

Discussions on the Functionality of Scientific Spirit of University to Guide Students Realising Aspiration

FENG Ying^{[a],[b]*}

^[a]Institute of Marxism, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

^[b]Yunnan University of Finances and Economics, Kunming, China.

*Corresponding author.

Supported by this article is one of the phasic research results of The ideological and Political Education Evaluation Mechanism in the Application of the Counselors Work Approval of Yunnan University of Finances and Economics Youth Programs Research Platform (YC2013B12).

Received 8 January 2015; accepted 14 March 2015

Published online 26 April 2015

Abstract

University spirit is a spiritual culture which is education-oriented, takes learning as its core, accumulates with historical development, and embodies University value. Scientific spirit as one of the University spirits, guides University students to seek the truth, to search the facts, to pursue innovation, and to look for change. The realisation of China Dream requires that every Chinese person transforms their little dream into reality. With respect to University students, this is to ask them in realising their life goals. During the process of University students' personality moulding and values forming, the scientific spirit of University could help students keep clear mind, objectively treat problems, gain consciousness of innovation, be brave in change, and become an objective, rational, innovative and critical constructor for the new type society. The scientific spirit of the University is a crucial spiritual power to lead University students to grow up healthily, and to achieve their life goals. This spirit is also an indispensable part of University spirit.

Key word: University; Scientific spirit; China dream

Feng, Y. (2015). Discussions on the Functionality of Scientific Spirit of University to Guide Students Realising Aspiration. *Canadian Social Science*, 11(4), 147-150. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/6768>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/6768>

INTRODUCTION

University is a crucial battlefield for the cultivation of

future constructors and successors of society. University spirit as the core of University culture determines a University's theory on school management and academic atmosphere, gradually define the University's value, standardise and restrict University's behaviour, nurture University students with both a high humanistic quality and a scientific literacy for China, and to supply talents to Chinese society's development. The University spirit includes spirits of freedom, independence, humanism, and science etc. The University spirit is a spirit which emphasises the respect to knowledge and talents, the courage to innovate, and the desire to seek the truth. This spirit has been formed and developed in the specific environment – University, based on characteristics of the times. The scientific spirit as an important component of University spirit requires University students to be equipped with spirits of seeking the truth, innovation, and critique. The China Dream is historical, realistic, and prospective; it belongs to the nation, various ethnics and every Chinese. University students as the most energetic, thoughtful and knowledgeable pillar power among the youth, have to actively study, live up, clear life goals, and realise personal dreams. As comrade Xi Jinping said, “both history and reality tell us, provided that the youth generation has lofty ideals and assumptions, the nation shall have its bright future, the ethnic group shall have hopes, and the realisation of our development goals shall have continuously powerful strength.

1. THE SPIRIT OF SEEKING THE TRUTH GUIDES UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO FORM CORRECT VALUES, AND TO FACE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES PROPERLY

The spirit of seeking the truth is the core of scientific spirit, and asks University students to continuously explore and discover new things as well as its objective laws, and then to understand the nature of things properly. During the process of cultivating University students,

the spirit of seeking the truth propels University students forming the correct values, view of life and view of the world through guiding students looking upon things objectively and reasoningly. The university spirit reflects upon school motto and theory on school management. The spirit of seeking the truth finds expression in both Universities' mottos and spirit, for instance, Zhejiang University's motto of "Truth seeking and innovation" and Renmin University of China's motto of "Seeking truth from facts" etc.. But in current Universities, promotion of the spirit of seeking the truth is still insufficient: University students' pursuit of truth is not enough, and the desire to achieve quick success results in trends of lacking investigation. In the contemporary information society, because of the lack of relevant knowledge and life experience, University students usually find difficult to distinguish and select huge amount of information. In addition, impacts of the traditional Chinese culture of "Zhongyong" and the Western mammonism, benthamism, individualism upon students leads to lack of worship to truth. As a result, students are satisfied with half the understanding, and are short of spirits of tracing the end and thinking thoroughly. The spirit of seeking the truth requests University students being equipped with rigorous logic to follow things' objective law, to observe matters dialectically, and to grasp the essence of objects. For one thing, the spirit of seeking the truth demands University students to keep learning and thus to accumulate knowledge reserve. When encounter the unknown things, try to deduce and restore the full image of things with not only books, but also pictures, videos etc. Exhaust every possibility to understand things all-around, and strive not to understand things simply in one side because it would be deficient and biased. By doing all above, deepening analysis shall become easier. For another, the spirit of seeking the truth asks University students to penetrate into reality to investigate and research. This is as with the sayings of comrade Mao Zedong: "Without investigations thus without rights to speak". The University period of time is a period of time in which students' values, view of life and view of the world have relatively been mature. This period of time plays a crucial role in the growing up and future development of University students. The spirit of seeking the truth guides University students to be specialised in studying, and teaches students that when facing what they are learning or judging things, they are firstly supposed to fully investigate those things and then try to utilise methods such as experimental verification etc. to deeply understand things and its law of development, for the sake of a more objective and comprehensive understanding. In this way, University students could have a relatively high chance to avoid following blindly, but to search for identity, to distinguish black from white and to stay rational and objective. All the previously mentioned methods could firmly bolster University students in terms of ideology, assure healthy

