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The Perceptions of Economic Development Contributions of a Community College on Local Areas: A Comprehensive Analysis of One Rural Mississippi Community College

Burnell Harris

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The perceptions of economic development contributions of a community college
on local areas: A comprehensive analysis of one rural
Mississippi community college

By

Burnell Harris

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Community College Leadership
in the Department of Educational Leadership

Mississippi State, Mississippi

May 2016

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2016

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This study was designed to investigate and analyze whether a community college foster economic growth in its service area and, more specifically, to analyze the economic development contributions of one rural Mississippi community college to its service area. The population under study consisted of business owners in the community college's area, local elected officials, a targeted community college president and administrators, economic development planners, and the Mississippi Development Authority. 100 questionnaires were distributed; 48% of them were returned. Data were collected, arranged, and analyzed using descriptive, comparative, and correlational statistical tools. Additionally, a 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the community college's economic contribution statements. Demographic information was collected. The following information was revealed: (a) 35% of the respondents were elected officials, 20% were community college board members, and 21% were administrators; (b) 73% of those responding were Caucasian; and (c) 40% of those responding had 21 years or more of academic experience. Results revealed that respondents believed that

this particular community college made significant contributions to the overall economic development of its service area. Based upon research findings, the researcher recommends the following: (a) continued elaboration between lawmakers and community college leaders, (b) identification of the economic needs of their regions by community college leaders, (c) community colleges' employment of an Economic Development Recruiter, and (d) the maintenance of business incubators. Additionally, the researcher recommends that more research is needed to determine how college administrators can increase enrollment and retrain displaced workers who are now students.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Dyann Harris, for her love, support and commitment to helping me stay true to my desire to attain this level of education. To my daughters, Tomika, Tineciaa, and Tiaura and my granddaughter, Marlyn Dyann for their encouragement, patience and understanding. To my mother, Sarah Louiza Harris and father, Levi Harris, Sr., who instilled in me the need for a profound educational background, and finally to my sisters, brothers, family and friends who stood by my side.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since their establishment over 100 years ago, community colleges in the U. S. have played a pivotal role in higher education. In their earlier years, the concept of community college was illuminated by fears that the era of ever-expanding opportunities was about to end (Coley, 2000). However, this ideology of ‘fear’ was proven to be unjustified and inappropriate. Other than wide open spaces and free land, there were frontiers to pursue. These frontiers included the opportunity to develop the mind through a particular American institution--the community college (Coley, 2000).

Since its inception, the community college system has developed to include over 1600 institutions; to enroll 5.5 million students in credit college courses and another 5 million in non-credit activities; and to employ almost 300,000 faculty members (Coley, 2000). Non-credit activities are primarily related to workforce training, which is a major component of the system and the communities they serve. Workforce training shows the relationship between education and income which will increase the demands for community college.

Legislators have come to recognize the contributions community colleges have made to the changing economy. As the economy changed or evolved, the demand for an educated and skilled population of people increased. This increased demand necessitated

that people be given opportunities to enhance their skills throughout their working lives. Additionally, politicians became cognizant of the increased pressure that community colleges were now facing. Specifically, they were now charged with the task of providing a quality education to students who were academically unprepared and promoting economic development in the communities they serve.

Political leaders recognize that individuals are the economy's greatest resources and that community colleges are the best educational tools for equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills they need to be productive (Nespoli, 1991). Research reveals that while 4-year colleges and universities have done a very good job preparing professionals, they have not done a very good one preparing technicians (Nespoli, 1991).

Never before in their existence have community colleges in America been so well positioned to play a major role in America's future (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000). When a nation decides that high technical skills are the routes to a brighter future, there is no better institution to fulfill this role than the community college system, which will address the massive educational efforts this undertaking will require (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000). The future success of the community college system will depend primarily on how well the college receives and adapts to the needs its service areas (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000). This adaptation will demonstrate the effectiveness of community colleges relative to community development, highlighting the economic impact/implication (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000).

Currently, community colleges are in the position of being able to contribute more to the economic growth and development of the communities they serve. To illustrate, not only are they preparing new technicians for the workplace but are also retraining

workers, bringing employers and employees up to date with new technologies and business processes, and working with businesses to help them become more innovative and competitive (The Business Monthly, 2002).

The changing relationship between education and the new economy begins with the fact that more and more jobs were (and are) requiring at least some postsecondary education (Carnevale, 2002). This change or new requirement now allowed community colleges to get directly involved with local economic development planning.

The Economic Impact

Economists have predicted that the demand for community college education and training will likely increase in the years to come because of the increasing need for technically trained workers. The past industrial workforce, with its emphasis on adaptable skills, problem solving, and technology, will have educational and training requirements that match skillfully and satisfactorily with the strengths of the modern community college (Griffith & Connor, 1994). Education beyond high school and diverse learning options have become economic imperatives both for traditional 18- to 24-year-old college students and for adults in search of lifelong learning (Carnevale, 2002).

Griffith and Connor (1994) described today's economy as a "moving target" (p. 78), meaning that the employment needs of society have changed and will continue to change. Community colleges are appropriately prepared for this moving target. For instance, analysts predicted that by the year 2000, only one out of four professional workers will require at a baccalaureate or higher degree. This suggests that the other

three workers will either need technical training or technical degrees (Griffith & Connor, 1994).

Currently, there are five crucial roles that community colleges will play in the new economy and in the new multicultural America. They are as follows: (a) minimum educational qualifications for access to good jobs, (b) stepping stone to bachelor's and graduate education, (c) pivotal education institution in the nation's job training and retraining system, (d) the primary education provider for the least advantaged and (e) the first chance at American higher education for the surging immigrant population (Carnevale, 2002).

Background

The original purpose of the community college system was two-fold. First, it was to provide to students an inexpensive means of acquiring a 2-year basic education prior to their transferring to a 4-year college or university. Second, it was to offer technical and vocational training for students wishing to enter the workforce. In the 1970s, the mission of the community college system expanded in response to the following three events: (a) the economic restructuring of many businesses, (b) the failure of many urban schools to educate the students they serve, and (c) an influx of non-English speaking immigrants into the U. S. Because of these three events, community colleges' administrators began to also focus on retraining workers for new jobs, working with small and medium size firms to help them become more productive and innovative, and providing customized training for firms to make them more competitive (Dougherty & Bakia, 1999).

The community college in this study is a public comprehensive community college, serving a seven-county district as established by the Mississippi Legislature. The

college's mission is to provide educational programs, economic development services, and cultural and recreational opportunities to constituents from the college's service area and surrounding communities. Quality programs and services are offered in a safe environment consistent with federal, state and local program operational standards and guidelines. To accomplish this mission, this particular college does the following:

1. Provide a variety of educational programs that:
 - a. offer the first two years of academic parallel courses and curricula of a baccalaureate degree program;
 - b. prepare individuals for employment upon completion of a prescribed curriculum;
 - c. provide a developmental program of instructions for students who academic foundation requires strengthening and to provide enriched educational opportunities for academically talented students;
 - d. include adult basic education, continuing education and community service programs for individuals, striving for professional growth and/or personal enrichment; and
 - e. Upgrade and/or develop workforce skills through special industrial and adult training.
2. Provide a broad range of support services required to implement the college's educational programs, which include but are not limited to library and learning resources, educational equipment and specialized

facilities, information technology resources and systems, student development services, and athletics.

3. Promote professional growth and development of faculty and staff through participation in programs of enrichment, leadership training, and advanced study, as well as membership and participation in professional organizations.
4. Provide a variety of services to college constituents through partnerships between the college and business, industry, and public agencies that support economic development.
5. Maintain a strong commitment to the use of state-of-the-art technology in all college programs and services.
6. Provide leadership in the coordination of all programs to improve relations with area high schools, other community/junior colleges, and four-year colleges and universities.
7. Provide cultural and recreational opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and citizens of the college service area and beyond.
8. Provide adequate financial resources, administrative processes, and physical facilities to support the mission of the college.
9. Provide a safe environment and quality accommodations to meet the needs of students, faculty, staff and the community.
10. Engage in an on-going, systematic process of planning and evaluation the results in improvement of educational programs and support activities (Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, it has become widely recognized that a key factor in economic competitiveness is a highly skilled work force. Evidence of this recognition is the Federal Government's redefining education as an economic development issue (American Association of Community Colleges, 2004).

The problem examined in this study was whether specific community colleges aid their local constituencies by advancing economic growth in their particular service area. Currently, there is little research that has focused on the extent to which the rural Mississippi community college in this study participates in economic development or entrepreneurial development in the communities it serves. The researcher wanted to investigate this problem.

The community college in this study has the potential to provide a large portion of its service area with expertise in strategic planning and program implementation to promote economic growth and development. It is located in the southern region of the state of Mississippi. It provides students with career and technical education programs that grants certificates and/or Associate of Applied Science degrees. This community college also addresses the needs and concerns of local employers, partnering with King's Daughters Medical Center (KDMC) to provide internships in its medical laboratory (Workforce Development at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2014).

There exist a need to know whether this particular community college contributed to fostering economic development in its communities relative to educating and training opportunities being offered to the general public and other business-related activities (Gantes, Sorensen & Nieri, 1996). Education and training are important variables to the

community college system, especially in workforce development. To illustrate, in 1988, the Nationwide Commission on the Future of Community Colleges recommended that Community Colleges help build communities by creating partnerships with employers and making facilities available for workforce training (Kasper, 2003).

It also appears that there is a need for better support of community colleges from lawmakers through funding, to assist community college leaders, business owners and economic development planners in the community college service area, in an effort to serve the needs of all communities. Increase funding for education and training will ensure greater economic opportunities through job development and economic growth. community college leaders need lawmakers support to make progress on fulfilling the 2007 mid-level funding that promises per Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) for community college students and to start new programs that fill the gap of skilled workers in Mississippi (“Mississippi Community College leaders,” 2013).

According to Dr. William Lewis (2013), president of Pearl River Community College and leader of the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges, By 2018, two-thirds of the nation’s jobs will require some education and training beyond high school, but not necessarily a four-year degree. Middle-skill workers such as nurses and healthcare specialists, electricians, automotive plant workers, computer technicians and truck drivers are the backbone of Mississippi’s economy.

(“Mississippi Community College leaders,” 2013).

