

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SCHEME IMPROVEMENT BY THE AFRO-ASIAN- AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ACCORD)

A Community College is an alternative system of education and training aimed at the empowerment of the disadvantaged and the under-privileged (Urban Poor, Rural Poor, SC / ST Poor and Women) through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in association with the local industry and the community and achieve skills for employment and self employability of the above sections of people in the society. It is an innovative educational and training alternative that is rooted in the community providing holistic education and eligibility for employment to the disadvantaged.

The Vision of the Community College (CC) is to be of the Community, for the Community and by the Community and to produce responsible citizens. The Community College (CC) promotes job oriented, work related, skill-based and life coping education and training. This 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 association 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 ideas and the objectives behind the establishment of the Community Colleges are the following:

- i) To suggest the establishment of the Community Colleges as an Alternative System in India.
- ii) To prove as to how it will help towards the positive performance in assisting the Community and the beneficiaries, the trainees and the parents by either providing gainful employment to the trainees or by making them entrepreneurial leaders.
- iii) To provide inputs to exploit the untapped resources in the industrial establishments, factories, hotels, hospitals and other enterprises.
- iv) To assess the needs of the school dropouts and others to enable them acquire the necessary skills for livelihood and formal qualifications for social status and societal recognition.

- v) To consolidate the experiences of existing Community Colleges in different countries.
- vi) To prepare a blueprint and policy framework for the establishment of the Community College all over the Country under the aegis of different Universities.

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN INDIA

The concept of the Community College in India was conceived by the young scientists and educational entrepreneurs Dr. Priya Ranjan Trivedi and Dr. Uttam Kumar Singh in the year 1985 when the then Ministry of Welfare, Government of India allocated funds under the Special Component Plan specially for the training of scheduled caste communities. Accordingly the first Community College was established at Mandar Vidyapith in the foothills of Mandar Parvat in Bihar followed by the second Community College at Patna under the aegis of Dr. Zakir Husain Institute for Non-Formal and Continuing Education with a view to rehabilitating the young boys and girls belonging to the scheduled caste community. The funds of the Central Government were routed through the State Department of Industries for the establishment of training cum production cum rehabilitation centres.

The Community College Movement further got strengthened in South India in October 1995 with the beginning of the Pondicherry University Community College. It was taken forward by the Inauguration of the Madras Community College by the Archdiocese of Mylapore - Mylapore in August 1996. It was strengthened by the Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, by giving approval to five Community Colleges in September 1998. It spread to Andhra Pradesh with the starting of JMJ Community College in Tenali in July 1999. It also now spread to many States and Union Territories. The Government of India should help establish and implement the project with a minimum of 1000 National Community Colleges with a view to developing the skills of young boys and girls in the country at the earliest.

The Community College, envisaged by Dr. Priya Ranjan Trivedi is an alternative system of education, training and development with a view to empowering the disadvantaged and the underprivileged through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with the local industry and the community and to achieve skills for employment and self employability of the above sections of people in the society. It is an innovative educational alternative that is rooted in the community providing holistic education and eligibility for employment to the disadvantaged.

Out of the students getting enrolled in the primary school, only about 30 percent are found in middle school and about 16 percent in high / higher secondary schools of children in the age group 6-11 years. About 90-95 percent enroll in primary school, at the secondary stage, that is, age group 11-15 years, only 48 percent continue and at the higher secondary stage, that is, age group 15-17 years, only about 24 per cent

are found to pursue studies. In the age group 17 to 23, only about eight percent are in the higher educational institutions. From these statistics, we can see that roughly, about 50 per cent of students drop out at every stage, in the school. The questions that arise are, what happens to all those youth who drop out of the educational system between the age group 11-17 years? This was what got published in The Hindu Newspaper on 26 July 2002.

Though 63.04 lakh students get admitted in 31,052 schools across the State of Tamilnadu, the dropout ratio is almost 36 percent by the time they get to high school of which 90 percent are girls. Around 48 lakh 'non-school going' children (in the 6-14 age group) are in Tamilnadu, according to The New Indian Express dated 9 January 2022.

Let us examine whether the Community Colleges can help generate employment:

Let us suggest Community College in India as an Alternative System in India.

Let us prove how it has helped towards the positive performance in assisting the Community and the beneficiaries, the student and the parents through an objective evaluation of the existing Community Colleges.

Let us provide inputs to exploit the untapped resources namely industrial establishments, factories, etc.

Let us assess the needs of the school dropouts and others to enable them acquire the necessary skills for livelihood and formal qualifications for social status and societal recognition.

