

Students in Poverty: How to Keep Persistent in Schooling—A Case Study on the Poor Students’ Pursuing Schooling Experience in Different Ages of China

Jingjing Liu^{1,*}

¹Department of Students’ Affairs, Yancheng Teachers University, Yancheng, China

*Corresponding author: Department of Students’ Affairs, Yancheng Teachers University, Yancheng, China. E-mail: hobbyc@163.com

Received: September 22, 2019 Accepted: October 12, 2019 Published: December 9, 2019

doi:10.5296/ije.v11i4.15505 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ije.v11i4.15505>

Abstract

Education of citizens is a hot topic concerned by governments and educators in China. Over the past 60 years, the Chinese government has adopted different policies of educational subsidies in different periods, benefiting many students from poor families. In addition to direct financial aid, there are other factors affecting poor students’ schooling. This study interviewed seven individuals from low-income families who studied in different ages, from 1950s to 2010s. The issues covered in the interview included the family’s economic situation during their schooling, kinds of financial support they once got from schools and the government, parents’ attitude towards their studying, and the attitude of individuals towards learning in financial difficulty, etc. and studied individuals how to overcome the economic difficulties and complete the learning process under the influence of internal and external factors. The study showed that the respondents’ successful ones of different ages were all benefited from the financial support from the state and schools. Their yearning for formal school education and their recognition of the value of knowledge are the intrinsic driving forces for them to adhere to their studies. When the government and schools provide much direct financial assistance to poor students, they should also take active measures to improve students’ attitude towards school education and knowledge, stimulating their enthusiasm and initiative in learning, take measures to promote students’ learning ability, improving their academic self-confidence, which plays an important role in deciding whether poor individuals can persisting in schooling.

Keywords: students with financial difficulties, financial aids, value identity, persistence in schooling

1. Introduction

Education for poor students is the one of the key projects of the Chinese government, which is not only related to the fairness of education, the future development of the individuals, but related to this country's poverty reduction strategy, as education is considered to be the fundamental solution to intergenerational transmission of poverty. Under the guidance of this thought, the Chinese government have been actively taking various measures to provide assistance to students from low income families to ensure that they do not drop out of school because of financial difficulties. In 2018, the cumulative amount of subsidies reached ¥204.295 billion, 135 million students were subsidized. Exempts tuition fees and Book fees in compulsory education, provide food allowances, and grants in high schools, provide student loans, work-study, scholarships, grants and so on in tertiary education. Among the subsidized funds, the central and local governments accounted for 66.15%. The Government plays a major and leading role in this regard in terms of its long-term nature, the quantity of funds and the formulation of policies(Report on the Development of Student Aid in China, 2018), the same as OECD countries, government spending remains the main source of educational funding. While governments in other countries adopted different financial policies, such as French, Sweden, Austria, charge no tuition fees at all for students at higher education institutions, and in some countries, fees for international students and domestic students are treated differently(OECD 2014).The willingness of policy makers to expand access to educational opportunities and to provide high-quality education can translate higher costs per student and must be balanced against other demands on public expenditure and the overall tax burden. (OECD 2019, Education at a Glance 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en>)

Although the amount, type and object of education grants provided by each country are different, to the students in poor, the government's subsidy policy can influence the economic pressure during their schooling period and their decision in schooling time.

2. Literature Review

Poverty exists not only in extremely backward countries, but also in developing and even developed countries. There are different definitions of poverty in the poverty research. There are different measure of poor or low-income in Nordic countries. In Denmark the Ministry of Finances is defining low income families as families with a disposable income less than 50% of the median income, while the Norwegian figures presented from Fafo measured poverty by using both disposable income less than 60% of the median income and households getting social security. Finland is the same as Norway. While in Greenland, there in on official poverty line. Definition of Child poverty, income below the limit to get need-assessed benefit (Emma Henrikssoncauses), different ways of looking at child poverty as absolute or relative poverty, objective or subjective poverty, economic or social poverty. As the cause for children poverty, Emma Henrikssoncauses pointed at unemployment, insufficient education and immigration. Risk for child poverty was higher for children in families with foreign background, children with a single parent and highest for children with foreign background

and a single parent. Child poverty is also related to segregation between different parts of the big cities (Bodil, 2009). Studies of the mindset of poor students also have different views. Ben Carson, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, considered that poverty results from “the wrong mindset:” low-income persons with strong motivation can escape poverty while those with negative attitudes remain poor (Richard, 2017). Research of Stanford University has found students from low-income families who believe that they can develop skills and do better in school if they work hard and practice—a “growth mindset,” which may be buffered from the effects of poverty on student achievement (Mary Ellen Flannery 2016). The growth mindset was characterized as students believe that skill and academic strength can be developed through effort and practice. That's contrasted with students with a fixed mindset, who believe their intelligence and skill sets are unchangeable, like eye color. A first-of-its kind, large-scale study of 168,000 10th grade students in Chile proved that, but poor students in the study were also less likely to have a growth mindset than their higher-income peers, researchers found (Evie, 2016). At the extremes, students from the lowest-income families were twice as likely to endorse a fixed mindset as students from the top-income families and schools, according to the study. The large sample study demonstrated the effect of mentality on the academic performance and self-development of poor students, and of course, this does not negate the impact of external financial support and the necessary material conditions on the poor. Mobility research. Researchers (Richard, 2017; Steven, 2014) believed it is weak in America. Of children born to poor parents, almost half remain trapped in poverty as adults. Only 30 percent make it to the middle fifth or higher. Low-income African Americans are stuck even more. Over half remain poor as adults; only a quarter make it to the middle fifth or higher.

