Cultural assessment story for the Analects

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In the Analects, Confucius states that people should not pursue for profit but personal moral cultivation and puts pursuing profit and behaving morally in opposite position. Culturally, this judgement may convey the information that pursuing profit itself is immoral. The designed social experiment focus on whether people influenced by ancient Chinese culture show more tendency to avoid talking about profits. The predicted result is based on the unique influence of ancient Chinese culture on contemporary Chinese people.

In the Analects 4.16, Confucius states that "The gentleman understands what is right, whereas the petty man understands profit". In Analects, Confucius generally claims that people should behave like "the gentleman". "The pretty man" is regarded as the opposite side of 'the gentleman". This sentence conveys that people should behave morally rather than pursuing profit and pursuing profit will hurt behaving morally. There are many examples of people doing some immoral things to pursue profit, but pursuing profit itself seems to have no necessary relationship with morality originally. The opposite relationship in the sentence constructs a stronger connection

The experiment is designed to see whether eastern people have more tendency of concealing their pursuit of profit than western people. Participants are asked to choose a job from a job list provided. Among all the jobs, there are two classifications. Some

between pursuing profit and immoral behavior.

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jobs have better actual profit, like higher salary, more holidays. The other kind has less economic profits but is viewed as noble like volunteers, countryside teachers. The experiment randomly divides the people into two groups with each group having similar number of western and eastern people. For one group of people, they anonymously choose a job, and for the other group, they are asked by the researcher to choose a job face to face. The percentage of people choosing previous job when being asked may be lower than the percentage of those were asked anonymously. The hypothesis is that for eastern people, the percentage disagreement will be higher than that of western people.

For eastern people, they are more influenced by the idea that pursuing profit can connect with immorality. When participants are under anonymous test, they consider moral issue less, and thus tend to choose based on their real consideration. When they are asked to make a choice face to face, they may consider moral judgement of the research on themselves. Under such condition, some people will choose the job based on their moral judgement. They may tell the researcher to choose to do volunteer jobs rather than earning more money. The only difference between the two group is the way of giving that choice. People from difference cultural may have different values other than view of morality, which may also influence the job choice. The analysis of difference cancels the influence of difference unrelated to morality. The percentage difference thus reflects whether they think pursuit of profit is immoral.

Confucius states that "the gentleman" should behave morally rather than pursuing profit, and pursuing profit may hurt morality. This idea makes eastern people view

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pursuing profit as immoral and thus tend to avoid choosing economic-beneficial jobs when being asked by researches.

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