In July, 2013, President Obama proposed the American Graduation Initiative to invest in community colleges and help American workers get the skills they need to

succeed (Obama, 2009). According to the President, in the near future, jobs requiring their workers to have at least an Associate's degree will significantly increase. He added that community colleges will provide an invaluable service to those workers and industries (Obama, 2009).

This study provided community colleges' leaders, lawmakers, business owners and economic development planners with a clear understanding of what economic variables are productive and/or what economic factors or variables need to be implemented in its community college service area. This study will also bring to the attention of community college leaders, local elected officials, business owners and economic development planners the importance of collaborating their efforts to advance economic development. "With committed leadership, colleges can convene local efforts and align resources" (Austin, 2012, p. 2). Ultimately, there is a need to know and determine whether the community college in this study contributes to the economic growth of its service areas.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate and analyze whether community colleges foster economic growth in the service areas in their community, and analyze the perception of economic development contributions of one rural Mississippi community college to its service areas. Given the population and socio-economic demographics of the local areas in the southwestern region of Mississippi, there is a need to know whether the community college in this study serves to stimulate or promote sustained economic growth in the surrounding communities. Moreover, it is important to know whether this community college will continue to provide the kind of knowledge, expertise, and hope

that is needed in rural communities. Additionally, it is important to determine and document how rural community colleges have contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship and small business development, encouraged and assisted in the development of programs that target poor people while creating jobs (Rubin, 2001).

Research Questions

This study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. Is there evidence to support the presence of contributions of community colleges and economic development in their service area?
2. Is there evidence of a direct relationship between the community college in this study and economic development in its service area?
3. What are the strategies implemented by the community college in this study in its service area?
4. Is there an awareness and satisfaction level on contributions in work force growth, economic development and population growth?
5. Is there any significant difference the community college in this study has made based on work force growth, economic development and population growth?

Significance of the Study

This study is important because it examined, assessed, and analyzed the community college in this study's contributions to the perceptions of economic development of its service area. Generally, it identified the perceived contributions of this

community college in stimulating the general business climate of the surrounding counties.

Different communities have different resources upon which to build economic vitality, and local leaders must comprehend their community's assets, which is the first step toward building prosperity. It is worth looking beyond the assets that are obvious or readily accessible. Sometimes, creative approaches can even convert problems into assets (Manpower Development Corporation, Inc., 2003).

Community leaders need to be cognitive of the fact that community colleges have moved into a position of making major projections and strides in economic development, including workforce development. Employers look more to community colleges as a source for training workers and generating programs geared toward improving the economy in local communities. These programs include promoting involvement management and technical assistance, small business development, and entrepreneurial training.

The confirmation of this study will allow community college presence to take the lead in establishing coalitions with other community leaders for the provision of job training and business consulting services by the college, as well as other incentives to attract new business. As the United States economy becomes increasingly technological, with new production and management techniques become common place, it is critical that employees and businesses have access to training. Community colleges can provide these services, and lead the nation forward to greater economic productivity (Hirshberg, 1991).

This study will, hopefully, motivate community colleges' presidents and local elected officials to determine whether to continue with the economic development strategies, or redefine their mission, break up in smaller units or limit their service area in order to be effective. Dougherty and Bakia (1999) asserted that there is a danger that community colleges, in their ardent pursuit of a strong connection with business, will lose interest in the traditional task of schools to prepare citizens and not just workers. Because administrators' time and attention are finite, the more they devote to the college's new economic rules, the less time is available for promoting education for citizenship, providing access to four-year colleges, and serving under-prepared students (Dougherty & Bakia, 1999).

According to Budd (2011), "the new economic role of the community college corners the risk of Balkanizing the college" (p. 48). The workforce and economic development programs tend to differ substantially from traditional wings of the college in organizational culture, revenue sources, pedagogy, and kinds of students enrolled (Lynch, 1991). These differences between the newer and older functions of the community colleges can breed a healthy competition and dialog. If these differences are cast, the result may be the creation of a deep cultural and organizational divide within the community college (Dougherty & Bakia, 1999). Community colleges' board, state and local officials need to consider ways to insure that the new economic role is supported without interfering with the nature of the community colleges.

This research can be a viable vehicle for community college presidents, economic development specialists, state and local governments, boards, elected officials, businesses, and companies. It will become a tool they can use to rate the effectiveness of

their economic development policies and strategies used by the community colleges in their service area.

Limitations of the Study

The Mississippi community college in this study may not be typical of other community colleges in other parts of the state. As a result, the reader should be careful not to transfer these results to other institutions outside the service area or community college outside the scope of this research project.

The number of participants who did not complete and submit the survey reduced the validity and reliability of this research. The honesty and knowledge of the participants responding to the survey was another limitation of the study. The results are also limited to the time the study was conducted and the reliability and validity of the questionnaire administered.

The population sample of the economic development community contained within the service area of the community college in this study is perceived to be distinctively characterized relative to its location in the state. Any implications for other community colleges would be problematic. Because of the nature of the study, the sample surveyed was drawn from the population of the seven counties in this particular rural community college service area. Those surveyed included opinions of the college president and administrators, economic development planners, local business owners, and local elected officials, including Superintendents of Education. Therefore, the size of the population was a limitation of the study because those surveyed were from the seven counties served by this particular community college.

Definitions of Terms

Community College is “Any institution accredited to award the Associate in Arts or the Associate in Science as its highest degree” (Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 5).

Community Leaders are individuals designated and perceived to represent a community.

Contribution is the distribution of capital to a rural area to induce economic growth and development .An amount of money or goods contributed.

Direct link. For the purpose of this study, direct link means being the exact cause for a particular situation of results.

Economic Contribution is defined as the gross changes in a region’s existing economy that can be attributed to a given industry, event, or policy (Watson, Wilson, Thilmany, & Winter, 2007). For the purpose of this study, it refers to the distribution of capital to a rural area to induce economic growth and development - an amount of money or goods contributed.

Economic Development means creating jobs, raising incomes, generating wealth, and reinvesting that wealth in the region’s businesses, institutions, and people. It means increasing the overall level of economic activity in the region creating opportunities for people to start and operate profitable businesses, do productive work, and raise their standard of living. And it means targeting economic opportunity to people who have been left out (Rubin, 2001). For the purpose of this study, it is the “Organized, planned

and cooperative efforts between public and private sectors designed to improve the economic conditions in a community and/or state” (Leach & Sanders, 1983, p. 6).

Implementation is to put into practical effect (The American Heritage College Dictionary, 2000, p. 682).

Population Growth is the increase in the number of people in the community college service area.

Questionnaire is a set of questions for obtaining statistically useful or personal information from individuals (Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 1993, p. 958).

Sample is a small-scale replica of the population under study. Sampling is a procedure by which we can infer the characteristics of a large body of people (called a population) by talking with only a few (Backstrom & Hursh-Cesar, 1981).

Service Area is a specific territory or area in Mississippi served by the community colleges relative to economic development.

Strategies are careful plans or methods to achieve goals (Merriam-Webster’s School Dictionary, 1993, p. 903).

Summary

Chapter I presents the reader with basic functions and nature of community colleges and their mission as it relates to economic development and their effects on surrounding counties. This chapter also presents a brief background of the problem, the impact, coupled with the original missions of one rural Mississippi community college.

Chapter I also identifies the statement of the problem, purpose of the study and research questions that directed this study. This chapter further provides details of the significance and limitations of this study, followed by definitions of important terms or concepts that will be highlighted throughout this dissertation.

CHAPTER II

REIVEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study will determine and analyze the perceptions of economic development contributions of one rural Mississippi community college to its service areas. While conducting research, several studies emerged relative to the role or contributions of community colleges in economic development.

Economic Development

Economic development is a term that economists, politicians, and others have used frequently in the 20th Century. The concept, however, has been in existence in the West for centuries. Mansell and Wehn (1998) stated that economic development has been understood since the World War II to involve economic growth, namely the increases in per capita income, and the attainment of a standard of living equivalent to that of industrialized countries. Economic development can also be considered as a static theory that documents the state of an economy at a certain time. According to Schumpeter (2008), the changes in this equilibrium state to document in economic theory can only be caused by intervening factors from the outside.

Numerous definitions have been offered for the term “economic development.” One of the most popular definitions views economic development as “the sustained, concerted actions of policy makers and communities that promote the standard of living

and economic health of a specific area. Economic development can also be referred to as the quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy” (Sen, 1983, p. 745). From another perspective, “Economic development is the institutional changes made to promote economic betterment. It is the social organizational changes made to promote growth in an economy. It is also the process of improving the quality of human life through increasing per capita income, reducing poverty, and enhancing individual economic opportunities” (Visual Analytics, n.d., p. 1). According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2013), economic development, “is the process whereby simple, low-income national economies are transformed into modern industrial economies. Although the term is sometimes used as a synonym for economic growth, generally it is employed to describe a change in a country’s economy” (p. 1).

Community Colleges and Economic Development

Community colleges often serve as the conduit for training opportunities offered by employers to their employees. Jacobs (1989) argued that manufacturing corporations focus on training and development of their employees as a major need. Being able to change and adapt to the marketplace requires employees who are also adaptable. Community colleges are well suited to serve as the training organization for these fast-changing times. Doucette (1993) reported that there are more than 2,300 community and technical colleges in the U. S. that have corporate training modules in place. These colleges are within commuting distance to almost every American and serve the people where they are located. Gleazer and Edmund (1980) maintained that the community college is truly an institution of the community and works to identify and meet the needs of its constituents better than any other educational institution.

Community colleges provide workforce training to the businesses and industries within their service area. One method they used involved training managers and supervisors in communication skills (Warren, 2000). In order to provide this training, community colleges' programmers must continually investigate what these supervisors need and then develop programs to meet those needs. They can discover these needs by working with advisory boards and establishing close relationships with business and industry leaders.

Leadership is crucial to economic development, and those leaders can come from many different places. Often, they are elected officials, civic leaders, college presidents or employees of city or county governments that work specifically for the betterment of the community. One thing they all have in common is the desire to make their town or region a better place in which to work and live (Williams, 1990).

In order for community colleges to continue to contribute to the economic development of their service areas, community college presidents should be cognitive of community needs and have the ability to go outside the traditional structure of postsecondary vocational programs already on campus to develop a sound economic development package. Such an economic development package will foster a need for more effective and improved communication between community colleges and the agencies in their service areas concerning the college's economic development efforts.

