *Kukchagam* was

changed into *Kukhak* (King Wonjong's reign: 1271) and then to *Seongkyunkwan* (King Chungson's rule: 1308-1313), the basic characteristics and systems of the academy remained almost the same. In the late Koryo period, however, Buddhism gradually declined, but Confucianism energetically awakened with the acceptance of Neo-Confucianism from China. In brief, Buddhism, as the state religion or royal cult both of the Three Kingdoms and of the Koryo Kingdom, developed a brilliant Buddhist culture, whereas Confucianism, as an orthodox doctrine, contributed to the establishment of social and political principles for the privileged class through the formal Confucian institutions.

From the beginning of the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910), Confucianism was the national cult or the state core ideology in order to cultivate bureaucrats who lead the people and to edify those who were able to follow Confucian ethics and values (Lee, 1997; Lee, 1998). The Choson Kingdom built a strictly authoritarian bureaucratic society through formal Confucian institutions and the *Kwa-keo* (National Civil Service Examinations) system. *Seongkyunkwan*, as the highest national Confucian academy or university built in the capital city in 1397, overall succeeded the educational systems and functions of *Taehak*, *Kukhak*, and *Kukchagam*. Therefore, the *Seongkyunkwan* (National Confucian Academy) was a sanctuary of Korean Confucianism. Within the Academy, the Confucian elite or higher education was mainly viewed as an institution for preparing future civilian bureaucrats who rose to sociopolitical positions through passing the *Kwa-keo* examinations. Accordingly, the *Kwa-keo* system was a backbone of the Confucian elite education in the Choson period. The Confucian educational system that depended on the *Kwa-keo* examinations was maintained until the late 19th century when the Choson Dynasty opened its door to the coercive foreign power and received the Western modern educational systems. Under these fierce waves, the *Seongkyunkwan*, as the highest national Confucian academy or university, did not sustained the highest Confucian educational authority and unavoidably closed its educational tradition. Nevertheless, the tradition of the *Kwa-keo* system is still alive and is regarded as a matrix of the present civil service examination. The reflections of Confucianism on leadership and organizational culture in contemporary Korean higher education will be discussed in the last section.

## **Leadership and Organizational Culture in the Analects of Confucius**

First of all, before discussing leadership and ethical values in organizational culture from the Analects of Confucius, the writer intends to mention the relation between leadership and organizational culture in brief, without defining the concepts of the two themes. For all ages and countries, leadership as the driving force of organizations has played an important role in every profit or nonprofit organization, society, and nation. Leaders' capability and behavior may embody strong ethical values in organizational culture, control or change organizational structures with exercising their influence over organizations, maintain or create organizational culture, and take the initiative for the alteration or reformation of organizations. In practice, leadership is not only a core factor for the execution of administration and substantial power for management, but plays a significant part in the creation of new organizational culture. In other words, leadership is regarded as an essential element or a core value in organizational culture. In this vein, we may say that leadership and organizational culture are inseparable. In the light of close relationship between leadership and organizational culture, the author intends to examine leadership and ethical values of organizational culture in Korean tertiary education from the perspective of educational administration, in particular, focusing on the impact of Confucian thought on leadership and ethical values in Korean higher education.

### **Leadership**

In the Analects of Confucius, the concept of leadership is explained from “cheng 政,” commonly translated as governing, administering government, sociopolitical order, or politics. Confucius gave answers to his people about “cheng 政,” with various sociopolitical connotations.



