

# Research on the Cultivation of Rule of Law Thinking of Private College Students under the Background of Covid-19

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**Abstract:** The outbreak of COVID-19 has raised new requirements for all citizens, especially college students, in the rule of law thinking. Many scholars have done researches on the cultivation of rule of law thinking of college students. However, there are few on the cultivation of rule of law thinking of private college students, and the cultivation path has not yet formed. Therefore, for private college students, how to extract the most effective cultivation path of rule of law thinking and put legal education into practice is the focus of this paper. Based on this, in the context of COVID-19, combined with the characteristics of private college students, this paper tries to explore the specific cultivation path of rule of law thinking.

## 1. Introduction

During the COVID-19 prevention and control period, the general secretary Xi Jinping chaired the third meeting of the Central Committee of the Comprehensive Law-based Governance of the Country. He stressed that under the centralized and unified leadership of the Party Central Committee, people's safety and health should always be put first, and further guaranteed through legislation, law enforcement, justice and law-abiding aspects, so as to improve the ability of prevention, control and management according to law. It is essential to promote all prevention and control work on the track of rule of law, providing strong legal guarantee. In this context, the awareness and rule of law thinking of college students, as the backbone of the future, directly affect the construction process of the socialist rule of law, the construction of a harmonious socialist society and the realization of the strategic goal of socialist modernization.

## 2. Interpretation of Rule of Law Thinking under the Background of Covid-19

During the period of epidemic prevention and control, a college student in the new era is required to have the rule of law thinking, and use it to think and deal with problems, so as to guide his behavior and make due contributions to epidemic prevention.

### 2.1 Define the Individual Legal Responsibilities of Citizens during the Epidemic Prevention Period

Concealing having been to the epidemic area or having close contact with people in the epidemic area is suspected of violating the law. According to *Law on Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases*, related situation should be faithfully provided by all units and individuals in China; The intentional or negligent transmission of COVID-19 shall be punished as a crime against public safety by dangerous means or by excessive and dangerous means against public safety; Whoever spreads rumors or seriously disturbs social order shall be sentenced to a maximum of seven years' fixed-term imprisonment in accordance with the provisions of our Criminal Law; Those who harm epidemic prevention workers with violence shall be punished with the crime of endangering public safety; Supermarkets that take advantage of the opportunity to bid up prices and obtain profiteering shall be severely punished with the crime of illegal operation; Producing and selling fake or inferior masks or disinfectants shall be severely punished for the production of fake or inferior products. Moreover, in accordance with article 16 of *Law on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases*, the state and society shall care for, assist and timely treat patients, and carriers of

pathogens or suspected infectious diseases. No unit or individual may discriminate against patients with infectious diseases, and carriers of pathogens or suspected infectious diseases.

## **2.2 Interpret the Meaning of the Rule of Law Thinking**

On the basis of clarifying the individual legal responsibility of citizens during the epidemic prevention, the following is the meaning of rule of law thinking. First, the rule of law thinking is guided by the value spirit of the rule of law, which contains the concept of justice, equality, democracy and human rights, which is a kind of legitimate thinking. For example, during the epidemic prevention period, it was reported that in the inspection, community workers found a family playing cards at home. They beat one of them and smashed the mahjong machine. The community staff lack the rule of law thinking, and failed to apply it to deal with problems. Second, the rule of law thinking is a normative thinking based on legal principles and legal rules to guide people's social behavior. For example, some students went home for winter vacation and passed through the epidemic area, or have come in contact with relatives and friends who have returned from the epidemic area. They feared to be isolated and did not report to the community. However, under the provisions of the *Law on Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases*, all are obliged to report truthfully, which is a normative thinking. Third, the rule of law thinking which analyze problems, deal with problems, resolve disputes based on legal means and legal methods, is a reliable logical thinking. According to the online report, Chen was asked to be isolated during the period of epidemic prevention and control. He ignored the regulations, disregarded dissuasion and forced out by beating or threatening policemen who were carrying out their duties. His behavior violated the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 5 of Article 277 of the *Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China*, and was suspected of obstructing public service. The actor should follow the stipulation of law, obey the management, and avoid spreading the virus. If there is an emergency, it is necessary to communicate with the management workers in time and seek solutions, which is a reliable logical thinking. Fourth, the rule of law thinking is a scientific thinking that accords with the law and respects the facts. During the epidemic period, the state faced up to the existence of COVID-19. While treating patients, our state organized medical experts to overcome difficulties, ensured that information was open and transparent, timely reported all kinds of data, and carried out all kinds of work in a realistic attitude.

In a word, during the epidemic period, college students who have been to or had close contact with the people in the epidemic area, were checked for the temperature by the staff and isolated. Their normal lives were affected, or even their freedom was limited. However, when their own interests conflict with the legal rules, they are willing to obey the law, accept various inspections and arrangements according to the guidance of the law. Their rule of law thinking is fully reflected.

## **3. Difficulties and Causes of the Cultivation of Rule of Law Thinking of Private College Students**

In view of the weak foundation and learning initiative of private college students, it is worth thinking about how to cultivate the thinking of rule of law. In the new era, changing "education of legal system" into "rule of law education" is a significant change in China's legal literacy education, and also a good opportunity to improve the legal quality of college students. The traditional education of legal system focuses on the teaching of legal knowledge and the publicity of legal system, which has no obvious effect on the improvement of legal quality.

