

# The Issues and Countermeasures of Cultivating Independent Personality in College Students in the New Era

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**Abstract:** The cultivation of an independent personality is the ultimate concern of education. In the context of today's globalized economy, networked information, and diversified cultures, it has become increasingly important to foster college students' independent thinking, courage, self-confidence, self-respect, self-reliance, and the ability to challenge authority. A layered sampling survey and research conducted among college students show that while students possess basic awareness of independent personality, the cultivation of such personality is hindered by several factors, including the weakening of independent personality education in universities, the influence of diverse societal ideologies, improper family education, and students' uncertainty regarding their beliefs. To address these challenges, it is essential to strengthen the concepts of independent personality education and curriculum design, promote the supportive role of family education, and enhance the awareness of independent personality development among college students.

**Keywords:** New Era; College Students' Independent Personality, Self-confidence, Personality Development, Higher Education

**DOI:**10.69979/3041-0843.24.2.036

In the context of the new era, General Secretary Xi Jinping has proposed to deeply promote the construction of the "Big Ideological and Political Course," integrating ideological and political education into curriculum teaching, practical activities, and social life, with the aim of comprehensively enhancing the ideological and political quality of college students. Research on the cultivation of independent personality in college students under the new era is of great significance for fostering young people's strong will, correct values, self-reliance, and self-confidence. Only when young people possess an independent personality can they cultivate citizens with independent personalities, which is of profound significance for the realization of the Chinese Dream and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Therefore, strengthening the cultivation of independent personality in college students is not only a personal growth need but also a fundamental requirement for national development and social progress.

## 1. The Connotation of Independent Personality

Personality is the characteristic that unifies psychological, physiological, ideological, and behavioral traits formed in the process of survival and development. It is the internal baseline defining the display of one's social image, the basis and criterion for self-mediating contradictions, and the internal quality formed through the integration of conscience, morality, and legal norms. Personality is a stable psychological trait influenced by multiple internal and external factors such as worldview and traditional beliefs. Independent personality refers to a person's independence, autonomy, and creativity. It requires a person to neither depend on a particular spiritual authority nor rely on a specific political power, maintaining objective judgment in the pursuit of truth and independent spirit in political decisions. The core of independent personality is self-reliance and self-confidence. The self-confidence discussed here actually refers to confidence in the system, the path, the theory, and culture, which ultimately depends on self-reliance.

Mencius' standard of "wealth and nobility cannot corrupt, poverty and lowliness cannot change, power and might cannot bend" is a common standard for independent personality. Confucius' saying, "The wise are not confused, the

benevolent are not worried, the brave are not afraid," also reflects a person's self-confidence, self-reliance, self-love, and self-respect, which are inherent requirements for an independent personality.

## 2. Survey on the Issue of Independent Personality Among College Students in the New Era

### 2.1 Survey Design

This study adopts a stratified random sampling method, surveying students from different grade levels (freshman to senior) at Jilin University, Jilin Engineering and Technology Normal University, Changchun University of Science and Technology, Jilin Animation Institute, and Dalian University. A total of 607 valid questionnaires were collected via the online platform "Wenjuanxing." Questions 1-9 in the questionnaire are Likert scale items used to measure the respondents' tendencies toward independent personality. The options ranged from "1" for "Strongly Disagree" to "7" for "Strongly Agree," with higher scores indicating greater agreement with the statement. Questions 10-13 collected respondents' demographic information. Among the respondents, 43.5% were male, and 56.5% were female. Students from single-child families made up 42.8%, while 57.2% were from non-single-child families. The distribution of grade levels showed that 52.4% were juniors, 28.8% were freshmen, 8.6% were sophomores, and 9.7% were seniors, with 0.5% from other grade levels. In terms of geographic origin, over 50% of the respondents were from the Northeast region.

### 2.2 Data Analysis

SPSS21 statistical software was used for descriptive and difference analysis of the data.

#### 2.2.1 Basic Information on College Students' Independent Personality

By calculating the mean and standard deviation of the data, we can understand the average trends and degree of variation of each variable. The mean and standard deviation of each variable are shown in Table 1.

Table1 Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Variable	Mean value	标准差
1.You have a certain understanding of the term "independent personality."	5.01	1.392
2.In class, you dare to question the content explained by the teacher.	4.42	1.586
3.在 You are able to have your own ideas and views during the learning process.	5.23	1.314
4.Your parents emphasize the development of your ability to independently handle problems.	5.29	1.467
5.You are easily influenced by others' opinions in interpersonal relationships.	4.46	1.577
6.You highly appreciate the view "Wealth and nobility cannot corrupt, poverty and lowliness cannot change, power and might cannot bend."	5.54	1.434
7.The teacher has mentioned the importance of cultivating independent personality during lectures.	5.32	1.579
8.The prevalent atmosphere of laziness, extravagance, and indulgence in society influences your behavior.	4.96	1.420
9.You have a clear understanding of your future life goals.	4.43	1.682