path of development for students to help them objectively treat opportunities and challenges happened during the process of realisation of life dream, and finally direct students to be successful step by step.

2. THE SPIRIT OF INNOVATION URGES UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO ACTIVELY SEEK CHANGE AND INNOVATION, IN ORDER TO KEEP PERSONAL LIFE DREAM ABREAST WITH THE TIMES

The spirit of innovation is the key to scientific spirit, which requires University students to be brave in abandoning old thoughts and things, but constructing new thoughts and things, and keeping abreast with the times. With edification of the spirit of innovation, University students could have enough accumulations to think and express their own ideas independently, and could comprehensively apply knowledge, information, skills and techniques they have learned to present new ideas and methods. In this way, they are ready to make inventions and creations, as well as reform and innovations. Innovation is the spirit which attracts most of attentions from modern Universities, especially in Universities of Science & Engineering, and comprehensive Universities. For instance, Shanghai Jiaotong University employs the spirit of "Dare to Be the First" as the mental instruction to educate students; Sichuan University takes "preciseness, diligence, truth seeking, and innovation" as the core of their University spirit. Even though the differences in history, areas and disciplines cause various but unique spirits in different Universities, the sense of innovation and the freedom of thoughts are the common point for which every University has been seeking their establishment. Due to the long lasting lag of technology in China, the ancient China had little knowledge regarding science. Our precedents had mainly been exploring humanity and morality as well as country administration, but seldom seeking for that of science, which led to people's lack of consciousness of science and thus ignored technologies. The sense and consciousness of innovation are fairly scarce; therefore, as the constructor of future society, University students are the hope of future society, and thus paying attention to the cultivation of University students' innovative spirit is the necessary responsibility to shoulder. For one thing, with the development of society, science and technology become the key factor of national progress, just as the word said by comrade Deng Xiaoping "Science and technology are the primary productive forces". In current society, innovative talents are the most valuable resources for the country's comprehensive power, and Universities are important battlefields for distributing technological knowledge and nurturing innovative people. Universities have to advocate students having the courage

to bring forth new ideas, and being happy to practice. To achieve this, Universities have to stimulate students' innovative thoughts, promote their innovative ability and strengthen their sense of innovation via education. For another, the spirit of innovation is the best mental impetus to remind students not being behindhand. This stimulus continuously reminds students to keep pace with the times and promote own knowledge reserve based on the requirements of times and realities, with continuous learning and changing their learning objectives, living needs as well as life dreams. By doing this, University students could adjust personal life goals with different demands of the times and realistic conditions to keep their life dreams fresh, and by doing this, University students could have a brighter future and thus could become the pillar power for societal development.

3. THE CRITICAL SPIRIT PROMOTES UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' CONSCIOUSNESS OF QUESTIONING AND RATIONAL THINKING TO MAKE THEIR LIFE DREAMS PRACTICABLE AND FEASIBLE

The critical spirit is the basis of scientific spirit, while the spirit of truth seeking and innovation are spirits which are formed based on exploring the known or unknown facts by questioning attitudes. The critical spirit asks students to bravely question the knowledge they have learned or even the "truth" being testified by many people, just as the geocentric theory believed by the Christian Churches being overthrown by Copernicus' "heliocentric theory", though it is noteworthy that the critical spirit requires students not only to question the ideological levels but also to actively seek for the reasons and supportive evidences for their questioning. Try to learn and practice and then bravely query and after that their senses of truth seeking and innovation could be promoted.