Confucius answered, ‘To govern (政cheng) is to correct (正cheng). If you set an example by being correct, who would dare to remain incorrect?’ (Analects [AL] 12: 17; Lau, 114-115)

Over daily routine do not show weariness, and when there is action to be taken, give of your best. (AL 12: 14; Lau, 114-115)

Let the ruler be a ruler, the subject a subject, the father a father, the son a son....(AL 12: 11; Lau, 112-113)

If a man manages to make himself correct, what difficulty will there be for him to take part in government [governing]? If he cannot make himself correct, what business has he with making others correct? (AL 13:13; Lau, 124-125)

As shown in the Analects, considering its homophonous etymologic root, the concept of governing (cheng政) is related to that of correcting or rectification (cheng正) and also concerned with the meaning of “to give of your best,” “to do one’s duty,” or “to make oneself correct.” In the Chinese language, the etymology of the word “cheng (政)” is to beat and to correct. As shown in its etymology, the character “governing” is derived from “rectification,” and includes the sociopolitical concepts, such as “to do one’s duty” and “to make oneself correct” which connote sociopolitical norms for leaders who govern his people or subordinates. On the basis of the norms, Confucius explained the governing as the concept of sociopolitical order or politics:

Tzu-kung asked about government [governing]. The Master [Confucius] said, ‘Give them enough food, give them enough arms, and the common people will have trust in you...(AL 12: 7; Lau 110-111)

Tzu-lu asked about government. The Master said, ‘Encourage the people to work hard by setting an example yourself.’ Tzu-lu asked for more. The Master said, ‘Do not allow your efforts to slacken.’ (AL 13: 1; Lau 120-121)

The Governor of She asked about government. The Master said, ‘Ensure that those who are near are pleased and those who are

far away are attracted.’ (AL 13: 16; Lau 126-127)

Based on sociopolitical order, Confucius suggests the ruler’s prerequisite conditions and ideal attitudes to govern the people. A leader first of all should cultivate himself or herself and thereby brings comfort to the people (AL 14: 42; Lau 146-147); be good both the self and the people (AL 12:19); and rule over them with dignity and treat them with kindness as well as goodness (AL 2: 20). In order to pursue social and political harmony, Confucius first stresses personal cultivation and then recommends sociopolitical participation. As David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames (1987) point out, personal ordering and sociopolitical harmony are mutually implicative because the former can take place in the context of sociopolitical participation, and the latter can be justifiable as attendant upon the achievements of personal cultivation (P. 164).

Furthermore, Confucius emphasizes not only the ethical character and behavior of a leader but also the rectification of a leader. For Confucius, “the rectification (cheng 政) of names” should be first considered for the administration of the state (AL 13: 3). He regards “the rectification of the names” as the beginning point of “the rule of virtue which is compared to the Pole Star that commands the homage of the multitude of stars without leaving its place” (AL 2: 1; Lau 10-11). Thus, he asserts the observance of the rites (AL 14: 41; Lau 144-145) and the consideration of virtue (AL 4: 11) for an ideal politics. In particular, Confucius said, “Supreme indeed is the Mean as a moral virtue” (AL 6: 29; Lau 54-55). In this vein, he claims that the Master or ruler should be cordial yet stern, awe-inspiring yet not fierce, respectful yet at ease (AL 7: 38; Lau 66-67), and stern in speech (AL 19: 9). As appeared in the Analects, like the rectification of names, the Mean is viewed as an essential virtue or value of the Master or leader to achieve sociopolitical order as well as personal cultivation.

In addition, Confucius mentions the relationship between a leader and his subordinates. For example, the ruler should employ the services of his subjects in accordance with rites, whereas the subjects should serve his ruler by doing their best (AL 3: 19); and to respect the ruler is a road to prosperity, whereas to despise or to ignore the ruler

is a way to ruin (AL 13:15). As noted in the Analects, Confucius advises the ruler to cultivate ethical leadership for governing his people, and also teaches the subordinates to have virtue of faithfulness and respect toward the ruler.

Considering the Confucian sociopolitical norms for the ruler, Confucius suggests that those who want to be rulers have to, first of all, be ethical leaders having virtuous characters and attitudes to make themselves correct, to do their duty, and to do their best, ultimately in order to achieve moral self-actualization and to build harmonious sociopolitical order. In addition, based on personal cultivation and social politics, Confucius asserts harmoniously interpersonal relations in social organizations, that is, reciprocally obligatory relationship on the ground of hierarchical relations.

