

TRADITION AND INNOVATION: THE INFLUENCE OF CHINESE CULTURE ON MODERN BUSINESS MODELS

Stefan Derian Hartono¹

¹ Faculty of Information Technology, Department of Business Information Systems, Monash University, Australia

E-mail: ¹stefan.derian@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The Chinese culture, with its rich traditions and values, has significantly influenced modern business models, particularly in the context of innovation and management. Core cultural principles such as guanxi (interpersonal relationships), long-term orientation, and collectivism shape decision-making, leadership, and operational strategies in Chinese enterprises. This paper explores how these cultural elements contribute to innovation, sustainable practices, and competitive advantage in a globalized world. The study highlights the integration of traditional Chinese values with digital transformation and sustainable business models, demonstrating their role in fostering resilience and adaptability in contemporary business practices.

Keywords: *Chinese culture, collectivism, innovation, sustainable business models, competitive advantage, leadership.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization, culture is becoming an increasingly important factor in determining business practices in various countries. The uniqueness and character of a culture can affect the way an organization or company conducts its business. One culture that has evolved over thousands of years and has had a significant impact on modern business practices is Chinese culture. Rich Chinese traditions, such as the guanxi concept, play an important role in shaping the business landscape in different parts of the world.

A key concept in Chinese culture is guanxi, which refers to a network of social relationships built on trust and mutual benefit. This concept is not only relevant in the domestic context, but it is also very important for foreign companies that want to operate in China. Research shows that many Western companies fail in the Chinese market due to a lack of understanding of aspects of Chinese culture, including guanxi (Bilro & Cunha, 2021). These companies often rely on business relationships that are both professional and formal, while in the Chinese context, personal relationships and trust are the foundation of successful business interactions (Mardhiyah, 2022)(Spijkman & Jong, 2020). Therefore, a deep understanding of Chinese cultural values and the application of guanxi can be a decisive factor in the success or failure of international business in China (Tan, 2022)(Chu et al., 2020). Furthermore, research shows that Chinese cultural values, such as long-term orientation and collectivism, also influence the way business negotiations are conducted. In negotiations between the Chinese and the West, there are often significant differences in approaches and expectations, which can lead to misunderstandings (Al-Sharaa & Hishan, 2022). For example, traditional Chinese values that emphasize long-term relationships can be at odds with Western approaches that focus more on short-term outcomes and contractual formalities (Liguo & Zeng, 2015). Therefore, it is important for business practitioners to develop cross-cultural competencies that enable them to adapt to different cultural dynamics in the context of international business (Xiao & Zhang, 2012). In addition, the influence of Chinese culture is also seen in the design and delivery of business information, especially in today's digital era. A study

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shows that corporate websites that do not consider local cultural values can fail in attracting consumer attention in international markets (Winata, 2022)(Zhu, 2015).

This shows that an understanding of Chinese culture is not only important in direct interaction, but also in the marketing and communication aspects of business. This paper aims to explore how Chinese traditions and values have influenced modern business models and leadership practices in various organizations. Through a critical analysis of several relevant literature sources, this paper will show that despite the innovation and adoption of some Western practices, Chinese culture remains a dominant factor in shaping the way of doing business in countries with significant Chinese populations.

In the modern context, understanding Chinese culture is essential not only in direct interaction but also in aspects of marketing and business communication. Chinese culture, which is rich in traditions and values, provides a solid foundation for business practices in countries with significant Chinese populations. One important aspect of this culture is its unique way of negotiating, which is heavily influenced by Chinese cultural values such as *guanxi* and long-term orientation. Research shows that a deep understanding of Chinese culture and negotiation style can increase the chances of success in international business negotiations (Arma, 2022)(Wu, 2023). Additionally, in the context of marketing, companies looking to enter the Chinese market need to consider local cultural values in their communication strategies. For example, website design and marketing materials should reflect Chinese cultural values to attract consumers' attention (Zhu, 2015). Research shows that failure to consider cultural values can result in a lack of appeal of products in the Chinese market (Olajide, 2014). Therefore, companies need to integrate cultural understanding into their marketing strategies to achieve greater success. Furthermore, Chinese cultural values also influence the way organizations develop leadership and managerial practices. In many organizations, values such as collectivism and hierarchy play an important role in shaping team dynamics and decision-making. Research shows that leaders who understand and value Chinese cultural values tend to be more successful in motivating their teams and achieving organizational goals (Putri, 2022)(Yuan, 2022).

