

Original Paper

Study of “Catalytic Functions” of the “Friend” Roles of *The Analects* in Business Dealings

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Abstract

In international business dealings, we inevitably encounter problems arising from cultural obstacles, which in business dealings influence us greatly. However, the influence of cultural barriers can be decreased by the role of friends in business dealings. Also, the discussion of the “friend” roles of The Analects gives us theoretical basis for helping us to overcome cultural barriers. Previous research has showed that nowadays business dealings are affected by cultural obstacles, but it is found that the “friend” roles of The Analects can help us, to some extent, to remove the obstacles in business dealings. This paper cited many examples of the “friend” roles of The Analects, and their excellent characters are illustrated. These characters help us to promote the common cause, strengthen business relations, extend the partnership, and enjoy the cooperation in business dealings. Therefore, according to the “friend” roles of The Analects, we can stimulate “catalytic functions” in business dealings.

Keywords

The Analects, business dealings, friends, catalytic function

1. Literature Review

The Analects is an ancient Chinese book composed of sayings and ideas, compiled and written by Confucius' followers in Spring and Autumn Period, which mainly records words and deeds of Confucius and his disciples, and the most important, Confucius' thoughts. And *The Analects* is one of the most classic works of Confucian school. Many people in the world like reading it. Many narratives about morality, politics, and personality in the book help people live or work in a better way. And the narratives about friends can actually help us to solve plenty of obstacles in business dealings and make a catalysis in business dealings.

1.1 The “Friend” Role in *The Analects*

What is the “friend” role in *The Analects*? What is its impact on our lives? What is its effect on our personal development? Chen (2015) research mentions the definition of the role in *The Analects*, which says the “friend” can be many kinds of people in ancient China, such as the people who share the same hobbies, or the people whom we expressed deep affection for. A friend can be a lover or a person with common interest. We don’t have certain criteria of making a friend. Zhong’s (2015) research talks about the importance and necessity of making friends.

1.2 The Obstacles in Business Dealings

In the procedure of business dealings, various obstacles will come out, because different national cultures are involved. Thence, conciliation must be made to develop a better relationship in business dealings. Culture is a very important part in business dealings. Luo (2007) notices that the business dealings between two counties with different cultures have the propensity for being broken by their different ways of thinking, and the competence of cross-cultural communication may be overlooked. Wang and Yin (2007) talks about the strategies employed in different cultures. Chinese people focus on harmony all the time, and they think harmony is the foundation of stabilization. On the contrary, American people always state their opinions straightly. Zhuang’s (2003) research ratifies this situation, and he mentions that in China, the most important task at the beginning of the business dealings is to establish a good cooperative relationship with the partner. Meanwhile, Trompenaars and Turner (2000) notice that a successful company is not only attributed to a particular cultural model, but it borrows various types of ideas, trying to reconcile them in a culture. Therefore, we need to be aware of the typically different cultures, and to respect the differences in their cultural thinking frameworks. Cross-cultural companies must establish a mechanism to reconcile cultural differences to promote development.

In response to how to resolve the conflicts between different cultures, Zhang (2009) mentions that we should maintain a sincere attitude in international business dealings, which is very important for the entire cooperation, because lack of sincerity will hurt the others’ feelings. Other scholars such as Ingram and Zou (2008) talk about the qualities necessary to benefit each other in business dealings, which are the trust, compassion, and a business friendship. Kiely (2005) also agrees with this, and he says that attitudes in business interaction are characterized by mutual trust and cooperation. Also, the control of emotions at work is also crucial and it directly affects the attitudes in business interactions. In conclusion, a good business dealing focuses on mutual trust, understanding and cooperation between the two parties.

1.3 The Friendship in Business Dealings

In addition, in recent years, scholars have begun to pay attention to the influence of fostering friendship in business dealings. Zeng (2018) believes that the commercial dealings in WeChat’s circle of friends and the choice of goods are mainly due to the trust of friends and the demand for products. Ingram and Roberts (2000) also mention that friendship with competitors can improve organizational performance

by enhancing collaboration, mitigating competition and exchanging information. The network of friends among hotel managers proves that friendships are more likely to be cultivated between competitors. Furthermore, the commercial capital exchange between friends provides a good foundation for the construction of business contacts. Meanwhile, friends in business dealings also play a major role in the field of their social life. At the same time, Ingram and Zou (2008) also recognize that business friendship has a strong guiding role in the career development, and can help people to develop better in their careers. The friends of modern business people are a combination of business and life, and the combination of these two fields can promise a better effect of friendships. So, it is vital to develop a good friendship in business dealings.

