

The Innovation of Poor College Students' Subsidization Modes in China

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Abstract

In China, poor college students have difficulties not only in finishing high education but also in looking for jobs. Under the current subsidization mode, we focus on helping students finish college, but ignore cultivating their employability. Therefore, we need a new subsidization mode we call developmental subsidization mode with the purpose of improving their competitiveness in the job market. Under this new mode, we provide part-time job opportunities instead of giving students money. Furthermore, new managing mechanisms should be adopted to operate the new mode, its specific strategies including organization management, colleges and enterprise' collaboration, using good models' influence and so on.

Keywords: Subsidization Mode; Innovation; Poor College Students; China

With the implementation of high education cost sharing system in the late 1990s, the double-track pricing system of tuition fee has been abolished. For almost 20 years, the new charge system has brought us great benefits, providing more learning opportunities for students and reaching high education's popularization, but has, as well, has triggered a new problem. Due to the high tuition fee, some students have to suffer from heavy financial pressure. To tackle the consequent problems, our government has not only tried every means to help them financially, but also issued a series of policies to establish a subsidizing system. The system suggests that we could adopt different approaches, like policy orientation, financial investment, appropriation allotment, multi-variant subsidizing combination and other methods, to improve subsidizing effort and extend its cover.

According to Chinese Students Financial Assistance Development Report in 2015 issued by The National Students Financial Assistance Management Center August 26th, 2016, governments, colleges and universities and other social groups in total have aided 41,415,800 person-times in 2015. The number of subsidizing finance reaches to ¥ 84.797 billion, increasing by 18.29% and ¥ 13.111 billion from 2014(National Students Financial Assistance Management Center, 2016). (Chinese Students Financial Assistance Development Report in 2015. 2016)

These forceful supportive methods have protected poor students' interests and maintained social stability. The solemn promise that we will not let even one student drop from college due to poverty has almost been realized. However, poor college students have more problems than just financial difficulties. Employment is another challenge they face because generally speaking, they lack employability. Therefore, we should devote more attention on cultivating poor students' employability because, as researchers suggest, the so-called subsidization should include not only financial help but also ability training. Since the concept of subsidization has changed, how to improve poor college students' comprehensive ability especially employability, has become a new subject worth our research.

1. The general situation of the current subsidization mode of poor college students in China

1.1 Subsidization system has almost formed.

Through years of efforts, the comprehensive subsidization system has basically taken shape, mainly composed of scholarship, student grant and student loan, together with part-time job, food allowance and special subsidy, complemented by social force donation. The coverage of subsidization has been extended continuously. Poor students' education problems have been solved pretty well.

See table 1.

The statistical table of current subsidizing projects of poor college students in China

specific content		finance department	subsidized object	the number of subsidized students	amount of subsidizing fund
scholarship	national scholarship	central government	very talented students	50,000 students nationwide per year	RMB 8000 per student a year
	national encouragement scholarship	central and local government	talented students with financial difficulties	3% of the total number of all college students	RMB 5000 per student a year
	school scholarship	colleges	assigned by college authority	designed by each college	designed by each college
students' grant	state grant	central and local government	poor students	20% of all students	RMB 3000 per student a year
	donation project grant	social communities, enterprises and public institutions, individuals	decided by college authority, generally with priority of poor students	designed by each college	designed by each college
	school grant	colleges	decided by each college	designed by each college	designed by each college
part-time job		colleges	designed by each college, using after-class time	designed by each college	no more than 8 hours a week, no more than 40 hours a month, with payment no less than RMB 8 per hour
subsidies and tuition fee cut	tuition waiver	central government and colleges	students with extreme financial difficulties, including orphaned and disabled students, children of martyrs, students with minority nationality, students from special care received family	designed by each college	designed by each college
	compensatory financing for those who serve in army	central government	students who will be enrolled in army; graduates who will be enrolled in army; retired soldiers who come back to college	the number of students who attend army that very year	no more than RMB 6000 per person a year
	education subsidization for retired soldiers	central government	retired soldiers who have retired from army for at least one year and later enter college	the number of retired soldiers who are enrolled in college that very year	no more than RMB 6000 per person a year
	free education for normal university student	central government	six normal universities directly under the Department of Education	the number of normal school enrollments	
students loan		discount government loans provided by financial institutions	poor students	designed by each province	no tuition, no accommodation fee, with living subsidies.
green channel		colleges	poor students who cannot pay for the tuition when entering college	designed by each college	no more than RMB 6000 per person a year