As the biggest developing country, the Chinese government has issued a total of more than 40 documents on various student funding policies, with 12 projects funded from 2006 to 29 in 2016. From 2007 to 2016, the total amount of funds accumulated by the whole country in preschool education, compulsory education, general high school, secondary vocational education, higher education and other education stages in China was ¥10542.26 billion. The amount of subsidy increased from ¥41.608 billion in 2007 to ¥168.876 billion in 2016, an increase of 3.06 times and an average annual increase of 16.84%. (The ten-year Development Report on Chinese student Funding (2007-2016). The implementation of policies and the investment of funds make the student financial assistance work in China protect the educational rights and interests of poor students to the greatest extent. Is the government's subsidy policy a key factor in poor students' adherence to their studies? In addition to external financial support, is there a unique internal psychological factor, so that poor students can overcome the difficulties of the time, continue their studies? This is the focus of this paper.

3. Methodology

Case study. This study used the methodology of one-to-one deep interview in April, 2019, got the study experience of 7 individuals of different years from low-income families, and explored the role of funding policies in subsidizing individuals in different eras, the cognitive

behavior characteristics of those students with financial difficulties but persistent in learning.

3.1 Recruitment

Recruit subjects from relatives, friends and students. Requirements: came from low-income families, did not dropout because of financial difficulties, aged between 20 and 70 years, according to the year of birth, every 10 years for an interval, 1-2 people in each interval.

3.2 Basic Information of Research Subjects

Table 1. Basic Information of the Subjects

Subjects	Gender	Born	Schooling Time	Education degree	Vocation	location of family
Case1	Male	1946	1956-1970	Secondary vocational school	Government official(retired)	Town in the east
Case2	Male	1961	1966-1982	Bachelor	High school teacher	Town in the east
Case3	Female	1978	1987-2003	Bachelor	High school teacher	Countryside in the east
Case4	Male	1983	1988-2008	Master	Doctor	Town in the east
Case5	Male	1989	1995-2011	Master	Teacher of police institute	Town in the east
Case6	Male	1996	2003-	Undergraduate student in reading	Junior	Countryside in the east
Case7	Male	1996	2003-	Undergraduate student in reading	Junior	Countryside in the east

3.3 Interview Questions

Questions in the interview involved 10 items as follows:

- Basic personal information, including the date of birth, gender, schooling time, degree, occupation, home location.
- Family members and income sources during school
- Learning expenses during school

- The way to identify the family economic situation during schooling.
- Financial aids received during school.
- In addition to the above-mentioned funding policies, how do individuals maintain their studies economically during their studies?
- How much does the school-provided funding policy play a role in addressing school expenses and in its own way? How effective are the financial aid policies provided by schools and their own ways in addressing school expenditure?
- Parents' attitude towards your continuing schooling behavior.
- The Impact of Learning Experience on Your Native Family and Personal Development
- Self-assessment of personal academic achievement level during schooling
- Combining with your own experience, what factors do you think will affect the learning process of students with financial difficulties?

3.4 Respondents' Answers to Questions

Case 1: Wang

Basically Family Information: There were parents and four siblings, with one disabled. Dad was the main income source of the whole family, as a shop clerk with a stable salary of 25RMB monthly which last for more than 20years (1950s-1970s).

Financial aids received in schools and self-help measures during schooling: From 1956 to 1961, in primary school, his tuition fees were exempted because of financial difficulties. He only needed to pay the book fees. At that time, the tuition fee was 3 RMB per semester, and the book fee was 2.5 RMB per semester. To pay the book fee and help parents economically, at the age of 10, Wang went out to collect waste during weekends, sorted and sold to the waste recycling workstation, then could earn about 1yuan each time. From 1961 to 1964, in the junior high school, besides tuition fee remission, he received a grant with 2yuan monthly; he only was required to pay book fees. He earned about 60 Yuan by working the whole summer vacation every year. Although failed to pass the selection examination of senior high school, after several months short-time job, he took part in the technical secondary school examination, and passed it, studied accounting. Tuition fee, book fee and basic cost of living were all covered by the government. All students went to this kind of school for free. He continued to work during the holidays to earn money. Once worked in the government canteen and local state-owned farm. In addition to pay for book fees, all the money he earned was given to parents to subsidize family expenses. "During that period, most people in China were still in absolute poverty, and maintaining the basic survival needs of family members was the goal of most families, and earning money as early as possible to support themselves and their families was what many parents expected of their children." Wang said in the interview.