Thus, cultural understanding is not only relevant in the context of business interactions but also in the development of effective leadership. The influence of Chinese traditions, particularly those derived from Confucian teachings, can be found in various aspects of modern leadership and business practices. Confucianism with its emphasis on social harmony, loyalty, and continuous self-development has established the concept of leadership in countries with a predominance of Chinese culture. In a business context, the adoption of these Confucian principles can help organizations to gain a sustained competitive advantage through effective management practices and a strong organizational culture. There are numerous examples of how Chinese traditions and values have influenced modern business practices, both in countries with dominant Chinese populations and in the international environment.

Chinese culture, with its distinctive values and traditions, has become one of the important elements that shape modern business practices in different parts of the world. Through the discussion and analysis of several relevant literature sources, this paper will reveal how these influences can be seen in various aspects, ranging from leadership, human resource management, to organizational business strategy.

Chinese traditions, especially those derived from Confucianism, have shaped the concept of leadership in countries with predominantly Chinese culture. Confucian principles such as social harmony, loyalty, and continuous self-development, have been adopted in leadership practices in many organizations. A case study of leadership in the hospitality industry in China shows that Confucian values such as charisma and continuous self-development, are important factors for the success of leaders in the industry.

Key principles of Confucianism, such as social harmony, loyalty, and continuous self-development, have been adopted and internalized in leadership practices in many organizations operating in an environment influenced by Chinese culture. One clear example can be found in leadership structures in East Asian countries such as China, Taiwan, and Singapore, where concepts such as filial piety (children's devotion to parents) and devotion to family or country are highly valued

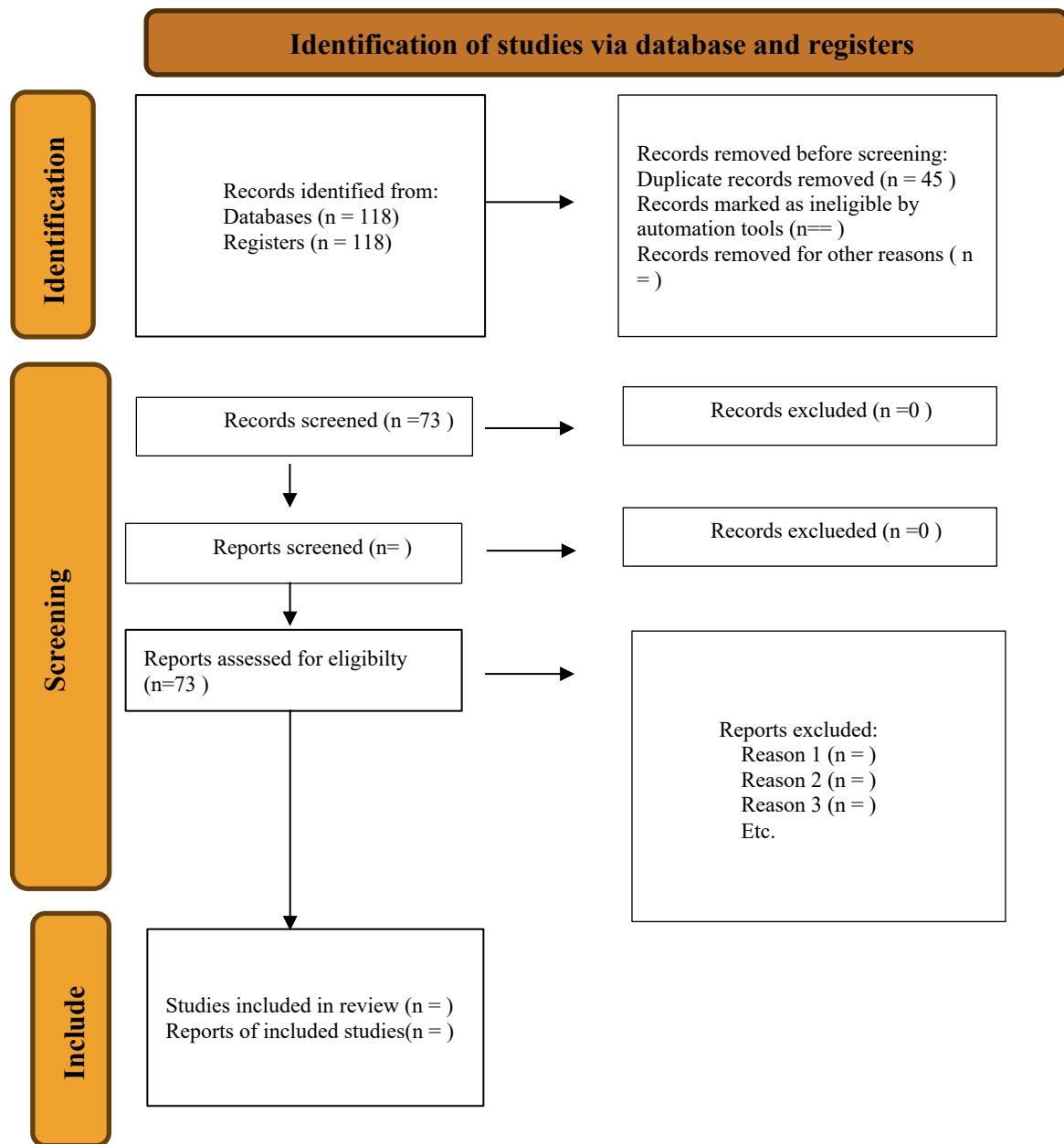
in shaping leadership mindsets. In this tradition, a leader is expected to maintain balanced relationships, respect traditional values, and always strive to develop himself personally and professionally.

