ARE scholarships still relevant in a society that values EQ (emotional quotient) and AQ (adversity quotient) as much, if not more, than IQ (intelligence quotient)? Proponents say scholarships level the playing field, giving everyone equal chances. A student can lift himself out of poverty if he is capable and works hard. Academic ability remains the main judging criteria because there are currently no better ways. The Public Service Commission said it also administers personality and aptitude tests, and considers a candidate's performance in National Service. Academics admit that scholarships can fuel the rich-poor gap—the rich have the means to better groom their children under the present system. They agree that the scholarship system has to change if it is to stick around.

《奖学金制度：有什么不好？》

☆ 太早锁定培育目标

人们对于奖学金制度的一大批评是：它剥夺了学生选择的“自由”，不利于学生的全面发展。据SMU陈宜芬副教授称，奖学金往往是在学龄10岁前确定下来的，虽然它在一定程度上有利于孩子的成材，但对孩子的思想品德和全面发展却有负面影响。学生在本科阶段被授予奖学金时，孩子往往并不知道自己还能成为什么。而一旦被授予了奖学金，他们在本科阶段很可能走不出自己的领域，就会感到自己“被限制”了。

☆ 追求成绩有偏差

奖学金制度的另一面是“高分”就是它扩大了贫富差距的“嫌疑”。“高分”就是奖学金制度的评价标准之一。据SMU陈宜芬副教授称，高分奖学金往往在新加坡高考中占据主导地位，而低分奖学金则往往在一些较差的学校中存在。高分奖学金往往在一定程度上有利于孩子的成材，但对孩子的思想品德和全面发展却有负面影响。学生在本科阶段被授予奖学金时，孩子往往并不知道自己还能成为什么。而一旦被授予了高分奖学金，他们在本科阶段很可能走不出自己的领域，就会感到自己“被限制”了。

☆ 偏重学术成绩已不合时宜

“奖学金制度”可能过于强调学术成绩，忽视了其他方面的培养。而学术成绩与社会实际工作能力并不完全对应。例如，一些学生可能在学术上取得了很高的成绩，但是在实际工作中的表现却并不理想。而且，学术成绩并不是判断一个人能力的唯一标准，其他诸如领导能力、沟通能力、团队合作能力等也是非常重要的。

☆ 学金制度未必有就业优势

毕业生透露，除了大型跨国公司和政府部门外，一般企业基本都抱着“高分即会”心态，不会特别重学术背景。PeopleSearch顾问经理James Lim说：“虽然学术成绩是评价一个学生的主要标准之一，但并不意味着学术成绩就是评价一个学生的主要标准。企业更注重的是学生的综合素质，包括领导能力、沟通能力、团队合作能力等。

人认为，奖学金制度本身并没有错，错的是如何评价奖学金。如果将奖学金全部用在考察学术成绩上，那么奖学金制度就失去了其应有的价值。奖学金制度应该考虑学生的综合素质，包括领导能力、沟通能力、团队合作能力等。

Associate Professor of Organisational Behaviour Tan Hwee Hoon from SMU’s business school said that the central philosophy behind scholarships is meritocracy. This means that so long as financially not well-to-do students show good academic performance and ability, they can still be rewarded and stand in good stead in society.

Another observation is that scholarships help to narrow the rich-poor divide. Students from low income families who do well in their studies will now have the chance to obtain a scholarship for university studies. In this way, they can lift themselves to the middle or higher income group.

Prof Tan noted that scholarships are usually awarded to students aged around 18-19 years old. At that age, not all of them are sufficiently mature and their mentality and aptitude are still evolving. It may be too early for an organization to start earmarking what role the scholar will be assuming in its management positions years down the road.

"Even though the scholarship selection process may include personality assessment tests, the result may not be accurate. Because the students are still young, their replies will be instinctive and may not accurately reflect what they will become much later." 

"The scholarship system hopes to ascertain the progress and advancement of the scholar in the areas of networking, leadership, stress management at the various stages of their future career. In reality, these abilities may not manifest themselves so early." 

Prof Tan added, "According to observations, good academic performance and good family background tend to have some correlation. Children of more affluent families tend to receive more attention and nurturing such as tuition and additional study materials."

She said that it is now no longer possible to just rely on academic grades in the scholarship selection process. Grades reflect only one aspect of a person.

To solve the problem of scholarship resources going back to rich families, Prof Tan suggested that we dissociate the prestige and monetary value of scholarships.

"Many children of well-to-do families seek scholarships not so much for the financial support but because of the attached prestige. So, if we de-link the prestige of scholarships with their monetary value, it will not perpetuate the problem of the rich getter richer and the advantaged becoming more advantaged."

"Agencies and organizations should consider looking at the household income of the applicants as an indicator to decide on the monetary value of the scholarship."

On the proposal to abolish bonds, Prof Tan said that while it solves the problem of bond-breakers, this is also a fair policy. This is because if scholars are indeed up to mark, they should not need to rely on the bond and should rely on their substance to compete with other non-scholars for a position in the company.

She also thinks that businesses and organizations should treat scholarships as a contribution back to society. Abolishing the bond will encourage companies to take a more proactive approach towards getting the best talents to join them.