

Chinese Financial Aid to Bangladeshi Students' education: An analysis the Impact on Social Sustainability

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Abstract : China provides educational financial aid (EFA) for developing countries like Bangladesh. A good number of Bangladeshi students are studying in China. They get educated from Chinese language Program (CLP) and other study field (OSF). To analyze the impact of Chinese EFA on social sustainability in-depth interview was conducted. The sample number was twelve. Six of them belonged to CLP and rests of them were from OSF. Threefold outline approach, namely, Vallance, S., Perkins, H.C., Dixon, J.E.(2011), were applied for this study. It is a qualitative analysis. According to both groups' responses, it was found how EFA impacted on development of social sustainability (healthy food, medication, accommodation, education, expanding job field and equity). Chinese language was the underlying factor for maintenance of social sustainability provisions (Cultural access, social network, Quality of life, pleasant work and Participation & empowerment etc.). CLP group was in advantageous position due to their Chinese language skill. However, CLP group students referred how EFA implicitly impacted on bridging social sustainability (Transformative - behave with environment, human and others/animal; Non-transformative- relevant information of environment and concerned services to solve environmental problem). The OSF group did not mention any considerable role of EFA/ education regarding human & eco-system relation of transformative bridge sustainability as well as non-transformative bridge sustainability.

Keyword- Financial aid, Scholarship, Social sustainability, Development sustainability, Maintenance sustainability, Bridge sustainability.

1.Introduction

Education is one kind of fulcrum for achieving social sustainability. Consciousness, training and learning are catalysts to move sustainability.

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Education helps become a responsible citizen as well as valuable human resource. It was perceived many times that education and social development has positive relationship [1].

1.a) The purpose and scope of the study

Human can study in one's own country or any other country of the world. Considering overseas study, education aid is underlying factor for a learner. International education aid has been promoted since 1960². Recently, the priority of education aid is emphasizing social justice. China provides different types of scholarships under various institutions. For instances, Chinese Government Scholarship, Chinese Universities Scholarship, Confucius Institute Scholarship (CIS) as well as Local Government Scholarship etc [2]. Confucius Institute has been providing scholarship for promoting Chinese language and culture. Other forms of stipend are for various subjects and programs. Students of Confucius Institute are doing study on language as well as Chinese culture. In general, two major categories of students are studying in China. One category is only Chinese Language Program (CLP) and another category is different major/field. These two major categories of education have divergent values. Both groups of students will get higher degree from China. One group will be learned more about Chinese language & culture than Other Study Fields (OSF). Another group of students will be specialized on different field of education. These two groups of students will be human resources of a country. These educated citizens play crucial role in the society. It is imperative to analyze how Chinese scholarships play role on social sustainability.

China is a rising power and provides international aid to education. She has been providing international aid to education for decades [3]. She offers scholarship for developing countries' citizens to study in China. Though, Chinese education aid encompasses five areas, recently the most prominent areas are three like university scholarships, vocational training and Chinese-language³. China has a big number of education institutions for giving higher education. According to Chinese education ministry's statistics (2006) [4], more than 3000 institutions enrolled almost 25.4 million students. Among a good number of higher education institutions, 252 Chinese universities have authority to accept overseas scholarship students [5]. China provides aid for developing countries'

² Education aid for foreigner and host country has been practiced after the Second World War, but especially from 1960. Yang, R. and Ma, J., "China's International aid in education: Development, Determinants and Discord".

³ Construction of education institutions and collaboration with other organization for training are other two areas which are covered by China's education aid.

infrastructure, expanding scholarship and training program and medical assistance. She is also emphasizing Human Resource Cooperation. She has begun to conduct training and seminar for developing countries' officials in 1998. She provides training on 20 fields for various level of officials from all over the world by the year of 2009. Now, every year China is providing training for 10,000 people from developing states⁴. China and Bangladesh have announced, the year of 2017 would be treated as "year of exchange and friendship"⁵. China and Bangladesh have vowed to work regarding sustainable development. Chinese president has mentioned to keep continuous support for Bangladesh's economic and social development⁶. In 2013, about 162 Bangladeshi students have been achieving China government scholarship [6]. Under various sponsorship program almost 1000 Bangladeshi student have come in China for study in 2015. It was estimated that in 2016, about 192 students from Bangladesh will get China scholarship. Moreover, October 14, 2016 Chinese president visited Bangladesh and has considered cooperation for training, education etc. will be provided. Male and female students have equal opportunities to win the scholarship. The impact of education aid can be varying due to gender issues. It is perceived that Bangladeshi male students are more interested to go abroad for education [7]. Even in domestic education, Bangladeshi guardian prefer more education expenditure and quality of education for boys rather than girls [8]. Due to other circumstances and issues may be a reason that female students are less motivated than male students for overseas study. Consequently, Bangladeshi female students are not available compare to male students in abroad. Considering this issue, a greater number of Bangladeshi male students are considered for this study than female students. It will be useful to assess sustainable development to examine that what kind of impact Chinese educational financial aid(EDF) has for social sustainability.