A case study of leadership in the hospitality industry in China shows that Confucian values have a profound influence on the success of leaders in the industry. Leaders in the hospitality industry in China are often seen as figures who must have charisma and the ability to set a good example. Charisma here is not only related to the ability to speak or attract attention, but rather to the ability to create a harmonious work environment and inspire employees to work with dedication and high commitment. In this case, leaders who are able to continuously develop themselves—both in terms of knowledge, skills, and work ethics—are considered better able to handle existing challenges and encourage organizational development in a better direction.

In addition, the principle of *ren* (kindness or compassion) in Confucianism also plays an important role in creating leadership based on empathy and concern for the well-being of others. Leaders who have a strong sense of empathy will find it easier to gain the trust and loyalty of employees. In the hospitality industry, where customer service is at the core of the business, leaders who show empathy for the needs of employees and customers are often able to create a more satisfying experience and strengthen an organization's reputation.

Continuous self-development—whether in terms of leadership skills, industry knowledge, or character development—is a value that has been constantly emphasized in the Confucian tradition. In an ever-changing and evolving world, leaders who focus on self-improvement through education and practical experience will be better equipped to face change and create innovative solutions. This is especially relevant in the hospitality industry, where customer trends and expectations are constantly evolving, and the ability to adapt quickly is one of the key success factors.

Overall, Confucianism with its principles emphasizing harmony, loyalty, and self-development, has formed a highly influential framework in building effective leadership in various sectors, including in the hospitality industry. Leadership based on these values not only pays attention to short-term results, but also focuses on the long-term well-being of all parties involved—from leaders, employees, to customers. This makes the Confucian tradition an important foundation for the development of sustainable and successful leadership in a variety of cultural contexts, especially in this increasingly global world

**Figure 1.** PRISMA flowchart from this study

In order to conduct literature research, researchers first search databases and registries, in this case in particular researchers use Scopus. Initially, as many as 45 records or articles were found through this source. However, along with the more in-depth research process, records are removed before the screening process is carried out, given their irrelevance to the established research topic. After the deletion stage, the records remain for further filtering. This process involves evaluating inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure that the retained records are still relevant to the research focus. After screening, a number of eligible records remain for further assessment, while those that do not qualify are excluded. The number of records sought or obtained during this process is not described in the scenario, but at this point, the research continues by reading and analyzing those records to obtain findings or information that can be used in the context of further research. Using the PRISMA diagram, the process of identifying and filtering this literature can be visually illustrated, allowing for readability and transparency regarding the flow of the research methodology.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

