

**A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE  
PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION WITH  
SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE EASTERN FREE STATE**

**By**

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**DECLARATION: STUDENT NUMBER: 99237335**

**I declare that “The Role of Community Colleges in the Provision of Vocational-Technical Education with Specific Reference to the Eastern Free State” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.**

-----

**28 October 2003**

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

**Mr. L. E. Letsie**

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to:

1. My children **Motetekoane Esther, Ditlhare, Lebakeng** and **Lotoane**. May they be inspired to strive for high educational attainment and for responsible citizenship.
2. All **Educationists, Educational Administrators** and **Educators** who are engaged in the development of Further Education and Training in South Africa. Their efforts are invaluable to millions of their countrymen.

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

A.C.T	Academic Coordination Team
AA	Associate in Arts
AACC	American Association of Community Colleges
AACJC	American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
AAJC	American Association of Junior Colleges
AAS	Associate in Applied Science
ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AET	Adult Education and Training
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
AS	Associate in Science
B.A.	Bachelor of Arts
CASE	Community Agency for Social Enquiry
CBEC	Community-Based Education Centre
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCC	Centre for Community Colleges
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERI	Center for Educational Research and Innovation
CES	Chief Education Specialist
CETA	Construction Education and Training Authority
CJT	Customised Job Training
CLAST	College-Level Academic Skills Test
CLC	Community Learning Centre
COLTS	Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service

COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CT	Company Training
DES	Deputy Education Specialist
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
ERIC	Education Resource and Information Center
ERS	Education Renewal Strategy
ETDP	Education, Training and Development Practices
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance
FET	Further Education and Training
FETC	Further Education and Training Certificate
FM	Frequency Modulation
FTSE	Full-Time Student Equivalent
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GNP	Gross National Product
HE	Higher Education
HETC	Higher Education and Training Certificate
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HoA	House of Assembly
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IT	Information Technology
ITB	Industry Training Board
LF	Learning Facilitator
MEC	Member of Executive Council



MERSSETA	Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority
NCFE	National Committee on Further Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NICE	National Institute for Community Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RTC	Regional Training Centre
SACHED	South African Committee for Higher Education
SAPS	South African Police Services
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SARS	South African Revenue Services
SAS	Statistical Analysis System
SASA	South African Schools Act
SDA	Skills Development Act
SEPSI	South Eastern Public Safety Institute
SES	Senior Education Specialist
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authorities
SGA	Student Government Association
SGB	School Governing Body
SMD	School Management Developer
SMME	Small, Micro and Medium Enterprise

SPC	St. Petersburg College
SPJC	St. Petersburg Junior College
SRC	Student Representative Council
TESA	Tertiary Education Sector Assessment
THETA	Tourism and Hospitality Education and Training Authority
UPC	University Partnership Centre
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USF	University of South Florida

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### **Abstract**

This study was conducted with the purpose of evaluating American community colleges in order to consider their role in the provision of vocational-technical education with specific reference to the Eastern Free State. In order to achieve this, three research methodologies were engaged in. They comprised a documentary study relating to the nature and functioning of American community colleges and to the provision of vocational-technical education in South Africa, an on-site visit to an American community college for the purpose of conducting an in-depth study thereof as well as an empirical investigation undertaken in the Eastern Free State with the purpose of determining the need for the establishment of community colleges in the region.

The documentary study of the American community college as well as the on-site visit to a typical American community college have revealed that these educational institutions have been particularly useful to individuals whose educational opportunities have been limited by a variety of circumstances by being plentiful, nearby, inexpensive, offering a variety of programmes and by adhering to an open-door admissions policy that imposes few entry requirements. It has also been revealed that American community colleges have a positive impact on those associated with them, namely, students, commerce and industry, universities and society in general.

The documentary study relating to the provision of vocational-technical education in South Africa has revealed that in the past the provision of education in the country has been skewed in favour of the White population, which happened to be in the

minority. As a result, the majority of citizens of the country either received little or no education at all. This has resulted in high levels of illiteracy, unemployment and poverty. It has also been found that corrective measures against this state of affairs are currently being undertaken.

The empirical investigation undertaken in the Eastern Free State has found that the residents of the Eastern Free State are in favour of the establishment of community colleges in their region. The type of community college that is desired is one that will lead to the upliftment of the educational levels of its students and equip them with marketable skills.

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations are made relating to the establishment of community colleges in the Eastern Free State. It has been found that there is no need for the establishment of community colleges alongside the already existing FET colleges in the Eastern Free State. Instead it is recommended that some of the features of American community colleges that have contributed to their success be adopted, adapted where necessary and be integrated into the FET college operating in the Eastern Free State.

#### **KEY WORDS**

Community Colleges, Community Education, Adult Education, Further Education and Training, Life-long Learning, Continuing Education, Recurrent Education, Vocational Education, Technical Education and Career Education