

## Community College as a Track Changer in Career Development

PREETI

Research scholar

SUNITA MISHRA

Dean & Head

Department of Human Development & Family Studies  
Babasaheb Ambedkar University (A Central University) Lucknow  
India

### Abstract:

*As the entryway to college for groups of people who would otherwise have been excluded from higher education, community colleges provide the first step on the ladder toward baccalaureate degree. As higher education institutions that are uniquely linked to their local communities, community colleges are asked to address the educational and civic needs of a wide array of local citizens. And as the educational institutions most attuned to the needs of the local business community, they are charged with equipping their graduates with the skills needed to succeed in the economy. Most of the models developed to examine student persistence and attainment in postsecondary education largely fail to account for the influence of institutional factors, particularly when attendance is observed at multiple institutions. Multi-institutional attendance is common for students who begin at a community college, but until now an empirical framework to estimate the contribution of more than one institution's characteristics on students' educational outcomes has been largely absent in the literature. Placement exams are high-stakes assessments that determine many students' college trajectories. More than half of entering students at community colleges are placed in to developmental education in at least one subject, based primarily on scores from these assessments, The concept of tracking has provided an important tool for understanding stratification within educational systems and has*

*been applied to higher education. The prepare of this review paper is to provide an insight and background information and concept of community college in career development.*

**Key words:** community college, career, tracking, education, economy, placement.

## **Introduction**

The concept of community based education was born in the early 20th century in the United States. The primary function of these institutes was to provide higher education to the local community by means of public funding. Community Colleges allow people to obtain certificates, diplomas and associate degrees. Many people also use these colleges as a bridging course in order to transfer their credits to a University and study towards a Bachelors degree. Students are able to choose from various fields of study which allows them the freedom to move into public sector careers like law enforcement, nursing and even fire fighting whilst also allowing them to go into more defined careers. Some of which include Information Technology, radiology and medical technicians. Community based colleges are a great opportunity for a number of reasons. Admission requirements for most community colleges are a high school diploma or the standardized (GED) exam. In the case of remedial education, community based colleges offer courses that prepare students to apply to Universities. Once they have obtained their associate degrees, students are able to transfer credits toward obtaining a Bachelor's degree.

Derby & Smith, (2004), community colleges now offer "student success" courses that teach students how to write notes, take tests, and manage their time; that help students explore their learning styles; and that encourage students to develop plans for college and careers.

Katherine L. Hughes and Judith Scott-Clayton (2010), Placement exams are high-stakes assessments that determine

many students' college trajectories. More than half of entering students at community colleges are placed into developmental education in at least one subject, based primarily on scores from these assessments, yet recent research fails to find evidence that placement into remediation improves student outcomes. Then they examined the extent of consensus regarding the role of developmental assessment and how it is best implemented, the validity of the most common assessments currently in use, and emerging directions in assessment policy and practice, and they conclude with a discussion of gaps in the literature and potential implications for policy and research.

The community college access mission is built on low tuition, convenient location, flexible scheduling, an open-door admissions policy, and programs and services designed to support at-risk students with a variety of social and academic barriers to postsecondary success **(Cohen & Brawer, 1996)**.

Pike (1997) found that participation resulted in significantly higher levels of involvement and interaction with faculty and peers, greater integration of information obtained in and out of class, gains in general education, and gains in intellectual development.

For the majority of students at community colleges, the consequence of assessment is placement into developmental education. More than half of community college students will eventually enroll in at least one remedial course, and many additional students are assigned to remediation but never enroll (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010; Bailey, 2009).

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Measurement of career and occupational outcomes may be done by survey of employers and graduates. Placement in

the workforce and salary information determines outcome. Passing of credentialing exam is another good way to assess outcome. Career and occupational outcomes have had greater success in that there are more concrete ways to evaluate the student outcomes (Seybert).

### **The role of community college**

The internationalization of community colleges has the potential to dramatically change the role, scope, and mission of community colleges. Because of its open access mission and low cost, many students from foreign countries are positioning themselves to study in the community college and then work, transfer, or return home with their new skill sets. As the largest provider of occupational skills training, the community college offers associate degree, certificate, and short-term noncredit training to meet the time constraints of its students while at the same time addressing the workforce development needs of the community.

The recent development of the community colleges in other countries like China, Haiti, Japan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and others provides a way to take the American model of community colleges abroad. There are now many opportunities to collaborate and learn about providing training opportunities both here and abroad that help strengthen communities. Countries can learn from each other about best practices in education, business, workforce development, and community development. Many community colleges are establishing faculty, staff, and student exchanges that focus on the exchange of knowledge and methods between countries. Here, the focus is not to simply replicate U.S. community colleges in other countries; rather, the purpose is to help identify solutions to the problems of each country. Some of those problems revolve around job preparation and lack of access to higher education.