To exemplify the need of improved communication, Cantor (1991), in a national study, described how community colleges have invested increasing amounts of resources aimed at economic development objectives and further described community colleges as the main catalyst for economic development. He found that economic development

collaborates best occur when maximum cooperation is achieved between all participating organizations, each of which stands to benefit in some form.

Cantor (1991) argued that over 85% of all community colleges promote their economic development activities and one-third of all community colleges have incorporated economic development into their mission statements. Katsinas and Lacey (1989) explain that community colleges have been involved in economic development of their service areas since they began.

Currin and Sullins (1988) conducted a research project designed to determine rural community colleges involvement in different economic development activities. In this research 237 community college presidents were asked to rate each activity as to the level of emphasis that was presently in place at their institutions. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the community college presidents decided that providing basic skills were important activities for their communities. This study established the fact that community college presidents must be committed to the economic development efforts of their colleges and be directly involved in program development and evaluation to continue to meet the needs of the constituency.

Kingry (1984) and Kingry and Cole (1985) completed related research concerning the areas of consensus and differences among Oregon Community College's faculty, administrators and businesses in the community on the role of the community college and their perceptions of its economic development activities. Kingry (cited in Currin & Sullin, 1988) identified 23 economic development activities that were useful in identifying the contributions of community colleges in economic development. This list

below defines the selected activities for Kingry's 1984 study. It included the following activities:

1. Conduct retraining programs for persons who have been laid off (Parnell, 1982).
2. Provide job placement services for students enrolled in the community college (Economic Development Administration, 1980).
3. Provide classroom apprenticeship training in cooperation with labor and business (Parnell, 1982).
4. Participation of college staff (i.e., administrators, faculty, or counselors) on industry recruitment teams (Hamill, 1982).
5. Contracting by colleagues with industries for the industry to provide certain technical training not available at the college but for which there is both student demand and community need (Gold, 1979).
6. Provide basic skills (math, reading and communication) training (Baum, 1981).
7. Provide cooperative education programs such as on-the-job training mixed with classroom training (Bulpitt & Lohff, 1980).
8. Provide instructional releases for teachers to work in industry (Bulpritt & Lohff, 1980).
9. Provide customized training programs to industry on the industry site (Tuttle & Wall).
10. Provide skill upgrade training for employed persons wanting to keep pace with changing technology or desiring to change positions. (Parnell, 1982).

11. Provide training in basic and mid-level management skills (Bulpitt & Lohff, 1980).
12. Provide short courses and workshops for company employees (Central VirginiaCommunity College Board, 1981).
13. Conduct research and development as applied to small business operation (Commission for Higher Education 1982).
14. Disseminate research results on technical change and business research to regional businesses (Groff, 1981; Oregon Department of Education, 1982).
15. Operate a business resource library to serve regional business (Fine, 1981; Oregon Department of Education, 1982).
16. Provide consultation in export management (Fine, 1981; Hamil, 1982).
17. Provide services or courses in business financial planning (Oregon Department of Education, 1982).
18. Conduct community training needs assessment (Mehallis, 1979).
19. Provide career and vocational counseling (Groff, 1981).
20. Provide prescreening and skill assessment of potential employees for business (Groff, 1981).
21. Provide staff to solicit funds for retraining programs (Groff, 1981)
22. Participation of community college staff on local community development councils (Groff, 1981; Hamill, 1982).
23. Collect labor market information for planning purposes (Bushnell, 1980;Arns, 1981). (pp. 38-39)

Kingry's 1984 study found that community college representatives have more positive perceptions of the economic development strategies and activities than individuals who were not a part of the college system. These studies point to a need for more effective communication between the community colleges and the agencies in their service areas concerning the community college's economic development efforts.

Currin and Sullins (1988) concluded that:

We are convinced that small rural community colleges can play a significant role in the economic development of their respective communities. Given the current emphasis and the clear need in rural areas, it is likely that community colleges will do more in economic development. The need, however, for research on how community colleges can effectively institute economic development programs has never been greater. Studies of exemplary economic development programs at small rural colleges could help provide valuable insight into how other small colleges might best get involved. (p. 43)

Katisinas and Lacey (1989) studied the economic contributions of Lake Michigan Community College on the local area. They found that Lake Michigan Community College represented what a rural-based community college can do to provide important, critically needed programs and services that will positively impact the economic development of its service region. Lake Michigan Community College was charged with the responsibility of bringing a central focus to institutional efforts to help businesses function in a more productive manner. This study concluded that after just 14 months of customized training through Lake Michigan Community College, over 3,500 manager, supervisors, and operators had been trained. Approximately 16 months later, 4,500

individuals in the private and public sectors had been served, thus resulting in approximately \$1.1 million in revenue.

There have been several research studies in North Carolina examining the relationship between economic development and the presence of community colleges in the areas they serve. To illustrate, Smith (1996) and Pennington, Pittman, and Hurley (2001) agreed, in part, that when comparing areas with community colleges to those without community colleges, it appears that those areas with community colleges experience more economic growth and development, even though the growth is minimum.

Lancaster (2002) also examined the role that many community colleges fill during economic instability. In the late 1990s, the unemployment rate in Sampson County, North Carolina more than doubled, rising from 3.7% to 7.7%. Over 300 layoffs occurred when a major manufacturing factory closed. These job losses resulted in a large number of displaced workers, many of whom enrolled in the local community college. This influx of students increased the college's enrollment by 10%. This was a win-win situation for the college and the displaced workers. The college offered these students the skills and knowledge needed to secure other employment and experience an enrollment growth. Thus, the presence of the community college in this area had a positive impact on the counties it served, the industries and small businesses within the counties and the individuals living there.

Lancaster presented several other examples of the community college's contribution to the local economy. For instance, Martin Community College in northeastern North Carolina provided assistance to Martin County through a forged

teamwork effort built around the local county elected officials, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) and Martin Community College System. This group became aggressive in their approach to economic development and helped to secure a 300-person locker fabrication company located in the community.

Lancaster (2002) study of community college and its role in economic development by examining Richmond Community College partnership with local industries. According to him,

Pilkington Glass is a Laurinburg manufacturing Company that looked to Richmond Community College to assist with a comprehensive maintenance-training program, coinciding with the company's 12-week shutdown as they made significant investments to rebuild ½ of the plant. Using resources from the Focused Industrial Training Program, staff from Richmond Community College, working with the local company staff, developed specialized training simulators and provided nine weeks of customized instruction to the Pilkington employees.

(p. 3)

Lancaster (2002) concluded that community colleges in North Carolina were instrumental in assisting with the development of small business of the community. For instance, Coastal Community College assisted potential business owners with the establishment and construction of a catering business for small family gathering.

The Office of Institutional Research at the Community College of Philadelphia (2004) conducted a study to show and document the important economic contributions that the community college in Philadelphia has made to the city of Philadelphia and the state of Pennsylvania. This study described the direct and indirect economic benefits to

the city and to the state as a result of the community college's educational programs and economic activities. Conclusively, this report highlighted the community college of Philadelphia as a major economic enterprise serving over 520,000 different individuals generating over \$100,000,000.00 in revenues that had major impetus on the city and state economic development.

In August, 2003, Mangum Economic Consulting, Inc. conducted a study to quantify how John Tyler Community College (JTCC) and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (JSRCC) contribute to the Greater Richmond Area's Economic Future. This firm presented evidence that John Tyler Community College serves as a precursor and catalyst for economic prosperity in Richmond. MEC listed five major contributions JTCC and JSRCC make to the region's economy:

1. JTCC and JSRCC enhance the productivity of the greater Richmond area's workforce.
2. The students experience significantly increased incomes.
3. JTCC and JSRCC are the largest providers of higher education services to economically at risk residents of the greater Richmond area.
4. Both Community Colleges make a significant contribution toward meeting some of the more critical workforce needs of the great Richmond area.
5. JTCC and JSRCC provide an efficient low-cost alternative for delinquent quality educational program (Mangum Economic Consulting, LLC, 2003).

Pennington (2001) investigated the impact of establishing a community college upon a county's relative economic development. This study was based on census data from 1940 through 1990 that were used in graphical analysis of short-time and ordinary

least square regression analysis. The results indicated that establishing a community college potentially contributed 8% to 11% of a county's economic development. Pennington pointed out that, during an election year, perhaps more so than in other years, the topic of economic development takes center stage. Every elected official has a view of the best way to direct economic development. Community colleges' leaders have suggested that no other institution has contributed more to economic development at local and state levels than the community college system (Lancaster, 1999).

Garza and Eller (1998) questioned whether there is evidence to support a direct link between the presence of community colleges and economic development. Studies of community colleges' economic impact have focused largely upon documenting economic impact through the provision of jobs and payrolls. The transition of payrolls into the purchase of goods and services in the local economy and the direct purchase of goods by institutions have a positive impact on the community.

Robison and Christophersen (2004) conducted a study to determine how the Metropolitan Community College (MCC) service area's economy and the state of Nebraska benefit from the presence of MCC. MCC, in partnership with the Nebraska Community College Association, hired CCBenefits, Inc. of Moscow, Idaho to provide the public with a clearer picture of the college's contribution to the local economy. In their study, the following four types of benefits were tracked: (a) regional economic benefits (i.e., contributions to local job and income formation), (b) higher earnings for graduates, (c) a broad collection of social benefits (i.e., improved health, reduced crime, lower welfare, and unemployment), and (d) the return to taxpayers for their college support.

The results of Robison and Christophersen (2004) study demonstrate that MCC was a sound investment from multiple perspectives. The college enhances the lives of students and increases their lifetime income, expectantly. It benefited taxpayers by training skilled workers who help stimulate the local economy and augmented tax revenues, formed an enlarged economy, and reduced the demand for taxpayers supported social services. Finally, it contributed to the vitality of the local and state economies.

According to State Science and Technology Institute (SSTI) Weekly Digest (2013), in order to spur regional economic growth, community colleges should look beyond national graduation goals. This article discussed President Obama's July 2009 speech where he challenged community colleges to graduate an additional five million students by 2020. According to the President's speech, community colleges uniquely are positioned to fuel the future of U.S. competitiveness by developing an educated, skilled workforce to address the needs of a 21st Century workplace. However, community colleges across the country are going beyond the president's challenge and establishing new initiatives to help support regional innovation ecosystems focused on encouraging entrepreneurship and nurturing tech-based startups (Obama, 2009).