In point of Western leadership theories, leadership recommended by Confucius does not totally match with four major leadership approaches such as power-influence, trait, behavior, and contingency. Considering only the trait approach focusing on the leader's personal abilities, managerial motivation and skills, and moral values, however, the styles of leadership appearing in the Analects may be summarized as two types: hierarchically authoritative leadership and reciprocally humanitarian leadership. The former nearly matches with charismatic leadership, because leadership as mentioned by Confucius is force of personality that induces not only a high degree of loyalty and devotion to a leader, identification of people with a leader, adoption of the leader's values and attitude, a sense of self-esteem from relationships with a leader, but also a high degree of trust in a leader as asserted by House and Singh (1987). On the other hand, the latter generally matches with transformational leadership, because Confucius also encourages leaders to enhance positive moral values and higher-order needs of subordinates as Burns (1978) mentions.

### **Ethical Value in Organizational Culture**

As shown in the Analects, the concept of leadership is illustrated from viewpoints of social ethical values as well as individual ethical values. Assuming that individual values were nearly related to leadership, social values would be inseparable from organizational culture

because culture is actually a combination of values and practices in organizations or society (Swidler, 1986). For Confucius, both ethical values, as core factors for achieving an ideal leadership or society, are inseparable relations between leadership and organizational culture.

In the Analects, Confucius regards the ruler as a moral manager having cultural leadership.

The Master said... 'a benevolent man helps others to take their stand in so far as he himself wishes to take his stand, and gets others there in so far as he himself wishes to get there' ... (AL 6: 30; Lau 54-55)

The Master said, 'There are three things constantly on the lips of the gentleman none of which I have succeeded in following: "A man of benevolence never worries; a man of wisdom is never in two minds; a man of courage is never afraid" ... (AL 14: 28; Lau 140-141)

In the Analects, Confucius views the ruler as a gentleman, a man of benevolence, a man of wisdom, or a man of courage. Also, the ruler is regarded as a virtuous man (AL 4: 11) or a righteous man (AL 4: 16). For Confucius, ethical values, such as benevolence, wisdom, courage, virtue, righteousness, etc. are essential tools that the ruler possesses to be a moral manager in collectivist society. On the basis of these ethical values, Confucius suggests the behavioral criteria of the ruler:

'There are nine things the gentleman turns his thought to: to seeing clearly when he uses his eyes, to hearing acutely when he uses his ears, to looking cordial when it comes to his countenance, to appearing respectful when it comes to his demeanour, to being conscientious when he speaks, to being reverent when he performs his duties, to seeking advice when he is in doubt, to the consequences when he is encouraged, and to what is right at the sight of gain.' (AL 16:10; Lau 164-167).

In point of organizations, assuming that ethical values refer to the standards of individual and social moral behavior, the behavioral criteria mentioned in the Analects might be regarded as not only behavioral norms of the ruler but also ethical paradigms of the moral manager. In particular, Confucius claims both benevolence and wisdom as

essential elements for the ruler who wants to be a moral leader or a gentleman. In the Analects (12:22), benevolence is viewed as “to love subordinates,” whereas wisdom is “to know subordinates.” We may say that the former is a main factor to maintain harmonious relationship between the ruler and his or her subordinates; the latter is an essential element to display effective leadership. In addition, in order to keep healthy society, Confucius advises superiors and subordinators to have some important ethical values: reciprocal ethical values between the ruler and subordinates are ritual, righteousness, faithfulness, and sincerity; subordinates’ ethical values are loyalty, filial piety, and respect; and superiors’ ethical values are forgiveness, benevolence, wisdom, and rectification.

