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Should Students Attending College Be Financially Independent and Pay Their Own Way

Through School?

Over the recent past, college education has become costly with the increased tuition fees in most private and public institutions, which are attributed to the increased inflation globally. The high education costs make it challenging for most students to get through college. It is expected that parents and guardians should support their children financially through school. According to a report published by Baum, it is revealed that 80% of parents within the United States cannot afford to pay tuition fees for their college children adequately (10). With the education costs soaring within the United States, the government has somehow provided financial assistance, for instance through grant funding to students. However, the aid may not be enough for the students to make it through college, and thus, it has raised concerns for students to look for part-time or full-time employment to improve their financial status and cater for their financial needs on their own. Besides, students require finances to pay their rent, bills, utilities, and other basic living costs through their college life. With the present-day economic changes, it may be hard for students to find well-paying jobs and to balance work time with school work.

So, should students attending college be financially independent and pay their own way through school? On one perspective, some argue that college education are for the benefit of the students and not the society or parents, and thus, the students should cater for their college costs by themselves. This argument can be invalidated in the sense that educated individuals are valuable assets to the society. For instance, employed medicine students graduates enjoy the benefits of education through salaries and contribute to health well-being of the society by providing professional and quality healthcare services. Moreover, working graduates contribute to economic welfare of the society as they build their careers (Ellis, par. 6). In this sense, it is essential for the society to offer financial support the students to gain education for the benefits of the society at large.

Can students attend college be financially independent? Financial independence for college students will require one to source out a job to cover for their financial needs. While this may seem easy, it may be overwhelming to get a well-paying job and set time for the job and school work. First of all, students may be required to work on a part-time basis, which may be approximated to 35 or more hours on a weekly basis. It is said that college itself is a fulltime job, raising controversies in whether students can balance part-time employment and study schedules. Apparently, it may be difficult to balance between working time and school time for employed students. In light of this argument, Mounsey et al., reports that most working students are faced with problems such as anxiety and depression which leads to lower grades compared to non-working university students (15-16). Despite the fact that the society expects students to cater to their financial needs and become independent, the burden on these students may lead to increased school dropout. Parents may claim that it is easy to attain financial independence while attending college with the consideration that most of them paid their way through college by themselves. On

the contrary, it should be considered that this argument is based on their past experiences. In the current economic system and the skyrocketing tuition fees, it may be harder to meet basic financial needs while young. In essence, some students have made it through college while working on full time and part-time jobs. Several cases of working students have revealed that it was quite overwhelming and it required much determination to cope with their jobs and fix class time around their working schedule.

Although it is difficult to pay your way through college, several options can offer financial independence and help one cope through college, graduate, and objectively secure a well-paying job in the future. Firstly, students can consider admission to lower-paying public institutions such as local community colleges. One can also find colleges that offer lower tuition fees to residents within a given locality. Besides, providing low tuition fees, such institutions will reduce housing expenses if one spends the night at their home. Secondly, one may consider applying for financial aids through grants, loans, and scholarships. Whereas one may receive funding, it is essential for one to reduce college life expenses such as partying expenses. Lastly, one can opt for legal emancipation granted by a court of law, which ensures financial role and status of parents is separated from those of their children. It is imperative to note the legal considerations required for the emancipation of children. For instance, one should consider that the legal justifications for separation of children's and parents' financial status are only applicable to parents whose overall family gross income is below \$50,000.

Conclusively, financial pressures among college students may affect the successful completion of their studies. Though some students have full financial support from their parents, they may fail to graduate. Whereas, some students who do not receive financial support from parents, may make their way through college through sourcing out for ways to meet their financial

needs through loans, grants, scholarships, or employment. It is of necessity that such students who work through their college time have an added advantage over their peers after graduation. Working during college may be challenging, but it is essential for students to ensure they balance

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their work and studies to achieve both life skills for jobs and academic gratification through graduation. Essentially, there are several part-time jobs such as online and virtual assistance jobs, available for college students. To sum it up, students should look out for such opportunities to attain financial independence.

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