These papers demonstrate the definition of the “friend” roles in detail and their contemporary values in *The Analects*, but they lack a combination with real life and business. Therefore, more examples of the “friend” roles in business dealings need to be demonstrated. In the current business interaction process, the obstacles caused by cultural differences will affect normal business dealings. Moreover, culture-affected businesses need correct value orientation to guide their business contacts, such as maintaining a sincere attitude. Moreover, in recent years, scholars have begun to pay attention to fostering the friendship in business dealings, and they also found that the friendship can help to approve the positive effects in business dealings. Therefore, the “friend” roles in *The Analects* can be applied to the current business contacts. Especially the multi-ethnic cultural exchanges today. The increased intercultural conflicts can be solved by the “friend” roles in *The Analects*. In this regard, the “friend” roles in *The Analects* can be applied to business dealings owing to its “catalytic functions”. In summary, we can solve the obstacles caused by cultural differences in today’s business dealings by the “friend” roles of *The Analects*.

2. The Roles of “Friend” Explained in *The Analects*

“A father is a treasure, a brother is a comfort, but a friend is both”. This is the friends’ importance that we learn from an English idiom. At the same time, in ancient China, Confucius paid much attention to this character of friend, and also in *The Analects* friend was placed in a very high position. And an ancient Chinese saying also says that “take history and friends as a mirror”. Thus, it is clear for us that friends are very important and also it is very necessary for us to know about the roles of “friend” explained in *The Analects*.

2.1 The Definition of the “Friend” Roles

Friend is a historical concept that presents different practical connotations in different historical periods. So it is necessary to know what contemporary friend means. As we all know, a newly met stranger we may call him friend, and our lover is our friend, and also friend can be the person with whom we have spent a precious get-together. Friend has become a common word nowadays. But meanings are not the same in ancient China, the word “*peng you*” which means friend in English have two different concepts (Zhong, 2015, p. 23). “*peng*” is the person whom we studied with under the same tutor, and “*you*” is the

person whom we met in our daily life. So, the phrase “*peng you*” has a wider meaning than what we mean by “friend” in modern society.

2.2 The Function of the “Friend” Roles

2.2.1 Friendship and Common Cause

The “friend” roles can do much help in promoting our daily conduct and help us to become an educated man, and through friends we can promote our common cause.

Example 1,

Master Zeng said, “Exemplary persons attract friends through their refinement, and through their friends promote consummate conduct (ren)” (*Analects* 12.24) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

In other words, the example means to achieve our own benevolence, we must make friends with the person who has such good conduct. In our daily life, we are always affected by our surroundings, and such an exemplary friend with good conduct can not only help us in promoting our conduct and benevolence, but also can give us instruction of becoming such a person.

2.2.2 Friendship—The Constitutive Nature of Relations

Also, *The Analects* mentions that we can promote our conduct by everything that deserves our learning from our friends.

Example 2,

The Master said, “In strolling together with just two other persons, I am bound to find a teacher in their company. Identifying their strengths, I follow them, and identifying their weaknesses, I reform myself accordingly” (*Analects* 7.22) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

This example tells us that the strengths and weaknesses in friends we can find can both help us to become a better person. In such a learning atmosphere, Confucius was happy to make friends. And because of his active emotion in making friends, he became a great philosopher and made a profound effect on constructing our Chinese national spirit. Furthermore, we can find that many optimistic and active people are good at making friends, and those with great conduct are making friends with everyone he has met. So, by making friends, we can learn much more and promote ourselves into a better version.

2.2.3 Attracting our Friends by Excellence

Moreover, making friends can help our society to achieve a natural harmony. For our own, making friends can help us to gather more resources that we need from excellent people, and as an excellent person, we make friends easily.

Example 3,

The Master said, “Governing with excellence can be compared to the North Star; the North Star dwells in its place, and the multitude of stars pay it tribute” (*Analects* 2.1) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

The harmony of society needs everyone’s development. In Confucius view, developing the society needs benevolence, and such kind of benevolence can be found in making friends, because a

harmonious society can't be built by one person, and everyone in the society needs to contribute his effort. With a determined effort, we can make ourselves more excellent and make more contribution with our friends to the world.

2.2.4 Pleasure of Being with Friends

Friends can reduce our stress and assure us of better mental health. It is a delightful thing that we have friends visit us.