1.b) Objective of the study

Every year a good number of Bangladeshi students have come to China for study. Some of them have won Chinese scholarship. Recently, China

⁴ Information office of the State Council 2011, "China's Foreign Aid", People's Republic of China, April 2011.

⁵ Frequent diplomatic, educational, training and people to people exchange program to be run.<http://www.forbes.com/sites/arafatkabir/2016/10/14/chinese-president-xi-jinpings-visit-to-bangladesh-gives-boost-to-bilateral-relations/#b87390bc3348>, Accessed at November 20, 2016

⁶ October 14, 2016, President Xi Jinping has visited Bangladesh and stated cooperation for Bangladesh. "New China",http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-10/15/c_135756611.htm, accessed at November 20, 2016

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also tries to promote her language and culture. To fulfill this purpose she provides some scholarships through Confucius institute. Moreover, she also provides stipend for Bangladeshi students, officials, scholars in various fields. China is committed to continue support of sustainability. Scholarship program is one kind of educational financial aid (EFA) to develop human resources. Educated citizens can promote national development and they also keep impact on social sustainability. The objective of this study is

- a) To find out the impact of educational financial aid (EFA) on social sustainability.
- b) To examine the impact of learning Chinese language and other study fields on social sustainability.

1.c) Rationale

China is Bangladesh's development partner. The border distance of these two countries is about 100 kilometres. Both nations have good bilateral relationship. Various types of projects are being implemented by Chinese company in Bangladesh. People to people relation increased rapidly. China is economic power in the world. She extended her foreign aid for developing countries for human resource development as well as others fields. Bangladesh is also getting support from China for different development activities. A number of brilliant students are coming to China for higher study. Some students are studying in China on their own finance. On the other hand, Scholarship won students are also studying. The young scholars are human assets for their country. Scholarship won students are symbols of bilateral relationship and friendship of two countries. This scholarship is one kind of educational financial aid (EFA) for Bangladesh. It is important to assess the impact of this kind of scholarship on social sustainability. Moreover, quality of education, skill and trained-up teacher in lower level education and teaching environment, lack of educational institutes are challenging issues in Bangladesh for considering sustainable development [9]. Education can equip students with skill for getting favourable outcome from environment, society and economic activities for present and future [10]. The Chinese education aid can be a way to mitigate the challenges. Education opportunities in China can promote the diversity and developed human resources. This resource can keep significant impact on social sustainability. October 14, 2016, Chinese president has visited Bangladesh and announced to provide support and cooperation in education sector. According to New China [11] (report)— "*The two countries also vowed to make unremitting efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development...*". This study gives us an idea

that how can this Chinese scholarship become a fulcrum for social development.

1.d) Research question

This study will try to answer the following question-

How does Chinese Education Financial aid (Like scholarship) impact on social sustainability?

Education aid for human resource development is a form to transfer of resources for a developing country. Scholarship for study is one format to provide education aid for developing states. The aid can impact on various aspects of scholarship owner. Human belongs to a society. Their activities reflect on society. The dimensions of human activities explicitly or implicitly impact on social sustainability. The answer is given according to social sustainability paradigm/ dimensions.

2. Literature Review and Methodology

2.a) Conception and literature review

According to University of Kansas, Financial Aid and scholarship [12], Aid Package is: *“One or more types of aid, including grants, university scholarships, outside/private scholarships, work-study and/or loans that a student has been awarded.”*

According to The New York State Financial Aid Administration Association, Inc. [13] --*“Financial Aid is any grant or scholarship, loan, or paid employment offered to help a student meet his/her college expenses.”* Scholarship is: *“Awards based either on academic merit alone, or on academic merit and financial need. They generally do not have to be repaid.”*

In this study Chinese financial aid for education will be consider Chinese scholarship. Education will indicate formal study in any institute. Students mean university going pupils. Education is one kind of process to develop human resources.