How schools identify the ones in need of financial aids: In the elementary school, the

qualifications for tuition fee exemption was not based on personal applications, but on the actual economic situation the head teachers got during their visiting to the students' families, and then the information was submitted to the school for confirmation. Only the head teachers knew who in the class was eligible for tuition reduction or exemption. The list was not public. Wang himself was told by his teacher to keep secret about his qualification, not let his classmates know about it since he was in grade 1. The same to elementary school, in junior middle school, students from poor family did not fill any applications, teachers' routine visit was the practical way to know each one's family financial situations and who really in need. Different from primary school, the lists who received subsidies were open in the class. More than a dozen students in the class were subsidized while the total number in the class was 45. According to memories, the recipients not only financially difficult, but excellent in academic performance and self-discipline.

Parents' attitude towards his schooling: No support at all and did not help him financially since the first day he came into school.

Personal views on schooling and education: Strong and unswerving. "Only formal education and knowledge can change the fate of poverty." "If parents don't support you, depend on yourself and study as much as you can anyway."

Case 2: Sheng

Family situation during schooling: Parents with 4 children. Only the father had a job with the salary was 38.5yuan monthly. The father was sick when Sheng was in Grade 3 of primary school, and passed away when Sheng was in Grade 1 of senior middle school. So, Sheng started to earn money since in junior high school, and kept until graduated from university.

Father's salary, farming, personal part-time work once were the main sources of household income. Since father's passed away, farming was only enough for basic survival needs, while personal part-time work brought uncertain income. According to the data of National Bureau of Statistics, the average annual wage of workers and staff nationwide was 615 Yuan in 1978, and the average monthly wage was 51 Yuan. The per capital disposable income of Urban Households in 1978 was 343.4 Yuan. The income of the family was below the average level for a long time.

Basic expenditure during schooling: Primary school tuition was 1.5 Yuan per semester, book fee was the same. Both costs were 3.5 Yuan per semester during junior high School. Tuition fees and book fees in high school were the same as in junior high school.

Financial aids received in schools and self-help measures during schooling: Despite the poverty of the family, Sheng did not get any financial aids from primary school to high school. He paid the fees as the schools required, didn't owe nor defer. Tuition and accommodation at university were exempt from payment because of the normal-majoring. Additionally, the University distributed basic living expenses to guarantee the students' living. A monthly subsistence allowance of 12.4 Yuan (increase by 2 Yuan after 1980) and a monthly grant of 4 Yuan. Fare subsidies for winter and summer vacation were 10 Yuan each time. He was only required to pay 20yuan of book fee per semester. He began to participate the

work-study programme in the library since in grade 2, got 1.2 Yuan each day and about 30 Yuan totally a semester, which made the high education affordable. In addition to the financial policy enjoyed during college, the expenditure during school was basically self-financing. Since junior high school, in addition to temporary work during the holidays, he also raised experimental white rabbits, mainly mow grass to raise rabbits, and then sold them to relevant research departments.

How schools identify the ones in need of financial aids: There was no subsidy for students in need from primary school to high school, tuition fees just could be paid delayed in some time, the list of students who owe tuition fees would be announced in public, and teachers would urge students to pay tuition fees. During the higher education, family economic situation identification process was in a serious procedure, included individual application, Class Committee discussion, openness in class, then determined the grade of the grants one could get. Grants, divided into three grades 4, 2, 1 Yuan per person per month at that time. The tuition remission and grants covered all students of the same major.

Parents' attitude towards his schooling: If you had the ability to learn, go to school; if you had not, dropout. Without support, no objection either. Meeting the basic survival needs of a family of six was the most urgent thing at that time.

Personal views on schooling and education: During the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, little was learned in the courses. But participating in the literary and artistic propaganda team in the school, his own interest in literature and art was cultivated, which had a great and positive impact to his study in Chinese in University, the impact lasted on even after his graduation from school, while he engaged in secondary education and language teaching work.

Self-assessment of Individual Academic Achievement Level during School Period: Good.

Combining with your own experience, what factors do you think will affect the learning process of students with financial difficulties? In those days, as long as we wanted to learn, economic difficulties were surely not a big problem, but could stimulate upward forces. Today, the situation is different. Families with financial difficulties are extremely difficult to produce talents. After all, today's schools can make students succeed not only by having a book and a set of homework. Especially in the past two decades, the success and success rate of wealthy families and poor families are not the same. There are too many additional textbooks in today's primary and secondary education. Children from the two varied families have different conditions of knowledge, experience and learning, and the gap will widen.