In Table 1, we can see that poor college students' subsidy is mainly composed of central or local government's support, special fund in college and donations from society. Students who receive subsidies either suffer from financial difficulties or are very talented ones. These measures have helped students solve their living problems and given them opportunities for better life.

1.2 Subsidization mode has been almost set up.

There are two kinds of subsidization methods, direct one and indirect one. Direct subsidization method can still be divided into two categories: donating fund and postponing payment. As for donating fund, sponsors give money to poor students for free; students don't have to pay it back, for example, students grant and scholarships. As for postponing payment, sponsors give money to students to help them solve the temporary problems and finish study first; students should pay it back, such as students' loan. Indirect subsidization means government, society and individuals give help to poor students indirectly through various channels, including tuition waiver, land or capital grant and colleges' tax reduction by government. (Wang Xiuzhen. 2015)

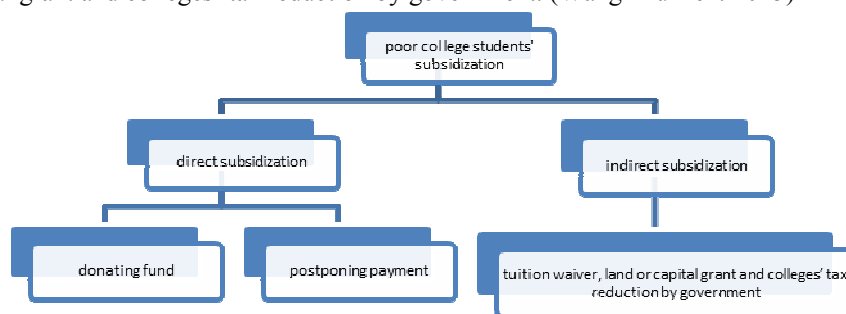


Figure 1 The current subsidization mode for poor college students in China

1.3 The operating mechanism of the subsidization mode has become complete gradually

Since the new policies about poor college students' subsidization have been implemented, colleges are trying every means to work out an efficient and effective operating mechanism. Different working procedures and measures have been improved continuously with fruitful achievements accomplished. Currently, there are several kinds of subsidization mechanisms:

1.3.1 fiscal appropriation→financial department→students' card or donators→students

All scholarships, state grants and some donating projects' fund enter the account of finance department in college, and then go to students' cards through banks. Besides, some donators give their donation directly to students in cash.

1.3.2 college→department→class→students

Students' subsidization management center (state-subsidized student loan management center) is set up on college level; student work groups or student work offices are set up in each department, teachers taking special charge of them. Each funding project is transmitted from college level to department level, then to specific class and finally to individuals. Each level is evaluated by its direct superior.

1.3.3 students' application→class's examination→department's evaluation→college's approval

According to relative regulations, all fund projects are implemented through this procedure: students apply for subsidization, classes have their own evaluation group to give examination, departments have special working team to evaluate classes' candidates and college authorities give final approval.

These mechanisms have their own characteristics and have played great roles in subsidizing students. Each mechanism is related to another in its function and its usage.

2. The problems of poor college students' subsidization mode and reasons behind them

Poor college students' subsidization mode in China has become complete gradually, playing an increasingly important role in assisting students. However, some problems still exist, including some traditional problems and some new ones. For example, in some college, subsidies don't go to those who need them most; therefore subsidization's effect has been undermined. These traditional problems still need our attention.