Example 4,

Confucius remarked, "it is indeed a pleasure to acquire knowledge and, as you go on acquiring, to put into practice what you have acquired. A greater pleasure still it is when friends of congenial minds come from afar to seek you because of your attainments. But he is truly a wise and good man who feels no discomposure even when he is not noticed of men" (*Analects* 1.1) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

Therefore, whenever Confucius sees "a friend come from afar", he will have a kind of pleasure in his heart. It is truly good and happy to meet a friend. Thus, through this kind of pleasure of making friends, one can really have better mental health. Meanwhile, we can know more about ourselves by our friends. Also, through an interaction with our friends we can gain much more happiness than we are alone, and such kind of happiness is a natural one, beyond utilitarianism. In daily life, we need love from our friends, and such kind of love can give us a pure happiness.

2.3 Implications of Making Friends

Now we have noticed the function of the "friend" roles, but we still don't know how to make a friend, and what kind of friend should we choose. In the beginning, we need to know what Confucius told us about how to choose a friend.

2.3.1 How to Evaluate a Friend

Example 5,

The Master said: "Having three kinds of friends will be a source of personal improvement; having three other kinds of friends will be a source of personal injury. One stands to be improved by friends who are true, who make good on their word, and who are broadly informed; one stands to be injured by friends who are ingratiating, who feign compliance, and who are glib talkers. (*Analects* 16.4)" (Roger & Henry, 1998).

As we can see from the context, a good friend is the person who is honest, right-minded and broadly informed, and bad friends are those who always say good things, showing gracious expressions, but actually they are doing dishonest practices secretly, being a flatterer to others.

Example 6,

Confucius remarked, "with plausible speech and fine manners will seldom be found moral character" (*Analects* 1.3) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

Confucius' judgement helps us to evaluate a friend properly.

2.3.2 How to be a Good Friend

First of all, we need to be frank and open.

Example 7,

The Master said, “My young friends, you think that I have something hidden away, but I do not. There is nothing I do that I do not share with you—this is the person I am” (*Analects* 7.24) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

This refers to the inner sincerity and integrity. We make friends with honest people; in the same way, we also should open our heart and not conceal anything to our friends. People can hardly do this in present society. But Confucius demanded him and his disciples to act frankly.

Example 8,

A disciple of Confucius remarked, “I daily examine into my personal conduct on three points: First, whether in carrying out the duties entrusted to me by others, I have not failed in sincerity and trustworthiness; thirdly, whether I have not failed to practice what I profess in my teaching” (*Analects* 4.4) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

This self-examination made by Zengzi, clearly tells us that it is truly important for us to keep a frank mind. Moreover, keeping promises matter much in making friends. Disciple’s words reflect Confucius thought.

Example 9,

A disciple of Confucius remarked, “if you make promises within the bounds of what is right, you will be able to keep your word. If you confine earnestness within the bounds of judgment and good taste, you will keep out of discomfiture and insult. If you make friends of those with whom you ought to, you will be able to depend upon them” (*Analects* 4.13) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

Confucius believes that honesty is the most basic requirement for people to interact with others. A person who is honest should respect the facts and have good faith.

Example 10,

Confucius remarked, “I do not know how men get along without good faith. A cart without a yoke and a carriage without harness, how could they go?” (*Analects* 2.22) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

Confucius takes honesty as his tenet and treats his students honestly. In the process of teaching, he treated his students as the center of teaching. At the same time, Confucius can also learn from students humbly and accept criticism from them.

Example 11,

Weigong Sunchao asked Zigong: “With whom did the Master study?”

Zigong replied: “The moral vision (Dao) of Kings *Wen* and *Wu* has not collapsed utterly—it lives on in the people. Those of superior character have grasped the greater part of it, while those of lesser quality have grasped a bit. Everyone has something of *Wen* and *Wu*’s way in them. Who then did the Master not learn from? Again, how could there have been a single constant teacher

for him?” (*Analects* 19.22) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

This has achieved a truly equal status between the students and Confucius, and promoted a more harmonious relationship between them. The teaching relationship broke the traditional one, being more like the exchanges between friends. Confucius taught the recognition of honesty to the students, and also equally exchanged with his students, which established a harmonious relationship between friends at the same time. In nowadays life, if we lost our honesty, we just lost our principle of being a man, and also it will be hard for us to stay well in our society, because nobody will trust us and we will lose our faith at that time.

Last but not least, we should try to take a helpful and respectful attitude. Once upon a time, a friend of Confucius died, and since he had no relatives, nobody was responsible for his burial. Then Confucius said: “The funeral will be done by me”. Confucius tried his best to aid his friend even after he died.