Mississippi Community Colleges

Community colleges are instrumental in training students for various skilled positions. These entry-level positions are easily available for training in community colleges because of the minimal costs in tuition, which students can afford. Community colleges have thrived in the face of competition with four year college because of the increasing need for advance technological skills in the workforce. This has been shown to increase individuals earning potential particularly in the Mississippi Gulf Coast region

where Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC) is located. Seventy-three percent (73%) of the students stay in the region after graduation and contribute to the local economy (Fact Sheet, 2005). Because of the students' training and immobility, new businesses emerged and existing businesses expanded, all of which created long-term economic growth in the local community.

Mississippi community colleges (including the rural community college in this study) play an important role in the local economy. The community college(s) enhances employee skills and provide customized training to local business and industries. The average student who leaves college will potentially spend more years in the workforce than someone who did not attend college. According to the MGCCC's fact sheet ("Fact Sheet", 2005), after graduating from a community college, the average student will spend 38.7 years in the workforce ("Fact Sheet", 2005). This results in average increase of \$28 for every education dollar invested rather in tuition, fees, or books.

Studies have demonstrated that the economic contribution of Mississippi community colleges increases lifetime earnings ("Fact Sheet", 2005). Studies have also shown that students who earn a two-year degree will earn \$280,659 more than someone with a high school diploma or GED ("Fact Sheet", 2005). This is report indicates that community colleges are training and equipping college students with skills and knowledge that will contribute to the community. Another example of the impact that community colleges have on the economy is provided by Pearl River Community College (PRCC), which is located in Mississippi.

PRCC is known for its vocation and technical programs, which provide South Mississippi's business and industry community with a well-trained pool of skilled

workers. (“Business & Industry’s best friend in Mississippi”, 2001). This college has a reputation for training health care technicians and assistants throughout South Mississippi. In 1999, Pearl River Community College announced a new program funded by legislation that was pushed through the Mississippi House and Senate by a consortium of business leaders and the PRCC president at that time. The advanced Center for Technology Partnership, a new concept in the marriage of business and educational institution, became Pearl River College’s latest attempt to offer its district a leading edge in economic improvement. “There is no project more important to economic development than this,” said Lowery Woodall, retired CEO of Forrest General Hospital and Area Development Partnership ACTP task force chairman. “This concept, this center will allow our region to compete worldwide” (“Business & Industry’s best friend in Mississippi”, 2001, p.1).

Because of these community colleges’ training programs in improving the overall economic environment of South Mississippi, community colleges have continued to make an economic contribution to the community. By offering invaluable support and training, these community colleges are producing efficient and affluent individuals who will enhance the community. The community college in this study offers similar services to the community. A percentage of the population are retained or relocated to the local community. This rural community college provided training in the area of healthcare, which is similar to that of PRCC.

Rural communities throughout our nation can grow and prosper; however, they must respond to the fact that the world economy is changing (“Statement from David A. Sampson”, 2005). Strategic planning in rural regions can advance particularly

impoverished areas. In order for such regions to prosper, educational institutions and economic institutions must form alliances in the interest of its constituencies. In other words, to improve an area's economic base, community colleges must collaborate with local businesses.

The working environment has changed drastically over the last 25 years. Employers are seeking those potential employees, who have the best skills and work ethic to offer to the overall growth of the company. However, many of students are graduating or leaving school without the basic skills needed to acquire productive full-time employment. Community colleges and local area businesses can benefit greatly if they collaborate and develop learning programs to enhance the formation of generic or basic skills for their clients. The Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) identified the characteristics the workforce needs to successfully compete in a global economy (Blackburn, McNulty, & Peck, 2003). These basic skills are reading, writing, listening, speaking, integrity, cooperation, and thinking skills. Some may think that these skills are developed only in school. However, students interact with more than just their teachers and other students. Researchers (Brown, 2002; Hughes, 2003) have found that many students work while they are in school to earn extra money. Many of these students are not aware that the jobs they are acquiring are introducing them to the real world of work; it is helping them develop a good work ethic, and good communication skills, along with many other skills that employers need. These same skills are classified as basic skills and cannot be groomed in the classroom only.

The community college in this study has developed effective economic development strategies. The Workforce Development Center at this community college

works in partnership with local businesses, industries, agencies, and other organizations to coordinate and offer educational and training programs and services. These programs and services are designed to enhance an employee's performance, and thus, achieve organizational objectives. The center is committed to developing a trained workforce for all employers located in the college service area, thus enhancing the economic growth of the region (Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2004).

The Workforce Development Center at this community college was created by an act of the Mississippi Legislature in 1994 for the purpose of providing workforce training and support for new, existing, and expanding businesses and industries in the state. The Workforce Development Center offers programs and services designed to assist individuals and companies in meeting the challenges of a changing workplace. For many businesses and industries, these include on-site customized training, industry or firm-related pre-employment training, and basic skills classes (Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2004).

Furthermore, the Workforce Development Center is staffed to provide individuals who need training or retraining with assessment, counseling, and referrals to training or jobs; pre-employment training; basic skills training and high school equivalency education; and short-term job skills training (Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2004).

The development of workforce skills, through special industrial and adult training classes, is viewed as a primary mission of the community college. Thus, this rural Mississippi community college maintains a team of professionals dedicated to delivering high-quality services to its customers. In addition, the enterprising nature of the

Workforce Development Center allows this community college to access the resources of the Mississippi State Board for Community and Junior Colleges, the State Department of Education, the Office of Vocational and Technical Education, and the Mississippi State University Research and Curriculum Unit. Its Workforce Development Center also has the means to access the resources of Career/Skill Tech Centers at the state's other 14 public community and junior colleges (Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2004).

Further research exemplifies the community college in this study as an institution that provides relocation and expansion incentives for its local service areas. It developed a free start-up training for new industries in a city located approximately 60 miles from its main campus. Employers designed the course work and selected instructors.

Prospective workers are trained at a branch of this college located in this city.

Manufacturers in the area joined together to form a private sector industrial training consortium, the first in the state. Using one rural Mississippi community college campus and equipment, the consortium provides evening training for existing employees using the Merit Shop Foundation Curriculum ("Relocation & Expansion," 2004).

In the old economy, people believed that being in a cheap place to do business was the key; attracting companies was the key; and a high-quality physical environment was a luxury that stood in the way of attracting cost-conscious businesses (Coletta, n.d.). Regions won because they held a fixed competitive advantage in some resource or skill; and, economic development was government-led (Coletta, n.d.). However, in the new economy, being a place rich in ideas and talent is the key (Coletta, n.d.). Attracting educated people is also a key (Coletta, n.d.). Moreover, physical and cultural amenities are keys in attracting knowledge workers (Coletta, n.d.). Additionally, regions prosper

if organizations and individuals have the ability to learn and adapt (Coletta, n.d.). Only bold partnerships among business, government, and nonprofit sector can bring about change (Coletta, n.d.). In the new economy, metropolitan areas need to shift their focus from providing tax breaks and other subsidies to investing in the skills of the workforce, a vibrant infrastructure for technological innovation, and a superb quality of life (Coletta, n.d.).

Rather than simply trying to cut costs or react to each new economic gyration, metropolitan areas should instead invest in the foundation areas for growth in the new economy. A progressive, innovation-oriented metropolitan area policy framework for the new economy should rest on the following seven pillars: (a) Knowing your region's economic function in the global economy, (b) Creating a skilled workforce, (c) Investing in an infrastructure for innovation, (d) Creating a great quality of life, (e) Fostering an innovative business climate, (f) Reinventing - and digitizing – government, and (g) taking regional governance seriously (“The State New Economy Index,” 2002).

Community colleges are at the forefront of health care workforce training across the nation, particularly, in rural areas (Rowley, 2005). A study conducted by Katsinas (1989) indicated that the vast majority of nurses in rural areas came out of community colleges (cited in Rowley, 2005). One community college that is indicative of this study is this Mississippi community.

In October, 2002, Practice Management for the Mississippi Hospital Association had been working with rural hospitals on billing issues (Rowley, 2005). Just when a hospital would start making headway in billing, the person handling the billing would leave. The management turned to community colleges for help. The community college

in this study initiated a pilot program in medical coding and billing (Rowley, 2005). Classes began on its campus. The program's launch was achieved with help from the Mississippi Department of Education, The Research and Curriculum Unit at Mississippi State and Consulting as well as funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Enterprise Corporation of the Delta, and The Bower Foundation (Rowley, 2005). The program—unique in the state and perhaps the country—filled a dual need, as do so many rural community college programs (Rowley, 2005). It helped supply trained workers needed by the region's employers and helps workers qualify for jobs in regions that often are lacking jobs (Rowley, 2005).

According to Bill Scaggs, Executive Director of the Rural Community College Alliance, rural community colleges such as the one in this study assist in meeting the needs of the service area (Rowley, 2005). These community colleges maintain working relationships with local, state and federal agencies, elected officials, consulting groups and local chambers of commerce to ensure awareness of businesses and industries potential interest in locating in its service area. This particular community college focused on these agencies by identifying key players in each service area and established a cooperative working relationship by inviting all parties to the table, who had an interest in building the community. Discussions included workforce training, followed by formal presentations.

This strategy was particularly effective during the closing of a major factory in a local community in Mississippi. This closure resulted in the loss of employment for 519 hourly workers and 71 salaried employees (Taylor, 2005). During this pivotal time, this rural Mississippi community college was very instrumental in providing assistance to the

factory's employees through a National Emergency Grant. National Emergency Grants (NEG) are discretionary grants awarded by the Secretary of Labor. The purpose of the grant is to expand service capacity at the state and local levels by providing time limited funding assistance in response to significant dislocation events. This community college initiated this project by assisting workers in local workforce investment, by providing workforce training, by retraining truck drivers, and by developing other employees' computer skills, all of which provided significant contributions to the local workforce economy.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research study. It is organized by the following sections: (a) purpose of the study; (b) selection and description of the population and the sample to be surveyed; (c) description of the instrument that will be used to survey the sample, how it will be designed, and how it will be validated; (d) pilot study; (e) description of how the data will be collected; and (f) description of statistical procedures that will be used to analyze the data collected based on the responses received from the targeted group. The population from which the sample will be drawn consist of local business owners in the targeted community college service area, local elected officials, targeted community college presidents and administrators, economic development planners, and Mississippi Development Authority.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine and analyze the perceptions of economic development contributions of one rural Mississippi community college to its service areas. Given the population and socio-economic demographics of the local areas in the southwestern region of Mississippi, there is a need to know whether this community college served to stimulate or promote sustained economic growth in the surrounding communities. It was also important to know whether the community college

in this study will continue to provide the kind of knowledge, expertise, and hope for the rural communities. Furthermore, it was important to determine and document how rural community colleges have contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship and small business development, encourage and assisted in the development of programs that target poor people while creating jobs (Rubin, 2001). Thus, this study was guided by the following five sets of questions:

Is there evidence to support the presence of contributions of community colleges and economic development in their service area?