Social Sustainability prioritizes human development and community flourishes for present and future. It emphasizes equity and human resource development. Social sustainability promotes and protects some values like human rights, diversity, safety and equity among others for future generation [14]. Western Australian Council of Social Service inc (WACOSS) [15] mentioned five principals of social sustainability assessment framework like equity, diversity, quality of life, interconnectedness, and democracy & governance. Social sustainability is a pillar (another two pillars are “economic suitability” and “environmental sustainability”) of the concept of ‘Sustainable Development’. The

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paradigm of social sustainability is equity, empowerment, accessibility, participation, sharing and cultural identity [16]. Same kind of social organization model has emerged in Kerala, India. The main criteria of planning to practice social sustainability in Kerala are similar to Khan's paradigm [16]. Social sustainability is a holistic approach of many dimensions. Equity, diversity, interconnected, quality of life, democracy and governance and maturity etc. are important dimensions [17]. Social sustainability dimensions vary due to different views. Torjman, S.; emphasizes poverty reduction, promotion of communities caring and social investment as social sustainable dimensions [18]. Application of the concept of social sustainability varies owing to its application field. According to Robert, H.W. there are five application approaches to social sustainability [19].

First, Sustainable development is an integrated approach with three pillars like economic, environment and social sustainability. Social sustainability is one of distinct objects of three pillars of sustainable development. Second, social sustainability acts as constraint factor upon other two pillars of sustainable development. Third, social sustainability is considered a base pillar among others of sustainability. Fourth, promotion of communities' economy and physical environment are stimulated by social sustainability. So, it can make a casual mechanism to manipulate other sustainability pillars. Fifth, the three major concepts of social, economic and environment represent individual and unique perspective. The sustainability depends on processing, integrating and placing. The Copenhagen social summit (1995) mentioned three basic criteria of social development like reduction of poverty, income generation activities and community level harmony [20]. Social interaction and social network are aspects of social sustainability. Social capital consists of the two aspects namely social interaction and social network. This social capital is intangible assets and non-physical factor which exists in people to people relation [21]. These are underlying issues for feeling of safety and well-being etc. These all are integrated part of social development issue. Education level can raise income level and has impact on productivity [22]. The income level and more productivity have implication on empowerment and participation. Education aid can have effect on growth. It was found that the effect of growth varies due to recipient countries' level (low- and middle-income level country) and also for target groups (primary, secondary and higher education) [23]. Aid has positive implication for education [24]. Education improves living standard as well as ability to be a better citizen. It also strengthens developmental capacities [25]. Education is one kind of process to be equipped with to live with social and economic

well-being and ensure environmental safeguards, for present and future generation⁷. Many authors like Sachs (1999), Chiu (2003) as well as Godschalk (2004) have written to give an elaborate concept of social sustainability [26]. Vallance, Perkins & Dixon have given three-fold outline of social sustainability. The outline of social sustainability comprises development sustainability (refers basic needs), bridge sustainability (emphasize on behavioural change towards bio-physical environment) and maintenance sustainability (addressing an awareness of habitual movement).

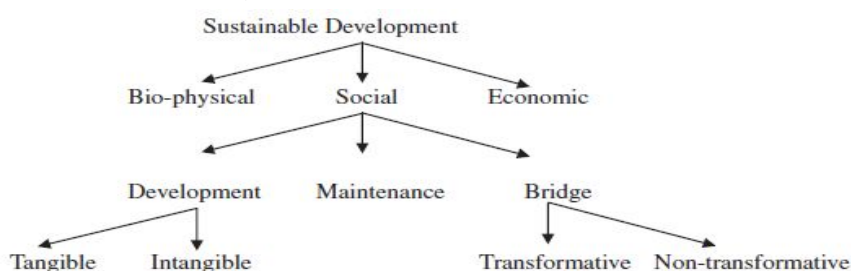


Fig. 1. Three strands of 'social sustainability'.

Source- Vallance, S., Perkins, H.C., and Dixon, J.E., 2011

2.b) Methodology

In-depth interviews have been conducted among the Chinese scholarship won students. They are all from Bangladesh. Now they have been studying in China. Social sustainability has various dimensions. Structured or semi-structured questionnaire is not enough to find out all relevant issues. The impact of educational financial aid (EFA) can be vary individually. In-depth interview can give holistic ideas about the impact of social sustainability. The sample number is twelve. Twelve student's interviews have been conducted. They are studying at different universities in Shanghai, China. There are two groups—six students in each group. The discrimination criterion of these two groups is Chinese Language Program (CLP) and Other Study Field (OSF). In one group, all students are studying in Chinese language program. Other group of students are studying in various fields (like Bio-medical engineering, Corporate management, International Business etc.). Male and female students belonged to both groups. Students of Chinese language program (CLP) are undergraduate level. This group of students belong to “the teaching Chinese as for foreign language” program. The other study

⁷ Education for sustainable development: Guidance for UK higher education providers (2014), The Higher Education Academy/Quality Assurance Agency for Higher education, University of the west of England.