Besides, subsidization's educational value has always been undermined for many years. People focus on giving money to students while never thinking about giving them mental warmth, spiritual help and the most importantly, the ability to get rid of poverty. To solve this problem, increasing students' adaptability to the society especially their employability is the key. The real situation is shown in the following paragraphs.

2.1 Our subsidization is mainly focused on helping students solve financial problems, but less concerned with cultivating their core values and spiritual concern.

In China, there is a misconception that students' subsidization equals to giving them money. Students with financial difficulties are always the main target of subsidization. Therefore, the so-called subsidization still focuses on financial help, seldom involving spiritual education which poor students especially need. Poor students are sensitive and no one can really know their sensitive hearts when they receive financial help. The degradation of students' subsidization to mere materialization has weakened its educational value, totally ignoring the psychological assistance and psychological health education in the process.

Therefore, it is very necessary and urgent to give them education on building integrity, motive, honesty, gratitude and so on. Their core values need to be built. Tough spirit, courage of overcoming difficulties, spirit of hard work and plain living and yearn for the better future and other good ethos need to be cultivated.

2.2 Our subsidization is mainly focused on helping students solve financial problems, but less concerned with cultivating and developing students' ability.

In western countries, the purpose of students' subsidization is to eliminate economic hurdles of poor students when they enter college to strive for equality of educational opportunity. Very poor students are allowed to apply for suspension of schooling to take part-time jobs before entering school or in the middle of schooling.

In China, there is a different story. As we mentioned before, the subsidization work's educational function is limited. Our current subsidization projects, including their contents, methods and forms, can be categorized into two kinds: blood transfusion method and free-sponsorship. The so-called blood transfusion method means large amount of cash being given out. These two subsidization methods could solve temporary financial problems, but has been congenitally deficient in promoting students' ability and cultivating their sense of duty. Many poor students gradually have the dependent idea of waiting for help, relying on others and asking for the need, lacking sense of gratitude, self-reliance and self-dependence. Most importantly, they still lack the most important element of getting rid of poverty—the ability. This phenomenon has a strong impact on college subsidization systems' effect, which is not good for poor students' development and growth.

In conclusion, our subsidization work mainly focuses on solving poor students' living problems, less concerned with poor students' ability training and quality promotion. The common method is granting out cash, which serves as the end of subsidization work procedure. Students are not given enough vocational guidance or practice opportunities. Besides, students don't get enough encouragement to take part in social practice, community activities and other on-campus or off-campus part-time jobs, so they don't have the sense of self-reliance, which means they don't want to get paid by working hard.

With the development of the subsidization work, the former mode of blood transfusion and free sponsorship has no longer been suitable for students. Therefore, we should focus on poor students' education and development issues, establish various subsidization modes and give full play to subsidization work's educational function.

3. The method of solving these problems of this mode

3.1 The optimization of the current subsidization mode of poor college students.

Poor college students' employment is closely related to individuals' healthy growth and society's stable development, is related to the effective implementation of the national policy of student's loan and the sustainable development of colleges, and is also related to the improvement of people's quality. In order to give play to subsidization's educational value, despite helping poor students solve financial difficulties, the working focus should be changed to improving students' employability and creating better conditions for their sustainable development in the future.

3.1.1 Update the concept of so-called subsidization

Developmental subsidization is one special form of subsidization under which college students design their own action plan and development goal, seeing their self-growth as their action orientation, meanwhile colleges provide technical guidance and financial support, evaluate performance of subsidization scientifically and rationally and promote college students develop in an all-round way. The new mode is the developed form of traditional subsidization mode because it is based on the principle of rights equaling to duties and justice and equality, aiming to solving poor college students' developmental issues.