1. Is there evidence of a direct relationship between the community college in this study and economic development in its service area?
2. What are the strategies implemented by the community college in this study in its service area?
3. Is there an awareness and satisfaction level on contributions in work force growth, economic development and population growth?
4. Is there any significant difference the community college in this study has made based on work force growth, economic development and population growth?

Selection and Description of the Population and Sample

Prior to collecting the data, the researcher requested permission to conduct the proposed study from the Institutional Review Board of Mississippi State University (Appendix C) and the president of one rural Mississippi community college (Appendix E).

The population of this study consisted of local business owners in the targeted community college service areas, local elected officials, targeted community college president and administrators, economic development planners, and Mississippi Development Authority. All participants were over the age of 18. The researcher obtained consent from all participants of this study. Data were collected from members of the population group, who responded to the survey. The research packets contained the survey instrument (see Appendix A), the permission letter from the community college's president, and the consent form (see Appendix E), which explained the purpose of the instrument and why this study was being conducted.

Instrumentation

This study used descriptive research methods to compare the demographic information of the participants of targeted population. Descriptive statistics are procedures for organizing and summarizing important characteristics of data so that the important data can be communicated and described (Heiman, 2000).

Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) maintained that one of two most commonly types of instrument used in survey research is the questionnaire. This method provided the researcher with the information needed in immediately usable form and required less effort to analyze while requiring no more effort from the respondents. The key strengths and advantages of questionnaires are as follows: (a) they permit respondents time to consider their responses carefully without interference from an interviewer; (b) each respondent receives the identical set of questions; and (c) they can address a large number of issues and questions of concern in a relatively efficient way, with the possibility of a high response rate ("The Handbook for Economic Lecturers", n. d., p.1).

The researcher also adopted portions of the instrument style used by Goss and Associates (2002) in their study of the influence of a community on the facility enhancement. Their goal was to evaluate the economic importance and monetary contributions of Metropolitan Community College on its service area.

The research instrument used to conduct this research study was developed by the researcher based on specific theories posed in the literature review. This was pre-tested for validity and reliability, revised as needed, and conducted exclusively by the researcher. The instrument was developed to collect data and to assess the economic development of targeted areas.

Pilot Study

A pilot study of the survey instrument was conducted. The researcher requested permission from the president of Delta Community College to administer the questionnaire to 25 administrators and other associates who were employed by the Institution during the spring of 2015. The feedback from the participants indicated that the survey instrument was clear and understandable to the population of study; and, as indicated by the study results, chances of realizing similar economic contributions will be positive and greatly recognized in the study service areas.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this study relied on the use of survey questionnaires. The researcher gathered information through closed-ended questions, designed to allow the researcher to gather information from the respondents; thus developing an intuitive understanding of the processes and events central to this inquiry.

The researcher obtained the names and addresses of the targeted population in an effort to receive permission to conduct this survey. Each respondent was be informed of the study's purpose, contents and duration. The questions were formulated and structured to gather information from the respondents using logical, easy to understand diction. Each question was developed to measure a specific aspect of the study's objective and purpose. All participants/respondents were mailed a survey questionnaire informing them of a specific time to return the survey.

Method of Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis, comparative statistical techniques and correlational statistical analysis. The study findings were used to determine and present reports on variables relative to economic development.

The map in Figure 1 depicts the area where the survey analysis was conducted

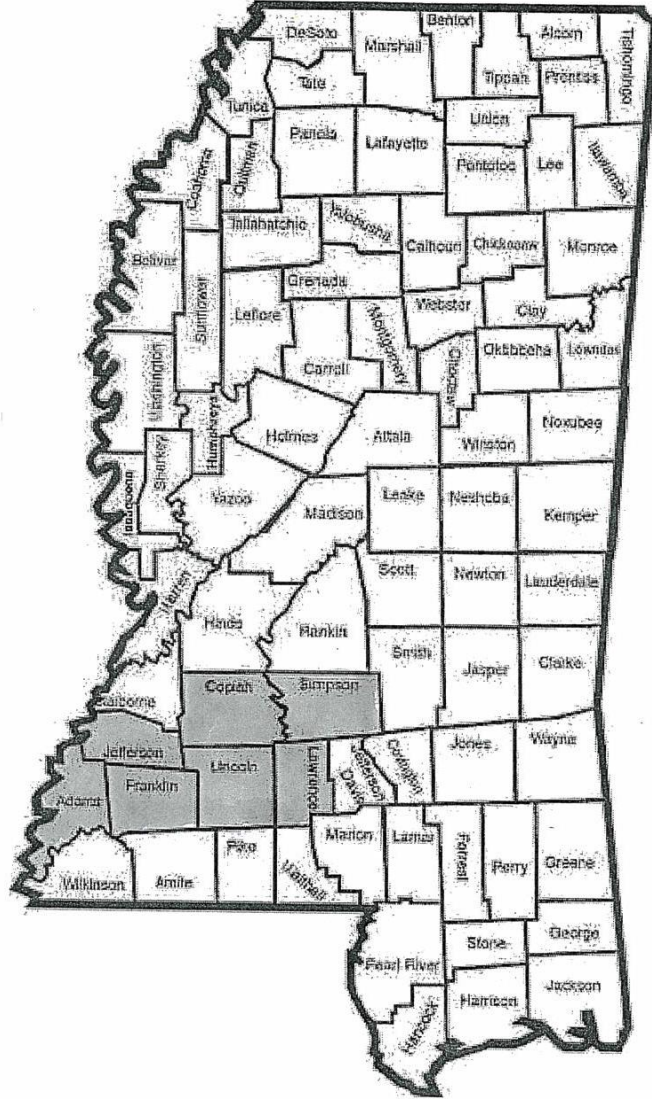


Figure 1. Map of Mississippi (2015).

NOTE: The shaded counties in the southwest part of the State of Mississippi are served by one rural Mississippi community college.

Summary

Chapter III describes the methods that will be used to adequately conduct this study. It gives insight into organizational structure and provides the reader with specific directives of how the data was collected and used.

This chapter is organized by sections which include the purpose of the study, section and description of the population, a detailed description of the instrument that will be used to survey the sample, and description of how the data will be collected. This chapter also included a description of the statistical techniques that will be used to analyze the data.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected from the population of the community college in this study's service areas in Mississippi who responded to the survey research instrument.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section focuses on the survey response rate. The second section presents descriptive data relative to the demographic information that was collected and analyzed, such as position, place of work/affiliation, age, gender, ethnicity, and number of years of experience as an administrator (See survey instrument, Section II). The third section explores the data that collected from the respondents, which answers the five (5) research questions relative to the economic development contribution of one rural Mississippi community college to its service area.

Survey Responses

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the community college in this study is contributing to the perceptions of economic development of its service area. Given the population and socio-economic demographics of the local areas in the Southwestern region of Mississippi, there exist a need to know whether this rural

community college served to stimulate or promote sustained economic growth in the surrounding communities.

The survey instrument was distributed by the researcher to 100 community members via email and post service. The service area members, who also received the survey questionnaire, were given 15 days to respond with a returnable date of July 6, 2015. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the participants responded.

Descriptive Information

The population of this study consisted of local business owners in the targeted community college service areas, local elected officials, targeted community college president and administrators, economic development planners, and Mississippi Development Authority. All participants were over the age of 18.

Position Distribution of the Respondents

Figure 2 shows the position distributions of respondents based on the survey respondents. A majority of the respondents were community college administrators, community college board trustees and elected officials of the service areas. Thirty-five percent (35%) of those responding to the survey were elected officials, and this group was the largest of the responding group of the population.

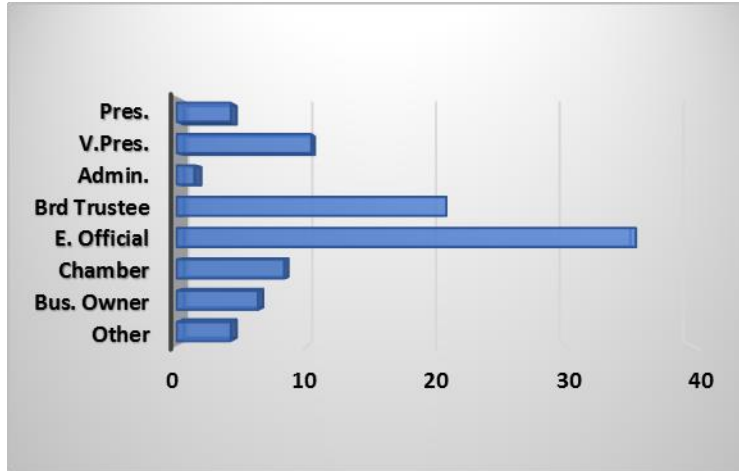


Figure 2. Position distribution of respondents.

Place of Work Distribution of Respondents

As shown in Figure 3, the majority of the respondents were employees of the community college in this study.

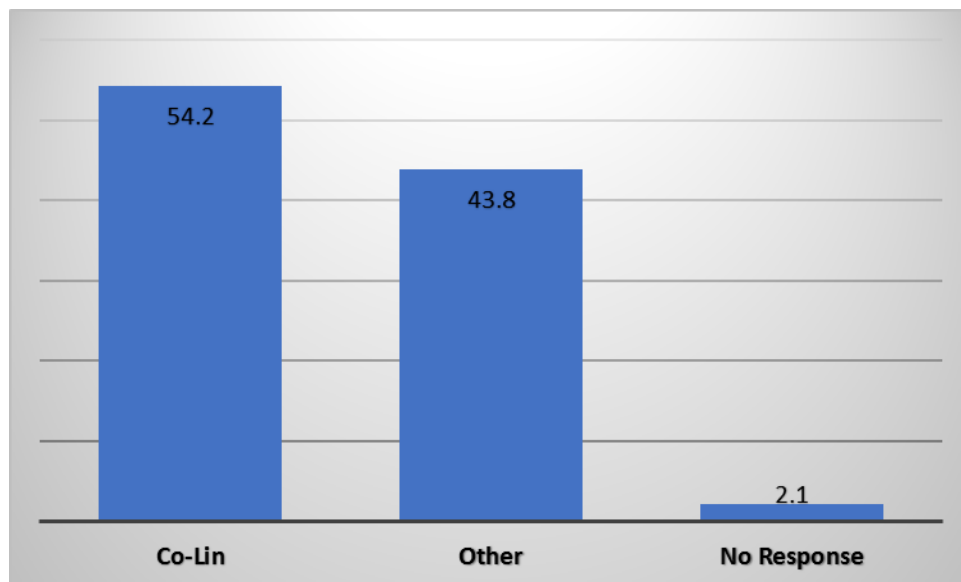


Figure 3. Place of work distribution of respondents.