To achieve the objectives of this study, the author conducted a comprehensive review of various relevant sources of information, including academic journals and research reports. These sources are selectively selected based on credibility, topicality, and novelty of the information presented. In this context, the author seeks to identify and analyze the literature related to the influence of Chinese culture, particularly the teachings of Confucianism, on leadership practices and human resource management in organizations operating in the context of Chinese culture. Here are some references that can be used in this study:

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations*. This book provides an in-depth analysis of how cultural values affect organizational behavior and leadership in various countries, including countries with significant Chinese populations. Hofstede developed a cultural dimension that can be used to understand the cultural differences that affect business practices.

Chen, C. C., & Starosta, W. J. (2000). *Foundations of Intercultural Communication*. In this book, the author discusses the importance of cross-cultural communication in the context of international business. They highlight how Chinese cultural values, including guanxi, affect business and leadership interactions.

(Setiawan, 2022)Li, J., & Zhang, Y. (2010). *The Role of Confucianism in Chinese Business Practices*. This journal explores how Confucian principles shaped business practices in China, including in aspects of leadership and human resource management. This research provides insight into how traditional values are still relevant in the context of modern business.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chinese culture, or Chinese culture, has a significant influence on modern business models, especially in the context of management and product innovation. Chinese cultural values, such as uncertainty avoidance and organizational culture, have been shown to influence the way companies operate and innovate. In this context, research shows that the business principles held by the Chinese community, as described in a study on the business culture of ethnic Hokkian Chinese in Prabumulih City, reflect the influence of ancestral teachings and business systems that have existed for many years ((Wijaya, 2022)Legista, 2021). This study highlights how these values contribute to the success of trading ventures, showing that Chinese culture influences not only social aspects but also economic and managerial aspects.

Furthermore, the avoidance of uncertainty, which is one of the core values in Chinese culture, plays an important role in business decision-making. This is seen in the way Chinese companies manage risk and plan long-term strategies. In the context of management innovation, an organizational culture influenced by Chinese values can create an environment that supports collaboration and innovation. For example, research shows that the digitalization of companies can reduce information asymmetry and encourage green technology innovation, which in turn improves investment efficiency and sustainable growth (Rolando et al., 2022)(Jiang et al., 2023). Thus, Chinese cultural values not only shape the way companies operate but also influence the results of the innovations produced.

In addition, organizational culture influenced by Chinese culture can be an important determinant in product innovation. In this context, companies that adopt Chinese values tend to focus more on the quality and sustainability of their products. Research shows that companies that apply the principles of Chinese culture in their product development are better able to adapt to changing markets and consumer needs (Chen, 2024). This shows that Chinese culture not only serves as a social framework but also as a significant driver of innovation in product development.

On the other hand, the digital transformation that occurs in modern business is also influenced by Chinese cultural values. Digitalization allows companies to integrate new technologies in their business processes, which supports innovation and efficiency. Research shows that companies that succeed in digital transformation often have strong organizational cultures, which reflect Chinese values such as collaboration and innovation (Rolando & Mulyono, 2025a)(Li, 2024). Therefore, the

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relationship between Chinese culture and management and product innovation is becoming increasingly important in the context of increasingly competitive and globally connected businesses.

Furthermore, the influence of Chinese culture on modern business models is also seen in the way Chinese companies are adapting to the challenges of globalization and digitalization. In this context, such companies often combine traditional values with modern business practices to create innovative and sustainable business models. For example, research shows that companies that adopt a sharing economy model can achieve higher efficiency and better sustainability, which is in line with Chinese values that emphasize collaboration and social responsibility (Rolando & Mulyono, 2025b)(Zhu et al., 2023). This shows that Chinese culture is not only relevant in the local context but also has broader implications in the global context.

In this regard, it is important to note that Chinese culture also influences the way companies interact with their stakeholders. Values such as harmony and mutual respect found in Chinese culture encourage companies to build strong relationships with customers, suppliers, and the local community. This not only enhances the company's reputation but also creates an environment that supports innovation and long-term growth (Mulyono, 2024)(Zhang et al., 2020). As such, the influence of Chinese culture on modern business models cannot be underestimated, as it shapes the way companies operate and interact within the broader business ecosystem.