Let us consolidate the experiences of existing Community Colleges

Let us prepare a blueprint and policy framework for the establishment of Community Colleges all over the Country.

The Community Colleges should be established by non-profit making, non-commercial and community based organisation with proven years of service to the local community. The establishment of the Community Colleges should be preceded by an extensive Need Analysis of the employment opportunities available in the local area and also the social needs of the Community. The Target group of the Community Colleges is 10th passed students, school drop out, rural youth, rural women, existing workforce that wants to update its skills and all who want skill based and need based education at an affordable price.

There is no age limit for admission into a Community College. The close and active linkage between Industries and Community College is a must for the success of the Community College System. The industrial partners help the College in designing the curriculum, providing part time instructors, serving as members of the Advisory Board and the Governing Board, taking students for internship and helping them to find job placement. The Community College is a Multi-campus reality. The Community is permitted to the optimum utilisation of the existing Infrastructural

facilities available to the community-based organisation that establishes the Community College.

The Community College tries to respond to the deficiencies of the Vocational system through industry-institutional linkage, competence assessment, proper certification, training on site, life skills training and job oriented programmes decided on the basis of the local needs. It is in the above areas that the Community College is an improvement and departure from earlier initiatives such as it is Community Polytechnics and apprenticeship training. The curriculum of the Community College has four distinct parts: life skills, work skills, internship and preparation for employment. The Certificate programmes for the school dropouts consists of 300 hours of training, the Diploma programmes of 400 hours of training, and the Advanced Diploma programmes consists of 500 hours for the 10th and 12th passed students and all others who want skill-based education. The evaluation and assessment of skills done by the Community College has four dimensions: self-assessment, assessment by the life skills and work skills teachers and internship supervisor at the works spot.

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.

There has been a lot of struggle in discovering the relevant and the needed curriculum to be given to the students of the Community Colleges. So, what is offered as the Curriculum taught in the Community Colleges is a result of the collective search and it is based on the actual teaching experience of many of the Community College Teachers.

The Curriculum of a Community College for a Job oriented Certificate / Diploma / Advanced Diploma programme. Given below is a suggested course outline: Duration of the programme is for 300-500 hours and it has 4 distinct Parts.

Part – I Life Skills

Part – II Work Skill

Part – III Internship and Hands on Experience

Part – IV Preparation for Employment and Evaluation

- ^a Depending on the learning level of the target groups in the local areas, the College could conduct classes from the minimum of Three Hours (for part timers) to maximum of Six Hours per day (for full timers).
- ^a The curriculum for every Job-Oriented Programme should be designed in collaboration with the practitioners of the Industry / Commerce / Service Agriculture / Rural Sectors.
- ^a The College should help the students to attain their Entry-Level Skills required for the Job-Oriented Programmes.

- ^a For the Certificate Courses, the Life Skills should be compulsory and the duration of the Work skill course could be modified according to the job requirements.
- ^a For all the students of the Community College whatever might be their specialised programmes, Courses on Life Skills are mandatory.
- ^a It is advisable to have 25 to 30 students maximum for skills – development in specific Job-Oriented Programmes.
- ^a The presence Job Placement Cell and Placement Officer is a must in every Community College for effective internship training and subsequent Job Placement.

PART I - LIFE SKILLS

PART II - WORK SKILLS

PART III - INTERNSHIP AND HANDS ON EXPERIENCE

PART IV - PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND EVALUATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF CREDITS

One Credit = 30 Hours of work.

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 Certificate / Diploma / Advanced Diploma is issued by the Community College. The transcripts may also be issued under the joint signatures of the University Authorities, the Director of the Community College and the Industry Partner where the actual training has been provided.

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.

The Community College ensures that the participation of the members of the agency that establishes the Community College, Administrators, Industrial Partners, Community Leaders, Consultants to the Community College etc.

The authorities of the College 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.

The Community Colleges should decide to: include the Excluded; give the Best to the least; match Education with Employment; have close Linkage with Industries; ensure the participation of the Community and the Development of Skills and Competencies; enhance the employability of the poor and the marginalised; respond to the dynamism of the Community College Movement in India; provide a resource centre with books and study materials; help in the process of curriculum development; have training Programmes for the Community College teachers and administrators; evolve methods of evaluation and assessment of skills; publish books and articles; popularise the concept all over the country; help in the preparation of Community Colleges; document the process and evolution of the Community College Movement; influence the State and Central Governments; recognise and accept the Community College System as an educational alternative; replicate the model all over the country; enter into International networking of Community Colleges in USA, UK, Germany, Australia, South Africa and Canada.

