

Policy paper

Sociology



Ideology behind the Funding of Education Behind every social policy lies the philosophy or the ideology adhered to by the government. It is through the nature of such policy also that a government may be considered as conservative, liberal, or radical. President Barack Obama and his administration have been rightly labeled as liberals because of the kind of social policies that they are promoting. In the face of the states' efforts to cut social spending, the Obama administration expressed apprehension over the negative effects of cutting the funding that used to be meant for education. In the news report mentioned in this paper, the President urged the governors to continue subsidizing education. This is basically an appeal that is founded on the liberal perspective. Although they are conservatives and although they did believe that government spending should be reduced, the governors expressed agreement with the President. Apparently, what convinced them to support the President's call was the fact that the appeal was none in a manner that treated education as an investment, a perspective that is conservative. By using a conservative perspective to convince the governors to support a liberal social policy, President Obama won them over to his campaign to retain government spending for education. This is definitely an example of how political leaders are able to skillfully use diplomacy to achieve goals without necessarily compromising their ideology.

The Ideology behind the State Funding of Education

In February 28, 2012, Associate Press came out with a news report about President Barack Obama's appeal to the governors of the states not to cut funding for education. The appeal was made while the President was giving a speech at the National Governors Association's annual winter meeting that <https://assignbuster.com/policy-paper/>

was held in Washington. In the said article which was written by Beth Fouhy with contribution from AP's Jim Kuhnhenn, it was mentioned that President Obama “ urged the nation’s governors to invest more state resources in education, saying a highly skilled workforce is crucial for the U. S. to remain competitive with other countries” (February 28, 2012). The appeal was made apparently to counter the measures of many states that led to drastic cuts in their respective education budget which led to the inability of thousands of students to complete their college schooling.

It is clear that the Obama’s administration showing its liberal character in the issue of education. A liberal perspective on the issue of education would be that that government must have a social policy that guarantees right to education of the citizens by actually allocating resources for it. The conservatives believe that education is a privilege that only those who have the means could attain. Once an individual has the means, then he could assert his right to education at a cost. The Obama administration clearly does not subscribe to such concept though. True to its liberal character, it considers society as being laden with inequalities. Because of this, it also believes that the federal government must play an active role in ensuring that every citizen is treated fairly and has equal opportunities to obtain basic necessities, including education. When the administration urged the governors not to cut the budget allocation for education, it was essentially encouraging the states to take a more liberal approach, at least, to the issue of education.

The stand of the President, however, as stated in the report, is that it is not the federal government that would implement the liberal policies on education but the states. He encouraged the “ state-centered approach by <https://assignbuster.com/policy-paper/>

spending more on education.” Apparently, it is an attempt to discourage the state governments from continuing their practice of cutting the budget for education that has left many students incapable of going to college. The Obama administration has been trying to put on the brakes on the neoliberal trend among the states when it comes to government spending. In the face of economic crisis, the neoliberal view would tend to favor a social policy in which welfare and other subsidies are reduced, making government intervention in uplifting the lives of the people lesser.

An interesting point of the report is that conservative governors such as Arizona’s Jan Brewer and Louisiana’s Bobby Jindal have expressed agreement to the stand of the President. This may be explained to the fact that President Obama explained the need for government’s funding for education by using an argument that the conservatives would easily subscribe to. He reminded the governors that the United States has to remain competitive economically and in order to realize this it must have a steady supply of skilled and well-educated labor force. The conservatives, who are ardent believers in the free market, see education as a necessary investment and leverage in the competition. Because of this, they did agree with the liberals on the issue of education funding. The liberals consider education as a right and that government must actively protect and promote it through different means, including providing subsidies. For the conservatives, however, education is an investment, a necessity that one must have in order to be competitive. In order to pursue his liberal approach to education, President Obama wisely based his calls on an argument that is appealing to the conservatives.

Reference

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Fouhy, B. (27 February 2012). Obama Urges Governors to Boost Education Funding. Associated Press. Retrieved from http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/U/US_OBAMA_GOVERNORS_EDUCATION? SITE= AP&SECTION= HOME&TEMPLATE= DEFAULT