## Stand Alone Success Courses

Point to the efficacy of the student success course model, even as a stand-alone course. Both of these studies focused on stand-alone courses designed to improve the success rates of underprepared students within the community college (**Karp, and Hughes**).

Strong relationships between increased student achievement and satisfaction with enrollment in a traditional student success course. Their interviews with students showed that students felt generally positive about their experiences, and they reported the usefulness of the course on their learning. However, the researchers were unable to isolate discreet aspects of the course with specific benefits. In addition, they could not conclude whether participation in the course impacted progress toward a credential. Even so, the positive reports from students indicate that their experiences seemed to support the conclusions that they felt more integrated into the college community, that they felt more confident about their learning and study skills, and that they acquired useful information about college services and incorporated them in their routines (**O’Gara, Karp, and Hughes**).

The *On Course* experience needs the students to explore the feelings that often sabotage success, rather than primarily focusing on successful behaviors. The training workshops associated with the texts are based on the following principles:

- Students construct learning as a result of what they think, feel, and do and less so by what their instructors say and do.
- The most effective learners are empowered learners, those characterized by self-responsibility, self-motivation, self-management, interdependence, self-awareness, lifelong learning, emotional intelligence, and high self-esteem.

- At the intersection of a well designed educational experience and an empowered learner lies the opportunity for deep and transformational learning and the path to success— academic, personal, and professional” (“*On Course Principles*” 2009)

*On Course* attempts to help the students develop the emotional and metacognitive context for the personal fluctuations that inevitably occurs as they build and rebuild new learning; whereas, *Becoming a Master Student* focuses on helping the students develop the intellectual tools for the learning journey. Both *Becoming a Master Student* and *On Course* have been aspects of successful programs with promising indicators in retention, course success, units completed, and overall satisfaction.

**Unemployment (or joblessness)** occurs when people are without work and actively seeking work. The unemployment rate is a measure of the prevalence of unemployment and it is calculated as a percentage by dividing the number of unemployed individuals by all individuals currently in the labor force. During periods of recession, an economy usually experiences a relatively high unemployment rate. According to International Labour Organization report, more than 197 million people globally are out of work or 6% of the world's workforces were without a job in 2012.

Community college is a great option for who work on a full or part-time basis. The programs offered at these institutes often do wonders for career advancement helping people move up the corporate ladder. Sometimes all it takes is an extra qualification or two to give you the competitive edge over your peers. Courses may even be taken at night, allowing people to continue at their jobs while learning. The community college became not only a more prominent regional and national institution but also an institution that was affected by macro-level changes in the external environment. These changes

include government policies to reflect both societal and economic concerns such as the training of a globally competitive workforce and private sector demands for an increase in work based training and specific skill acquisition for workers.

### **The Community College – Changing Track:**

Archbishop of Madras Mylapore at the launching of the Madras Community College (1st July 1996 ) said that the large number of students coming out of Secondary Schools and University Colleges being unable to find suitable employment and not being fully equipped to face life and its challenges. So it is necessary to ask the question, for whose good are these educational institutions if they do not prepare young men and women for life in the real world. He believe that our institutions should Change Track and provide relevant and quality work skills for this large group.”

### **Assessment and Placement Policies**

The brief historical review above demonstrates support among policymakers and educators for an assessment and placement process that places students in courses for which they have the skills to succeed. In the last decade, the debate has evolved to focus on whether institutions can best make these determinations themselves or if the process should be dictated by the state. Arguments for state-standardized assessment and placement policies are that they can ensure that students are prepared for college-credit courses; that they can establish a common definition of academic proficiency, helping to align secondary and postsecondary academic requirements and expectations; that they can help states measure performance across different colleges and track remedial program effectiveness; and that they facilitate transfer between colleges (Prince, 2005).

Counterarguments cite the importance of institutional autonomy and particularly of institutional freedom to set policies and practices that take into account the particular needs of colleges' local populations. In addition, given the discomfort with placement determination based on a single test score, it seems necessary to preserve some institutional flexibility in placement.

### **Recommendation**

The following measures are recommended:-

- National recognition for the community college system is required. Vertical mobility of the community college students through the Open Universities and conventional Universities with the three tier system: Diploma, Associate degree and Degree.
- Funds, Stipends and Scholarships should be provided to the disadvantaged sections of society especially SC/ST/BC/MBC/Women/Minorities.
- Central Placement Cells should be set up in Collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industries and Chambers of Commerce.
- Community Colleges should be established in educationally backward districts with emphasis on soft skills development. Setting up the Community colleges can go a long way for correcting the regional imbalance in the system of Higher Education.
- Institutions of repute can adopt neighboring villages and open Community Colleges to promote vocational / skills training and pre college Training / bridge courses.

