

On the Teaching Environment and Its Educational Function in Colleges and Universities

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Abstract: *The teaching environment in colleges and universities refers to the synthesis of various objective conditions and things, their functions and the effectiveness on which the teaching activities in colleges and universities depend. It has the characteristics of normalization, controllability, purification and education. In cultivating the growth and development of college students, the teaching environment in colleges and universities has the functions of incentive, cultivation, intellectual, fitness and promotion.*

Keywords: *Colleges and universities; Teaching environment; Characteristic; Function*

1. Introduction

Teaching activities are carried out in the teaching environment. The teaching environment in colleges and universities refers to the synthesis of various objective conditions and things, their functions and the effectiveness on which the teaching activities in colleges and universities depend [1]. The teaching environment in colleges and universities is a special environment, which is organized according to the special needs of developing people's bodies and minds, and can be divided into broad sense and narrow sense. In a broad sense, the teaching environment in colleges and universities includes all the factors that affect teaching activities, such as social system, family conditions, relatives, friends, neighbors, schools, etc. In a narrow sense, the teaching environment in colleges and universities refers to the various objective conditions within the school that affect classroom teachings, such as school spirit, class spirit, teaching equipment, teaching system, health conditions, and interpersonal relationship between teachers and students, etc[2].

2. Characteristics of teaching environment in colleges and universities

2.1. Normalization

The normalization of the teaching environment in colleges and universities means that the teaching environment in colleges and universities is a special place for educating people. It is designed, established and organized according to the unique needs of comprehensively promoting people's physical and mental development and the national educational policy. Therefore, all aspects of environmental construction in colleges and universities should meet the standard requirements for educating people.

2.2. Controllability

The controllability of the teaching environment in colleges and universities means that compared with other environments, the teaching environment is easy to adjust and control. People can constantly adjust and control the teaching environment according to the needs of teaching activities and choose the factors that have positive significance for people's physical and mental development to make the teaching environment develop in a favourable direction.

2.3. Purification

The purity of the teaching environment in colleges and universities means that the subjective and objective factors of the teaching environment are organized together under the common noble goals of

pursuing truth, mastering knowledge and developing body and mind. Various environmental factors have been purified through careful selection, refinement and processing. Therefore, compared with other environments, the teaching environment in colleges and universities purifies the mind with less external interference.

2.4. Education

The educative nature of the teaching environment in colleges and universities means that the teaching environment is not only the material support for teaching activities, but also the various environmental factors that constitute the teaching environment themselves have educational significance. Just because the teaching environment is a place for educating people, when people build it, the need for its educational function has far exceeded the need for its material function, which is also a feature of the teaching environment in colleges and universities that differ from other environments.

3. Elements of teaching environment in colleges and universities

3.1. Physical factors of the environment

Air, temperature, light, sound, colour and smell are physical factors of the environment. These factors can directly affect teachers' and students' physical and mental activities[3]. On the one hand, they cause students and teachers to feel different physiologically; on the other hand, they make students and teachers produce and form emotions psychologically. For example, the fresh air in the classroom can make people awake and happy, thus improving teaching efficiency. If the air is dirty, it is easy to make people dizzy, dazzling and disgusting, significantly reducing teaching efficiency. It can be seen that air, temperature, light, sound and other factors have a meaningful impact on teaching activities and are essential elements of the teaching environment.

3.2. Various teaching facilities

Teaching facilities are the main factors that constitute the material environment of colleges and universities and the material basis on which teaching activities rely. From a small point of view, the school's physical facilities should include the campus, classrooms, dormitories, libraries, auditoriums, teachers' offices, laboratories, playgrounds, canteens and various greening facilities such as lawns, flower beds, pools, etc.; From a small point of view, sports equipment, etc., are all necessary basic facilities for teaching activities. As an essential part of the teaching environment, teaching facilities not only restrict and affect the level and content of teaching activities through their perfection but also affect teachers and students with their external characteristics. For example, the different shapes and colours of campus buildings, various indoor and outdoor decorative arrangements, campus greening, and the placement of desks and chairs in the classroom will have a subtle impact on the mental outlook of teachers and students, teaching and learning emotions and even teaching quality. Therefore, in a certain sense, teaching facilities are not only a necessary condition for teaching, but also a powerful pillar for the development of campus civilization.