Furthermore, it is important to consider how Chinese culture contributes to the development of sustainable business strategies. In this context, Chinese companies often integrate sustainability principles in their business models, which reflect Chinese cultural values that emphasize social and environmental responsibility. Research shows that companies that adopt a sustainable approach in their operations are not only able to meet the demands of increasingly environmentally conscious consumers but can also improve operational efficiency and reduce costs (Ingriana et al., 2024)(Chen, 2024). This shows that Chinese culture not only serves as an ethical guide but also as a significant driver of innovation in the context of sustainability.

In conclusion, Chinese culture has a profound influence on modern business models, especially in the context of management and product innovation. Chinese cultural values, such as uncertainty avoidance, collaboration, and social responsibility, shape the way companies operate and innovate. By integrating these values into their business strategies, Chinese companies are not only able to adapt to the challenges of globalization and digitalization but also create sustainable and innovative business models. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the influence of Chinese culture on modern business models is essential for developing effective and sustainable strategies in this increasingly complex business era.

3.1 The Influence of Chinese Culture on Business Model Innovation: Entrepreneurship, Collectivism, and Long-Term Orientation

Chinese culture has a significant influence on business model innovation, especially through values such as entrepreneurship, collectivism, and long-term orientation. Entrepreneurship, which is an integral part of Chinese culture, encourages individuals to take risks and innovate in the development of new business models. Research shows that a strong entrepreneurial spirit among ethnic Chinese entrepreneurs has resulted in a variety of innovative and competitive business models in the global market (Legista, 2021). This is reflected in business practices that prioritize creativity and adaptation to market changes, which are important characteristics in today's dynamic business world.

Collectivism, which is a central value in Chinese culture, also contributes to the company's ability to innovate. In this context, interpersonal relationships and strong business networks become very important. Research shows that Chinese entrepreneurs often leverage their social networks to get the support and resources needed to develop innovations (Rolando & Ingriana, 2024)(Zhong, 2024). These networks not only help in reducing risk and uncertainty, but also allow for the exchange of ideas and collaborations that can accelerate the innovation process. Thus, the values of collectivism in Chinese culture create an environment that supports innovation and collaboration among business people.

Long-term orientation, which is also a hallmark of Chinese culture, allows companies to be more responsive to environmental changes and adapt quickly through business model innovation. Research shows that companies that adopt a long-term perspective tend to be more successful in implementing sustainable innovation strategies (Rolando, 2024)(Jiang et al., 2023). This is because long-term orientation encourages companies to invest in research and development, as well as to build strong relationships with stakeholders. Thus, these values not only contribute to the short-term success, but also to the sustainability and long-term growth of the company.

Digitalization also plays an important role in supporting business model innovation among Chinese companies. Research shows that the application of digital technology can improve operational efficiency and accelerate the development of new products (Li, 2024). By leveraging digital tools, companies can better collect data, analyze market trends, and develop more innovative solutions. This is in line with Chinese cultural values that value innovation and adaptation to change. Therefore, the integration of digital technology in business practices is one way for Chinese companies to remain competitive in the global market.

Overall, Chinese cultural traditions and values, such as entrepreneurship, collectivism, and long-term orientation, have a significant influence in supporting business model innovation. Through a strong entrepreneurial spirit, extensive social network, and long-term perspective, Chinese companies are able to adapt quickly to market changes and develop innovative business models. As such, a deep understanding of the influence of Chinese culture on business innovation is essential to formulate effective strategies in an increasingly complex global context.

3.2 Integration of Chinese Cultural Values in Modern Business Models: Frugality, Discipline, and Technological Innovation

Chinese culture, rich in traditions and values that have existed for centuries, plays an important role in shaping the characteristics and mindset of the business people in this community. Values such as thrift, discipline, and hard work, taught in Chinese culture, have become the cornerstone for the development of efficient and competitive business models. For example, in the business context of ethnic Chinese Hokkien, principles such as feng shui and Tao Zhu Gong not only influence managerial decisions but also operations, creating a well-structured and well-planned business system (Mulyono et al., 2025)(Legista, 2021). This shows that cultural values not only serve as social norms, but also as practical guides in business decision-making.