Source: Survey Data Organization

From Table 1, it can be observed that the average score for the question "I have a certain understanding of the term 'independent personality'" is 5.01, indicating that the respondents generally have a certain level of understanding of the term "independent personality." Questions 3 and 6 further confirm this observation. The average score for question 3, "I am able to have my own ideas and views during the learning process," is 5.23, and the average score for question 6, "I highly appreciate the view 'Wealth and nobility cannot corrupt, poverty and lowliness cannot change, power and might cannot bend,'" is 5.54, suggesting that college students possess a certain degree of independent personality traits in their learning and daily lives. However, the average score for the question "Do you dare to question the content explained by the teacher in class?" is the lowest at 4.42, which seems somewhat inconsistent with their recognition of the "Wealth and nobility cannot corrupt..." character. This discrepancy actually reflects a potential issue in the cultivation of independent personality among college students, such as their tendency to abandon the courage to speak out for self-protection. Additionally, the average score for the question "I have a clear understanding of my future life goals" is 4.43, with a standard deviation of 1.682, which highlights a prominent issue among contemporary college students: the lack of clarity in

career planning.

### 2.2.2 Difference Analysis of Variables

To further analyze the differences in independent personality variables based on personal characteristics, a difference test was conducted between the relevant variables reflecting independent personality and the variables of gender, only-child status, grade level, and geographical origin. The results showed that the gender variable had a significant impact on questions 1-3, 5, and 9, with p-values of 0.048, 0.003, 0.000, 0.004, and 0.001, respectively. The results indicate that male students have a stronger awareness of independent personality but are also more susceptible to the influence of others. In the analysis of the impact of the only-child status variable on independent personality, significant effects were found for questions 1 and 3, with p-values of 0.005 and 0.042, respectively. This shows that college students from one-child families have a more pronounced awareness of independent personality. However, the impact of the only-child status variable on other variables was not significant, suggesting that being an only child in the family does not significantly affect the development of independent personality.

## 3. Problems in the Cultivation of Independent Personality among College Students in the New Era

Based on the survey results and research from relevant literature, the following problems in the cultivation of independent personality among college students have been identified:

### 3.1 Weakening of Independent Personality Education in Teaching

Currently, in China's higher education system, there is no systematic content module specifically dedicated to the cultivation of independent personality. Independent personality development has not been incorporated into the curriculum or teaching content. Although there is a strong emphasis on "curriculum-based ideological and political education," few institutions propose integrating the cultivation of independent personality into the course content. Most universities still focus on disciplinary construction, leading to mechanical teaching. In the survey, although students generally agreed that teachers mentioned the importance of cultivating independent personality to varying degrees, when asked, "Do you dare to question the content explained by the teacher in class?" the average score was 4.42, reflecting the lack of independent personality development in daily teaching. Furthermore, many higher education institutions lack measures to develop students' comprehensive abilities and place insufficient emphasis on the holistic development of students. The traditional teaching concepts, influenced by teaching assessment indicators, prioritize students' grades and teaching order management over psychological development, self-control skills, and other areas of education.

### 3.2 Impact of Social and Cultural Trends

Social and cultural trends reflect the overall environment, group interpersonal relationships, and ideological tendencies of society. They not only directly affect individual physical and mental health, group cohesion, and collective consciousness but also subtly influence social stability, national security, and the revival of the nation. In today's society, unprecedented changes are taking place in politics, culture, economics, and technology. College students, who are in campus environments, are easily influenced by negative social trends and online cultures. Negative trends such as laziness, indulgence, and extravagance are spreading among university students, leading to the formation of incorrect value systems. The survey showed that 59.3% of students acknowledged being influenced by negative social trends. Based on years of teaching experience, many students are addicted to online gaming, which severely cuts down the time they dedicate to self-study. Other students spend excessive time watching videos and live-streamed programs, which leads to rigid thinking, disorganized behavior, and a reluctance to engage in learning. As students lose their sense of self, this also leads to broader social problems.

### 3.3 Imbalanced Independent Personality Cultivation in Family Education

The one-child policy in China has fostered a culture of overindulgence towards children in Chinese families. Although many families now have two children, the habit of doting on children remains unchanged. The survey results show that

over 50% of families are non-only-child households, yet the overprotective behavior from parents still persists. This overindulgence greatly deprives children of their autonomy, causing many university students to develop a dependent attitude, such as waiting for food to be served and not taking responsibility for their own affairs, which impacts their normal interpersonal interactions. Consequently, many students become selfish, weak, and lethargic. Additionally, there is a general phenomenon in the cultivation of college students where there is a disconnect between school education and family education, and a lack of communication and coordination between the two educational systems. After entering university, parents often find it difficult to understand the behavioral differences between their children at home and at school, which hinders the correct guidance and communication with their children.