### **3.1 Stagnate At the Level of Imparting Knowledge and Single Content of Education**

At present, legal education in private colleges mainly relies on the public course of *Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Legal Basis*, counselor management and various activities organized by Science and Technology Division and Youth League Committee to realize legal publicity and education. However, the weak foundation and poor independent learning ability of private college students lead to low enthusiasm in class and low participation in community activities. In addition, the rule of law education stays at the level of imparting knowledge with single contents, excessive

theoretical content and a lack of social practice. Moreover, the class hours are insufficient, generally concentrated in the first year. The form of textbook learning is taken. Teachers are generally without systematic legal education background, but are professional in the general law, which makes the legal education lack effectiveness.

### **3.2 Fail to Accord with the Characteristics of Private College Students**

At present, the rule of law education for college students adopts a one size fits all mode. There is no special method for the rule of law education for private college students, with implicit education effect. The college entrance examination scores of private college students are generally not high and their foundation is weak. The education mainly stays in the aspect of knowledge teaching, and takes the form of teachers' teaching and students' passive listening. The teaching mode is fixed and practical teaching is insufficient. It is obviously unreasonable that there is no distinction in teaching mode, teaching methods, etc although there are different teaching objects, different autonomous learning abilities, different degrees of absorption of legal knowledge and different exercises of legal thinking. Therefore, it is of necessity to formulate specific programs for cultivating legal thinking according to the characteristics of private college students.

### **3.3 Few Ideological and Political Teachers with Legal Background**

Educators with different qualities make the educational effects quite different. In private colleges, the number of ideological and political teachers with legal background is often insufficient, which leads to incompletely demonstrated charm of law. Students has low interest in learning the law and missing belief in the law. Therefore, the ideological and political teachers still need to be strengthened. Especially those with legal professional background are required to be vigorously introduced and cultivated.

## **4. Method to Cultivate the Rule of Law Thinking for College Students in Private Colleges**

Conduct a multi-level and all-round training of the rule of law thinking according to the interests of private college students and the characteristics of private colleges. In addition, make a collective effort from the aspects of education mode, education concept, education content, education mode, learning form, educator's quality and education environment to cultivate the legal thinking of college students.

### **4.1 Attach Importance to the Dialogue Teaching in Education Mode**

Change the traditional instillation teaching mode in the teaching of rule of law and pay attention to the dialogue teaching. In the topic selection and link design, make students form rich feelings for new knowledge, and guide them to learn relevant knowledge and skills in a divergent way by making them have dialogues with the text, with their own inner world, with the learning community, with teachers, and with the objective world. In the process of teaching, it is essential to adhere to the problem orientation and cultivate students' insight to catch and grasp the problems of the times. For example, during the outbreak of COVID-19, the phenomena such as the bid up of prices, concealment of whereabouts, non cooperation in isolation, etc., guide students to actively participate in the teaching of the rule of law, give full play to their subjective initiative, and cultivate their sense of identity and belief in the concept of the rule of law. Teachers are expected to create a democratic atmosphere suitable for the dialogues and stimulate students' inspiration. The purpose of teaching is no longer to find the answer itself, but the process of cooperating, exploring and reflecting, thus letting students participate in teaching, realizing the combination of classroom theory teaching and extracurricular practice education, and improving the teaching effect.

### **4.2 Integrate the Rule of Law Education into Daily Life of College Students**

Nowadays, the new media has changed people's life, especially for the new generation of college students. To a certain extent, the learning ability and knowledge foundation of private college students require the intervention of new media to embed the rule of law in their daily life, and

arouse their curiosity. On the one hand, the relevant knowledge and specific methods of legal dispute handling are taught through cloud classroom, which makes students accumulate legal common sense. On the other hand, in class, topics related to employment, entrepreneurship and interpersonal communication are introduced, such as whether employees should be paid if they do not return to work during the epidemic. Students' questions generate specific teaching content. That is, the legal issues discussed in class are derived from students' daily life, making students closer to the law.

#### **4.3 Improve the Teaching Ability of Teachers**

The quality of teachers determines the educational ability of colleges. Similarly, the cultivation of college students' thinking of rule of law also needs high-quality and high-ability teachers. This requires private colleges to take the effective improvement of teaching ability of ideological and political teachers as the top priority, create favorable conditions, offer further study and re-education for ideological and political teachers through various ways and achieve the improvement of teachers' professional quality. Meanwhile, colleges are suggested to build two teachers' teams for the subject of rule of law and the subject of ideological and moral cultivation, comprehensively allocating teachers of rule of law education.

#### **4.4 Activate the Multi-Dimensional Functions of Campus Environment in the Educational Environment**

The campus education environment refers to the external explicit campus environment and internal campus cultural atmosphere that a college constantly shapes in the long-term teaching process and is known by all college members. It mainly includes the college spirit, study style, campus management and cultural and artistic activities. The campus education environment has an implicit education function for college students, with a good imperceptible effect on the formation of college students' concept of rule of law. Under the leadership of the Youth League Committee, the Youth League Committee of each secondary college shall, in accordance with the actual situation of students, cooperate with ideological and political teachers to hold legal knowledge competitions, lectures on the rule of law and simulated court competitions and other activities every semester, so as to build a harmonious campus legal education environment, actively guide students' behaviors, and pay attention to the accumulation of legal knowledge and the cultivation of legal awareness. In addition, combined with the hot topics related to COVID-19, it is advised to carry out the study of typical characters, so that students will feel the advantages and necessity of using the rule of law thinking to deal with problems, and consciously cultivate the rule of law thinking.

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