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I acknowledge the use of the following AI tools during the preparation of my work:

1.ChatGPT (<https://chatgpt.com>)

Date: [18/10/2025-24/10/2025]

Purpose: Searching for relevant literature, summarising paragraph key points, converting formal language to oral expression, and check my own expression.

2. Doubao (<https://www.doubao.com>)

Date: [18/10/2025-24/10/2025]

Purpose: Key point summary, translating English resources.

# How Can Ritual Propriety Positively Impact Academic Procrastination?

## 1. Introduction:

The phrase “ritual propriety” will be used in this study to describe the concept *li* 禮, which also often rendered as “ritual”, “propriety”, “proper conduct” or “the rites”. It is an important part in Chinese culture, not only fundamental in Confucianism thought<sup>1</sup>, we can see that Of the Thirteen Classics in the tradition, three are dedicated specifically to ritual propriety, namely *the Rituals of Zhou* (*Zhouli* 周禮), *the Book of Rituals* (*Yili* 儀禮), and *the Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記): but also plays a vital role in Chinese society for dynasties<sup>2</sup>.

According to Chenyang Li (2023), ritual propriety covering both the external and inner senses of the concept. On the one hand, it is ritual or the rules of conduct, stands for social norms which guides people’s behavior. On the other hand, it refers an inner sense of propriety in conducting (people themselves). Although in our contemporary society, order is founded primarily on the law which replace many of the roles of ritual propriety, the law does not cover all aspects. The smooth operation of much community still relies largely on ritual propriety.

Procrastination is to voluntarily delay an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse-off for the delay(Steel, 2007). For some individuals, deferring what needs to be done can become a persistent behavioral pattern and interferes their daily life. This situation referred to as procrastination which is voluntarily delaying an intended course of action despite the negative consequences of that delay (Klingsieck, 2013). Surveys indicate that a significant proportion of university

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<sup>1</sup> Of the Thirteen Classics in the tradition, three are dedicated specifically to li, namely the Rituals of Zhou (*Zhouli* 周禮), the Book of Rituals (*Yili* 儀禮), and the Book of Rites (*Liji* 禮記).

<sup>2</sup> 《左傳·僖公十一年》：禮，國之幹也，敬，禮之興也。

students admit they experiencing procrastination which named academic procrastination. It can cause many drawback to students' academic performance, well-being, mental health and physical health.

Nowadays, this phenomenon has attracted greater attention, It has been studied from many different theoretical angles. Psychologists have analysed the causes of academic procrastination, which include cognitive factors, motivational factors, emotional factors, environmental and task-related factors, personality and neural basis, irrational beliefs and self-efficacy. Recent studies support the notion that academic procrastination can be seen from a situational perspective and as a failure in learning self-regulation. It suggests that interventions should address situational as well as deficits in self-regulation to help students overcome their procrastinating tendencies. However, because procrastination is not considered a psychiatric condition, determining its occurrence is complicated.

Academic procrastination poses significant challenges for students, yet traditional psychological approaches to defining and addressing it remain highly complex. This study set out to find a new methodologies draw upon the ritual propriety within Sinology which could offer positive influence on academic procrastination through behavioural intervention (cultivating good habits via the practising of ritual propriety) and cognitive intervention (fostering the attitude of respect underlying the practising of ritual propriety). Which could offers a fresh perspective on relief academic procrastination.

## *2.Positive influences one: cultivating good habit through Rules of conduct*

Rules of conduct as a aspect of ritual propriety, could offer some positive influences like a kind of behavioral intervention for improving academic procrastination. To be specific, I will give five examples form *the Guidelines for*

being a good person (*dizi gui* 弟子規)<sup>3</sup> and then discuss the potential impact to academic procrastination:

(1). “When our parents call us, we should answer them right away; when they tell us to do something, we should do it promptly instead of neglect.”<sup>4</sup>

This rules of conduct of ritual propriety, is a guiding about answer and act on time to parents. If student follow that and cultivate it as a habit, it will play a powerful influence which improving academic efficiency, since this habit of acting promptly can also made student give on-time execution in their study. On the same time, such practicing is also a good method for enhancing self-control, its play a vital role in procrastination( Steel 2007, Alexander 2014<sup>5</sup>).

