
The Role of Confucian Principles in Regional Peacebuilding

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Abstract

This study explores Confucius's concept of harmony as articulated in the Analects and its implications for regional peace. Confucius contended that a well-ordered society is rooted in virtue, ethical leadership, and harmonious relationships. Specifically, this research aims to (1) examine Confucius's vision of governance through moral exemplarity, (2) analyse the role of harmony in interpersonal relationships, and (3) assess the relevance of Confucian thought for contemporary peacebuilding. Data were collected through an extensive review of the Analects and relevant secondary literature, employing thematic content analysis to distil key principles and their contemporary applicability. The findings yield three principal insights.

First, Confucius highlights the necessity of virtuous leaders whose moral conduct inspires similar behaviour among their followers; this model aligns closely with modern concepts of integrity-based leadership. Second, Confucian teachings on harmony in family and society underscore the importance of empathy, self-discipline, and mutual respect as vital components for fostering peaceful communities and encouraging collaborative engagement. Third, Confucian harmony signifies proactive cooperation rather than mere conflict avoidance; values such as filial piety and reverence for authority continue to be foundational for social stability and collective well-being.

In conclusion, the study asserts that Confucian moral leadership offers practical guidelines for conflict resolution and minimising social discord. Confucius's conception of harmony cultivates cooperative relationships at familial, communal, and national levels. Additionally, Confucian values—such as social responsibility, respect for authority, and environmental stewardship—promote sustainable governance and global peace. By advocating for long-term stability, mutual understanding, and international cooperation, Confucian harmony plays a significant role in fostering peace and sustainability in the modern world.

Keywords: Mindfulness of breathing; Yoga practice; Brahmanism; Buddhism; Ānāpānasati; Breathing Techniques

Introduction

Harmony is a concept of Confucius, introduced in his Analects, that has profoundly shaped the Chinese government and East Asian philosophy. Thus, his virtue and leadership ethics teachings teach harmonious relations in attaining social order and peace. Lau et al. (2023) researched the effect of Confucius on contemporary Chinese leadership. They pointed out how Confucianism contributes to diplomatic relations in East Asia by having the potential to resolve conflicts. For example, ethical governance is an important factor in promoting global peace, as the United Nations (2021) describes, which is similar to what Confucius said, that moral leadership will bring about peace. While Confucianism is acknowledged, a divide exists between acknowledging the Confucian recognition, based explicitly on harmony, and understanding peacebuilding in today's way. Kauppi & Viotti (2023) depicted the implication of Confucianism in diplomacy and did not completely dwell on its more significant circumstances for achieving global peace. This research intends to address such a gap by examining Confucius' ideas and their relevance to contemporary peacebuilding approaches.

This research is to explore Confucian perspectives, particularly the concept of harmony in contemporary peacebuilding and global governance. The research gap focused on the contribution of Confucian values to direct action in conflict resolution and peace and stability today. Although Confucianism has been subject to analysis in the context of the Chinese government, its capacity for dealing with worldwide peacebuilding is relatively unexplored (Patey, 2021). This research is fundamental; it provides a different framework of ethical leadership and social order because ethical leadership leads to social harmony. This research fills this gap by reflecting on how Confucius' teachings have been used to bring enlightenment into contemporary governance, particularly in regions with political instability. The journal's intended readers are scholars in philosophy, peace studies, international relations, policymakers, and global leaders involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This research aims to introduce contemporary governance practices with Confucian thinking. The main aim of this research is to investigate how Confucius' teachings, with a special emphasis on his concept of harmony, can be helpful in contemporary peacebuilding and global governance. The study will investigate Confucian values and their relevance to contemporary management ethics and conflict management. Through the principles of Confucius outlined in the Analects, the research will

analyse the relevance of promoting stability and harmony within the society, precisely in distant lands that experience the phenomenon of the lack of political stability. This research is timely and politically crucial because of the ongoing, globally salient problems of war and government (Art, et al., 2023). The study will demonstrate how Confucianism can articulate peace initiatives in contemporary terms.

This research paper presents Confucius' concept of harmony and how it can currently be used in building peace. The research will provide a description of Confucian philosophy, exploring in detail virtue, ethical leadership, and harmony, drawing directly from the Analects. It will then examine how one can draw on these ideas for present-day governance, particularly in regions with all political and cultural instability. In addition, the research will assess the potential advantages of merging Confucianism into peacebuilding processes, raising the trend to ethical leadership in furthering global peace. Ultimately, this research provides valuable information to the technical community, government, and world leaders in managing governance and peacebuilding problems today.