Case 3: Zhao

Family situation during schooling: There were parents and six siblings in the family. They lived in countryside, having some farmland. Like many local families, in order to have a son, the parents kept having baby until the sixth one was a boy. The father worked in a local factory, his salary and farming were the income resources of the whole family. The income barely covered the expenses of the family. Unfortunately, the father was laid off in the reform of state-owned enterprises in China in the middle of 1990s. Later, the father became ill and

passed away in her second year of college. The average monthly household income was 200 RMB in the period of Zhao's primary till junior middle school. That number went up to 400 when she entered into senior high school, and stopped growing because her father was laid off and died of disease afterwards. As the family couldn't afford several kids' schooling expenditure, her four older sisters all stopped schooling after junior middle school mostly. As the head of the family, the father thought that it was useless for the girls to go to school, girls couldn't find jobs like boys even if graduation from school. So after Zhao graduated from junior high school, he no longer agreed to support her continuing her study.

Financial aids received in schools and self-help measures during schooling: From entering primary school until graduated from high school, Zhao normally paid her tuition fees and book fees as required, did not enjoy any financial assistance from school or local government. As the father refused to support her higher education, her mother borrowed from relatives for her college tuition. In the university, she received a subsidy of 65 Yuan per month for her major in normal education. She also once received scholarships because of excellent academic performance, several hundred Yuan a time. She earned part of living expenses by doing tutoring and other part-time jobs. Her college tuition was 3000 Yuan a year, accommodation was 800 Yuan a year, and in addition, the basic living expenses was 200 Yuan a month.

Personal views on the influence of schooling and education to her family and herself: It increased the financial burden on her parents, but she herself had strong willing to study, believed that only knowledge can change the fate, can change the living conditions of the original family. Facts have proved that it was right to stick to it.

Self-assessment of individual academic performance during school: excellent.

Combining with your own experience, what factors do you think will affect the learning process of students with financial difficulties? Zhao's opinion is that the economic situation is only one factor, and that students' attitude and perseverance towards learning are the decisive factors, especially how strong and firm is the belief that knowledge can change destiny? The stronger, firmer is this belief, the stronger will to study.

Case 4: Yang

Basically Family Information: Parents with two boys. In 1992, when Yang was 10 years old and his little brother was only 4, the father suffered from cancer and passed away, leading the family into trouble. Mother's salary was the main source of income for the family. In the middle of 1990s the mother's monthly salary was 300 Yuan, and her annual income was nearly 4000 Yuan. According to the data of the State Statistical Bureau, in 1995, the average annual wage of workers and staff in the country was 5,500 Yuan, and the per capital disposable income was 4,283 Yuan (Baidu Knows). Later, the mother's salary rose with the rise of the salary level of the whole society. In 2000, the year Yang was enrolled to college, it increased to more than 1,200 Yuan per month. The number climbed up to more than 2,000 Yuan while his younger brother entered into college in 2007. As a support programme to their families after the government officials passed away, the government subsidized the family

100 Yuan a year as a pension, and released rice and other food as condolences during the Spring Festival. This assistance lasted more than 20 years until both the two brothers graduated with master's degree.

Schooling Expenditure: The tuition fees for elementary school was more than 20 Yuan per semester, for junior high school, more than 60 Yuan per semester, and for senior high school, more than 100 Yuan per semester. From 2000 to 2005, he studied medicine in a university. The tuition fee was 4,600 Yuan per school year. The accommodation fee was 800 Yuan per school year. Expenditure on living expenses was 300-400 Yuan per month. During his postgraduate study, the tuition fee was 5,200 Yuan per academic year and the accommodation fee was 1,200 Yuan. Expenditure on living expenses was 600-700 Yuan per month.

Financial aids received in schools and self-help measures during schooling: No financial aid from elementary school to high middle school. During college years, he received the following subsidies: 4000 Yuan of scholarship totally, 2000 Yuan of tuition exemption, 5000 Yuan of work-study, and national grant 2000 Yuan. During postgraduate period, he received subsidies as follows: 1000 Yuan of scholarship, 2000 Yuan salary of work-study jobs. He did tutoring and helped teacher do scientific research to get some income.

How schools identify the ones in need of financial aids: Teachers knew that based on personal application and local certification. The results of the confirmation and who received scholarships and grants were all made public in class.

What is the role of the financial aid policy provided by schools and their own ways in solving school expenditure? Yang admitted financial aid from schools played a major role in resolving his school expenditure.

Parents' attitudes towards his schooling: Very supportive. Mom provided as much financial support as she could.

Personal views on schooling and education: the family and his own economic situation have been improved through schooling and higher education.

Self-evaluation of individual academic achievement level during school is excellent.

Combining with your own experience, what factors do you think will affect the learning process of students with financial difficulties? Yang's answer is: parents' attitude towards children's schooling, employment quality after graduation, individual's self-motivation towards schooling.

Case 5: Ming

Basic situation of the family: Case4 Yang's younger brother. The two cases are the same in terms of family structure, income and so on.