Example 12,

The Master said: “Exemplary persons who are not serious will not inspire respect; what they learn will not remain permanent. Make conscientiousness and sincerity your first principles. Have no friends who are not good as yourself. And where you have erred, do not hesitate to mend your ways” (*Analects* 1.8) (Roger & Henry, 1998).

Confucius thought that we need to learn how to respect ourselves and others. It is obvious that if we don't respect ourselves, we can hardly expect others to respect us. For constructing our confidence and personality, it is essential for us to respect ourselves. Respecting others is also respecting ourselves in another way. And we can gain others' trust and respect by respecting others.

To sum up, we should recognize the difference between good friends and bad friends. And we should stay close to good friends, because we can learn much from them and improve ourselves profoundly. For bad ones, we should keep away from them, because they may influence us not only in our behavior but also in our thought. According to *The Analects*, we also have to know how to be a good friend. In *The Analects*, Confucius has mentioned that integrity, keeping our promises, being honest, and an attitude of respect are very essential for us to be a good friend. If we can follow these guidelines, we can attract more good people to be our friends, and also, we can improve ourselves profoundly.

3. “Catalytic Functions” of the “Friend” Roles of *The Analects* in Business Dealings

With development of globalization, business communication has entered a new stage of development—exchanges between countries have become increasingly frequent. There are much more Chinese companies conducting foreign-related business than before, and there are much more people leaving the country or staying in China attending cross-cultural business communication. Since English is a universal language in the world, domestic merchants mostly use English as a communication medium in multinational business.

3.1 Interpersonal Relationship in Business Dealings

Focusing on improving our English skills, we always neglect our cultural differences between two

different nations, which made a great obstacle in business dealings. In international business negotiations, people are generally affected by cultural conflicts, because they ignore the cultivation of intercultural communication skills. In fact, when one's ability to use English reaches a certain level, cultural obstacles become particularly prominent. Human behavior is restricted by the culture, and the culture is embodied by human behavior. Negotiators in business dealings from different cultures have different values and ways of thinking. And the style of negotiation is also a reflection of the culture they are in. If the two parties involved in international business negotiations come from two different cultures and have different values and ways of thinking, this negotiation will not be easy. Neglect of cultural differences, lacking communication, inadequate preparation, and improper handling in negotiations can increase the difficulty of international business negotiations. So ways must be worked out to solve these problems.

3.1.1 Friends in Business Dealings

Friendship in business dealings is becoming increasingly common. Business friendship is a friendship that is combined with business relationships: market competitors, buyers or suppliers, colleagues within the organization, or actors occupying similar positions in different organizations or markets, and thus may provide useful business information for each other.

3.1.2 The Functions of Friends in Business Dealings

First of all, friends in business dealings can bring us plenty of good advantages. First of all, friends in business can bring us trust. As we treat a business person as our friend, which means we did plenty of communication with him, and since we know more about that friend, we will trust him more in business dealings, and we will be more confident in conducting business with him and will further promote cooperation with business friends.

Secondly, friends in business can improve our business information exchange. Such exchange of information is very fast. Once we have determined that someone has become our business friend, we have a feeling for him, and as we know much about him, we know what he needs. In this regard, we will inform him fast and more comprehensively. As soon as this favorable business information for him comes out. The help between friends is an interaction. After we have helped our business friends one time, they will repay us next time.

Thirdly, friends in business can bring us initiative. Once we become friends with our business partner, we will want to know more about him, such as what his specific job is, what he does need in business dealings, and what benefit he can give me, etc. After knowing the information of this friend, we can realize that we can help each other in business dealings through our friend relationship. This kind of help is reciprocal. As we recognize this advantage, we will be more proactive in understanding each other, and will be more active in helping business friends.

Fourthly, friends in business can bring us improvement and profit in our business. A friendship case in business field proved this fact. "The performance implications of the friendship-network structure within the Sydney hotel industry, with performance being the yield (i.e., revenue per available room) of

a given hotel (Paul, 2000, pp. 3-87). This shows that friendships with competitors lead to dramatic improvements in hotel yields. Performance is further improved if a manager's competitors are his friends, illustrating the benefit of cohesive friendship networks. It is through this mutual competition among friends that we can improve our ability much more quickly and thence bring significant benefits to our business activities.

These massive advantages maintain a key factor in business dealings.