Research Objectives

1. To analyse the role of Confucian Principles of Harmony, specifically Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), and Ritual Propriety (Li), in fostering regional peacebuilding.
2. To examine the influence of Ethical Leadership (De), as defined by Confucian thought, on regional peacebuilding.
3. To investigate how Confucian Governance Principles, particularly Ritual Propriety (Li) and Ethical Leadership (De), directly influence regional peacebuilding efforts.

Literature Review

The existing literature highlights the enduring influence of Confucianism on governance and peacebuilding, emphasizing themes of harmony, ethical leadership, and social stability. Song (2020) argues that Confucian moral principles—especially Benevolence (Ren) and Righteousness (Yi)—have underpinned East Asian governance frameworks for centuries, shaping policymaking and leadership practices in the region. Similarly, Paczyńska (2023) explores how Confucian ideals inform local peacebuilding initiatives and

international diplomacy, suggesting that these values can foster cooperation and mitigate regional conflicts. However, while Confucian ethics are well-documented within East Asia, their application in diverse or politically unstable global contexts remains underexplored.

This review synthesises current scholarship on Confucian thought, identifies critical gaps, and outlines a research agenda to examine how Confucian values might inform contemporary governance and peacebuilding worldwide. Traditional studies have largely concentrated on East Asian diplomacy and statecraft, but less attention has been paid to the potential of Confucian principles in global peacebuilding efforts. Although the theoretical underpinnings of Confucian ethics are robust, practical implementation in non-East Asian regions has received insufficient scholarly focus (Song, 2020; Paczyńska, 2023). To address this gap, future research must investigate interdisciplinary frameworks that integrate Confucian values into modern governance and conflict resolution strategies.

1. Confucian Harmony and Regional Peacebuilding

Central to Confucian thought is the triad of Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), and Ritual Propriety (Li), each contributing uniquely to social harmony. Guo (2022) contend that Benevolence is intrinsically linked to compassion, whereas Righteousness fosters justice and mutual respect. Empirical examples from East Asian diplomacy illustrate that Righteousness has mediated complex negotiations by ensuring equitable processes, thereby reducing conflict intensity (Izaguirre Pechirra, 2024). Benevolence, on the other hand, promotes conflict prevention by cultivating empathy and mutual understanding among parties. Ritual Propriety serves as a societal regulator, standardizing behavior through shared norms and preventing disputes born of disrespect or misunderstanding (Guo 2022). Despite these insights, scholarship on the application of Confucian harmony to peacebuilding in post-conflict and multicultural settings is limited. Notably, in post-conflict South Korea and China, local leaders have employed Benevolence in community peacemaking to bridge societal divides (Kester, 2020). Likewise, Ritual Propriety has functioned as a mechanism for conflict prevention in ethnically diverse regions by codifying respectful interaction (Jinzhou, 2020).

2. Ethical Leadership (De) in Peacebuilding

Confucian ethics prioritize leadership through virtue rather than coercion. Khalil and Hartley (2024) demonstrate that ethical leadership correlates strongly with trust and cooperation—two foundational elements for peacebuilding in unstable environments. Leaders embodying Ren and Yi exhibit honesty and reconciliation, effectively mitigating tensions in divided societies (Alzola, Hennig, & Romar, 2020). Such leadership promotes collective responsibility and shared governance, reflecting Confucian ideals within the broader social framework. Historical examples underscore this connection: post-apartheid South Africa witnessed ethical leadership—exemplified by Nelson Mandela—that advanced forgiveness, justice, and national cohesion (Vorster, 2023). In East Asia, China's emphasis on ethical leadership has facilitated mutual respect and diplomatic dialogue, contributing to regional stability (Do, 2022). Nonetheless, research often overlooks how these leadership models might be adapted to radically different cultural or political settings.

3. Confucian Governance Principles and Social

Cohesion Central to Confucian governance is the interplay between Ritual Propriety (Li) and Ethical Leadership (De) in maintaining social order and cohesion. Barton and Ho (2021) note that Li stresses respect and conflict avoidance, thereby fostering harmony. According to Jinzhou (2020), respect undergirds social stability by encouraging individuals to fulfill community roles responsibly. When combined with De—leadership founded on moral integrity—these principles nurture social trust and cooperation (Fort & Haugh, 2020). For instance, in Korea and China, Confucian-inspired leadership practices have strengthened public service motivation and collaboration across government and civil society (Lee, Min, Kim, & Park, 2022). However, political instability poses challenges to these governance models, as it can undermine the social trust necessary for Confucian principles to take root. Future research should therefore examine how Confucian governance frameworks can be tailored to contexts marked by weak institutions or ongoing conflict.