Under the new mode, we could focus on the internal factors which influence poor students' employability, and help them analyze their own characters and setting up their own goals to obtain professional knowledge and skills. We pay more attention to cultivating their ability to help them get rid of poverty and making up poor students' lack of social resources and social adaptability

3.1.2 Reestablish subsidization principles

Researchers and employment workers have done a lot of research, including having given out three kinds of questionnaires to enterprises, colleges and this year's college graduates respectively. Analysis of the collected data suggested that the biggest obstacle for college students' employment is a big gap between college students' employability and employers' actual requirements.

As an integrated capacity, college students' employability is influenced by different factors concerned with society, family, college, individuals and other respects. Colleges' education will necessarily have a great effect on the knowledge, the technical ability and individual psychological characteristics college students need to have in the process of hunting for jobs. Therefore, we know colleges play a great and comprehensive role.

However, due to the inner connection between financial situation and employment resources and employability, most poor college students are faced with greater obstacles when hunting for jobs. The research

survey data suggests that students' family's financial situation is the key factor. Children from urban families with high income have obvious advantage over their peers, with the greater possibility of getting higher income from the first job.

Poor students still belong to vulnerable groups, bearing great pressures other students cannot experience. If the subsidization focuses on improving and strengthening students' employability instead of just helping them finish college, they will get the maximized benefits from it. The developmental subsidization mode provides the possibility of achieving this goal.

3.1.3 Optimize subsidization methods

There are two basic methods: project-oriented and part-time jobs formed.

Project-oriented subsidization means that college departments manage all kinds of subsidization funds, encourage students to establish project teams and apply for the technical guidance and financial support through designing project. All the projects should be examined before conclusion. On the one hand, Project-oriented subsidization could help to get rid of disadvantages of the old blood-transfused subsidization, improve students' integrated ability and strengthen their teamwork spirit; on the other hand, students get money through their own labor and wisdom with mental self-gratification and self-actualization. Only in this way, can we really achieve the win-win solution of effective subsidization and ability enhancement.

Taking part-time jobs should be created to compensate free sponsorship. Part-time job bases on and off campus should be created to help students find part-time job positions. Then students could be encouraged to finish pre-job training in their spare time and get subsidies in the form of salary instead of being given money. College students get money through work, which will not only eliminate their financial pressure and but more importantly, can strengthen their professional skills; improve their organization and management ability, entrepreneurship and innovation ability.

These two methods could connect students' rights and obligations together, overcome the disadvantages of the free lunch-formed subsidization, and reflect equality and fairness. These two methods will be of great educational value.

3.2 Innovate operation mechanism

3.2.1 Set up groups and exert their effect.

Self-service groups should be established therefore aided students could develop their self-educating and self-managing ability in these groups. Groups, like QQ group or Wechat group, have their own directors and communicating platforms and carry out communication activities regularly. Aided students are encouraged to participate in activities to cultivate their communicating and coordinating ability. Furthermore, colleges should call on not only poor students but also all students to participate in the activities, and create conditions for more students to build relationship in this organization.

All students' participation could help poor students learn the meaning of dedication, cultivate their sense of duty and sense of gratitude, enhance their social flexibility, competitiveness and creativity. In the future, poor students could deal with pressure more skillfully and more confidently and gradually grasp the ability of obtaining social resources.

3.2.2 Use models' influential effect.

College authorities give specific attention to some excellent poor students, set up models and call on others to learn from them. We could select and appraise the outstanding students, report their learning experiences or moving stories, call on others to learn from them. In this way, we can help them cultivate the sense of self-sufficiency and hold the positive attitude. Besides, we could carry out activities to exchange ideas and create the environment in which everyone cares about the subsidizing work, in order to combine financial help and educational support together.

3.2.3 Colleges operate with employers.

Colleges should enhance cooperation with employers to create more opportunities for students. They could make use of these opportunities to put theory into practice, improve their employability and accumulate experience. Both graduates and undergraduates could get a lot of benefits from these opportunities; especially graduates could master employment skills through internship programs.

In conclusion, the subsidization mode based on improving poor college students' employability could show justice of high education. Yes, this mode could not be established and optimized overnight; the cooperation between colleges, society and donators need to be strengthened.

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