3.3. Social information

Generally speaking, the teaching process is a process of information transmission. The information transmitted by teaching activities is the central part of school information. But in addition, the school also receives extensive and complex social information from various social relations, social groups, social systems, social structures and other aspects through various channels. The university environment is not a closed environment. It is open to the social environment and constantly communicates with it in various ways. Among them, the rapid development of mass media and various social information poured into schools through radio, television, books, newspapers, the Internet, and other media greatly impacted teaching activities. This kind of influence has both positive and negative aspects. The correct handling and application of various social information are conducive to students' physical and mental development and improve teaching quality. If misapplied, it will interfere with or even destroy the regular progress of teaching activities. Therefore, social information is not only an essential factor in the teaching environment but also a factor that must be carefully studied and can be adjusted and controlled.

3.4. Interpersonal relationship

Interpersonal relationship refers to all kinds of relationships formed in social communication. Interpersonal relationships in colleges and universities, such as the relationship between school leaders and teachers, the relationship between school leaders and students, the relationship between teachers, the relationship between teachers and students, the relationship between students and so on, are closely related to teaching. These complex interpersonal relationships constitute the interpersonal environment of teaching in a certain sense. They affect teaching activities by affecting people's emotions, cognition and behaviour. Among them, the relationship between teachers, between students and between teachers and students are the three main interpersonal relationships within the school, which have the most direct and specific impact on the teaching quality. Therefore, it is undoubtedly of positive significance to establish a harmonious and good interpersonal relationship for promoting teaching research and improving teaching quality.

3.5. School spirit and class spirit

The school spirit of colleges and universities is a kind of collective behaviour. School spirit is an invisible environmental factor and a substantial educational force. The style of study, the style of teaching, the style of leadership and the appearance of teachers and students in a university are all related to the school spirit. The school spirit can be divided into positive and negative. The positive school spirit can make the teachers, students, and staff continuously enhance their consciousness, work hard, study hard, and promote the teaching work to achieve good results. The negative school spirit makes the teaching work lax and disordered, and it is easy to make the work of colleges and universities divorced from the correct teaching objectives. Class spirit refers to a common psychological tendency formed by all class members in long-term communication. Once the class spirit is formed, it becomes a binding force, affecting every member of the class social system. It not only shapes students' attitudes and values but also affects their learning activities in the classroom. From the perspective of psychological mechanisms, the school spirit and class spirit all appear as a psychological atmosphere. Once this psychological atmosphere becomes a normative force that affects the whole group's life, it is a behavior formed with psychological restriction. However, if the guidance and management are not good, some incorrect group norms and unfair public opinions will also occur in the class, which will harm teaching. Therefore, strengthening the construction of the school and class spirit and making them favourable factors to promote teaching should be an essential part of the teaching environment in colleges and universities.

3.6. Classroom teaching atmosphere

The classroom teaching atmosphere mainly refers to an emotional state formed by the class collective in the classroom teaching process[4]. It includes the psychological state of teachers and students, emotional experience, the relationship between teachers and students, the attitude towards teaching and the attitude towards the surrounding environment. It reflects the relationship between classroom teaching situations and students' collective. There are two types of classroom teaching atmosphere. One is a supportive atmosphere; the other is a defensive atmosphere. The former is a positive and healthy teaching atmosphere, while the latter is harmful. A positive classroom teaching atmosphere is conducive to the emotional and information exchange between teachers and students. It is also conducive to teachers' timely grasp of students' learning situations and feedback on teaching effects to continuously adjust teaching contents and strategies according to specific teaching situations and achieve ideal teaching results. It can be seen that the classroom teaching atmosphere is an essential factor in the classroom teaching environment, and it is of great significance to regulate and control this factor to form a good teaching environment.

3.7. Other factors

The elements that constitute the teaching environment in colleges and universities are complex, and the above are only some of the main parts. In addition, there are other factors such as the party organization in colleges and universities, the appearance, speech and behaviour of teachers and students, the interpersonal distance in the classroom, the informal groups among students and their norms, and various gatherings in schools and so on. As part of the teaching environment, these factors exert a subtle and profound influence on the cognition, emotion and behaviour of teachers and students from different aspects and on each link of teaching activities and their overall effect.