In summary, while the Confucian emphasis on harmony, ethical leadership, and social cohesion offers promising pathways for peacebuilding, scholarship remains predominantly region-specific. Addressing this gap requires interdisciplinary inquiry into the adaptability of Confucian ethics within varied

cultural and political environments. By developing frameworks that integrate Ren, Yi, Li, and De into contemporary governance and peacebuilding practices, researchers can advance both theoretical understanding and practical strategies for fostering stability in a range of global contexts.

Conceptual Framework

This research is a study on Confucian Principles of Harmony, Ethical Leadership (De) and Confucian Governance Principles, which have a bearing on regional peacebuilding through compliant moral leadership. The researcher defines the research conceptual framework based on the concept of Confucianism, together with how Righteousness and Ritual Propriety are integrated from the Confucian Principles of Harmony. They depend on empathy, justice, and social order and feel that if men and society live in harmony, they can function properly. At the centre of the framework, therefore, is Ethical Leadership (De), which reflects moral integrity and leadership by example. This leadership approach fosters trust, cooperation and stability between regions most affected by political instabilities.

The Confucian Governing Principles include the Ritual Propriety (Li), which governs the leader and society in general regarding the ethical governance of a peaceful and harmonious society (Yuan et al., 2023). What constitutes moral leadership is determined since it is the primary region's agent of peacebuilding. Leaders who practice Confucian values provoke men to do good and act ethically in governance, achieving the elements of regional peacebuilding within the region, including conflict resolution, cooperation, and social harmony. In this process of moral leadership, the principle of Confucianism plays a considerable role in providing peace and stability in the presence of some rebellions or instability.

The Conceptual Framework shows how Confucianism works in the region to sustain the content and form of implementation of the Core ideas when creating an atmosphere conducive to peacemaking. It explains the benefits of Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), Ritual Propriety (Li), and Ethical Leadership (De) in as much as it explains how they create a common good for the benefit of society, how to establish law and order and productive relationship in any society. When applied in governance, they are the principles used under conflict resolution to ensure that there is some stability in areas infested with conflicts, which is used

to ensure peace. Furthermore, it provides a further understanding of how moral leadership fosters trust, mobilizes society for order, and develops long-term peace within the culture because it adapts to different politics.

