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## Government Involvement in American College Education

### **Introduction**

In the current and modern society, children are raised with the notion that if they worked hard in school, and graduated from college, they are better placed to secure the much-needed jobs hence attain the yearn for living the American Dream. College education has become a basic requirement in the twenty-first century due to the increased demand for education in most cultures globally. The debate on the essence of college education in the United States is based on the effects of higher education on the personal development of individuals as well as the question of whether all citizens should have at least access to higher education (Epstein). Currently, the United States of America is one of the most developed and wealthiest nations, but its percentage of college graduates falls behind, compared to other developed countries. The percentage of US college graduates is below 30 percent while that of other equal nations (regarding power and wealth) stands between 40 and 50%. The major factors hindering most Americans to attend college are high tuition fee coupled with the lack of financial support from the national government. Government's non-involvement when it comes to investing in American's college education will have dire implications for the nation's economy, hence the need for it to take initiatives in making college affordable for all students.

### **Challenges Hindering Americans from Attending College**

The high cost of college fees is the primary reason that obscures many students from joining college, hence makes it hard for the large population of youth to access higher education. This challenge compels most students to resort to student loans, which are charged considerably exorbitant rates, thus making the life of the college students quite hard. As explained by Holland, many women and men are struggling to repay the student debt, hence are notably postponing home purchases, marriage, childbearing, and most significantly, limiting their chances of venturing into entrepreneurship. Similarly, the increased levels of student loans are acting as the principal perpetrators of economic inequality, thus hinder the opportunity and diversity long promised by higher education (Holland).

As explained by Holland, most Americans still hold the belief that a college degree is a key to a successful life, which is as well supported by data showing that college graduates lead better lives in comparison to those individuals with just high school diploma. In this light, the essence of the college education is brought out, hence the need for the national government to ensure that there is access to college education for all Americans. The country will be better placed to compete with other nations placed in the same category in terms of power and wealth. Government involvement in funding college education would lead to equality in education access, and as well reduce the burden of increased student borrowing, hence a promise of stability upon graduation. As Holland elaborates, students with higher education loans are disadvantaged as they begin their education. The loans have significantly reduced the ability of the education system to be an equitable chance necessary for upward mobility.

According to The Executive Office of the President, low-income students have a little likelihood of attending colleges and universities compared to their high-income peers, hence the former are denied the chances of success(p. 4). Since few low-income students apply for higher

education institutions such as universities and colleges that best fit them intellectually, the result is a high level of academic undermatch.

### **Importance of Americans Accessing College Education**

Many professionals have ventured into the assessment of the need for college education, with the inclusion of the low-income students in the United States as it directly or indirectly leads to an improvement in the standards of living especially for the impoverished (The Executive Office of the President 8). There are various starting points in the assessment of the importance of college education among Americans. Such considerations include the cost of learning, the realization of a diverse society, the positive impact on students' morals, and lastly the transformation and development of communities.

The national government's initiative to finance higher education is influenced by the assessment of the cost of education. According to Forkner, there have been numerous concerns regarding the practicality of attaining an equilibrium between investment in higher education and the challenging economic times (18). Despite the great strides in funding college education guided by the practical policies of education, the American system of education has remained stagnant in contrast to international college education systems. The system of education has precisely been hampered by the 2008 economic downturns which led to the reductions in federal funding that significantly challenged higher education in America (Forkner 18).

There is the need to understand the connection between wages in the labor market and education levels. As explained by Zimmer, the link is built on the globally approved idea of imperfect substitution in terms of work and the availability of skills in the labor market (p. 9). In the highly competitive job market, there exists a positive salary bias that favors individuals with high and acceptable skills, such as those acquired in college, as well as increased human capital

(Zimmer 16). Therefore, people with college education are likely to lead better lives after graduation since higher salaries, which are linked to improved living standards, are accorded to people with high levels of education. Similarly, increase in higher skilled workers lead to decrease in the wage inequality, implying that the community with educated individuals is some steps away from equality in the labor market. According to Zimmer, higher levels of education not only helps an individual secure the best opportunities for increased wages but also assists the college graduate in finding a job quicker (15).

Additionally, humans gain knowledge after encounter and exposure to higher education. Therefore, the government involvement in funding college education is a promise to an informed society. Besides, higher education institutions are essential when it comes to nurturing positive ethics and good morals in university students. It lies in the human nature the ability to socially interact and associate in a social setting. Therefore, individuals with college level of education are beings capable of fitting in a community full of diversity. This is because colleges offer an environment of diversity necessary to shape the behaviors of individuals.

However, as explained by Hanson and Moore, the moral behavior in colleges could as well be negative such as the realization of high level of cheating that has become on the rise in business schools (p. 525). Therefore, there should be a keen consideration of the trends in such moral behavior in higher education institutions so as to gain a proof of whether colleges would only be for those who are not easily manipulated into development of harmful morals. In the case of learning vices such as cheating in college, there is the debate of individual principles and peer influence; hence it is not justifiable to assume that people would be negatively affected while in colleges. Student state of moral improvement cannot be considered as bankrupt since they are continuously seeking guidance to assist in their moral development with the central promise of

holding dear specific expectations for the institution as well as its agents (Hanson and Moore 540).