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field (OSF) group of students belonged to graduate level. This is a qualitative analysis. The three fold outline of social sustainability framework of Vallance, S., Perkins, H.C., Dixon, J.E.(2011) was followed to analyze the data. Collected data are also analyzed considering field of education. Data was compared between Chinese language program (CLP) students and other study field (OSF) students. Relevant articles, news paper, websites were also used as secondary data.

3. Result and Discussion

3a) Development social sustainability - All CLP students said that they enjoyed healthy and pure food. They take food on time and it is less oil mixed food. Eighty three percent of OSF group students agree with CLP students considering purity of food. In term of pure and healthy issue ninety one percent of total targets students said that they enjoy pure food. Considering medication, both groups mentioned they have health insurance. No one needs to take medicine yet. Again, similar respond was found for accommodation regarding stability of electricity, internet facility, air condition system as well as cleanness. All of CLP group and eighty-three percents of OSF students are felt better accommodation facilities.

Students of both groups have expressed positive side of education in China. CLP students emphasized that quality of education is good. No tensions for study cost. It gave them opportunity to pay more attention to study. They learn Chinese language as well as culture. OSF students mentioned that some study field is not available in Bangladesh. In China they can study of that field. They learn lot of techniques of study and gather ideas to solve the same problem in different circumstances. They felt self-confidence to present their topics. They are always updated by information. The main mental satisfaction is no financial burden for paying semester fees. Employment is a future phenomenon of graduated students. CLP students have condition for doing job as Chinese teacher after completing the course. Due to learning Chinese language they will do work on some special areas like translator. OSF student have no scholarship condition that after graduation they will do job of their study field. But belief is , their abroad degree will expand job opportunities in national and international level. Their degree will have added value for their professional profile. Both groups of students gave a common answer like expanding opportunities to get job in Chinese company in future. Eighty three percent of both groups' students believe that Chinese educational financial aid ensure equity. CLP students refer to equal access of study in Chinese language program, access in

information. The view point of equity is little bit different according to OSF student. They referred that they will get equal opportunity for higher study in international area, access for applying international & national job market. Moreover, the Chinese scholarship selection process as well as application opportunity also ensured equity.

Box-1

One student [X1] of OSF respond regarding Quality of life-

“Communication is good, no traffic jam; so, communication has become very comfortable. Safety and security is very satisfactory. These things help keep the flow of daily life normal and sound. The surroundings and the environment is pollution free. These, I think, positively affects the quality of life.”

Another student[X2] of OSF respond regarding Quality of life-

“Teachers here give more explanatory lectures, and demands lots of class presentation, so confidence level is growing. Learning new study techniques. When a topic is put up in the class, discussions come up based on the problem from the perspectives of different countries. This helps accumulate lots of ideas. Classes here are full of international students, and it’s an opportunity to listen to and understand their different opinions.”

One student [Y1] of CLP respond regarding Equity-

“At the universities in China, education is a resource. Many students are studying here on their own resources. I could not study here if did not avail the scholarship. Having availed the scholarship, I have got the access to study in multinational classrooms. To me this is a kind of equity, which I have chanced to get because of education aid.”

Another student [Y2] of CLP respond considering Empowerment-

“Scholarship seems to have empowered myself. Any decision I have to take on my own, justifying myself the positive and negative aspects of it; whereas earlier I had to depend on my guardian’s decision. Now I have become self dependent. Maintain all expenses with my own scholarship money is a kind of empowerment.”