Furthermore, these unique characteristics also contribute to the company's operational efficiency and competitiveness. In today's digital era, many Chinese companies are leveraging digital technology to improve efficiency and expand their market reach. For example, the use of e-commerce platforms and other digital technologies has enabled companies to reach consumers globally, as well as improve the effectiveness of marketing and data-driven decision-making (Maha et al., 2025)(Li, 2024). This digital transformation not only improves efficiency, but also encourages innovation in existing business models, which in turn strengthens their competitive position in the market (Gao, 2024).

In addition, research shows that technological innovations in the supply chain can help Chinese companies to achieve better sustainability and economic growth (Rahardja et al., 2025)(Hu, 2023). By adopting new technologies, companies can reduce costs and increase productivity, which is especially important in an increasingly competitive business environment. Therefore, the integration of Chinese cultural values with technological innovation creates strong synergies, allowing businesses to not only survive but also thrive in a dynamic global market.

In this context, it is important to note that Chinese cultural values not only serve as a moral foundation, but also as a driver of innovation and efficiency in creating business models that are not only efficient but also sustainable and responsive to market changes(Wigayha et al., 2025c) (Zhu et al., 2023). This suggests that a deep understanding of local culture and values can provide a significant competitive advantage in an increasingly complex business world.

4. CONCLUSION

Chinese cultural traditions and values have a significant influence on modern business models, especially in the context of entrepreneurship, collectivism, and long-term orientation. In Chinese

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culture, values such as "Guanxi" (interpersonal relationships) and time management are highly upheld, which contribute to efficient and effective business practices. Research shows that ethnic Hokkien Chinese apply these values in their business practices, which creates a strong and mutually beneficial social network in a business context (Wigayha et al., 2025b) (Legista, 2021). This shows that strong interpersonal relationships can increase business opportunities and create an environment conducive to innovation.

Furthermore, the long-term orientation that Chinese culture has encourages individuals and companies to invest in long-term development, both in terms of human resources and technology. In this context, China has become one of the world leaders in innovation and technological development, thanks to increased spending on research and development (R&D) and the creation of innovation centers (Novoselova, 2022). The green and carbon transition policies implemented by the Chinese government also reflect this long-term orientation, where companies are encouraged to adopt environmentally friendly and sustainable technologies (Rolando, Widjaja, et al., 2025) (Novoselova, 2022).

The unique characteristics of Chinese culture, such as frugality, discipline, and hard work, also contribute to the formation of a competitive business model. Frugal nature encourages companies to manage their resources wisely, while discipline and hard work create a productive work culture. Research shows that companies that adopt these values tend to be more successful in facing global market challenges (Xiang et al., 2021). In this context, small and medium-sized enterprises in China, which are often family-led, show that good management practices and the use of financial technology (FinTech) can improve their access to financing and strengthen their position in the market (Xiang et al., 2021).

Innovation in business models is also driven by digitalization and new technologies. Corporate digitalization can reduce information asymmetry and encourage green technology innovation, which is increasingly important in the context of sustainability (Rolando, Chandra, et al., 2025) (Jiang et al., 2023). By integrating new technologies into their business practices, Chinese companies can improve operational efficiency and develop more innovative products, which in turn increases their competitiveness in the global market (Jiang et al., 2023).

In addition, the influence of Chinese culture on modern business models is also seen in the way these companies adapt to changing economic and social environments. Chinese companies have demonstrated the ability to innovate and adapt quickly to market changes, which is a result of the strong values of collectivism and cooperation in their culture (Wigayha et al., 2025a) (Legista, 2021). This creates a business ecosystem that supports collaboration and innovation, which is critical in the face of today's global challenges.

In a broader context, China's economic growth phenomenon can be seen as the result of a combination of cultural values, government policies, and technological innovations. China has succeeded in changing its economic paradigm by increasing investment in research and development, as well as creating an environment that supports innovation ((Widjaja, 2025) (Novoselova, 2022). This shows that Chinese cultural values not only influence business practices at the micro level, but also contribute to broader economic transformation at the macro level.

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