### **Characteristics need to make a difference**

To modify the scenario of employment and to improve and gear up the speed of professionalism, community colleges are



designed with characteristics features. The key words of the Community College system are access, flexibility in curriculum and teaching methodology, cost effectiveness and equal opportunity in collaboration with industrial, commercial and service sectors of the local area and responding to the social needs and issues of the local community, internship and job placement within the local area, promotion of self employment and small business development, declaration of competence and eligibility for employment.

### **Academic Guidance and Advising**

Academic guidance and advising – arguably the most important student services – are areas where students need tremendous help. Improving academic services at community colleges is crucial because most entering students arrive with academic deficiencies that limit their ability to engage effectively in college-level courses. Early research on the collegiate experience by Pascarella and Terenzini suggests that institutions can enhance the academic experience of under-prepared students by providing extensive instruction in academic skills and advising. Personal guidance and counseling can help community college students confront academic as well as nonacademic challenges. Although most institutions offer these services, students may be reluctant or unable –due to time constraints – to take the initiative and seek out assistance on their own. In a review of the literature on the impact of counseling on student retention, it was found that counseling increases the retention of students with high risk factors for dropping out. The structure and offerings of personal guidance and counseling services vary from campus to campus. In some cases, students are offered individual or group sessions with licensed, professional counselors. In other cases, faculty members may serve as counselors or mentors to help students

address personal concerns. The faculty-student interactions are often more informal than the professional counseling services.

## Career development

Is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future.

Career choice and planning have become a critical issue in life especially to teenagers. Numerous educational opportunities and highly competitive and drastic change of labor market trend are all challenges faced by young people as they are preparing themselves for the future. These challenges may caused confusion and pose placement problems for those in position of making career decision.



Career decision making is a long process. It requires the ability to integrate various kind of information related to personal and career. Career decision can only be made after the individual consider career in for which relates to the jobs (Sidek Mohd Noah, 2002).

## Challenges and Opportunities

- Because most campuses serve a primarily local population, competition among colleges is limited. Students usually lack information about the relative quality of their local college. Among the mix of federal

funds and programs dedicated to the community college sector, very few aim to improve institutional performance.

- Given limited resources available for instructional costs, community colleges rely heavily on part-time adjunct lecturers who often teach multiple courses at multiple colleges and receive low wages and no benefits.
- Despite widespread interest in using data to inform decision making, it's difficult to integrate findings from institutional research into daily practice. Many community colleges lack sufficient numbers of trained researchers to use student-level data and organize it for instructional planning.
- The quantity and quality of college financing information that families receive differs by social class. Why is it that economically advantaged students learn about college and how to pay for it from a variety of sources, whereas poor students often have to rely on their high school counselors?
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### **Community college in health sector**

In health sector community college provide the many area of the job prospectus like dietetics, physiotherapy and nursing. Dietitians or dieticians are experts in food and nutrition ("dietetics"). They advise people on what to eat in order to lead a healthy lifestyle or achieve a specific health-related goal. They work in a variety of settings from clinical to community and public policy to media communications.

### **Community college in computer technology**

Computer technology is often through the donation of technology to developing areas without thought for access to electricity or equipment maintenance. Community college

facilitates technology development often involving hardware or software design, and the coordination of donors, distributors, and deplorers. Technical development overlaps with the fields of technical training, maintenance and support.

The growth in online enrollments is over ten times higher than the growth in overall higher education enrollments and this trend is expected to continue (Allen & Seaman, 2010; 2013). With the rapid advancement of technology, shifting life styles, and expanding enrollments outpacing the current higher education infrastructure, more courses and degree options are expected to become available via online learning; some experts contend that soon, up to half of all traditional campus programs will be available [alternatively or exclusively] online (Howell, Williams & Lindsay, 2003).

Responding to rising enrollment demands, over 97% of community colleges have turned to online learning to increase student access (Parsad, Lewis, & Tice, 2008).

### **Future prospects**

In community college the Certificate builds on the highly successful Preparing Future of the student. The Certificate will produce graduates who are highly competitive in the job market in higher education, are quick starters as faculty members, and who can provide leadership in higher education.

### **Conclusion**

Community college diversion effect that focuses on the educational aspirations that underlie ultimate educational attainment. community college missions, if it is indeed time for reform and new direction, community colleges would be well served by helping design their own futures. The locus of decision making varies some- what from state to state, but the colleges can assure themselves an integral role in any decision

process if they take the lead in carefully assessing the services they wish to provide to their communities now and in the future. Therefore, it is important young people to be guided and assisted in planning their career path systematically to avoid frustration in the of mismatched career choice.

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