4. Functions of teaching environment in colleges and universities

4.1. Incentive function

The incentive function of the teaching environment means that a good teaching environment can effectively stimulate learners' learning motivation and improve their learning enthusiasm. All kinds of human activities are caused by certain motives. Students' learning activities are always carried out under the control of particular learning motivations. Learning motivation is the power that directly promotes learners' learning. It is expressed in the form of learning needs, intentions, wishes or interests. In the teaching process, learning motivation plays an important role in teaching by giving play to its guiding direction, focusing attention and increasing vitality. The reason why the teaching environment has the function of stimulating students' learning motivation is determined by its own characteristics. In a positive and harmonious teaching environment, various environmental factors can stimulate students' learning motivation. For example, the interpersonal relationship between teachers and students, as a critical factor constituting the teaching environment, profoundly impacts students' learning enthusiasm. In teaching practice, due to the formation of a good relationship between teachers and students, teachers respect, care about and love students. In turn, students will give teachers corresponding positive emotional returns and love teachers more deeply. In addition, students will have an emotional transfer to teachers. That is, they will love teachers and the subjects they teach. This is just as the ancient Chinese educationists put forward the idea of "close to their teachers and believe in their Tao". In addition, other factors in the teaching environment, such as school and class spirit, are also of great significance in stimulating students' learning motivation. Benny, an American psychologist, said: "if a collective atmosphere is friendly, mutual understanding and mutual support, then the collective will have a positive impact on motivation, work performance and achievement." Teaching practice shows that once the school or class spirit of preciseness, realism, diligence and progress is formed, it will become a collective psychological atmosphere with great appeal. This kind of good psychological atmosphere is often one of the direct incentives to stimulate students' learning motivation. It will subtly impact the collective members, give them a positive emotional experience, and improve their learning enthusiasm.

4.2. Cultivation function

The cultivation function of the teaching environment means that a good teaching environment can cultivate students' sentiments, purify their minds, and develop their noble moral character and behaviour habits. Students' ideological beliefs, moral concepts and behaviour habits are always formed in a particular social environment. As a specific micro-social environment in which students live for a long time, the college teaching environment plays an irreplaceable role in cultivating students' moral emotions and behaviour. For example, teachers' behaviour in class, as an essential environmental condition, positively impacts the formation of students' good morality. Numerous facts have proved that excellent teachers are often the most direct, concrete and vivid examples for students to imitate and learn. Teachers' good work style, high sense of responsibility, a clear view of right and wrong, self-criticism spirit and an open-minded attitude that must correct mistakes all have a strong influence on students and have a profound impact on the formation of their good moral character and noble sentiment. Therefore, the educational effect of the teaching environment on people is not forced to instil, but to integrate education into a vivid situation. Through the comprehensive action of tangible, intangible, material and spiritual environmental factors, students are influenced imperceptibly, so as to produce an educational effect of "moistening things silently". This kind of educational influence is easier to be understood by students than simple preaching and is more conducive to the comprehensive cultivation and shaping of people's noble sentiments.

4.3. Intellectual function

The intellectual function of the teaching environment is that a good teaching environment can effectively promote students' intellectual development and improve the efficiency of their intellectual activities. Psychological research shows that a tidy, clean, elegant and quiet environment can make people feel comfortable and energetic, while a dirty and noisy place can make people tired and bored. The impact of the two different environments on people's intellectual activities is very different. Environmental psychology research has confirmed that environmental factors have a great relationship with brain use efficiency. When using the brain, you need to have appropriate light intensity. Too strong light will give bad stimulation to brain cells, make people feel irritable or even dizzy, and affect