In the light of ethical values in organizations (Daft, 1992, pp. 326-328), ethical values revealed in the Analects are not only essential factors that play important roles within a category of personal ethics that includes belief and values, moral development, and ethical framework, but also symbolic factors that play significant parts in organizational culture that includes rituals, ceremonies, and symbols, as well as codes of ethics that influence values and behaviors in organizational systems. In order to build harmonious societies or to achieve successful organizations, the ruler should become a moral manager who does one’s best under leadership that embodies ideal ethical character, as well as a cultural leader who creates or changes culture or ethical values and who integrates organizational culture create harmony and consensus (Daft, 1992, p. 332).

In sum, the writer evaluates that ethical values in the Analects show a reciprocal relationship based on hierarchical rules. The ultimate goal of the Confucian ethical values is to build personal and sociopolitical order in collectivist society. Personal order as a core factor is closely related to leadership that executes administering government and that displays substantial power for effective management. Sociopolitical order as a core element is nearly connected to organizational culture that involves cultural leadership and ethical norms for the change of culture and ethical values.

## **Reflections of Confucianism on Leadership and Organizational Culture in Contemporary Korean Higher Education**

The liberation of Korea from Japanese occupation (1910-1945) in August 1945 was a turning point in Korean history. After the United States military government had controlled the South Korean people for three years (1945-1948), the Republic of Korea was established on August 15, 1948. There were only 19 institutions of Korean tertiary education with a total of a little over 7,819 students and 1,490 teachers at the time of national liberation in 1945 (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 32), while in 1999 the number of tertiary institutions in South Korea was reported to be 369 with a total of 3,147,317 students and 55,465 teachers (Ministry of Education & Korean Educational Development Institute, 1999, pp. 8-9).

As shown in the above, Korean higher education was rapidly expanded with the need for industrialization by the Korean government and with the desire for education by the Korean people who regard higher education as the most effective means for the attainment of social status. In the history of Korean education, elite or higher education was monopolized by the upper class males. Until Western Christian missionaries arrived in the Korean peninsula in the period of the late Choson Kingdom, the common and the lower people did not easily approach to higher education. In fact, the three greatest donations to democratic higher education in modern Korea were Western Christianity, American education, and the Korean people's educational adoration based on Confucian values.

In this paper, Confucian values and principles are mainly centered on examinations regarding the reflections of Confucianism in contemporary Korean higher education. In order to examine the research topic specifically, first of all, Confucian impact on leadership in contemporary Korean higher education will be analyzed, and then Confucian impact on organizational culture in contemporary Korean higher education will be weighed in terms of ethical values.

As reviewed in the leadership section, Confucian leadership is based on two main themes: personal order and sociopolitical order. Both themes emphasize reciprocally interpersonal relationships between superiors and subordinates under hierarchically authoritative leadership as well as reciprocally humanitarian leadership. Based on the dual

Confucian leadership, the characteristic of leadership in Korean higher education is still hierarchically authoritative in general. Since 1948, the Ministry of Education has strictly controlled all Korean higher education institutions with a highly centralized closed system. Korean postsecondary institutions have shrunk autonomy, idiosyncrasy, and diversity under the direction and supervision on the Ministry of Education. Like the Ministry of Education, most college and university administrators have generally preferred authoritative leadership to democratic or transformational leadership.

For instance, subordinates use honorific words to superiors: the sitting position is usually based on rank determined by status, age, and gender; female faculty members are generally discriminated or disadvantaged in personnel or school administration by the majority of male administrators; most administrators seldom open communication networks to faculty members or students both in school administration and in decision-making processes; and administrators or professors urge their subordinates or students to obey and to devote. As mentioned in the above, the legitimate and coercive force of personality urging a high degree of loyalty and devotion is still a major trait of college or university administration in Korea (Lee, 1997; 1999a; 1999b). In practice, authoritative bureaucracy, as an administrative trait of superiors, tends to be highly closed. The hierarchically closed structure in organizations maintains a strict communication pattern. In the light of the dual Confucian leadership, the writer judges that almost all of educational administrators in Korean higher education prefer hierarchically authoritative leadership to reciprocally humanitarian leadership as well as preferring autocratic managers to moral managers. Therefore, transformational leadership based on positive moral values and harmonious relationships is not usually exercised in contemporary Korean higher education.