The unique feature of Community College System is the training given for Life Coping Skills. The Life Coping Skills that have proved beneficial to the students are transformative skills that have added value to the personhood and given them a definite focus and praise direction in their lives such as an understanding of themselves, management of stress and time, skills in community. Problem solving and decision making increased in theirself confidence and self esteem, a clear understanding of goals leading to self motivation and basic computing skills and ability to communicate with reasonable fluency in English. It has also developed in them Coping Skills such as coping with anger, sexuality, loneliness, failure, shyness, criticism, etc.

The trainees have learnt a few useful skills to help them in the work environment like Pre School Teacher, Computer Software, Office Management, Nursing

Assistant, Automobile Technology including Repairing of Two Wheelers, Three Wheelers and Four Wheelers.

Since the selection of right Industrial Partners is an important factor in the overall success of the Community College Movement. The following criteria is used by the Community Colleges for selecting the Industrial Partners:

- Willingness of the Industrial Partners
- Willingness to allow girls to work in order to gain experience.
- Safety, distance and accessibility to the work spot. Experience in Work skills.
- Sharing of vision for the poor
- Interested to train the trainees
- Commitment for Job placements in their Companies
- Having good infrastructure.
- Good Trainers concerned with the upliftment of the students
- Frequency of the visits of the industrial Partners to the College
- Serving as the Members of the Advisory Board
- Ready to provide apprenticeship training
- Skill based training
- Helping in the Designing the Curriculum
- Part time instructors
- Allowing the trainees to work with advanced equipments
- Authorised Service Centres

The Governing Body of the Community College should have a few Industrial Partners as its members. The entire system is kept going by the qualified life skills, work skill staff and guest faculty. The Advisory Board for each of the course should be in place in every College. The Colleges must send their trainees for internship for at least two months. Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Training and Placement all should be done by the Community College. The Community College must improve the living standards of those who are excluded and uplift the downtrodden. They should also update the courses every year with the experts from different fields.

The Colleges need to access the need of the various potential employers. As Community College awards the Certificates, these are fully professional qualifications. Professional Enrichment Workshop and sharpening the teaching skills and ways to improve industrial collaboration should be explored.

The problem of school dropouts can be handled by the Community Colleges by providing them multi-skills since they already have the experience – 8th Passed and below 10th. These trainees can be given Certificate courses.

The model of the Community College system would be replicated all over the country even one College in 650 Districts of the country.

The Community College should try to address the deficiencies in the vocational educational system in the following manner:

- i) It is aiming at the employability of the individual trained.
- ii) It is evolving a system to declare the competency level and duly certify the same.
- iii) It is promoting strong Industry–Institutional linkage and ties. It involves the Industry to articulate the skills it wants and works in close collaboration with the industries, to make the individuals skill oriented that is needed by the employer.
- iv) It emphasizes the teaching of life skills, communication skills and English to the takers of the system.
- v) The Community College System certainly lessens the burden on higher education.
- vi) It is evolving a system of evaluation and assessment of skills, which are personal, social, language, communication, work and creativity.

The various components of the Life Skills Programme such as Life Coping Skills, Communication Skills, English, Basic Computing Skills preparation for employment could be included in the whole stream of vocational education with the expertise of the Community College and by training teachers of vocational schools. There is a need to promote active industrial partnership with agencies like the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Indian Industry etc. in order to stabilise the internship and job placement.

The same Life Skills could be introduced as an integral component to the Arts and Science college students to enhance their employability.

The whole movement has been a non-governmental initiative. Hence the Governments could provide external support through awarding of scholarship and stipends to the deserving students.

This help could come from the following Ministries / Departments of the Central and / or the State Governments:

- a) Rural Development
- b) Social Justice and Empowerment / Welfare
- c) Health and Family Welfare
- d) Women and Child Development
- e) Youth Welfare and Sports
- f) The Quasi Government Organisations
- g) Public Sector Agencies to ensure placements
- h) Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- i) Ministry of the Development of North Eastern Region
- j) Ministry of Science and Technology

k) Ministry of Human Resource Development

Our country has come to a point of no return when we have unemployment, peacelessness, insurgency, pollution, poverty, greed and population explosion.

The Community College under the auspices of the leading and statutory training authorities should decide to solve the above mentioned problems by creating environment friendly and sustainable jobs by developing skills of the young boys and girls with a view to generating employment besides having a competent cadre of entrepreneurial leaders so that we may prove that India very soon will have more number of job givers rather than job seekers.