Expenditure on schooling: Primary school tuition was 200-300 Yuan per semester. The fee for junior high school was also 200-300 Yuan per semester. High school tuition was 1200 Yuan per semester. Without accommodation fee. After going into university in 2007, his tuition fee was 4600 Yuan per academic year, the accommodation fee was 1200 Yuan, the book fee was

600 Yuan, and the living cost was 400 Yuan per month. His master's degree was admitted to the public fee category because of excellent grades, and the individual was exempt from paying the tuition and book fees, only had to pay 900 Yuan per academic year for accommodation. His living expenses were 1000 Yuan a month.

Financial aids received in schools and self-help measures during schooling: During undergraduate period, he received a total of 1500 Yuan in the school professional scholarship, the National Inspirational Scholarship 2 times a total of 10000 Yuan, student loans twice totaled 9200 Yuan, the total amount of the above items was 20700 Yuan. During his master's degree, in addition to the treatment of exemption from tuition fees, he also received 400 Yuan a month of living allowance, totaled 10000 Yuan, obtain national scholarships twice totaling 20000 Yuan because of academic excellence, the total amount of the above items was 30000 Yuan. In addition to the financial support provided by the school, he himself earned money through tutoring, internships, etc.

Evaluation of the effect of school financial aids and individual efforts: Ming thought subsidies provided by schools played an important role in solving his tuition fees, while his own ways played an important role in solving living expenses.

The determination of the family economic situation during the university was based on the individual application and the local civil Affairs department determines that the result was disclosed in the class, and who got the award-winning grant was also made public in the class. Parents' attitude towards his schooling: Full support.

The impact of schooling towards original family and his personal development: To original family, before finished the undergraduate education, tuition and living expenses was a financial burden on the family, and during the postgraduate education, there was little burden on families due to the exemption of tuition fees, combined with school scholarships, national scholarships and internship salaries.

The impact of schooling on personal development: In the process of learning, especially at the undergraduate and postgraduate stages, independent ability can be cultivated and form rational views. One should keep moving into a higher platform through learning.

Self-assessment of individual academic achievement levels during school: Good.

According to your own experience, what factors do you think will affect the learning process of students with financial difficulties in their families? Ming's answer is: High cost of living; Feelings of inferiority arising from inferior than others in eating and dressing; in order to earn money, did multiful part-time jobs, reducing the time of study, which has a negative impact on studying.

Case 6: Zhou

Basic Family Information: Parents with two boys, living in rural area. The family's economic situation was so difficult that Zhou only had two months in kindergarten, his father had been worked in the village gypsum mine as a blaster, after the gypsum mine was closed, he was laid-off, after that, the father had to engage in long-term farming and odd jobs, the mother has

been doing farm work at home for a long time. The mother has been in poor health for a long time, couldn't do heavy work after a major operation in 2016. Zhou himself was maimed in an accident in 2003, and the family was heavily indebted and more impoverished. Average monthly income of the family: primary school: 2000 Yuan; junior high school: 3000 Yuan; senior high school: 4000 Yuan; university: 4000 Yuan. Parents' wages, family farming and Zhou's part-time work are the main sources of income for the family.

Basic situation of expenditure during schooling: No tuition fees because of compulsory education policy. The book fee was 32 Yuan per academic year. Expenditure in junior high school: Tuition was 1200 Yuan per academic year. No book fees. The accommodation fee was 360yuan per semester. Living expenses were 1280 Yuan per semester. Expenditure in senior high school: Tuition was 1600yuan per academic year. No book fees. The accommodation fee was 400yuan per academic year. Living expenses were 2000yuan per semester. Expenditure in college: Tuition was waived because of disability. The book fee is 600yuan per semester. The accommodation fee is 1200yuan per academic year. His living expenses are 3200yuan per semester.

Financial aids received in schools and self-help measures during schooling: No financial aids from elementary school to high school. Three years of University: 1100yuan of Scholarship, 17400yuan of Fee Remission for disabled students, 400yuan salary of work-and study totally, 15000 yuan of Peeli Grant. Besides the assistance school offered above, Zhou also works part-time outside the school, carries out entrepreneurial activities to self-support.

Measures for determining the economic situation of families during schooling: None from primary school to senior high school. In college, the identification of the student's family difficulties is of three links, individual application, by the local Civil Affairs Department audit and determination, and finally by the school approval, the results of the determination and the various financial assistance is public.

Parents' attitude towards his schooling: His parents gave him full support for his study.

The impact of your study experience on your native family and personal development: Education spending is indeed stressful for his family, whilst he benefited from continuous education in the openness of personal vision and the enhancement of multi-faceted ability.

Self-assessment of individual academic achievement levels during school attendance: Good.

According to your own experience, what factors do you think will affect the learning process of students with financial difficulties in their families? Zhou's answer is the support from the family, the level of personal achievement and the outside funding.

Case 7: Liu

Basic situation of the family during schooling: Parents with two boys. Living in the countryside, the family income mainly depends on farming for a long time. During his schooling, the family economy was very difficult. Now with the progress of technology, the increase in the variety of agricultural products, the household income of his family is much better than before. Besides Liu, the family has to support his brother's schooling.

