

COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS AN ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN INDIA: A SIGHT

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Abstract

A community college is a type of educational institution. The term can have different meanings in different countries, but usually refers to an educational institution that provides tertiary education and continuing education supplemental to traditional universities and colleges. In India, 98 community colleges are recognized by the [University Grants Commission](#). The courses offered by these colleges are diplomas, advance diplomas and certificate courses. The duration of these courses usually ranges from six months to two years.

Keywords: College, Community, Skill, Opportunity, Collaboration, Employment.

Introduction

The Community College is an alternative system of education, which is aimed at the empowerment of the disadvantaged and the underprivileged (Urban poor, Rural poor, Tribal poor and Women) through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with the local industry and the community and achieve skills for employment and self employability of the above sections of people in the society. The Community College is an innovative educational alternative that is rooted in the community providing holistic education and eligibility for employment to the disadvantaged. The Vision of the Community College is to be of the Community, for the Community and by the Community and to produce responsible citizens. The Community College promotes job oriented, work related, skill - based and life◊ coping education. The Community College initiative is in conformity with the Indian political will that prioritises in education, primary education, information technology education and vocational education. 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.

The Community College - A Vision

"Big and prestigious educational institutions may become slowly extinct because they are unable to give relevant and meaningful education to respond to the challenges of our time. Community College is a welcome change. We have to opt out of the existing situation in higher education.... Community College is a VISION and an IDEA that is whole heartedly welcome"

The Community College - A People's Movement

"The Community College system should become a people's movement. It should not be considered as a parallel system. The University model of education especially the affiliated system emphasises the elitistic and exclusive right from the beginning of admission into colleges to the culmination of obtaining a degree. The formal system has nothing much to offer. The industrialists are not any more interested in the products of the formal system because they do not have the skills which the industrial and commercial houses need. The plus two system and the degree level education make the students unemployable for the rest of their lives. Hence we have to develop pluralism in the structure. The Community College system has the flexibility. These colleges should become rural - based."

The Community College - An Alternative System of Education.

"Coming to the Community College System, I have my appreciation of its welldefined vision and mission. The aim of Community Colleges to reach the unreached, including the excluded and giving the best to the least is laudable. I would like to hail a movement that has a bright future - a movement with many innovative features, a movement that provides an alternative educational system, a movement that supplements state efforts, a movement that cares for the uncared.

The Present Scenario

The Community College Movement has become a National Phenomenon spreading its wings to many states of India. We have 564 Community Colleges in 28 states of India. Out of which 202 Community Colleges are run by the Arts and Science Colleges that are selected and funded by University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi. There are 247 Community Colleges that are run by NGOs, actively Collaborating with ICRDCE in reaching out to the dropouts thus making the Vision and Mission of ICRDCE a viable concrete reality.

Evaluation and Assessment of Skills

The Evaluation and Assessment of the Skills of the incumbents of the Community College is completely internal and done by the Community College with the help of technical and field experts. The evaluation is aimed at the testing of the skills rather than the absorption of information. The evaluation is jointly done by the Life Skill Instructor, Work Skills Instructor, Industrial Supervisor supplemented by the self-assessment of the student of the Community College, thus making the evaluation comprehensive and purposeful, determining the attainment of skills.

The knowledge and skills components should be given equal weightage. This evaluation is to be continuous, transparent and should contain checks and balances within the system to ensure credibility.

The Diploma or the certificate is signed by the Director of the college as well as the Industrial Partner who has trained the students in the particular fields of specialisation.

Need Analysis

Need Analysis is the backbone of the Community College. It is considered to be the Gospel of the Community College. The Community College is established on the firm footing and foundation of the thorough Need Analysis of the Employment and Self-Employment Opportunities in the Local Area. The ICRDCE has done and helped 16 Institutions to do their Need Analysis.

Industrial Collaboration

The Community College cannot succeed without the active participation and collaboration of the industrial, rural, agricultural, commercial and service organisations of the locality. The above sectors come to assist the Community College in the following five ways.

Designing the curriculum for various job oriented courses.

Serving as members of the advisory board.

Being part time instructors for teaching and assessment in the College.

On the job training for the students in the work place.

Job placement for students who have been trained in the Community Colleges.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) could be signed with the industries for all the above five areas of collaboration.

A few representatives from the above sectors industrial, commerce and service sectors could also serve as the members of the governing body of the College.

Administration and Governance of the Community College

The Community College will ensure the participation of the members of the agency that establishes the Community College (Board of Management), Administrators, Representatives of the faculty of the Community College, Industrial Partners, Community Leaders, Consultants to the Community College and Representatives nominated by the Government. The authorities of the College will make sure of the proper management of Life Skills, Work Skills, Placement for Training, Financial and General administrative matters and also the needed infrastructural facilities necessary for training.