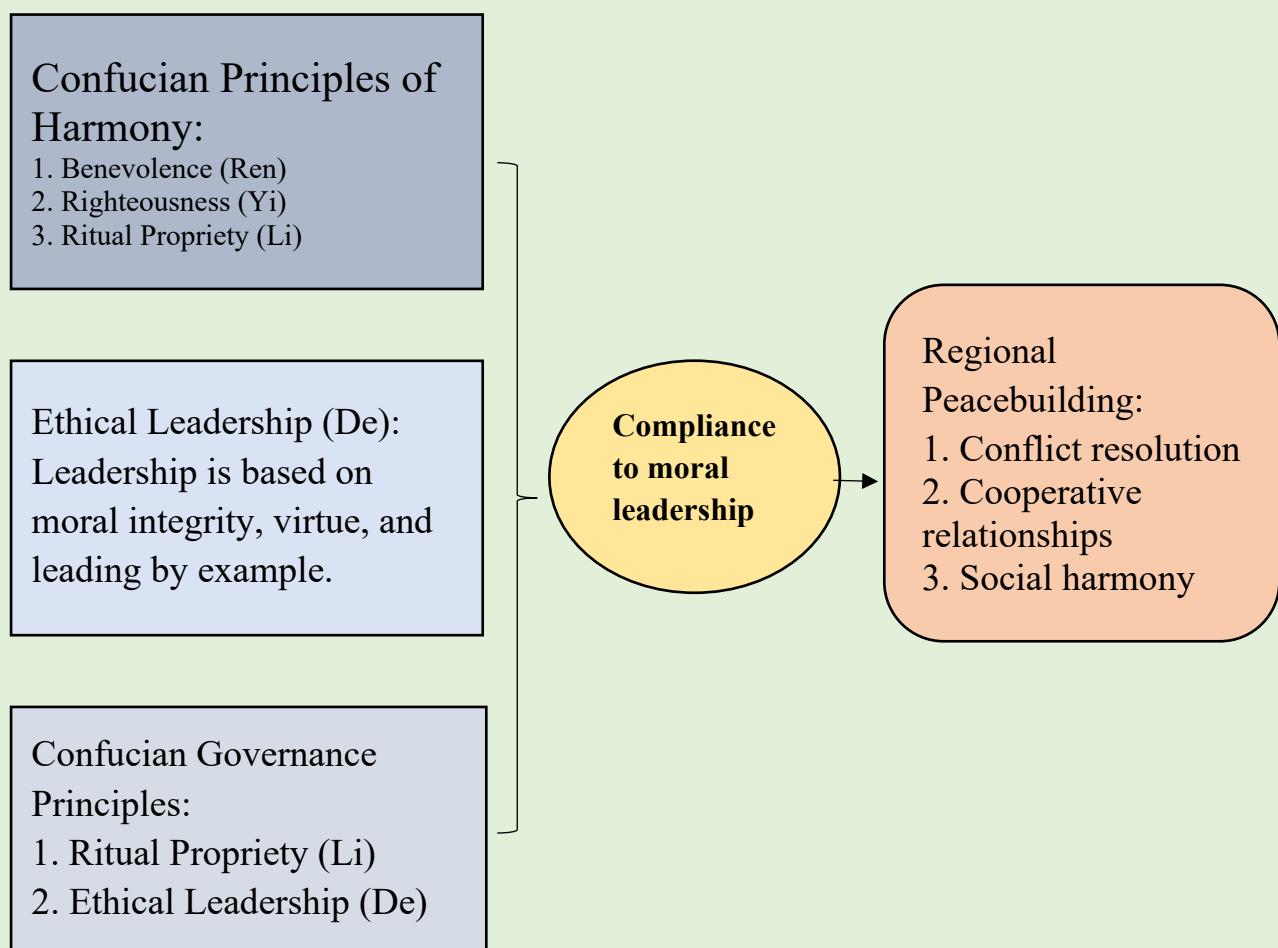


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This research is a qualitative study aimed at exploring the role of Confucian principles in regional peacebuilding. The research area is the application of Confucian values such as Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), Ritual propriety (Li), and Ethical (De) Leadership values in countries affected by Confucian thought and in places that are faced with political instability or post-conflict recovery. Purposive sampling is used for the case studies selected from East Asia and other parts of the Confucian-influenced regions, with the survey analyzing how these principles contribute to governance and peacebuilding efforts.

The research tools used in this study are Document Analysis and Case Studies. In the Document Analysis, the researcher will examine Confucian texts, particularly The Analects, and related literature to understand how Confucian principles have been applied in governance and peacebuilding (Pu & Zheng, 2024). The focus is on extracting key principles like Benevolence, Righteousness, and Ethical Leadership and analyzing their impact on societal stability and peacebuilding.

Specific regions where Confucian principles were applied to governance and peacemaking (mainly East Asia) will be analyzed using case studies. For these case studies, the study areas have been affected by political instability or conflict. Reports and academic studies of Confucian principles in peacebuilding will be analyzed for the data collected. Thematic analysis of the data will then explore how these principles are used to resolve conflict, build cooperative relationships, and achieve social harmony, out of which regional peacebuilding is obtained (Chitondo et al., 2024).

Research Results

Objective 1. Results showed that regional peacebuilding is paved by Confucian Principles of Harmony, especially Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi) and Ritual Propriety (Li). Benevolence or Ren is about empathy and compassion and promoting peaceful relations with fewer chances of conflict (Barton & Ho, 2020). The principle of mutual respect and understanding is widely applied in East Asia. Generally, leaders and communities in the region hold each other to high importance, encouraging cooperation instead of confrontation. Beyond peace studies, the application of Benevolence gleaned from governing and peace efforts, especially peace efforts, has been instrumental in reconciling and resolving conflicts in war or politically tense zones (Blair, 2020).

Righteousness (Yi), as a principle to guide moral behaviour and justice, significantly contributed to regional peacebuilding. Those who represent Righteousness are less inclined to choose the betterment of self over that of others. In places like South Korea, where there is political instability, the boosting of Righteousness has assisted in resolving the conflict as it has helped ensure that the leaders are just and fair (Sohn, 2024). If righteous leadership is in place, this

can bring greater trust into communities and minimise the risk and conflict, which can only sustain long-term peace and social harmony.

Ritual Propriety (Li) was deemed critical in facilitating peace in regional areas as it regulates social behaviour to cultivate respect for social norms (Lewis, 2020). This principle ensures that people reasonably interact with each other and thus may help prevent disputes from escalating. The principle of Ritual Propriety helps promote cooperative behaviour to restore peace in post-conflict areas, as it is a traditionally rooted principle in regions like China (Lewis, 2020). The Ritual Propriety (Li) policy assists in creating harmony to enable people to live in peace since forceful resolution of disputes is avoided (Lixinski & Zhu, 2024).