Basic situation of family income during Liu's schooling: During Liu's primary school period, the number was about 600 Yuan per month, then was 1000 Yuan per month when he was in junior high school, the number climbed to 1200 Yuan per month during his senior high school, when he went to college, the monthly income of the family rose to about 2500 Yuan.

Basic expenditure for his school attendance: No tuition fees during compulsory education. 800 Yuan per semester of tuition fee during high school. In the university, tuition fee is 5200 Yuan per academic year, books cost is 1000 Yuan per academic year, accommodation costs is 1200 Yuan per academic year, living expenses of 1200 Yuan per month.

Financial aids received in schools and self-help measures during schooling: None in elementary school, 75yuan monthly of living allowance in junior high school, 1000yuan of living allowance per academic year during senior high school. During university, he received Peeli Grant of 5000yuan every academic year, 200 Yuan of professional scholarship. Liu did part-time work to get some additional income.

Methods for determining the financial situation of students' families at all stages of his schooling: None in primary school. From junior high School to university, this work involves individual applications, local civil affairs Department audit, school identification process, the results of the definition and financial assistance related were shown in the class publicly.

Liu admit the financial support provided by schools has a greater impact on reducing his financial burden of going to school.

Parents' attitude towards his schooling: Supportive.

The impact of study experience on your native family and personal development: On the one hand, to a certain extent, it is good for the family glory, as the parents received less education because of poverty, he learned more in the knowledge, along with experience and could share with them, also let them get joy from that. On the other hand, to himself, studying not only enriches his own knowledge, but also has increased his own life experience; schooling has been playing a profound role in the development of his own life.

Self-assessment of individual academic achievement levels during school attendance: Medium.

According to your own experience, what factors do you think will affect the learning process of students come from families with financial difficulties? His answer were tuition fees, state funding policies, parents' attitudes to learning, their own attitudes towards learning, and the geographical location of their schools.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Schooling for Children from Poor Families Tends to Create a Conflict between the Needs of Collective Survivals and the Needs of Individual Development

The primary aim for poor families is to meet their basic survival needs, children's education

belongs to the developmental needs of individuals, so when the basic survival needs of the whole family are not satisfied, especially when the family in absolute poor condition, children's personal developmental needs can hardly get support from their parents. To the family in poor financial conditions, kids are given the responsibility to help parents support their families, the sooner the better.

4.2 Persistence to Learning of Poor Students is, without Exception, an Individual's Autonomous Behavior

To kids who are in poverty and want to get higher education, the only ones they could rely on are themselves. So, they show self-help awareness and behavior at early ages. They come up with all kinds of ways to pay for their own schooling expenditure, without parents' support and guidance. Academic persistence is often closely related to their developmental mindset, they firmly believe that study can change their future.

4.3 Government and School Funding Play an Important Role in Helping Poor Students' Schooling

In the past 60 years, the focus of government financial aids has shifted from elite higher education to funding for the whole process of each formal school education section. In the 60s-80s of last century, education expenditure in elementary and senior middle school were borne by pupils and their families, financial aids such as tuition fee remission did exist. But since the number of poverty was enormous, limited financial assistance resources could not meet the needs of all poor students, so even if case 2 was indeed financially difficult, he did not enjoy the tuition fee remission before higher education. Wang's sister, 6 years younger than him, came from the same family, didn't either. Wang attributed this to academic achievements, and his sister's academic performance was not excellent enough to qualify for a fee waiver. In order to avoid contradictions, it was the preferred method for teachers to keep the confidentiality of younger students who were eligible for tuition remission. When the resources of education funding are sufficient and the system is gradually perfected, openness becomes an inevitable trend.

4.4 Compared to Decades ago, Students in Poverty Get more and more Support in Their Schooling

Government, schools, enterprises and individuals, give poor students financial aids together, those poor with excellent academic performance usually have more choice in scholarships. Besides assistance from outside, support from parents is rising in the poor family. As the knowledge and education level play an more and more important role in nowadays, kids are no longer only helper to the current survival needs, but a hope to lift the family out of poverty. Fewer kids release the burden of families, and increase the parents' expectations towards kids' education level to the families' future.

The first 5 interviewees have been engaged in decent and secure jobs in government public office, teachers, doctors, etc., and have completed the change of family poverty and the transformation of their class gradually after graduation, which has proved that they were right to persist in their studies. Of the 7 people, only 1 committed moderate academic performance,

and the other 6 were all good, which means good academic performance can help poor students develop positive and optimistic expectations for the success of their studies and their future development after education. Those would become a powerful internal driving force to promote poor students to seek various ways actively to overcome economic difficulties and continue their studies. Although the ways varied significantly in different ages, no matter what the social and economic conditions at that time and how bad the economic situation their families were, they can always find ways to earn money.