3b) Maintenance social sustainability-Language and culture has close relation. Language also can represent an image of a culture [27]. CLP students are in advance position compare to OSF group for cultural access.OSF student face impediment to communicate with all level of local peoples. As a result, choosing food menu, getting information, enjoying local movies, making local friends is not smooth event. But they got an opportunity to enjoy socio-cultural change with other

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international students. CLP students can access local and international culture. Social and cultural factors are important for developing inclusive community. Cultural life can help to feel homely belonging [28]. Cultural access helps the CLP group student to understand better of Chinese community. A similar effect was found in social connectivity. Due to language barrier OSF group face problem for local issue, but international connectivity. CLP group social connectivity increased in term of local and international students. Electronic social media is another source for social connectivity. A common respond was found from both groups that the use and connectivity of electronic social media (Using different application like WeChat, on-line marketing, weibo and so on) has increased subsequently. Considering quality of life CLP group hint at better transport communication system, taking short period for communication, purchasing power of international brand products make their life comfortable. OSF group hint at security, good traffic system, less polluted atmosphere, less time consume for communication, extra curriculum activities (Gym facilities, musical instrument facilities etc.), obey to discipline and time maintain etc. give a trajectory to improve quality of life. However, now pleasant work is not direct outcome of educational financial aid. Sample pupils hope their education will have positive impact on pleasant job. Both groups respond almost similar. It was perceived that the CLP group was determined for pleasant job after their graduation. CLP scholarship condition is a reason for their pleasant job in future. Whereas, the OSF group reckon their education will be fulcrum to find a prestigious job. Ultimately, pleasant work is a future phenomenon. Participation and empowerment is another dimensions of maintenance sustainability approach. Both groups replied that their participation has increased in various aspects. The CLP group mentioned that their participation has increased in family decision making, international cultural program, international conference/ seminar, engagement of different club. This group thinks, the ability to communicate with 1.3 billion Chinese populations is one kind of skill. This skill empowered comprehensively. One mentioned liberty of taking decision is one kind of empowerment. All of OSF students were not agreed that Chinese educational financial aid has any impact on participation and empowerment dimensions. Few of them answered that participation has increased in voluntary activities, attendant career related inaugural ceremony/ seminar, gave opinion on media. Except quality of life all CLP pupils found a good mentionable change in all dimensions of maintenance sustainability. Eighty-three percentage of this group said that in some extent quality of life has improved.

3c) Bridge social sustainability- Educational foreign aid (EFA) has no direct implication regarding bridge social sustainability. The surrounding circumstances enhanced target pupil's knowledge and ideas. In this provision behave with environment is a dimension. The most common respond of both groups' pupils is waste management. The CLP pupils motivated for proper using of electricity & gas, thinking of environmental issue, caring for sound pollution (whimsically used vehicle whistle), caring for tree plantation. The OSF students said about low voice to speak (less sound pollution), followed traffic rules and more alertness for cleanliness. Education promote individual potentiality and provide ideas to transform oneself and community [29]. It was reflected that both group students apply their potentiality for betterment to deal disposal trash, trees and environmental pollution.

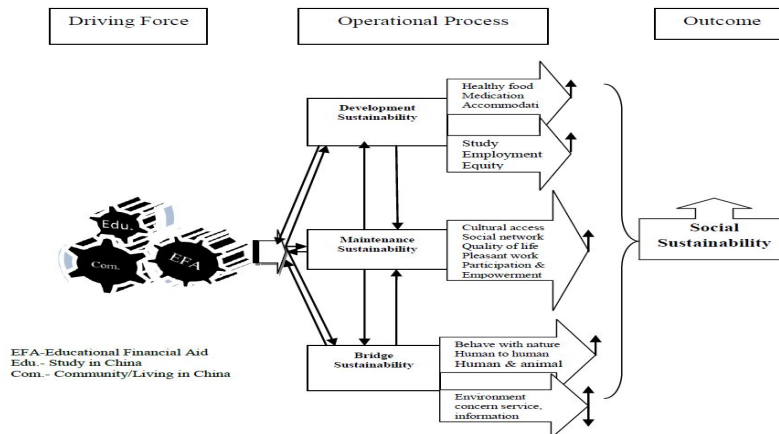
Considering human to human relation, the CLP group referred that gender discrimination reduced significantly, relation with transgender/third gender become smooth and natural. OSF group said they learn how to response with different nationals and manner. They also agreed that gender discrimination has reduced. For social class issue, CLP students hint at that they show respect equally. Their attitude to help others has improved. The OSF group mentioned that race & religious discrimination reduced to make relation with any person. Acceptance power has increased with various social classes and eliminates conservative behavioural traits. Adaptation with changing society is a considerable issue to survive in new environment. The CLP group refereed due to language skill they easily adopt with social diversification. Aftermath, they easily communicate with local inhabitants, understood how to survive in new community and did not fell homesickness. The OSF said they adopt with on-line study system, with best practices as well as international phenomenon. All of the OSF students said that they did not feel any change among themselves regarding human and eco-system relation. A proportion of CLP group mentioned that they acquire a knowledge of treating with animal especially cats. Even sometimes they also feed cats. One kind of soft corner has grown for animals and realized that human should be caring to animal.