The critical spirit needs preciseness, which embodies Universities' mottoes, such as Zhejiang University's "being practical and realistic, strict and pragmatic, striving and progressive, pioneering and innovative", and Zhongshan University's "being erudite, questioning, careful thinking, wise discriminating, and persistent working" etc.. Generally, Chinese people lack the critical spirit, and in most occasion the learning process leads to simply swallowing knowledge rather than asking questions such as "why" and "what". They seldom question the correctness of what they have learned. University students exposed to such environment will automatically be lack of consciousness of questioning and criticalness; therefore, Universities need to emphasise the cultivation of critical spirit, actively nurture students' sense of questioning to

enhance their critical ability, in order to enhance students' comprehensive ability and to provide excellent talents for societal construction. In one hand, University students are supposed to develop customs of questioning and querying. Because knowledge learned is the summary of precedents' experiences, it is naturally biased and even false due to its characteristics of subjectivity and historical limitations. Students should be happy to rethink rather than following the widespread thoughts and ideas and regarding truth as everlasting things. In another hand, University students need to question and criticise to gradually perfect their own knowledge structures to keep pace with the times. In the process of questioning and criticising, students have to do loads of reading references to analyze and distinguish their queries. Data searching and analysis are just the process of learning and perfecting their own knowledge reserve. Due to the deficiency of students' own knowledge and experiences, they might find their own shortcomings during the process of questioning and criticising, and then try to perfect it. This proficiency might be intellectual, moral, and even psychological aspects, but all these deficiencies provide students a chance to improve themselves, and to lay a comprehensive foundation for their future development. By means of cultivation of the critical spirit, University students shall gradually develop consciousness and customs of questioning, and enhance their own rational thinking via questioning, which is conducive to help students establish a feasible, realistic life dream, rather than an illusory and impractical one. These measures shall be quite supportive to the propulsion of students' life dreams.

The cultivation of University students' scientific spirits brings students to pursue truth actively, to be brave in innovation and to dare to criticise. All the previous characteristics shall propel students' healthy grown up and lay a solid foundation for the realisation of their life dream. The University scientific spirit is a crucial component of University spirit. Building a favourable cultural atmosphere in Universities, promoting the scientific spirit and cultivating students' consciousness of truth seeking, innovation and criticalness shall equip students with higher scientific and cultural literacy, and help them become innovative talents to realise their own life goals, to reveal their societal value and to devote in the development of society, so as to aggregate little forces into huge power to accomplish the China Dream.

REFERENCES

- Liu B. C. (2001). What is the university spirit. *Journal of University Teaching Exploration*, (03), 13-15.
- Liu, T., & Huang, Q. (2007). Brief analysis of difficult situations facing the university scientific spirit. *Shenyang Agricultural University Journal (Social Science Version)*, (05), 704-707.
- Liu, Y. S. (2013, April 4). Discussions regarding upright style of study. *Chinese Civilisation Net*. Retrieved from <http://www.>

- wenming.cn/syjj/ldhd/lys/201304/t20130408_1161574.shtml
- Mao, J. R. (2010). Of Chinese scientific spirit's features. *Study Forum Journal*, (02), 47-50.
- Qian, Z. H. (2002). The spirit of suspicion and criticalness, the key factors to drive scientific development – Thoughts upon the 100th anniversary of Nobel Prize. *Jiangsu University Journal (Social Science Version)*, (03), 17-22.
- Wang, J. F., & Song, X. K. (2009). Of the scientific spirit. *Suzhou University Journal*, (05), 4-7.
- Xi, J. P. (2013, May 4). Speeches in discussions with outstanding youth representatives from all walks of life. *Xinhua Net*. Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-05/04/c_115639203.htm
- You X. J., & Wang, Y. P. (2012). Analysis between scientific spirit and university scientific spirit. *Guizhou Normal College Journal*, (02), 67-69.
- Zhang, Y. L., & Chen, G. (2006). Of cultivation of the university scientific spirit. *Huangzhong Agricultural University Journal (Social Science Version)*, (04), 89-93.