3.2 Making Friends in Business Dealings by Adhering to the Guidelines in The Analects

The Analects has already told us how to evaluate friends and make friends in our daily life. Then we should just follow the guidelines in the book in making business friends.

At the beginning, we need to learn how to evaluate the friends in business dealings, where good friends should be of integrity. They keep their promises and also have an attitude of respect. Meanwhile, good business friends have good qualities, such as sincerity, integrity, and they can be honest with their friends. At the same time, these good business friends will keep their promises and be aware of their shortcomings and mistakes, and they are tolerant. Last but not the least, these good business partners know how to respect others as well as themselves.

Then, we need to know how to be a good friend in business dealings. *The Analects* gives us plenty of suggestions, and we can apply them to nowadays business dealings. First of all, we need to behave ourselves with integrity in business dealings. Keeping integrity in business dealings requires us not to do things against morality, rules, or even the law. Especially when conducting business dealings with our business partners, we can't do things in favor of our partner apparently, but actually do bad things that hurt the interests of our business partners. Doing such violations of morality, rules, and even law will not only hurt the interests and feelings of our business partners, but also will hurt our own character, reputation, and interests. Only with an integrity can we establish a positive personal brand, and we are able to make good business friends. Secondly, we should keep our promises and be honest. In business dealings, we can only gain the trust of business partners by keeping our promises. If we do not keep our promises and deceive our partners in business dealings, our personal brand will be destroyed. And we will directly lose this business partner, and lose our business interests. So, it is vitally important for us to keep our promises and honest character. Thirdly, we should also try to be tolerant enough. In dealing with business affairs, we may inevitably make some mistakes, and it is very important to maintain tolerant attitude for ourselves and our business partners. We cannot blame ourselves or our partners for some small mistakes in business dealings. That is, we should learn to be considerate and to forgive others. Only when we are considerate and tolerant to ourselves as well as our business partners, will we have a big picture in business dealings. Last but not least, we should try to acquire more knowledge and get well informed in business dealings. And then we can gain more business experience. And our respectful attitude can help us attract more business partners to become our friends.

Once we have cultivated our integrity, honest personal brand in business dealings, and kept our

promises and taken a tolerant and respectful attitude towards our partners, we can get more good business friends.

3.3 “Catalytic Functions” of the “Friend” Roles of *The Analects* in Business Dealings

Cultural differences are influencing international business dealings. Take China and America as an example. There are huge cultural differences between them. And such differences make business dealings difficult to conduct. The differences are mainly caused by two countries’ different ways of thinking. The history of the United States is not so long. And it was sparsely populated 300 years ago. Most Americans are immigrants. Thence, American individuals’ survival and development must depend on their own struggles. Therefore, they cultivate plenty of special characteristics in their culture, such as individual freedom, self-reliance, equality of opportunities, competition, seeking for wealth, and hard work. In business dealings, Americans do not pay much attention to maintaining a long-term interpersonal relationship and they talk subjects directly into the theme, because the people of America is highly mobile, and the environment and the people in contact are constantly changing. In contrast, China has a long history, and there is a large population in a comparatively small area. For the survival in this situation, everyone was required to work together and cooperate with each other. This has formed the characteristics of collectivism in Chinese culture, which focuses on long-term cooperative relations and harmony. At the same time, China has thousands of years of regular farming habits, which makes people form a long-term way of thinking that things are usually related to each other and they always go as a circle.

Such cultural obstacles in business dealings not only occur between China and the United States, but also between China and other countries. What can we do to decrease such obstacles and make our business dealings more successful?

3.3.1 Promoting the Common Cause

We can implement the suggestions of making friends in business dealings according to *The Analects*. Human culture has commonality, that is the moral quality of human beings. And the “friend” roles of *The Analects* just explain the most fundamental moral qualities that people need.

By cultivating our integrity, the personal brand of honesty in business dealings—keeping our promises and taking a tolerant attitude towards the mistakes of our international business partners, we can get more business friends. And the most important part is to hold a respectful attitude in business dealings, that is, we need to respect ourselves, others and culture differences in business dealings.