Age of Administrators

Figure 4 gives the age of the respondents. Thirty-three percent (33%) of the administrators were between the ages of 51 – 60 years of age. Twenty-five percent (25%) were between the ages of 41 – 50 years of age; and only 21% were between the ages of 21 – 30 years of age.

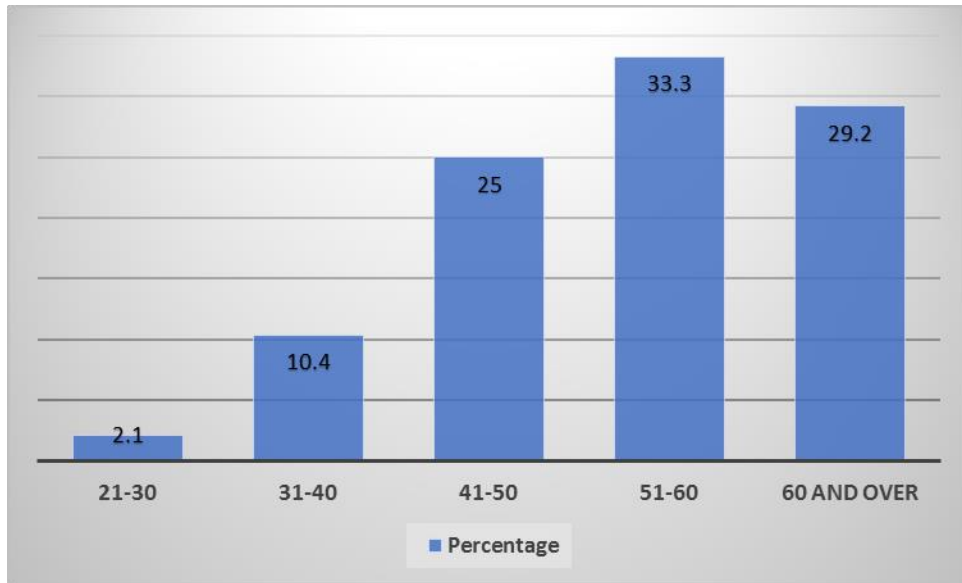


Figure 4. Age distribution of respondents.

Gender of Administrators

Figure 5 shows the gender distribution of respondents. A majority of the respondents, 69%, were male compared to 31% who were female.

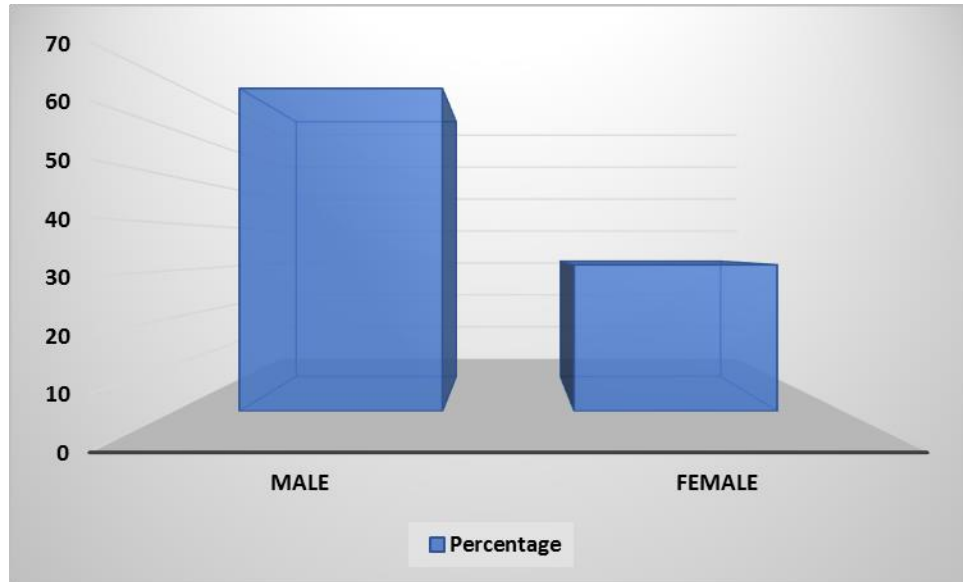


Figure 5. Gender distribution of respondents.

Ethnicity of Respondents

In terms of ethnicity of the study population in this rural Mississippi community college service area, Figure 6 indicates that the majority of the respondents, 73% were Caucasian.

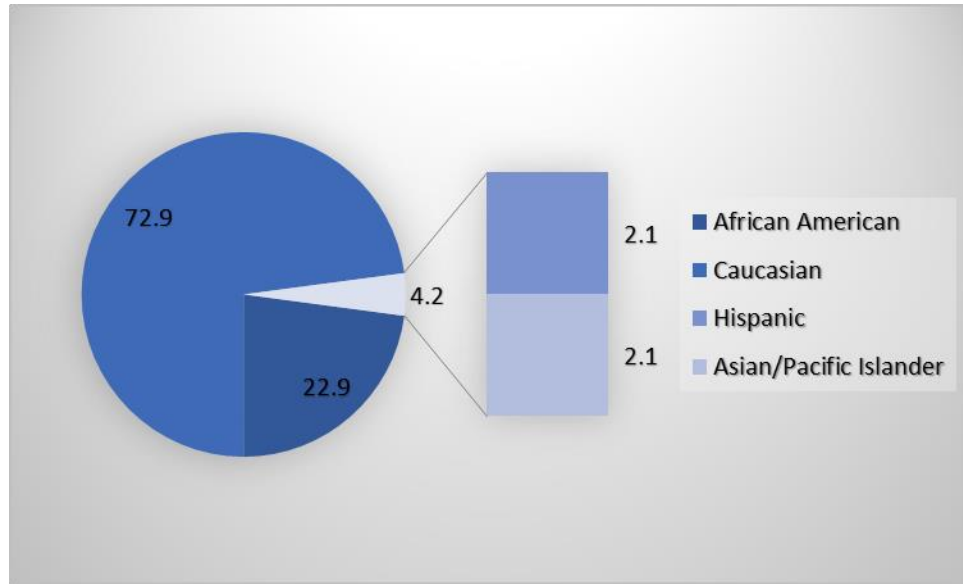


Figure 6. Ethnicity distribution of respondents.

Years of Experience as Administrator or Business Owner

Figure 7 shows the years of administrative experience of respondents. Forty percent (40%) of the respondents had 21 years or more of administrative experience.

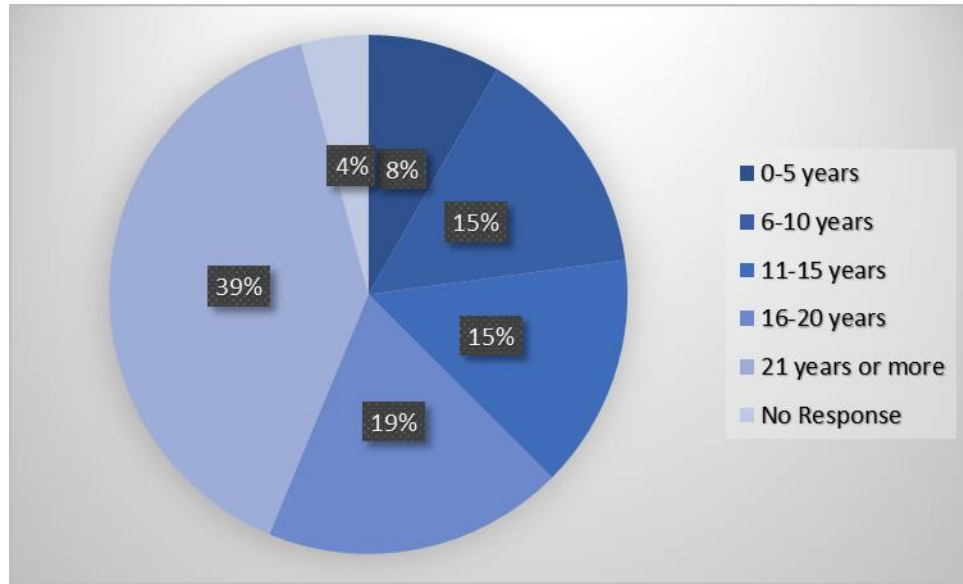


Figure 7. Years of experience.

Research Findings

To investigate the extent to which the community college in this study contributed to the perceptions of economic development of its service area, survey questions were disseminated. Data collected from the surveys were analyzed and results were used to answer the following research questions:

Research Question One

Is there evidence to support the presence of contributions of community colleges and economic development in their service area?

This question was designed to examine whether the presence of community colleges contribute to the perceptions of economic development of their service areas. All respondents in this survey answered 'yes' when there were asked if the presence of the community college contributed to the economic development in their service area.

Economic Modeling Specialists International (Economic Modeling Specialist, International, February, 2014) conducted an analysis of the economic impact of community colleges on the communities they serve. The results of this study indicated that America's community colleges have a significant, positive impact on the economy and generates a return on investment for their stakeholders (i.e., students, society and tax payers).

Community colleges are instrumental in training students for entry-level skilled positions in such areas as clerical, data-processing, and health occupation (Kelly, 2002). These entry-level positions are easily available for training in community colleges because of the minimal costs in tuition, which students can afford. Community colleges have thrived in the face of competition with 4-year colleges because of the increasing need for advance technological skills in the workforce. This has shown to increase individuals' earning potential, particularly in the Mississippi Gulf Coast region, at MGCCC. To illustrate, 73% of graduates stay in the region and contribute to the local economy after they leave the college ("Fact Sheet", 2005). Because of the student training and immobility, this encourages new businesses, assist existing businesses, and create long-term economic growth in the local community.