The CLP students are more aware for using battery run vehicle, bicycle. These automobiles are environmentally friendly. They are also walking rather than using transport. They gain an understanding of auto toilet washing, use of recycling products and water storage system in winter. These issues are important to ensure a healthy environment. The OSF group also gave similar answer about recycling products. In addition,

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they referred corporate social responsibility for environmental development. Although, forty percent of this group referred they did not feel any impact about non-transformative provision.

Impact of Chinese educational financial aid on social sustainability



Source- Author (Adopted three strands social sustainability approach)

Fig. 2- Operational process

4. Conclusion

Every year a good number of students get educational financial aid from China. China provides scholarships for developing countries like Bangladesh. Students from Bangladesh are studying in Chinese Language Program (CLP) as well as Other Study Field (OSF) (for instances, Corporate management, Bio-medical engineering and International business etc.). The CLP as well as scholarships are introduced recently. So, all of the students of CLP are of undergraduate level. Again, most of OSF students are also of graduate level. The objective of this study is to analyze the impact of Chinese educational financial aid (EFA) /education on social sustainability. The three strands of social sustainability approach, namely, Vallance, S., Perkins, H.C., Dixon.E. (2011) were applied to examine the impact of EFA on social sustainability. The target group was twelve Bangladeshi students studying in Shanghai, China. They were divided into two groups. Six students belonged to CLP. The rest of sample population belonged to OSF group. In-depth interview was conducted with these two groups. The questionnaire and data analysis framework was on the basis of the threefold outline approach of Vallance,S., Perkins, H.C., Dixon, J.E.(2011). CLP group students said they could eat pure and healthy food with their living allowance under scholarship; all of them have medical insurance. Due to stable electricity, internet connection, air-

condition, their accommodation became more comfortable. They could study at a good university without financial cost; their education would expand their opportunity for finding work and ensure to access a better education. These all hinted at development of social sustainability. Again, CLP students enjoyed local & international culture, increased their social network & participation at different programs. Ability of purchasing power of international branded products, facilitated transport communication and leading healthy life reflected their quality of life. This group's students refereed that in future Chinese language education would promote to get expected job. Their participation in various programs and decision-making process had increased. In some context they felt empowered due to their Chinese language skill. So, EFA for CLP had influential role on the provision of maintaining social sustainability. However, they were now more concerned for waste management system and used to dustbin, felt free to make conversation/ relation with opposite gender/any gender. They became aware to help other peoples, show respect to any races, classes of society. They did not feel lonely or homesickness at new living place. They got adopted with new community. Soft corner for living creatures had grown among few students of CLP group. They were now more caring and conscious about animals. Awareness for environmental problem solution had stimulated CLP students. They used non-smoke producing vehicle, threw recycling products in specific bin and acquired ideas for hygienic toiletry system. In a word, EFA was implicit driving force to revive bridging social sustainability of CLP group. The OSF group agreed for pure and healthy food issues. In some extent, they showed less interest for same "Halal food" menu at their campus in every meal and were also not used to with local food. Considering medication and accommodation, this group responded in the same way like CLP group. Two students of OSF group hinted at room sharing is a cause of hampering privacy and kitchen problem respectively. Most of OSF group said EFA had important role in case of development of social sustainability. Considering education, frequent paper presentation, new study field and learning new ideas & techniques to solve the same problem made confidence level stronger. They believed their education would proliferate to expand career development in national and international arena. Chinese scholarship process and getting access to study in China was a reflection of equity. This group faced a problem for socio-cultural views. Lack of Chinese language efficiency became an obstacle to enjoy Chinese culture. They did not face crisis for spared social network connectivity with international students. Security, fresh atmosphere and communication facilities were underlying factors that reflected their quality of life. Participation for their study related seminar, volunteer activities had

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increased. Consequently, it could be said EFA had influential role on maintaining social sustainability of OSF group. Regarding bridging social sustainability, OSF group also said they were now more conscious to throw waste at specific bin as well as pay more attention for cleanliness. They learned how to respond according to counterpart customs and manners. They got adopted with on-line study and best practices. Their acceptance capability with divergent race & class had increased. OSF group didn't mentioned any significant impact of Chinese education aid with respect to eco-system as well as non transformative provision of bridging sustainability.

The impact of EFA was varying in some extent due to field of education. Local language skill was underlying strand. It was underpinned to fulcrum the impact on various aspects of maintaining social sustainability.

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