The research established that both Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), and Ritual Propriety (Li) would create harmony in society in that when the two parties' conflict, they will be able to agree quickly (Barton & Ho, 2020). Confucianism is also a method for regulating society in this context and provides a good grounding in ethical leadership; hence, there is politeness in business among the leaders and people. Thus, the research indicates the presence of Confucian values worldwide and the applicability of the identified model for peacebuilding in other nations apart from the East Asian countries. Applying the Confucianism form of ethical leadership in these situations is a feasible method of repairing and ensuring long-lasting peace in a society that cannot establish a political solution or restore buildings in the wake of conflicts.

Table 1: Impact of Confucian Principles on Regional Peacebuilding

Confucian Principle	Impact on Peacebuilding	Example from Case Studies
Benevolence (Ren)	Fosters empathy, reduces conflicts	South Korea post-conflict reconciliation
Righteousness (Yi)	Promotes justice and fair conflict resolution	Regional peace negotiations in East Asia
Ritual Propriety (Li)	Maintains social order, prevents conflicts	Community cooperation in Chinese governance

Objective 2. The results showed that ethical leadership (De), with its core Confucian meanings, is crucial for constructing peace at the regional level. A society's lack of proper moral values, virtues, and other ethical principles and its

leaders and members' lack of manifestation of these lead to trust and cooperation (Robinson et al., 2022). Ethical Leadership has played an essential part in our journey towards political and societal reconciliation and stability in South Korea and Vietnam, where the political situation and social unrest were disturbing (Wang, 2023). Confucian values or ideas of justice and benevolence bring a sense of shared responsibility and collaboration in leadership, reducing tensions and conflict.

The results also show that Ethical Leadership (De) promotes peacebuilding through a moral governance environment. The political process in China and Japan, which are the regions where Confucian principles are incorporated into leadership practices, focuses on accountability, justice and fairness (Cuevas, 2024). The Leadership of this form results in better cooperation among governments and citizens and an arrangement of trust and collective action (Robinson et al., 2022). Ethical Leadership framework, where role models (leaders) lead societies to peace through virtue and the necessity of ethical governance in achieving long-term stability, is considered.

Furthermore, in encounters with ongoing conflicts or post-conflict recovery, Ethical Leadership is essential to establish a moral authority that encourages peaceful and non-violent conflict resolution (Coffman, 2023). Peace agreements have been facilitated in East Asia, where the leaders embody ethical values and support justice and cooperation in governance. (Sohn, 2024). The research shows that leaders who endorse Confucian ethics are likely to promote the peacebuilding process, leading to lasting peace and social harmony. Ethical Leadership is critical in overcoming societal divisions.

Furthermore, the study indicated that ethical leadership (De) is influential in regional peacebuilding, especially regarding moral force and leadership authority. In particular, leaders who adhere to the views of Confucius create cooperation and unity, in other words, in countries and territories where there may be political upheavals or social disturbances (Robinson et al., 2022). Ethical leadership in East Asia has been proven to enhance prolonged peace and stability if leaders understand the justice, accountability, and responsibility of all people. This study shows that Ethical Leadership resolves animosities and builds permanent peace in the conflict-affected zone (Sohn, 2024). The integration of Confucian ethics within the leadership for future peacebuilding internationally is reasonable for future peacebuilding because ethical leadership enhances society's

fabric and makes building peace highly respected by all the relevant societal stakeholders.



Figure 2: Leading with Integrity (Coffman, 2023).

Objective 3. The results showed that Confucian Governance Principles of Ritual Propriety (Li) and Ethical Leadership (De) directly impact regional peacebuilding by creating an ethical governance environment, social order, and teamwork. Ritual Propriety (Li) protects society's social harmony by governing men's behaviour and preserving social respect (Wu & Zhao, 2024). In areas where governance is permeated with Confucian values, such as China and Japan, Ritual Propriety is crucial for peaceful cohabitation in diversity and preventing social disintegration (Cuevas, 2024). It encourages following norms and a predicted social environment where conflicts are less likely. Most notably, it has succeeded in post-conflict areas when righting the wrongs and fostering respectful relations is a prerequisite to lasting peace.

Furthermore, ethical leadership (De) in governance breeds trust and moral authority in leaders to their people, both of which are key to realizing long-term peacebuilding (Ebot-Ashu, 2024). The populace is more inclined to trust leaders

who practice virtue, integrity, and justice, guaranteeing the success of any peacebuilding endeavours. In places like South Korea, where ethical leadership is built into governance, results suggest leaders using moral authority enable their societies to bring themselves back to being in discord and cooperation even after times of turmoil or conflict (Wang, 2023). Moreover, ethical leadership creates accountability in leadership, thus lessening corruption and creating peace in the region.

