

# Importance and Strategies: On Cultivating College Students' Critical Thinking

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**Abstract:** Cultivating critical thinking is an important goal of college education. It has important theoretical and practical significance for the development of college students' personality and ability as well as the improvement of the innovation level of the whole society. Based on this idea, this paper discusses the significance of critical thinking cultivation for college students, analyses the reasons for the lack of critical thinking of college students, and finally proposes the cultivation strategy of critical thinking. Colleges should reform their teaching objectives, teaching contents, teaching methods and teacher-student relationship.

## 1. Introduction

The cultivation of critical thinking is the key to the cultivation of high-quality talents, as well as the needs of college students' psychological and personality development, which is conducive to the improvement and development of college students' ability to adapt to the future society. Critical thinking is the necessary quality of innovative talents and the basic condition for cultivating the innovative spirit and forging the innovative ability of college students. Critical thinking can help college students form a good thinking pattern, actively discover, analyse and solve problems, and inspire new understanding and new viewpoints. College students are high-quality people in the society, the future of the country and the hope of the nation. With critical thinking, college students will naturally enhance their innovative spirit and innovative ability. College education should not be limited to imparting knowledge, but more importantly to cultivate students' thinking ability.

## 2. Significance of Critical Thinking Cultivation

### 2.1. Beneficial to the Cultivation of College Students' Exploration Spirit

Under the influence of the current education mode and system in China, the spirit of inquiry of college students is extremely lacking. The relatively fixed thinking mode directly influences the expansion of thinking and the choice of perspective of college students when dealing with affairs and problems. Critical thinking cultivates college students to analyse problems with the perspective of examination, carry out in-depth discussion, thoroughly understand the essence of things through a large amount of information, and put forward some of their own views and views. This critical thinking way of handling problems enables college students to mobilize their professional knowledge and various knowledge reserves to form unique views or opinions when dealing with practical problems. Under the background of information society, there are many problems and events that need us to discuss with critical thinking, analyse the causes and purposes of various phenomena, so as to better understand the truth and nature of events. This is conducive to improving students' thinking mode, strengthening students' spirit of inquiry, and improving students' level and perspective of seeing problems.

### 2.2. Beneficial to the Cultivation of College Students' Innovation Ability

Critical thinking is a separate process is not simple, nor simply criticism, but on the basis of their existing knowledge reserves, standing in a new Angle of view, the existing conclusions, idea and

other critical analysis and exploration, form their own judgment in the process, critical comments and Suggestions are put forward. Critical thinking reflects a person's creative and innovative thinking ability, and is the thinking and thinking personality in the face of things or problems. When college students encounter problems in their professional study or life, they can express or interpret different conclusions from the current conclusions with reasonable perspectives and arguments through critical thinking, so as to realize independent judgment and innovation.

### **2.3. Beneficial to the Cultivation of College Students' Critical Thinking Ability**

With the development of information technology, multimedia tools are widely used in the teaching of various subjects. The use of multimedia teaching tools, the course content in video, audio, pictures and other ways to show, make the course teaching more vivid, lively, increase the amount of teaching information. The most important point of multimedia teaching is that it has reformed the traditional teaching mode and enriched the teaching methods. Through multimedia, the translation teaching situation can be created so that students can integrate into the context and receive the edification of English. Therefore, the cultivation of critical thinking ultimately gives students a critical thinking ability, which enables them to understand and explore the essence of problems from multiple perspectives and put forward speculative opinions. The cultivation of college students' critical thinking dimension is beneficial to students in the learning process constantly cultivate a kind of consciousness, and relate their knowledge reserves, shape into a better space imagination and creation.

### **2.4. Beneficial to Form the Stable Psychological Characteristics of College Students**

The cultivation of critical thinking of college students to a large extent makes up for the lack of judgment and critical thinking ability caused by the teaching of theoretical knowledge in college. Through the cultivation and training of critical thinking, college students can have very stable psychological characteristics, forming a healthy social psychology of friendly communication with others and the ability to judge right and wrong. Critical thinking enables college students to take the initiative to think and judge more comprehensively when facing pressure and difficulties, critically face pressure and difficulties, critically view themselves, and make correct choices and behaviours.

## **3. The Reasons for the Lack of College Students' Critical Thinking**

There are many reasons for the lack of critical thinking of college students in China, among which there are no more than two main reasons: national culture and education. Their mutual use and influence have formed the current domestic cultural and educational atmosphere and influenced the cultivation of critical thinking of college students.