Besides, there are diverse schools of thought regarding the topic of morality and college education in the fact that some of the college programs are designed to encourage students to develop adequate cooperation skills with their future employers (Kris and Simon 6). In that light, college education could be viewed as a technique that promotes professional ethics as it exposes individuals to early experience in their respective specializations in the job market. The major issue with the stated consideration is the hypothesis that higher education institutions such as colleges and universities fail to prepare students for the workplace but rather is a system that encourages and promotes the notion of students to succeed solely in their examinations (Hanson and Moore 525). Therefore, there arises the need to improve the system of learning that would ultimately include a transformation in the ethical behavior of students hence make them fit in the job market.

The other reason as to why the national government should be involved in funding the college education is the fact that such higher education institution is a facet of development that is responsible for connecting students to a multicultural world; thus they can appreciate diversity. American youth should have access to college education in order to meet a diverse student culture that would help them have a broad view of life. A primary influence of higher education for all Americans is the creation of an atmosphere that helps in internationalization hence ability to learn about global principles (Berry and Taylor 585). With clarity in views from different cultures in the world, students are capable of comparing and appreciating the variations and thus use them to build themselves efficiently.

It would be advisable that the government take initiatives in making college education affordable to all Americans for the purpose of realization of cultural diversity. Additionally, efforts to ensure that all individuals have access to higher education imply that even the low-income earning families would afford to educate their children. This will further lead to equal opportunities both in the job market and also in the making and implementation of development policies in the society since individuals will be equipped with considerable skills for cooperation.

Additionally, more workforce training and use of profit-making institutions in America would be beneficial to the US population as it would offer youths the skills needed to work (Epstein). Epstein further explains that the national government should be involved in funding for apprenticeships and also provide other opportunities necessary to expand and improve the existing workforce training. There should be a diversity in routes to rewarding careers since students have differences in their nature of styles of learning as well motivational requirements (Epstein). Therefore, various kinds of jobs ought to be created for the students admitted in apprenticeship institutions. With such measures in line, there would be a significant diversity of skills in the job market, meaning that the rates of productivity and national development would as well increase.

Government involvement in college education implies that all individuals regardless of their socio-economic status will have access to the post-secondary education and training in academics (Epstein). When students are offered the chance to be in colleges, they are assured of developing training in a set of skills, academics, or trade that would assist them in increasing their employability after graduation. According to policy experts, the notion that a college is a place- made of mortar, bricks, lecture rooms, presidents, and faculties ought to change in the spirit of realization of the core essence of higher education (Epstein). College education should

be aimed at holistic transformation of students to highly skilled graduates who would act as significant assets in the process of national development.

The establishment of numerous community colleges in the local setting ensures that members of the involved society receive adult education, entrepreneurship development studies, community education, training of contract workforce, and also other related vocational training ventures (Rephann 444). As explained by Rephann, the access to community college is uneven, with the fundamental hindrance being the high cost of tuition rates (Rephann 451). It would, therefore, be considered as feasible when the government offers the much-needed support in promoting and enlightening all citizens in the community level. Members of the society will be better placed once they seek higher education via community-based higher education institutions since they will increase their knowledge base in various professionals. However, policy makers still identify the challenge when it comes to consideration of the benefits emanating from such local colleges. The problem is related to the subject of costs involved in funding community colleges.

It is important to first have a full understanding of the dynamics of risks associated with establishment and funding of the universities, and the anticipated gains (McKinney, Mukherjee and Wade 329). As explained by McKinney, Mukherjee, and Wade, low socio-economic status students view borrowing as their last resort as they have to fund their college education (330). Such community college students are driven by necessity when borrowing the higher education loans since they require to address the challenges of immediate liquidity; hence they overlook the long-term implications such as interest rates associated with the loan. Therefore, the involvement of the government in funding college education would remove the obstacle of financial constraints, ultimately providing an equal platform for all students. Similarly, community college

students would be capable of joining colleges with students from all walks of life, hence benefit from the advantages associated with diversity of principles and cultures. An alternative would be to avail loans through the federal loan policies; hence community college students becomes aware of the benefits and setbacks associated with taking up the investment option of borrowing in efforts to further their knowledge and skills (Zimmer 9).

### **Conclusion**

Higher education has increasingly become a fundamental need in the twenty-first century due to the increased demand for education in most cultures all over the world. However, lack of government involvement in funding college education has undermined the number of US students graduating from colleges as compared to graduates from other wealthy and powerful nations. The high cost of college fees is the primary reason that hinders many students from joining college. Few graduates from college imply that there would be increased inequality in the job market since jobs require and generously pay the skilled and educated individuals. Therefore, the national government should take initiatives in funding college education; hence make it affordable to all Americans.



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