When ritual propriety (Li) and ethical leadership (De) combine, they have extraordinary power in regional peacebuilding efforts because the leaders need to govern with moral integrity and promote social respect and order (Isakhan & Akbar, 2022). Confucian principles are thus used in this dual application to develop cohesive communities without conflict and the inclination to work for a common good. Confucian Governance Principles are applied in East Asian societies, and in these societies, there is evidence of peaceful cooperation and stable governance; there is also evidence that these principles contribute to long-term peace and regional stability (Guo & Puja, 2022).

The results show that the combination of Ritual Propriety (Li) and Ethical Leadership (De) in Confucian governance establishes a firm base for regional peacebuilding. Leadership and its moral integrity, as well as the moral purity in the ability of leaders to uphold social order, are essential markers of stable societies, such as in East Asia, where the leadership's moral integrity and its ability to maintain social order had an effect in the post-conflict recovery and political stability in their society. Ritual Propriety and Ethical Leadership can be applied side by side for social respect and cohesion in support of the peacebuilding process (Miklian & Katsos, 2024). Although these principles promote peaceful coexistence, they also enhance trust and collaboration among different groups, enabling them to rebuild from conflict after conflict. The findings have implications that Confucian governance principles, if applied in such regional peacebuilding efforts, can be the best channels for stable long-run order, cooperative relationships and sustainability of peace in regions where disruption and armed conflicts exist (Robinson et al., 2022).

Table 2: Confucian Governance Principles and Their Impact on Regional Peacebuilding

Governance Principle	Impact on Peacebuilding	Example from Case Studies
Ritual Propriety (Li)	Ensures social order, prevents conflicts	Post-conflict China - rebuilding community norms
Ethical Leadership (De)	Fosters moral governance and unity	Confucian-inspired leadership in Taiwan's political stability

Discussions

The findings of this study demonstrate that Confucian principles of Harmony, namely Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), and Ritual Propriety (Li), align closely with foundational concepts in peacebuilding theory. Galtung's Conflict Transformation Theory (1996) posits that sustainable peace requires structural change, cultural transformation, and the satisfaction of human needs. In this regard, Ren and Yi foster empathy and justice, which are necessary to transform adversarial relationships into cooperative ones, while Li provides normative guidelines that regulate behaviour and reduce the likelihood of conflict escalation. Consistent with Orimiyeye and Bala's (2024) Human Needs Theory, which emphasises the fulfilment of emotional and security needs as prerequisites for durable peace, Ren encourages compassion-driven engagement, Yi underscores fairness in negotiations, and Li establishes predictable social interactions that satisfy the need for both security and belonging. Empirical cases in East Asia illustrate how Ren has been operationalised in community peacemaking, helping to bridge social divides in post-conflict contexts such as South Korea and China (Setiawan, 2024). Thus, the integrative application of Ren, Yi, and Li not only resolves immediate disputes but also cultivates long-term social stability.

The role of Confucian Ethical Leadership (De) in peacebuilding further validates transformational leadership frameworks. Bass (1990) argues that transformational leaders inspire followers by exemplifying moral integrity, articulating an appealing vision, and fostering individualised consideration. In the Confucian paradigm, De is characterised by personal virtue and moral rectitude;

leaders who embody De engender trust and cooperation among constituents (Khalil & Hartley, 2024). Puyo (2022) demonstrates that ethical leadership, grounded in Ren and Yi, can guide communities or nations toward peaceful solutions by promoting reconciliation and shared responsibility. For example, post-apartheid South Africa's transition was facilitated by leaders who, much like Confucian paragons of De, prioritised forgiveness and justice, thereby enabling healing across deeply divided groups (Vorster, 2023). Similarly, China's diplomatic approach in East Asia, which incorporates respect and moral authority, has contributed to regional stability by modelling virtuous conduct (Do, 2022). Consequently, Confucian De resonates with Bass's transformational framework, suggesting that leaders who internalise and act upon ethical principles enhance social trust and catalyse cooperative peacebuilding.

Furthermore, Confucian Governance Principles—particularly Li and De—are instrumental in fostering regional cohesion and mitigating conflict. Ritual Propriety (Li) prescribes formalized behaviors that uphold respect, hierarchical order, and collective harmony, thereby minimizing triggers for social discord (Jinzhou, 2020). Perkuhn (2025) finds that Li establishes a shared cultural vocabulary that facilitates dispute resolution and reduces misunderstandings among diverse groups. In parallel, ethical governance (De) ensures that policies are implemented transparently and equitably, generating legitimacy and public buy-in (Ren, Wang, & Lv, 2022). Huntington's theory of civilizational conflict (ASIA, 2021) acknowledges that Confucian cultural values—when embedded in governance—can promote a stable polity by aligning state behavior with societal expectations of propriety and righteousness. Empirical evidence indicates that regions governed according to Confucian norms experience lower levels of internal strife and higher levels of institutional trust (Huang, 2024). Therefore, by harmonizing moral leadership with prescriptive social rituals, Confucian governance offers a holistic model that supports sustainable peace.