(2).“Get up early and go to bed at a reasonable time.Youthful days passes swiftly; cherish every moment.”<sup>6</sup>

This one is about daily routine and treasure time. A healthy schedule is really important especially for students who experiencing high academic pressure. Irregular routines are more likely to exacerbate the vicious cycle of procrastination and anxiety. The cherishing attitude can also help student properly managing their time and tasks.

(3).“Avoid doing things in a hurry, since acting in haste easily lead to mistakes. Do not be afraid of a task which is difficult or become careless when a job is easy.”

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<sup>3</sup> Li Yian 李逸安, trans., *Qianzi wen and dizi gui* 千字文弟子規 (Zhonghua shuju 2012)

<sup>4</sup> Li Yian 李逸安, trans., *Qianzi wen and dizi gui* 千字文弟子規 (Zhonghua shuju 2012),p65:“父母呼，應勿緩；父母命，行勿懶。”

<sup>5</sup> They conclude procrastination and academic procrastination an self-control failure.

<sup>6</sup> Li Yian 李逸安, trans., *Qianzi wen and dizi gui* 千字文弟子規 (Zhonghua shuju 2012),p73:“朝起早，夜眠遲；老易至，惜此時。”

This regulation of ritual propriety precisely addresses the two emotional factors of academic procrastination: fearful and avoidant behavior as well as underestimation. Then the result of procrastination often brings with haste and blunder. This ritual propriety give us suggestion of avoiding negative judge and bias, therefore effectively avoiding procrastination.

(4).“In our studies, we should set a reasonable timetable and then study hard. With enough time and effort, we will thoroughly understand the confusion.”

Excessive expectations and miserable time-management strategy also easily cause academic procrastination. If we can wisely set up a timetable and recognise that with the investment of time and effort, hard work ultimately yield good results. The symptom of academic procrastination will relief.

(5)“If we have a question, we should make a note of it, then ask someone to get the right meaning.”

Practising this guideline could offer students a good academic habit. If they can always write down and resolve question on time, they will significantly reduce the difficulties and pressures during the learning process. These barriers also factor of academic procrastination.

*3.Positive influences one: cultivating good habit through Rules of conduct*

According from the chapter four of *Yang zheng yi gui* 養正遺規(Sourcebook on childhood education), students are required to pay homage to the Confucius and their teachers on the first day and fifth day each month, in a order based on seniority, wearing specific attire and following certain procedures. At the beginning and ending of each day study, they must likewise pay respects to their teachers in order. These practices were commonplace in ancient China. Today, similar ceremonies can still be observed in many schools, universities or other institutions, such as Opening Ceremony and Graduation Ceremony.

This type of ritual propriety is a other form not only external convention of behaviour. In fact, it cultivate naturally and potentially respect in students' heart. This reverence bring an intrinsic motivation and strength which can help them overcome barriers like academic procrastination and made them manage their study wisely.

Multiple bodies of literature suggest that rituals can act as a buffer against the deleterious effects of strong negative emotions. Ritualized behaviors seem particularly likely to emerge under circumstances characterized by negative emotions such as high anxiety, uncertainty, and stress. Also, by drawing attention to the regulatory environment and enhancing sentiments of personal involvement, rituals energize and invigorate a person's activities, driving them toward present and future goals (Nicholas M. Hobson , 2017).

#### *4. Conclusion:*

Ritual propriety is a important concept in Chinese especially ancient society and philosophy which having undergone the test of practical application over thousands of years of transmission. Is it a tad out of date to modern society? Indeed, although in contemporary times, our society is founded primarily on the rule of law, ritual propriety still plays a vital role in almost every human society and institution,

maintain the structural and psychological balance and order. It contains inner and external aspect, properly follow it can bring people well-beings.

In today's hustle and bustle environment, students are facing more temptation, challenge and pressure. Accompanied by environmental factors and intrinsic factors, academic procrastination became a common phenomenon. It brings many negative outcomes to students.

This essay discuss the feasibility of practising ritual propriety to positively influence academic procrastination. It brings a new aspect of methodology from Sinology, but it also need more deep research and implementation in practice in real life.

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