

Confucius and aristotle on virtue

Religion



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Confucius and Aristotle on Virtue Confucius and Aristotle on Virtue Virtue refers to behaviour that illustrates high moral standards and, therefore, the concept of moral excellence. The essay compares Confucius and Aristotle's perceptions of virtue or the good ethical character and conduct. In the course of addressing this purpose, the study will focus on comparing the Confucius and Aristotle's viewpoints on virtue, acceptable ethical character and conduct through demonstration of similarities and differences in specific ideas. Besides, the essay will consider the implications of the findings in understanding ancient Chinese and Greek cultures. Similarly, the essay suggests ideas of virtue, which can apply to ethics in the contemporary society that has diverse workplaces.

According to the concept of 'virtue ethics' by Aristotle, it is challenging to attain morality in a universal code. That indicates that the justified thing to do in a specific situation is what a virtuous individual would do. Aristotle defines virtue as the quality of character that is essential and ideal in ensuring a life well lived. In defining this concept, Aristotle focused on characterizing the good life as that lived under the influence of or in accordance with virtue (Lockwood, 2008). On the other hand, Confucius focused on going a notch higher to the process of defining the concept with the intention of escaping the potential circularity of virtue ethics. He further provided a starting point towards understanding how to achieve a good life. From that perspective, there is not a single, universal moral code.

Nevertheless, there is a 'root of humanity' and, thus, the perfect opportunity for the attainment of closest loving relationships (Slingerland, 2003).

According to the perception, the fulfilment of duties to families and friends prior to the execution of ethical responsibilities for others forms a critical life

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aspect.

Similar to most Greek philosophers, Aristotle focused on viewing virtue as a form of language. From that perspective, self-examination is essential in the generation of self-knowledge that eventually leads to the realisation of the good life. It indicates that knowledge comes out as a mean, which is relative to individuals. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle focused on the integration of a patient, careful and descriptive approach to examining moral philosophy (Hoffe, 2010). The central issue in the concept is the question of character and personality. Aristotle focused on answering the questions on what defines an individual as a good person. From that perspective, it is remarkable that each activity has its ultimate cause and, thus, the good at which it aims.

Aristotle notes that there cannot be an infinite regress in relation to merely extrinsic goods, thus the need for the existence of highest good at which all human activities ultimately aims. That relates to the concept of happiness (living well). Attaining that ultimate goal demands that there must be entire proper functioning in relation to human life. In addition, an activity of the soul has the obligation of expressing the genuine virtue or aspect of excellence. In this context, individuals need to aim at the achievement of a life full of conformity in accordance with the rational natures in pursuit of virtue. From a Confucian perspective, the achievement of virtue focuses on gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, kindness and earnestness. Confucius focused on the illustration of these aspects of virtue, which individuals must practice in the course of living a healthy as well as harmonious life. Based on that, it is imperative to have a well-ordered society for the expression of virtue (Slingerland, 2003).

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From the above perceptions, it is evident that Aristotle and Confucius focused on the illustration of happiness and appropriate living conditions as a form of expression of virtue. Based on their reasoning, virtue has the potentiality of ensuring that people aim at the achievement of happiness and quality living conditions following self-awareness and self-knowledge. That justifies the fact that ancient Greek and Chinese societies adopted and recognised utilisation of the self-awareness to facilitate the achievement the goals and targets. That was in relation to virtue or self-knowledge that forms the basis of happiness and quality living conditions. On the other hand, the Confucian approach focused on the utilisation of a systematic approach in pursuit of quality living conditions and, thus the achievement of virtue or ethical conditions.

In contemporary society, the concept of virtue or ethics starts with the basic assumptions that all employee live in accordance with the moral guidelines. That form the guiding principles with the intention of conducting themselves in the work environment effectively and efficiently. In the context of diverse workplaces, business entities focus on the development of the ethical principles with the intention of making people of all socio-economic backgrounds to feel comfortable working towards the realisation of competitive advantage. Similarly, the approaches are vital to the promotion of equal opportunities in contemporary working environments.

References

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