In summary, Confucian principles of Ren, Yi, Li, and De provide a robust framework for regional peacebuilding that complements and extends existing theoretical models. By satisfying human emotional and security needs (Orimiye & Bala, 2024), fostering moral legitimacy (Bass, 1990; Puyo, 2022), and embedding behavioral norms that discourage conflict (Galtung, 1996; Perkuhn, 2025), these principles enable societies to transition from transactional coexistence to transformative cooperation. For policymakers and peacebuilding

practitioners, integrating Confucian ethics into governance strategies can enhance social trust and resilience in politically unstable regions. Future research should empirically test these propositions in diverse cultural settings to refine the applicability of Confucian peacebuilding beyond East Asia, thereby contributing to global efforts aimed at achieving durable, inclusive peace.

Knowledge from Research

This research highlights how core Confucian values—Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), and Ritual Propriety (Li)—contribute to regional peacebuilding by fostering empathy, fairness, and social order. Benevolence nurtures compassion and unity within communities, deescalating hostility rooted in discrimination and promoting understanding among diverse groups. Righteousness provides a foundation for fairness, encouraging just treatment and conflict resolution grounded in mutual respect. Ritual Propriety reinforces social stability by guiding behavior through shared norms and honoring others, ensuring that interactions remain respectful and preventing disputes from escalating. Collectively, these principles address fundamental human concerns and inspire harmonious relationships, collaborative networks, and enduring friendships.

Beyond theory, these findings can reshape academic and policy frameworks. By integrating Confucian principles into peacebuilding curricula, educators can develop programs on ethical leadership and conflict resolution that resonate with contemporary societal challenges. Introducing these values in academic settings can foster a generation of leaders equipped to build bridges across cultural divides. Moreover, adapting Confucian ideas in policy circles—both within and outside East Asia—can inform legislative measures aimed at sustaining social cohesion, suggesting that global initiatives could benefit from this moral framework.

At the community level, emphasising Benevolence and Righteousness in local projects encourages leaders and residents to practice cooperation, mutual respect, and proactive conflict management. These efforts can be especially impactful in areas experiencing displacement, political unrest, or ethnic tensions, laying the groundwork for lasting peace. In economic spheres, businesses and corporations can adopt Confucian-inspired ethical leadership models that prioritise justice, fairness, and virtue. By making moral decision-making central

to corporate governance, companies can enhance employee trust, strengthen stakeholder relationships, and advance sustainable practices that balance profit with social responsibility.

These insights also hold significant implications for policy and international diplomacy. Governments and institutions can incorporate Confucian values into peacebuilding frameworks, promoting upright leadership and ethical governance in unstable regions. By crafting policies that reflect Ren, Yi, and Li, decision-makers can foster inclusive political systems and cultivate durable social stability. International organisations, too, can leverage these principles when designing peacebuilding initiatives, helping to establish moral authority, build cooperative alliances, and support long-term regional stability. In conflict-prone areas, Confucian-inspired leadership models offer a promising path toward global peace and sustainable governance.