The Community College should vocationalise the careers of young boys and girls from all States and Union Territories in general through training in the areas of vocational and skill development.

A Community College is generally a type of educational institution basically for catering to the growing needs of the community members including young and old men and women who have less facilities for undergoing postsecondary and tertiary education and who are wanting to settle themselves by acquiring specialised skills for seeking jobs or for becoming entrepreneurs.

The term can have different meanings in different countries.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN AUSTRALIA

Community Colleges in Australia carry on the tradition of adult education, which was established in Australia around mid 19th century when evening classes were held to help adults enhance their numeracy and literacy skills. Today, courses are designed for personal development of an individual and/or for employment outcomes. The educational programme covers a variety of topics such as arts, languages, business and lifestyle; and are usually timetabled to be conducted in the evenings or weekends to accommodate people working full-time. Funding for Community Colleges may come from government grants and course fees; and most Community Colleges are not-for-profit organisations. There are Community Colleges located in metropolitan, regional and rural locations of Australia.

Learning offered by Community Colleges has changed over the years. By the 1980s many colleges had recognised a community need for computer training and since then thousands of people have been up-skilled through IT courses. The majority of colleges by the late 20th century had also become Registered Training Organisations; recognising the need to offer individuals a nurturing, non-traditional education venue to gain skills that would better prepare them for the workplace and potential job openings. Qualifications such as undergraduate degrees and higher are not offered at Community Colleges, though some Community Colleges do offer Certificate and Diploma courses.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN CANADA

In Canada, the 150 institutions that are the rough equivalent of the US Community College are usually referred to simply as “Colleges” since in common usage a degree granting institution is, almost, exclusively a university. In the province of Quebec, even when speaking in English, colleges are called Cégeps for Collège d’enseignement général et professionnel, meaning “College of General and Vocational Education”. (The word College can also refer to a private High School in Quebec).

Colleges are educational institutions providing higher education and tertiary education, granting Certificates, and Diplomas. Associate’s degrees and Bachelor’s Degrees are granted by universities, but, in some courses of study, there may be an agreement between colleges and universities to collaborate on the education requirements toward a degree. Only in Western Canada is the term Associates degree used as in the United States. In other parts of Canada a degree is usually attained as a 4 year study programme, and to a much lesser degree now (except in Quebec, where it is the norm), in 3 years.

Each Province has its own Educational system reflecting the decentralisation of the Canadian provinces and therefore of the Education system. However most of the colleges began in the mid-1960s as a response education and training for the then emerging baby boom generation, and to provide training to the post second World War II European immigrants and newer immigrants from around the world, that were starting to enter the country.

The motivation for Community Colleges was a new way of thinking about education and training in Canada (more specifically in Ontario), and was economically based as opposed to the much earlier start in the United States of Junior and Community Colleges which was driven by an integrative social policy. Some programmes are still economically based, as to the needs of the area, province and country. All programmes are reviewed regularly, or every few years for relevancy. Programmes and courses are changed, added or deleted according to projected economic future, while many programmes are relatively stable and have been around as long as the colleges, such as various business administration programmes.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN INDIA

The HRD Ministry along with the University Grants Commission (UGC) is currently working on a proposal to start as many as 200 Community Colleges in the country within the next one year to “address skill shortage”.

They are likely to be based on the Community College model in the United States. A team of Education Ministers from seven States, led by Madhya Pradesh’s Education Minister Shri Laxmikant Sharma, visited the US to understand the model. The team submitted a review report in May 2012. All States have been asked to submit concrete proposals to the Ministry. The Cultural Attaché for Education and Exchanges at the US Embassy in New Delhi, Stephanie Forman Morimura, said,

“We’ve been supportive and encouraging of the Indian interest in implementing a Community College system that’s right for India. As Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in her recent speech at the US-India Higher Education Dialogue, ‘I believe Community Colleges are one of the reasons, often unheralded, that the United States has been so successful’.”

In the US, Community Colleges provide an important additional layer of education where students can learn practical skills and get the theoretical knowledge to continue on to university if they like.

In the mean time, Dr. P R Trivedi has decided to establish 1000 National Community Colleges. He has envisaged a five-year Action Plan for launching different types of skill development numbering 1800 vocational and employment centric skills in association with the existing institutions in the country including NGOs, ITIs, Colleges, Schools, Residents Welfare Associations, Geriatric Care Centres, Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Health Care Centres, Farmers, Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Electronics, Instrumentation, Fashion, Media, Textiles, Chemical, Cosmetological, Tourism and Travel, Paramedical, Printing, Food Processing, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Hydropower Engineering related organisations etc.