STATUTORY BODIES

Board of Management (II) Governing Body of the College (III) Advisory Boards (IV) Director (Head), Programme Co-ordinators, Placement Officer, Members of the College, Life Skill Staff, Work Skill Staff, Guest Faculty and Supportive Staff.

Recognition and Accreditation

The Community College System has been working successfully with 75% Job Placement without getting Recognition from any Approved Educational Bodies of the Country. However most of the Community Colleges felt there is the need for Recognition from the State and Central Governments to facilitate the horizontal mobility and the vertical mobility of the students of the Community College. The ICRDCE has conducted Seven Consultations to further this cause. It is for the first time in the educational history of the country, the agencies that run Community Colleges have devised SelfRegulatory and Autonomous Guidelines to ensure credibility and accountability of the system. Thus the ICRDCE has succeeded in influencing the State and Central Governments for Recognition and Accreditation of the system and for the Student Centered Funding. The issue of Accreditation was examined closely by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), New Delhi at the direction of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, New Delhi. The NIOS has given accreditation so far to the 18 Community Colleges in the country.

12th Five Year Plan (2012 - 2017)"

Ongoing UGC initiative that supports career oriented add-on courses in traditional universities and colleges and the IGNOU's scheme of community colleges would be reviewed. Technical support of Philanthropic Foundations and the Indian Centre for Research and Development of Community Education (ICRDCE) (which has 230 community colleges in its fold) would be taken to build on the current initiatives and create a robust framework for skill based education within the higher education sector in the country. This could include institutional arrangements for recognition of prior learning."

A Way Forward

Alignment of Community College Curriculum with NSDC

The 'Skilling India' Programme has been announced by our Honourable Prime Minister Modi through the establishment of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). ICRDCE is undertaking aligning our curriculum with NSDC according to National Occupational Standards (NOS) so that we can participate fully in the entire efforts of empowering the poor and skilling them to take up gainful employment. The purpose of doing this alignment is to get National Certification for different kinds of job roles prescribed by Sector Skill Councils. This is absolutely necessary to update and upgrade the students since various skills will be recognized by various Sector Skill Councils of NSDC.

Aligning with Higher Education in India

UGC Community Colleges: There are 240 UGC Community Colleges. These Community Colleges conduct Certificate - 6 Months, Diploma - 1 year and Advanced Diploma - 2 years. The minimum qualification of students for admission is 12th passed. Recognition of the Diploma and Advanced Diplomas given by UGC Community Colleges "The College concerned should itself award Diploma / Certificate under its own seal and signature after a written authorization from the affiliating university. However, the college should mention the name of the affiliating university and the scheme on the award."

Bachelor of Vocational Degree -

UGC has started the B.Voc degree in the Arts and Science Colleges with 12b and 2f status in India in the XII Plan Period (2012- 2017). 177 Colleges are conducting Certificate courses - 6 months, Diploma - 1 year, Advanced Diploma - 2 years and Degree - 3 years.

KAUSHAL KENDRAS:-

Realizing the importance and the necessity for developing skills, the University Grants Commission has introduced the scheme for establishment of Deen Dayal Upadhyay Centres for Knowledge Acquisition and Upgradation of Skilled Human Abilities and Livelihood (KAUSHAL KENDRAS) in universities and colleges during the XII Plan with the objective of development of skills among the students and creating work and ready manpower on a large scale. The KAUSHAL KENDRAS will endeavor to maintain a pyramidal structure of student enrolment with respect to Diploma, Advanced Diploma, B. Voc and further studies. There are 68 Kaushal Kendras.

Educate More Dropouts

The major advantage of Community College Education is the privilege to admit school drop outs at any age. Numeric and literacy of the dropouts and illiterates can be enhanced through Community College Education. On the other side

we could see that Community College Education is an emerging concept in India that needs more clarity among the people.

Increased Employment Opportunities at the Industries

As Community College Education has more of industrial exposure in the field work practicum it is recommended that the Industries employ more number of students from Community Colleges in the future.

Collaboration with Industrial Partners

Collaboration with industrial partners enables the colleges to expose students to the working culture and business ethics and to help them into gainful employment when they are absorbed in the job market.

Conclusion

Community Colleges are empowering individuals and communities by providing skill based training that leads to employment and a way out of poverty. Skills development not only enables them to earn a livelihood but also helps them to become productive members of the family/society. They offer a second chance to large population of school dropouts and underprivileged to get education that opens the doors for higher education and lifelong learning. It assists with horizontal mobility by widening employment opportunities and vertical mobility by paving the way for higher education. Community Colleges are contributing to a gradual social change that is building the human resources in communities across the country led by strong partnership of local organizations, business, and industry.

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