### 3.4 Confusion in Students' Beliefs Affecting the Development of Independent Personality

With the increasing emphasis on ideological and political education, the issue of university students' beliefs has gained more attention. In the context of a materialistic society, college students are easily prone to breaking value and ethical boundaries and losing their fundamental beliefs. The survey revealed that some university students have distorted personality values and insufficient self-education. Faced with various social and cultural trends, many students lack the sharp discernment and independent thinking abilities necessary to navigate them. This makes it easier for students to be influenced by vulgar and corrupt cultural ideologies, leading to excessive indulgence in the virtual world, reluctance to engage with society, and weakening self-control. As a result, students develop habits such as dependency, evasion, and a lack of responsibility, which diminish their willingness to participate in social work and reduce their sense of social responsibility. When asked, "Do you have a clear understanding of your future life goals?" the average response score was 4.43, indicating that college students lack clear plans for the future and possess weak self-management abilities.

## 4. Strategies for Cultivating Independent Personality in College Students

### 4.1 Strengthen the Concept of Independent Personality Education

The formation of independent personality encompasses various aspects of life, learning, and social interactions. When college students leave the protection of their parents and enter the university environment, they must face the different challenges of "walking alone." University is a comprehensive and systematic social environment that, beyond theoretical knowledge, is a process of physical and psychological development and an important stage for establishing good values before entering society. Therefore, university education plays a crucial bridging role in personal development. Higher education should enhance awareness of the educational concept of independent personality. Currently, university education primarily focuses on building academic and professional excellence, often neglecting the importance of self-development and self-actualization, which deviates from the essence of education. University education should not only meet the needs of the times but also emphasize the humanistic spirit of traditional culture, respect for individual differences, and promote the balanced development of students' physical, psychological, and moral elements.

### 4.2 Enrich the Content of Independent Personality Education

In the context of achieving the "Two Centenary Goals" and realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, cultivating a new generation of youth with ideals, abilities, determination, and the courage to undertake the mission of the times is of great significance. Effective educational content is the backbone of cultivating independent personality among college students, a core factor for successfully shaping their independent personality, and a manifestation of advanced educational concepts in practical educational processes. First, establish and promote the core values of socialism to correct the awareness of independent personality. The socialist core values proposed at the 18th National Congress, which include "prosperity, democracy, civilization, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity, and friendliness," reflect the unique characteristics of China in the fields of politics, economics, culture, society, and ecology. These values are an essential and reliable tool for improving the moral and cultural quality of students in the new era. Secondly, learning the outstanding traditional Chinese culture can help students absorb valuable nutrients to improve themselves. Chinese traditional culture has always been rich in spiritual wealth. For example, in the I Ching (Zhouyi), it is written, "The movement of heaven is full of power. The gentleman makes constant self-improvement," and in A Lian's

Poem (Ai Lian Shuo), "Born in the mud but not tainted, washed in clean water but not seductive, internally straight, externally clear, with fragrance that grows purer, its shape graceful, viewed from afar, not to be desecrated." Such exemplary cultural and spiritual elements from Chinese traditions are invaluable assets in cultivating independent personality awareness among university students.

#### 4.3 Focus on the Role of Self-Education in Cultivating Independent Personality

First, improve students' self-awareness. Encourage college students to correctly recognize their strengths and merits, and view themselves with a constructive perspective. Once students have a clear understanding of their outward appearance, they should also explore their inner psychological and personality traits, accurately grasp their relationships with others. Through self-learning, they can continuously enhance their cognitive and moral levels, evaluate and recognize themselves scientifically, and develop effective self-supervision methods to improve their self-cultivation. Secondly, establish a psychological coordination mechanism. Conduct effective self-reflection to form scientific and normative concepts. By understanding the laws of psychological change and activity, students can regulate their emotions effectively, adopt positive psychological adjustment methods, and enhance their self-regulation abilities. Additionally, students should be encouraged to practice self-restraint. It is essential for students to learn actively and strengthen self-discipline. Regardless of the external world's temptations, they should never relax their self-control or lose their moral judgment and behavior.

#### 4.4 Utilize the Family's Role in Supporting the Cultivation of Independent Personality

The education of college students is a social issue involving schools, society, and families. Due to the early, long-term, and profound impact of family education, it plays a foundational role in developing an individual's overall qualities. Clearly, good family education is crucial for college students, whose personalities are still maturing. First, creating a harmonious and healthy family environment can have a subtle and positive influence on college students, helping them develop an independent personality. Second, emphasize joint family education. In family education, parents each have their role to play. For instance, mothers often inspire daughters with traits such as kindness, hard work, love, and sensitivity, while fathers contribute through their bravery, strength, confidence, responsibility, and accountability. Both parents significantly promote the development of their children's personality.

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