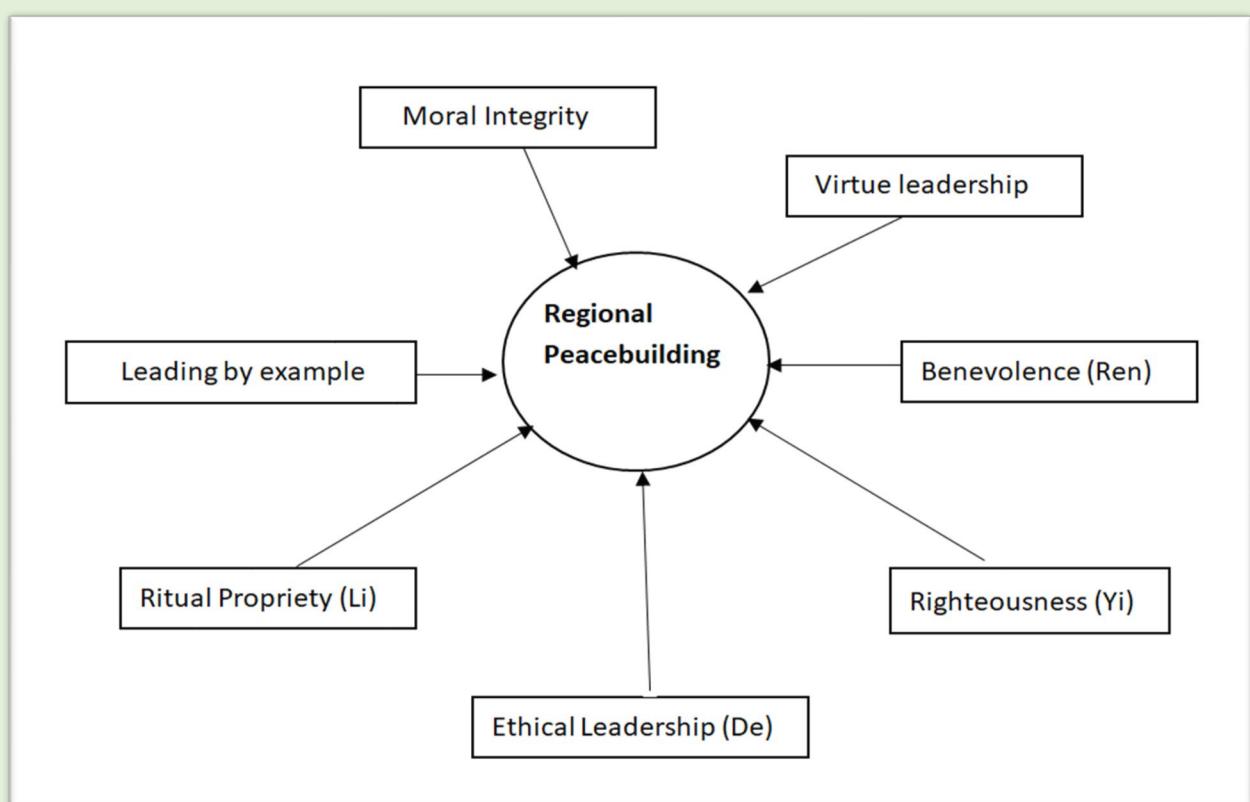


Figure 3: Knowledge Model of Confucian Principles in Regional Peacebuilding (Koczkás, 2024),

Conclusion

This research has shown that the Confucian principles are pivotal in promoting regional peacebuilding with high impact coming from Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), Ritual Propriety (Li), and Ethical Leadership (De). The key knowledge acquired shows that Benevolence (Ren), fostering empathy and compassion, lessens inter-group conflict to the extraordinary degree that it outstands even among ancient Confucian virtues as the leading way to resolve conflict. Righteousness (Yi) is to resolve the conflict produced by humanity within an executive through law, justice, and righteousness for the good of a people and the stability and unity of the society. Ritual Propriety (Li) governs human behavior, supervises human behavior to keep order and prohibit the insurgency of party conflict, and assures human society to be at peace and cooperate.

Further, Ethical Leadership (De) is recognized as a key factor, if not the most critical factor, in peacebuilding. Leaders who exhibit moral integrity, virtues, and values and lead by personal example foster trust and cohesiveness within their communities. This discovery supports the significance of ethical leadership in directing nations to ward equivalent healing and amid lasting serenity. The research also shows that doing justice to peace in societal turmoil is where ethical leaders with justice and virtue as their missions make peacebuilding count for the people, questioned and marked on strong.

Finally, the research indicates that practicing the Confucian governance principles (i.e. Ritual Propriety (Li) and Ethical Leadership (De)) creates a structure for effectiveness in governance and, therefore, governance security with leaders who get respect and recognition in the society. Due to these principles, social harmony, cooperation, and conflict resolution are brought about. The research demonstrates that it is essential to reflect the Confucian principles in regional governance, and such an example proves very inspiring for all the regions that want to achieve stable and good governance in the area permanently.

Suggestions

This research reveals that Confucianism, specifically Benevolence (Ren), Righteousness (Yi), Ritual Propriety (Li), and Ethical Leadership (De) contribute a lot to regional peacebuilding by creating social harmony, conflict resolution, and cooperative governance. The real value is that these principles can be used for global peacebuilding efforts, particularly in countries experiencing political instability or post-conflict reconstruction. Future researchers trying to test these principles, translating them across their integrity into the real situations of non-East Asian countries, must review the experience of utilizing them to create peace in different cultural, social, or political conditions.

For the following research question, research must be done on integrating Confucian values with other cultural frameworks in peacebuilding. Understanding how Confucianism can be in partnership with another ethical and cultural approach will give us a fully developed solution to global governance and conflict resolution strategies. This will enlarge the range of Confucian peacebuilding theories to more numerous regions and grounds, granting valuable kinds of knowledge to worldwide peace actions.

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