4.5 An Analysis of the Factors Affecting the Adherence of Economically Disadvantaged Students to Studies

Internal Factors: A firm value recognition of learning. The individual's strong willingness to study. No matter how bad the financial situation was, the strong willingness of the individuals push them seek ways actively to earn money overcome the difficulties, even no support they got from their parents. The strong willingness to study is generally based on one's academic ability.

Intermediary factors: The individual's academic performance. Individuals who achieve above the average academic level are able to build academic self-confidence, can also get more financial aid for academic excellence. This will further encourage students with financial difficulties to study harder, then form a virtuous circle.

External factors: Government and school financial aids policies. In the past 60 years, the government and schools have provided more and more help to students with financial difficulties in terms of stability, popularity and variety, especially ensures the basic education for the poor students for nine years, individuals do not need to earn money for school expenses at the age of only 10 or so. It reflects the effectiveness of government investment and support in education.

Draw Cognitive Behavior Chart of Poor Students' Persistence in Learning as Figure 1:

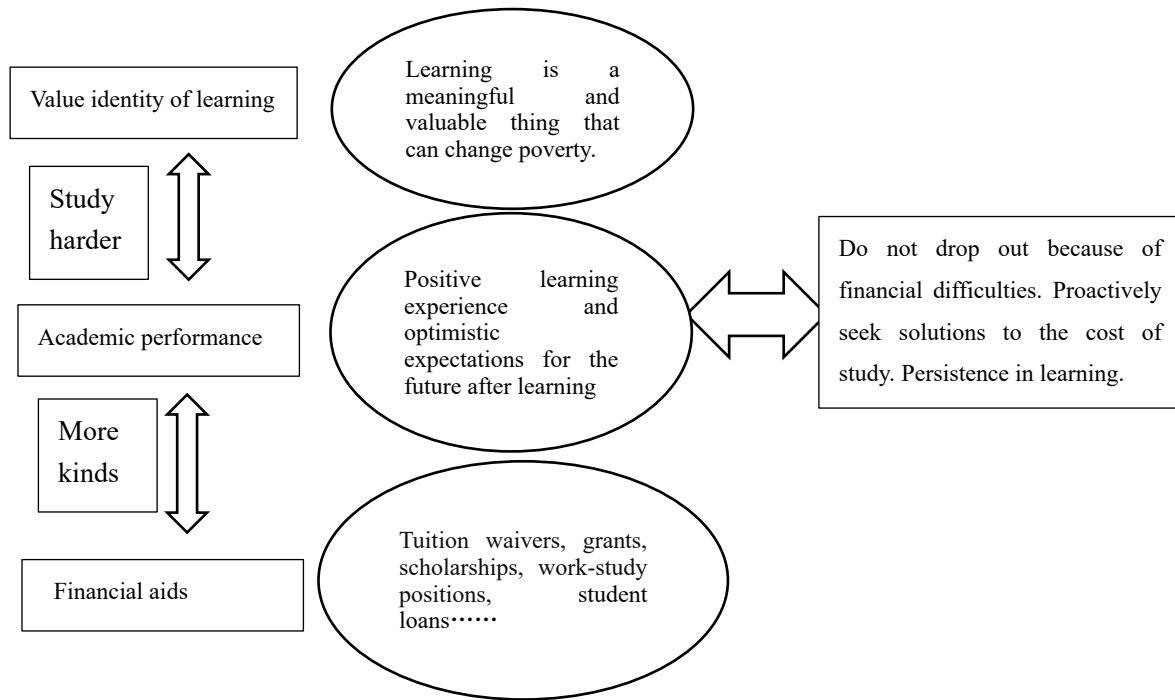


Figure 1. Cognitive Behavior Chart of Poor Students' Persistence in Learning

5. Conclusions and Implications for Research and Practice

5.1 Individuals' Attitude towards Learning is the Vital Inner Element That Push Them Persist in Learning

When students with financial difficulties have a firm recognition of the value of learning, they will strive to find ways, such as earn money by themselves or get financial aids from school to maintain the expenditure during the study period. The effectiveness of financial aid items is influenced by poor people's attitudes toward learning. If poor students have a negative assessment of learning and the future after graduation, such as how much can a college degree contribute to improving family poverty, they will lose the motivation to stick to learning. Even if the school provides various financial aids, he may give up his studies.

5.2 Poor Students' Persistence in Studying has a Close Relation to Their Academic Performance

Poor students with excellent academic performance are more confident in their academic ability and have more positive expectations for the future of continuous learning. Their academic performance at school not only give them a sense of accomplishment and academic confidence, but also enables them to receive more financial aids, especially when educational funding is scarce in the whole society.

5.3 Growth Mindset in the Poor Children can Strongly Incentive them to Think and Resolve Difficulties Actively, Face kinds of Challenge, Push Them Endeavor to out of Poverty, and Finally Succeed

No matter how difficulty their native families are, they believe the poor condition is not unchangeable, but can be changed though their efforts. This kind of mindset also influence the mobility of individuals in poor. The cases in the study have been or are about to out of poverty in native families, with significant improvements in income and living environment compared with their parents.