### **3.1. The Factor of Educational Problem**

From the perspective of the whole education and cultivation process of college students, from primary school to high school, all the way is to cope with various examinations, which has formed a kind of test-oriented habitual thinking. This directly leads to the suppression of students' development in critical thinking. Relatively speaking, the teaching atmosphere of the university is relatively free and loose, but it has not changed the nature of the education that should be tested. In this case, college students will continue to take the test of learning thinking, the thinking of college students will be suppressed. Therefore, it is reasonable that critical thinking is "biased" in this kind of teaching and learning.

### **3.2. The Factor of National Culture**

Through the comparison of cultural differences and thinking habits between Chinese and Americans, we can know that ethnic cultural factors have a great impact on the lack of critical thinking of domestic college students. National culture is related to a nation's belief, spirit, habits, way of thinking and behaviour and other elements. Different regions have different cultural representations, and different national cultural characteristics will also exist under different national

systems. Therefore, from the perspective of ethnic cultural factors, cultural environment and ethnic cultural inheritance play a positive role in the lack of critical thinking of domestic college students to a large extent. Dialectical thinking in traditional culture also has some interference or influence on the cultivation of critical thinking. More importantly, national culture fundamentally determines the way of thinking, cognitive mode and cultivation of understanding ability of college students, which also involves another important factor affecting critical thinking of college students – education.

According to the above analysis, the fundamental cause of the lack of critical thinking among college students in China is the education and training mechanism for college students formed in a specific cultural environment. The relatively fixed education model and cultural environment make it impossible for critical thinking to be practiced in class and have no time to practice.

#### **4. Critical Thinking Cultivation Strategy for College Students**

Based on the above analysis and discussion, the cultivation of critical thinking of college students needs to start with teaching practice. As the main part of teaching design, colleges and universities need to have better course plans and clear training objectives and pre-dates in the cultivation of critical thinking. As the subject of teaching practice, teachers need to correctly grasp the teaching requirements and methods of critical thinking, change teaching concepts, explore the teaching rules of critical thinking and improve teaching skills in the teaching process.

##### **4.1. Reference and Learning under the Background of Cultural Integration**

The national culture cannot be changed. Under the guidance of the national spirit, the influence and role of culture always exist with the continuous development and development of inheritance. The cultivation of critical thinking of college students changes the current situation of the cultivation of critical thinking of college students in China by referring to the western teaching model. For example, questions and reflections on teaching design are raised in the western classroom, so that students can collect their own tasks based on the questions, collect and sort out information according to the requirements of the questions, explore the solution strategies and methods of the problems based on the knowledge they have learned, and elaborate their own judgment basis and perspective of processing methods. In the whole process, students' subjective initiative and information integration ability are emphasized to form a relatively objective and pertinent evaluation of students' final critical thinking performance, which is suitable for further guidance and encouragement. There are many other ways that can be used critically to adapt to the needs of classroom teaching. This is a way to cultivate critical thinking for college students under the background of cultural integration.

##### **4.2. Appeal of Appropriate Evaluation Methods**

Throughout the previous classroom teaching, evaluation means are rigid and single. Teachers require students to accept the "accurate answer" designated by the teacher. The teacher's evaluation of students is to test students' recitation and subrogation of "accurate answer" through mid-term and final tests. Evaluation is based on the results. Students who recite from memory well are considered "good students" in the eyes of teachers, while those who recite poorly are "poor students". Teachers use this kind of standard to measure students, students in order to meet the requirements of the teacher as "good students" in the eyes of the teacher to hide their own heart, become learning puppet, completely lose the initiative of learning. Such evaluation method hinders the cultivation of critical thinking and the comprehensive development of body and mind of college students. Scientific evaluation is to use scientific and effective evaluation methods to objectively make a comprehensive evaluation of teachers' educational activities, not affected by subjective will. Scientific evaluation of teachers' teaching plan with guidance, scientific and reasonable evaluation method to measure the students' learning situation directly reflects the teachers' teaching plan is scientific and reasonable, whether perfect teaching process and teaching goals, teaching result, teachers' teaching plan according to the evaluation results to reasonably adjust the teaching task.