Next, Confucian impact on organizational culture in contemporary Korean higher education is illustrated by several characteristics in educational administration. First of all, a hierarchically closed system in organizations has maintained highly formally administrative structures and has demanded a rigid communication style. The hierarchical relation between superiors and subordinates or between the old and the young is deeply reflected in Korean tertiary education (Lee, 1997; 1998). For instance, in a faculty meeting,

even in a private party, the seating arrangements are usually determined by status—based on rank, age, and gender (Lee, 1999a). In particular, age is a very important measure to decide a social or an administrative position in Korean society. In the academic field, according to an age-ranking system on the grounds of Confucian ethical order or principle, the younger faculty members have usually respected the senior faculty members generally holding higher positions. Also, the younger faculty members always use honorific forms of address when speaking to the senior faculty members regardless of status, career, and gender (Lee, 1997; 1999a; 1999b).

On the other hand, secondly considering the interpersonal relationships between teaching faculty members and students, the students usually obey and respect their teachers, whereas the teachers generally deal with their students leniently. In fact, teachers commonly control their students with both legitimated authority and Confucian ethical values that are somewhat analogues to those between parents and offspring (Janelli, 1993; Lee, 1997; 1998; 1999b). Students believe that they are indebted to their teachers for the benefits they are bestowed just as daughters and sons are indebted to their parents (Janelli, 1993). In this vein, as Hofstede and Bond (1988) point out, paternalism based both on the reciprocally humanitarian relationship, as a prototype of social organizations, is conducted in Korean higher education much like that of the Japanese business culture.

Thirdly, despite the fact that Confucian values were deeply reflected in organizational structure and culture in Korean higher education, they left both a positive and a negative impacts. In the positive aspect, Confucian ethical values and principles established the reciprocally humanitarian relationship between superiors and subordinates; they brought educational adoration to the Korean people; and they suggested the necessity for Koreans to have strong moral norms. In the negative aspect, Confucian ethical values and principles afforded male dominant culture under which men generally discriminated against women; they disseminated academic collectivism that excluded other persons who studied in heterogenous schools or institutions from homogeneous ones; and they brought superiors or leaders hierarchically formal authoritarianism that ignored the self-action or the self-esteem of subordinates. In particular, academic collectivism has become a serious



obstacle interrupting the discussion of scholarly works between teachers and students or between senior faculty and younger faculty. Also, academic collectivism has been closely related to the solidarity among alumni composed of homogenous social ties not only forming an academic sectarianism between school factions but also aggravating academic ostracism between institutions. Owing to this evil effect, academic freedom has now become nothing but a concept in current Korean higher education. Therefore, the establishment of harmonious personal and sociopolitical order on a collectivist society is still far in current Korean education.

In sum, the major characteristics of organizational culture in Korean higher education are a hierarchically closed system with a rigid communication pattern, an age-ranking system on the ground of Confucian sociopolitical order, paternalism based on the reciprocally humanitarian relationship, masculine dominant culture on the basis of Confucian male dominant principles, and academic collectivism with the formation of academic sectarianism. Summing up, these characteristics are closely related to Confucian personal and sociopolitical ethical values.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In this article, the writer has examined Confucian thought and Korean higher education from the perspectives of leadership and ethical values in organizational culture. As we have seen, Confucian values and norms have overall effected on leadership and organizational culture throughout the history of Korean elite or higher education. In recent years, with having achieved higher stages of economic development in Korea, Confucian values and principles are gradually decreasing, while Western values and assumptions are rapidly increasing. Therefore, the characteristics of organizational culture in Korean higher education are much more complex than the author has indicated in this paper. For this reason, much more research is needed on leadership and organizational culture in Korean higher education.

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