thinking judgment; Too weak light does not cause enough excitement in the brain. Keeping the temperature of the brain environment appropriate can improve the brain's speed of processing information and problem-solving ability. According to research, when the temperature exceeds 35 °C, brain consumption will increase significantly, which can easily cause brain fatigue; The temperature is too low, and the efficiency of using the brain is not ideal. Air also has an essential impact on brain activity. If the air is not fresh or insufficient, it will cause an insufficient oxygen supply to the brain, significantly reducing the working efficiency. Research shows that colour also plays an essential role in promoting people's intellectual activities. Light green or light blue can make people calm, make it easy to eliminate brain fatigue and improve brain efficiency. Deep red and yellow can stimulate people strongly, excite the brain, and inhibit them. In addition, often being in a noise environment of more than 70 dB will make people dizzy, have weak excitability, memory loss, inattention, etc., and the use efficiency of the brain will be significantly reduced. The sound with moderate volume and pleasant ears can make people relaxed and happy, and it is easy for people to enter the ideal state of intellectual activities consciously or unconsciously. This implies that the main reason the music environment created in teaching can improve teaching efficiency is that it successfully applies this principle. In a good teaching environment, due to careful design and continuous adjustment, various environmental factors can reach the state most conducive to students' intellectual activities, and the impact of adverse factors such as air pollution and noise can be minimized. Therefore, a good teaching environment can give full play to students' intellectual activities and promote intellectual development.

4.4. Fitness function

The healthy function of the teaching environment means that a good environment can effectively promote the normal development of students' bodies and improve their physical quality and health. It has long been widely recognized that human health is closely related to the quality of the environment. For students who spend most of their time in school, the teaching environment in colleges and universities has a more direct relationship with their health. Facts have proved that a good teaching environment can effectively improve students' health levels, while a lousy teaching environment will decline students' physical quality. First, a good teaching environment can provide an excellent hygienic environment for students. A good hygienic environment includes fresh air, plenty of sunshine, a clean campus, a clean diet, etc. If students live in such an environment, they can avoid some diseases caused by health reasons, and their health can be guaranteed. Secondly, a good teaching environment can provide a positive emotional environment for students. Modern medical research has found that the violent fluctuation of emotion will lead to the imbalance of the body's internal environment, leading to disease. For example, anger, fear, anxiety and other emotions can increase the secretion of gastric juice, while depression, sadness and other emotions can reduce the secretion of gastric juice. It can be seen that maintaining good emotions plays an important role in the health of the body. In this regard, the teaching environment plays an important regulatory role. In a good teaching environment, it is easy to form a positive emotional environment because of harmonious interpersonal relations, united collective, common goals and rich recreational activities, so that students living in it can often maintain optimistic, stable and happy emotions, thus greatly increasing the adaptability of the human body to the environment and the resistance to diseases. Finally, a good teaching environment can create a reasonable living environment for students so that students' activities in the school can be carried out regularly, and mental work and physical work can be carried out alternately to avoid students' learning time being too long and damaging their health. In short, a good teaching environment can achieve its fitness function through the above aspects. Only when these aspects are organically combined can the fitness function of the teaching environment be effectively brought into play.

4.5. Promotion function

The promotion function of the teaching environment means that a good environment can effectively improve teaching efficiency and positively promote the smooth progress of teaching activities. This function is a combination of the above functions. Generally speaking, the reason why a good teaching environment can play a promoting role mainly depends on the following two aspects. First, it can create the best spiritual environment for teaching activities. Teachers and students are the main body of teaching activities. Teaching activities largely depend on teachers' and students' mental outlook, working mood and effort. In a good teaching environment, the positive and progressive collective behaviour, the respect and trust of school leaders for teachers, the unity and cooperation between teachers, the care and love of teachers for students, and the respect and love of students for teachers are all intangible spiritual forces that profoundly affect the inner world of teachers and students and

stimulate their work enthusiasm. Once this enthusiasm becomes a lasting, stable and positive working mood, it can release great energy in teaching activities to ensure that teaching activities can efficiently achieve the expected purpose. Second, it can create a necessary material environment for teaching activities. Teaching activities are inseparable from the support of material conditions. Teaching practice has proved that whether the material facilities of teaching can meet the needs of teaching has a direct impact on the teaching effect. Sufficient material conditions can effectively promote the improvement of teaching quality. In contrast, the lack of material conditions will reduce the teaching level to a certain extent, and even hinder the normal progress of teaching activities. For example, if there is a serious shortage of sports equipment, the quality of physical education teaching will be difficult to be improved. As a good teaching environment provides the necessary material conditions for teaching activities, the improvement of teaching level has a material guarantee, and the promoting role of the teaching environment in teaching will be brought into full play.

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