Education Funding’s Impact on Society and Comparability

Erika Cunanan & Ydylle Acosta

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Dr. Kimberly Bunts-Anderson

Northern Marianas College

Abstract:

Education funding is money used for the funding of school needs and expenses. This paper will be introduced by the system behind education funding. Education funding comes from different places, like the federal government, tax payers money, and local government. This academic essay explores education funding and its impact on society. This essay will also focus on the impact of the lack of funding for schools, specifically Northern Marianas College. Comparability of funding systems from other states in the United States will allow us to comprehend how money is distributed. We must understand what happened in the past and compare it to the present so we can foresee the future.

In Article XV Section 2 of the Commonwealth Constitution entitled, “Higher and Adult Continuing Education,” it states that:

“The purpose of the college shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful postsecondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole.”

Unfortunately, Typhoon Yutu hindered NMC students to experience the quality education that was promised in the constitution, but the institution has done their best with rebuilding campuses, providing instructors for classes, and tending to the needs of students. But how is the money distributed? Let’s look at the U.S. In 2016, college institutions in the United States spent about $584 billion. Total expenses were $372 billion for public institutions, $197 billion for private nonprofit institutions, and $15 billion at private for-profit institutions (NCES, 2016)..

In 2010, the CNMI received nearly $12 million in additional recovery funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Press Office of U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Referring back to Article XV Section 2 of the Commonwealth Constitution, it states that:

“The college shall be guaranteed an annual budget of not less than one percent of the general revenues of the Commonwealth. The budgetary appropriation may not be reprogrammed for other purposes, and any unencumbered fund balance at the end of a fiscal year shall be available for reappropriation.”

General revenues in the CNMI consists of profit from casino industries. Socioeconomic factors disrupt the funding that goes into education. An article published on January 16, 2020 declares that the Board of Education proposed a tax increase of 10% for those people who make $50,000 per annum for PSS. If the same effort from authorities in NMC was exerted into bettering the education fund system, we wouldn’t be writing this essay today. Although the austerity program plays a major role in the disturbance of funds, we believe that other measures could be adjusted to improve the learning environment of students in higher education.

Lack of education funding has negative effects on us in the CNMI because the quality of our education becomes lessened. Teachers have lower salaries, there are insufficient funds for classrooms and their materials, conditions of school’s buildings are affected, and courses or time for school may be lessened too. In a study led by James Coleman, it showed that achievement in schools depends on the money that comes in. “It is known that socioeconomic factors bear a strong relation to academic achievement. When these factors are statistically controlled, however, it appears that differences between schools account for only a small fraction of differences in pupil achievement” (pg. 21-22)

By looking back and researching about the CNMI’s education funding systems, how it was distributed back then until today, and comparing it to the education funds in the U.S., we are able to understand how the lack of funds affects us and why we need to act now.

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