Studies demonstrate that economic contribution of Mississippi Community colleges increases lifetime earnings ("Fact Sheet", 2005). Studies have also shown that students who earn a two-year degree will earn \$280,659 more than someone with a high school diploma or GED (Fact Sheet, 2005). This is a phenomenal report which indicates that community colleges are training and equipping the college students to contribute to the community. Another example where community colleges have an economic

contribution to the Mississippi Community is Pearl River Community College (PRCC). PRCC is known for its vocation and technical programs in providing South Mississippi's business and industry community a well-trained pool of skilled workers ("Business and Industry's Best Friend in Mississippi", 2001).

Further evidence to support the presence of contributions community colleges have on economic development in their service areas derive from this researcher's study of one rural Mississippi community college's presence in its service area. The information collected from the survey was compiled, arranged and analyzed. When the respondents were asked about the economic stability of the community served by this community college, 93% of the respondents concurred that this rural community college provided economic stability to its service area and has been for decades.

When participants were asked about the limiting expense growth, 94% of the respondents agree that this community college provides a low cost education option for service area residents.

In further support of Research Question One, the researcher asked participants about the attractiveness of the community as it relates to the service area of this rural community college. Ninety-two percent (92%) agreed that the presence of this rural Mississippi community college increases the attractiveness of the community and encourages the start-up and/or relocation of other businesses to the service area.

Evidence also shows in the pilot study in Delta Community College service areas that when asked whether Delta Community College contributed to the economic development of the service area; 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that Delta

Community College added to the advancement of the economic development of its service area (see Figure 8).

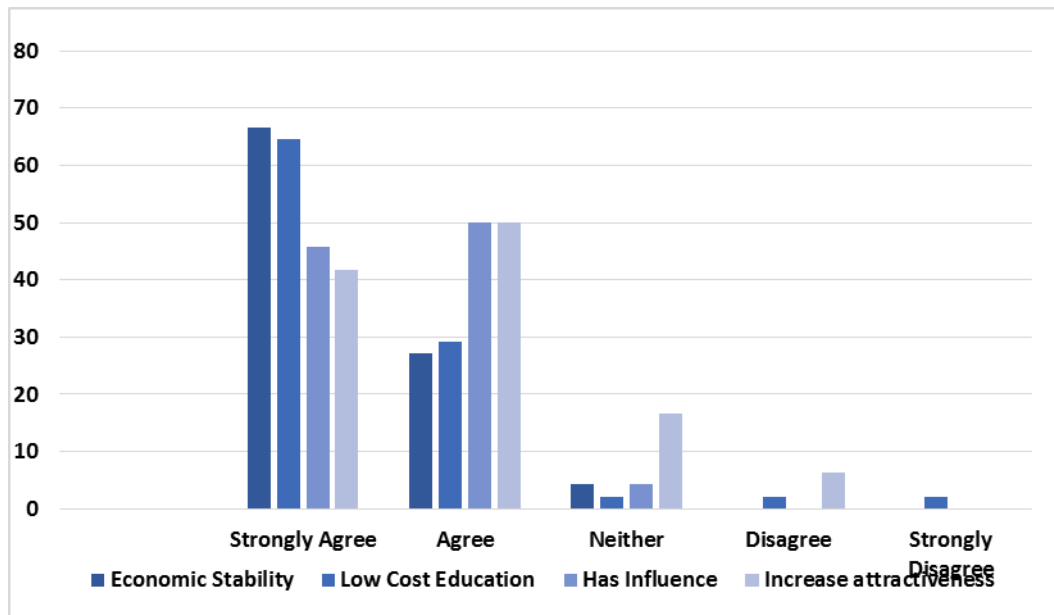


Figure 8. Level of respondents to the distribution in economic development.

Research Question Two

Is there evidence of a direct relationship between one rural Mississippi community college in this study and economic development in its service area?

This question is designed to determine whether the community college in this study fosters economic growth in its service area.

In Section II of the survey instrument, respondents were asked to respond to a series of statements by indicating the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement based on the above research question. Their responses were measured by using a five-point Likert scale using (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neither; (4) disagree; and

(5) strongly disagree. The statement that specifically asks whether the community college in this study adds to the income of its service area garnered a response of 73% who strongly agree and 27% who agree that by providing individuals with associate degrees and skill development, the community college in this study added to the income of its service area. When asked about the local tax collections, 37% strongly agreed and 44% agreed that this rural Mississippi community college accounts for increases in local tax collections (see Figure 9).

To further answer Research Question Two, this researcher inquired as to the impact the community college in this study had on the employment rate and relocation of businesses in its service area. Forty-six percent (46%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 50% agreed that the community college in this study had direct influence on an increase in the employment rate in its service area and influenced new business firms to locate in or relocate to its service area.

Overall 56% of the respondent strongly agreed and 42% agreed that this rural Mississippi community college contributed to the overall perceptions of economic development of the service area. Figure 9 presents a graphic depiction of the answers given by the respondents.

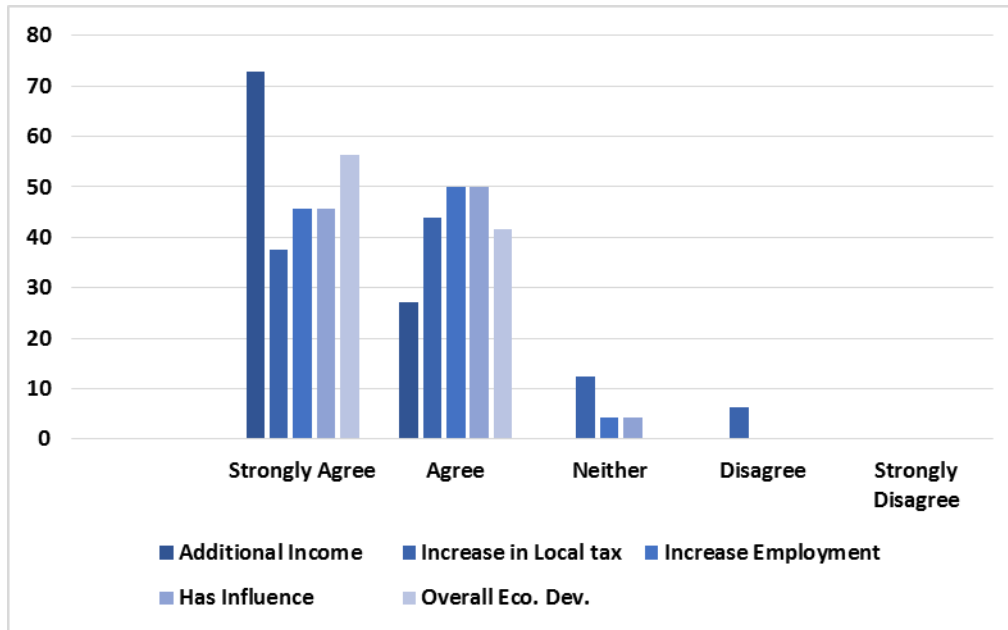


Figure 9. Relationship between the community college & economic development.

Research Question Three

What are the strategies implemented by the community college in this study in its service area?

This question was designed to determine what economic development strategies were used by the community college in this study.

To determine the strategies used by this community college, the researcher asked the participants to respond to 18 economic development strategies used by community colleges by checking ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the use of each strategy.

According to the American Association of Community Colleges (2015), in all communities, community colleges serve as an economic catalyst by providing employers with an educated and trained workforce. When asked about the community college in this study acting as a catalyst/leader in organizing a master plan (community-based

programming) for economic development problems in their service area, 81% of the respondents answered ‘yes.’

Eighty-three percent (83%) of the participants responded that the community college in this study provided college placement services to graduates seeking employment in the work force; and, 90% of them answered that this rural Mississippi community college provided job training to existing businesses and industries. Additionally, respondents indicated, with 71% rating, that this community college “maintains an advanced technology center geared to demonstrate new technological equipment to businesses in their service area.” In addition to the responses noted in Figure 10, the respondents also gave positive ratings for the areas, “forms partnerships with local businesses and government agencies in the service area,” “provides cooperative education opportunities for students in conjunction with business and industry,” and “participates in the economic development programs connected with the local chambers of commerce.”