5.4 The Chinese Government should Adopt Measures to Make Education and Knowledge more Attractive to Poor Students

Direct financial aids is not the more the better. Since the Chinese government has established large-scale educational assistance system, he should start to improve the quality of education, and thus improve the market competitiveness of the educated. Education is an effective way to blocking-up the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Over the past 60 years, through personal efforts and state funding, several generations of impoverished students have persisted in pursuing their studies, gradually shaken off the poverty of their native families, had a good living environment and spiritual pursuit. In retrospect of past hardships in learning, they have more recognition of the value of knowledge and personal will quality.

In fact, with the popularization of higher education in China, the market value of undergraduate education has gradually depreciated. Although the absolute salary level of undergraduate students is rising after graduation, compared with the peers who did not receive higher education, the advantages of undergraduate education are not as obvious as those of 20 years ago. Therefore, when China has established a sound subsidy policy, in order to continue attracting and helping poor students continue to go to school, it is necessary to strengthen poor people's recognition of knowledge and take positive and effective measures to improve the quality of higher education, so that can increase to attractiveness of knowledge and the competitiveness of school education to poor students, but not just give much money directly.

Acknowledgements

This work is supported by Jiangsu Education Science 13th Five-Year plan 2018 (Key funding project of Student financial aid special topics). The project name: Study on the identification of students with family financial difficulties in colleges and universities under the idea of precision financial support. The project number: X-a/2018/19. This study is a phased result of the project.

References

- Baidu Knows. Retrieved from <https://zhidao.baidu.com/question/2080394249279070788.html>
- Baidu Knows. Retrieved from <https://zhidao.baidu.com/question/247593033.html>
- Baidu Knows. Retrieved from <https://zhidao.baidu.com/question/353513973.html>
- Blândul, V. C. (2013). Scholar Absenteeism – A Continues Challenge of Contemporary Education. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 76, 917-921. <https://10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.04.231>.
- Bodil, E. (2009). Child Poverty in the Nordic countries International Council on Social Welfare. Retrieved from https://www.icsw.org/images/docs/Regions/europe/activities/2009-11-20_Child-poverty-in-the-Nordic-Countries-rapport.pdf
- China National Center for Student Financial Aid. Retrieved from <http://www.csa.cee.edu.cn/>
- Chinese Student Funding Development Report 2018. National Student Financial Assistance Management Center. Retrieved from http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrb/html/2019-03/11/nw.D110000renmrb_20190311_1-06.htm
- Claridge, H., & Ussher, M. (2019). Does financial support for medical students from low income families make a difference? A qualitative evaluation. *BMC Medical Education*, 19, 153.
- Education at a Glance 2014, OECD. Retrieved from https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2014_eag-2014-en
- Education at a Glance 2019, OECD. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/>
- Evie, Blad. (2016). Mindset a Key Factor in Student Success. Retrieved from <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/08/03/mindset-a-key-factor-in-student-success.html>
- Financial Aid for UK Residents. Retrieved from <https://england.edu/admissions/financial-aid-for-uk-residents>.
- Harry, J. H., Kirsch, I., & Braun, H. (2016). Improving Opportunity through Better Human Capital Investments for the Labor Market. *The Dynamics of Opportunity in America*. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-25991-8_11
- Loris, V., & Nadir, Z. (2015). Away, but not too far from home. The effects of financial aid on university enrolment decisions. *Economics of Education Review*, 49(12), 91-109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2015.08.003>
- Mary, E. F. (2016). Retrieved from

<https://www.neatoday.org/2016/09/29/growth-mindset-in-students/>

National Bureau of Statistics of China. Retrieved from <http://data.stats.gov.cn/easyquery.htm?cn=C01>

Oseguera, L. R., & Byung, S. (2009). The Influence of Institutional Retention Climates on Student Persistence to Degree Completion: A Multilevel Approach. *Research in Higher Education, 50*, 546-569.

Richard, R. (2017). Is poverty a mindset? Economic Policy Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.epi.org/blog/is-poverty-a-mindset/>

Steven, H. I. (2014). Inequality, Mobility, and Being Poor in America. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d2a7/4e4b1fd6613bb6b818d1f29b12f697e5ddad.pdf>

Ten years of student funding mainstay progressive education equity has taken significant steps—Key points of the ten-year Development Report on Chinese student Funding. (2017). *Studies of finance and accounting in education, 28*(5), 3-9. http://xueshu.baidu.com/usercenter/paper/show?paperid=a72954a6160d0dd68bda6cb8b2d73b0a&site=xueshu_se

Types of Aid. Federal Student Aid. Retrieved from <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>

Wei, H., Fan, L., Xiaowei L., & Pingping, H. (2018). More money, better performance? The effects of student loans and need-based grants in China's higher education. *China Economic Review, 51*(10), 208-227. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2017.09.005>

Copyright Disclaimer

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).