First of all, integrity in *The Analects* is the basis for engaging business dealings. Only by not violating moral rules and the laws in business dealings, can we promise our interests. It is our integrity that can act as the foundation to conduct business. Secondly, honesty in *The Analects* can enhance our personal brand. Business dealings are inseparable from honesty. Only when we practice honesty, will it bring us the trust of others. With the trust of others, we can possibly conduct business dealings next time with them, thence to maintain our business interests. While by practicing honesty, we also need to forgive the mistakes of ourselves and others in business dealings. It is inevitable that people will make

mistakes. Proper forgiving will make us forget the pain of loss and focus more on our business dealings. And being considerate can also help us to get a better business reputation, which can enhance our personal brand too. Also, only by understanding ourselves and our business partners will we gain a broader business perspective and be able to detect more business opportunities, and then we can gain more commercial benefits in business dealings. Therefore, if we have a respectful attitude, business dealings will be easier for us to conduct, and the most importance is that we respect our business relationship and our dealings. With a respectful attitude in business dealings, we can also earn others' respect and make a profit.

Confucius in *The Analects* told us the most essential morality in aspects of being a moral person and making friends. And his words can truly play a “catalytic function” in business dealings.

3.3.2 Strengthening Business Relations

We need friends in business dealings. It is not only because that we need our friends' help, but also, we can help others and achieve our consummate conduct.

Making friends in business dealings can strengthen our business relationship. The society needs friendship to help it to promote in a positive way. Also, business dealings need friendship to help them to improve. People need friendship to gain happiness in business dealings.

Getting friends in business dealings is a prerequisite progress before we start a business relationship. People can get more assistance from his business friends, and through friendship he can get more business information. Thence, strengthening our business relations by making friends can not only help our business be easier to conduct, but also can assure ourselves of a better prospect of business.

3.3.3 Extending the Partnership

Many successful business people are good at making friends, and those with great conduct are treasuring every opportunity to make friends they have met in business dealings. So did the Confucius. He focuses on every time he can make a friend, because he holds an active attitude in making friends, believing that he can learn some good morality form his friends and remove some disadvantages as he can find in them.

We can learn much from Confucius. By making more friends in business dealings, we can not only learn more good business conducts and benevolence from them, but also find more business opportunities. Thence, we can promote ourselves into a better partnership and find more good business friends.

3.3.4 Enjoying the Cooperation

One should enjoy his time with friends, just as Confucius did. When Confucius saw “a friend come from afar”, he would have a kind of pleasure in his heart. Similarly business men will enjoy their cooperation with their friends and business partners.

Through an interaction with our business friends we can find much more information and opportunities of business dealings than we are alone, and even more, we can find that we are not lonely in doing such business—we have friends who share the same interests with us. Enjoy the cooperation in business

dealings, we can identify with our friends, and such kind of cooperation can give us a feeling of happiness. So, enjoying our cooperation in business dealings can give us more information and identification. Also, cooperation can bring us more success.

For decreasing obstacles in business dealings, we can promote the common cause by applying the principles of integrity, honesty, forgiveness and respectful attitude, so that we can build our popular personal brand. Also, strengthening business relations, extending the partnership, and enjoying the cooperation in business dealings are useful for us to cultivate much more and better business friendships. All of these great characters can perform the “catalytic functions” well in business dealings.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Major Findings

The study finds that cultural obstacles are affecting the progress of business dealings. After studying the “friend” roles of *The Analects* and the friend roles in business dealings, the author found out that we can apply the “friend” roles of *The Analects* into business dealings, which can perform “catalytic functions” in them.

Also, by studying the discussions of the “friend” roles in *The Analects*, it has been concluded that, to be a good friend, we should try to be integrate, honest, considerate and we should hold a respectful attitude to ourselves and others in our daily life. And these good characters can truly help us in business dealings, because they can help us to cultivate our personal brand and achieve business success.

Besides these, after studying the “friend” roles of *The Analects*, the conclusion can be drawn that we should also do some good jobs in business dealings, such as promoting the common cause, strengthening business relations, extending the partnership, and enjoying the cooperation. These are ways to implement the core value of the “friend” roles of *The Analects*, and such friends can carry out “catalytic functions” in business dealings.

4.2 Implications of the Study

The findings of the study show that the “friend” roles of *The Analects* can fulfil “catalytic functions” in business dealings. Thence, business men can try to implement good spirit into themselves to make friends with, such as integrity, honesty, consideration and a respectful attitude. And for the student we can try to learn these in our daily life too. Also, a business man should do better in some aspects, such as promoting the common cause, strengthening business relations, extending the partnership, and enjoying the cooperation, for these can help them to achieve more business success.

4.3 Limitations of the Study

The study is mainly talking about the theoretical knowledge of the “friend” roles of *The Analects* and business dealings, and it lacks practical implementation in business dealings. Some more practical implements may be needed to explore more about the topic.

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