Only with critical thinking can college students have doubts and devise effective solutions when they encounter problems. Due to the change of the teaching objective, the teaching content and teaching method, as well as the learning method and learning attitude of college students, the evaluation method matching the teaching content teaching method came into being, so as to realize the objective and scientific nature of the evaluation.

#### **4.3. Changes in School Teaching Design**

The cultivation of critical thinking of college students can be practiced and achieve good results. The key lies in whether the teaching environment is suitable for the implementation of critical thinking teaching and learning of college students. Therefore, in terms of the education and cultivation of critical thinking of college students, colleges and universities on the one hand change their ambiguous attitude and send clear signals to specific teaching staff so that the teaching of critical thinking can be arranged practically. On the other hand, we can add critical thinking teaching content into teaching on a trial basis, carry out exploration and research, summarize the teaching rules, and then promote them in various subjects.

#### **4.4. Innovation of Teachers' Teaching Methods**

There is no fixed mode of critical thinking cultivation. The teaching objectives and contents of various subjects are constantly changing with the changes of The Times, and the changes in objectives and contents drive the changes in teaching methods. Nowadays, the use of multimedia teaching has been quite common in the classroom of big schools. However, because of the use of multimedia in teaching, the teaching method has undergone great changes. Instead of dominating the classroom, teachers return the classroom to students, try to guide students to think and cultivate their critical thinking. The teaching method of teachers refers to the teaching methods used by teachers in cultivating the critical thinking process of college students, including situational teaching method and heuristic teaching method. Situational teaching method is refers to the teachers by creating a scene, the training of college students' critical thinking in the situation, and thus stimulate students learning interest and motivation in critical thinking, in line into critical thinking training for college students when teaching students into the scene, learning critical thinking in the situation, the church student establishment situation, use critical thinking in the situation. Enlightening teaching method refers to the cultivation of critical thinking by guiding students to think. The characteristic of enlightening teaching is to guide students to think actively and encourage students to find answers to questions by themselves, without directly releasing the answers to students. In the critical thinking training for college students, we should guide students to think about problems from different perspectives, cultivate critical thinking, and form innovative ability.

#### **4.5. Exploration of Effective Learning Methods for Students**

Exploring effective learning methods is the key to give full play to students' enthusiasm and initiative and cultivate their critical thinking. Effective learning methods include autonomous learning, research learning and practice learning. Autonomous learning is the change of college students' learning consciousness and thinking mode. Critical thinking is active, college students with critical thinking will take the initiative to participate in learning, which is different from waiting for teachers to give "orders" and then to carry out the tasks set by teachers. Research-based learning is a learning mode in which the teacher instructs the college students to take the team as the learning unit, and in the process of team learning, the teacher takes the methods of topic setting, investigation, discussion, analysis and summary as the learning methods. Research-based learning can not only pool wisdom and pool collective wisdom together, but more importantly, it will have a huge impact on many aspects such as college students' ability to collect materials, the way they think about problems, the logic of discourse and the ability to deal with interpersonal relationships. Learning process of inquiry learning is group determine the research question, separately to collect material and will handle, team members collectively discussion questions and the materials collected and shown in discussing certainly prove his point, team members discuss views of the

same problem after agreed, the better for group discussion activities. Practical learning corresponds to the memorization of theoretical knowledge. The memorization of theoretical knowledge can be completely completed in class, and almost all knowledge comes from teachers' teaching. It is very difficult for college students to apply theoretical knowledge to real life because they passively accept knowledge and cannot fully understand knowledge. During the cultivation of critical thinking, college students are easy to acquire theoretical knowledge of critical thinking, but it is not easy to turn theoretical knowledge into ability overnight, which requires continuous practice and reflection for a long time.

## **5. Conclusion**

College students are the driving force to push forward the future society. Strengthening the cultivation of college students' critical thinking is of great theoretical significance and practical guiding value, no matter for the comprehensive development of college students' ability and personality, the improvement of the innovation ability of the whole society and the reform of college education. The cultivation, exercise and improvement of critical thinking ability is an integral part of college students' study. In the current complex information age, students living in the ivory tower will often get lost without independent thinking and judgment, which is bound to be seriously out of line with the demand for talents in the new era. In the stage of higher education, it is of great significance to pay attention to the cultivation of critical thinking ability of college students and improve their ability to solve practical problems. Through the use of critical ability to achieve innovation, training innovative talents, through the talent power to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation!

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