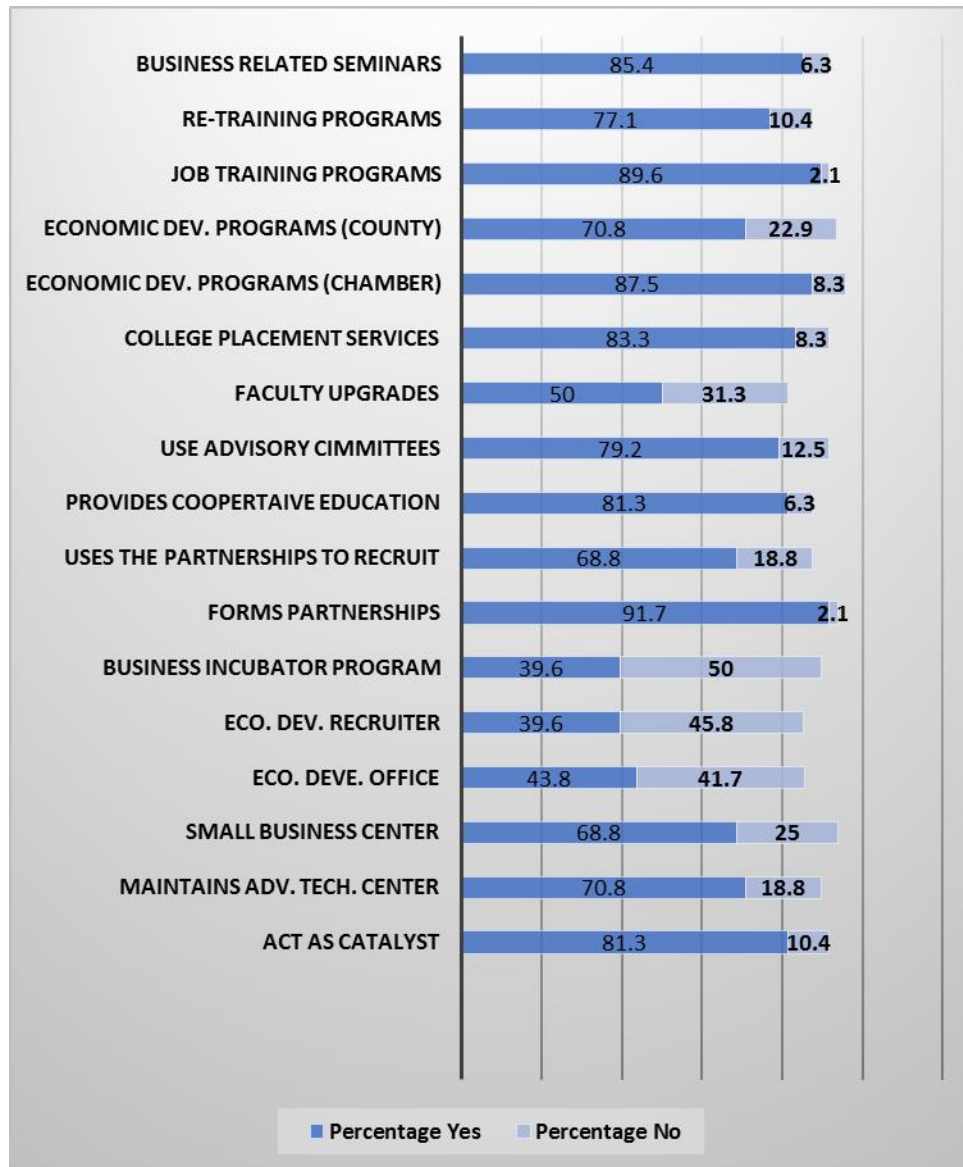


Figure 10. Strategies implemented by the community college.

Research Question Four

Is there an awareness and satisfaction level on contributions in workforce growth, economic development and population growth?

This question is designed to measure the effectiveness, satisfaction and awareness level of each participant to each of the 18 community college strategies.

Participants were asked to evaluate the economic development strategies used by and rate the effectiveness, awareness and satisfaction level of those strategies. Survey results revealed that 77% of respondents said that the strategies were effective for businesses and industries. Participants noted that 77% of businesses and industries were satisfied with the strategies, while 75% of businesses and industries thought that awareness were good. Sixty-six percent (66%) of participants responded that the community college's, in this study strategy, to "participate in the economic development programs connected with the local chambers of commerce" is most effective; while 75% were satisfied and 71% were aware. When asked about effectiveness, satisfaction and awareness level of the economic development strategy "use advisory committees to maintain the linkage between businesses and the community college," 59% of respondents indicated that it was most effective while 71% were satisfied and 55% were aware of the strategy.

Figures 11-13 depict the overall effectiveness, satisfaction and awareness level of each strategy.

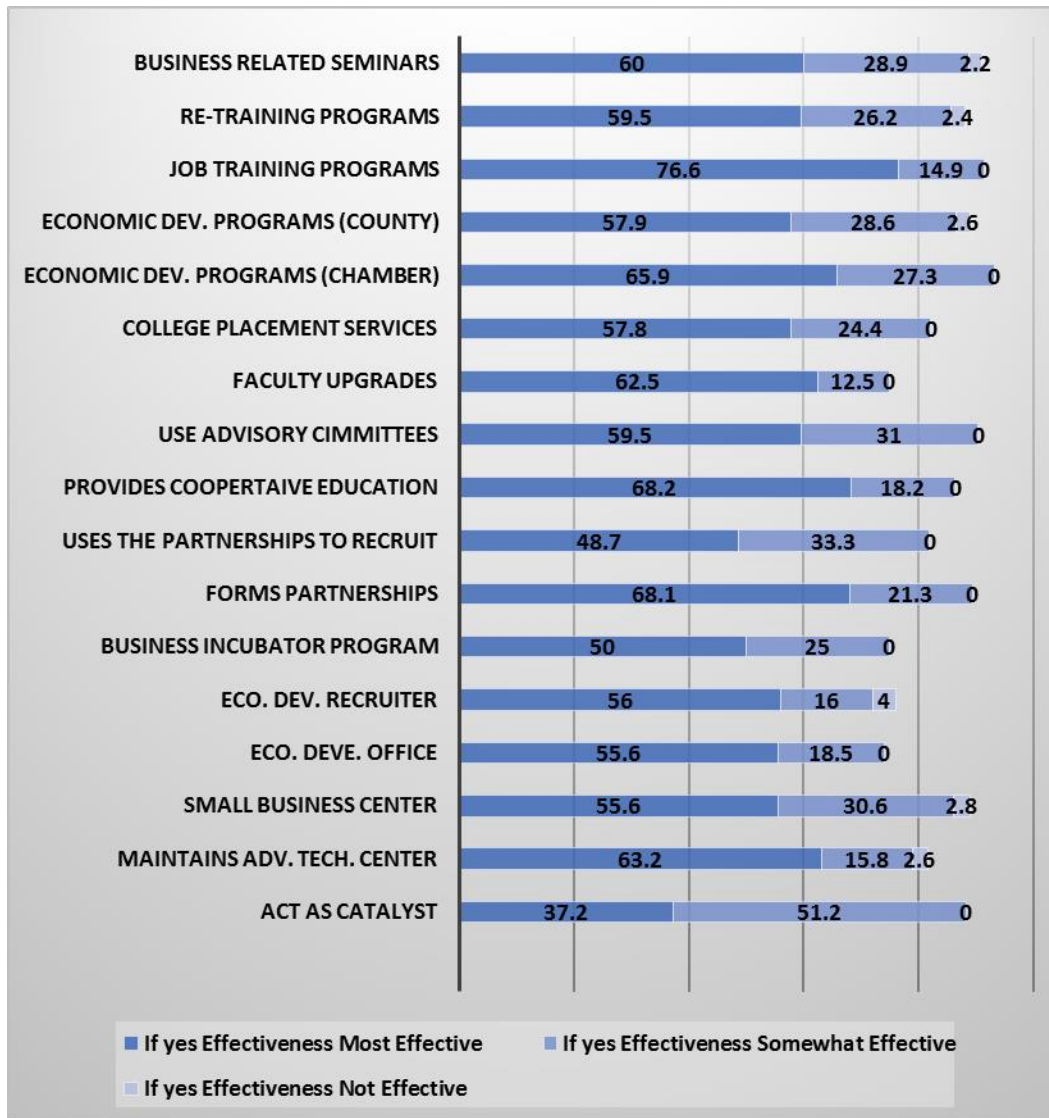


Figure 11. Strategies implemented by the community college: Effectiveness level.

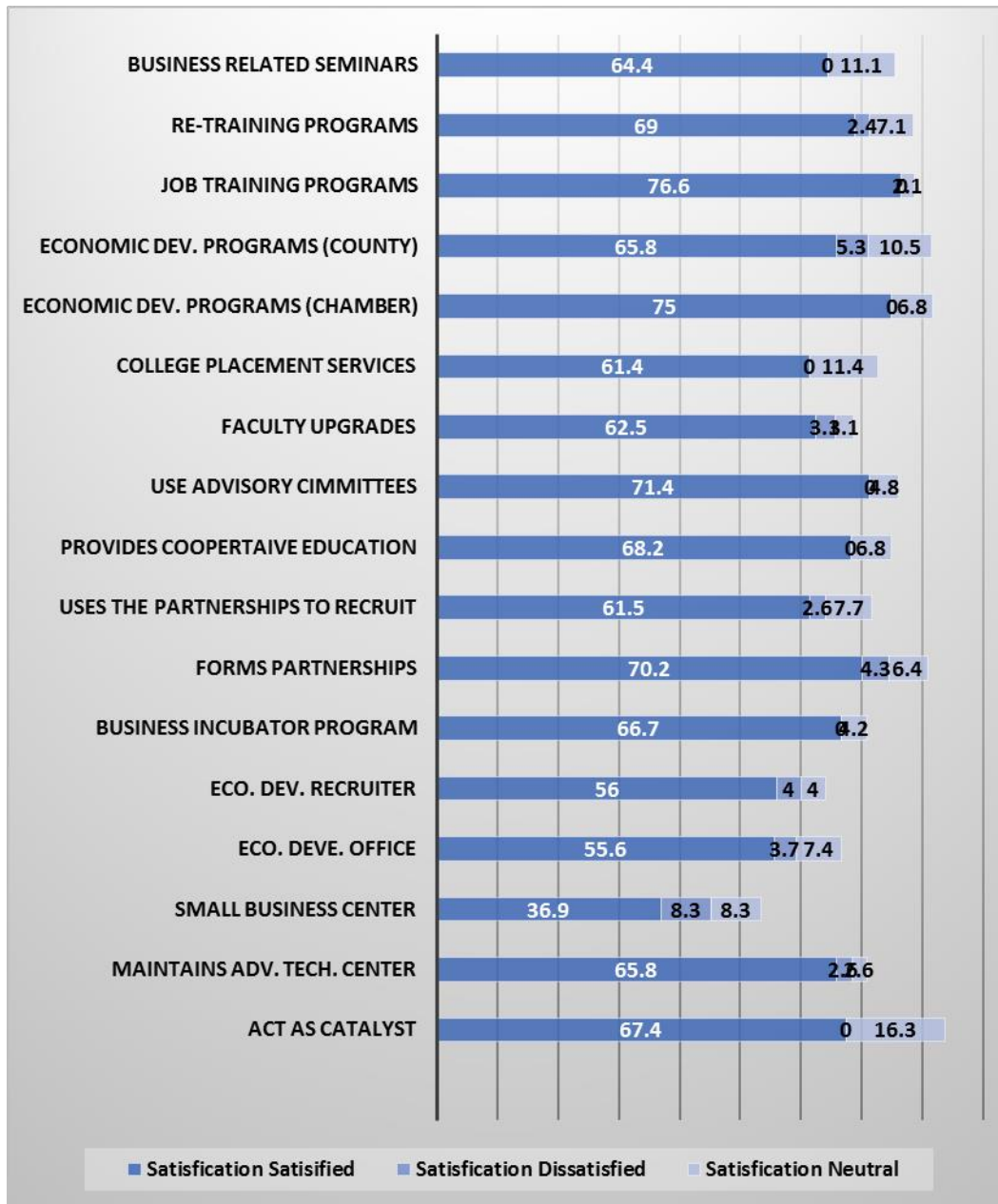


Figure 12. Strategies implemented by the community college: Satisfaction level.

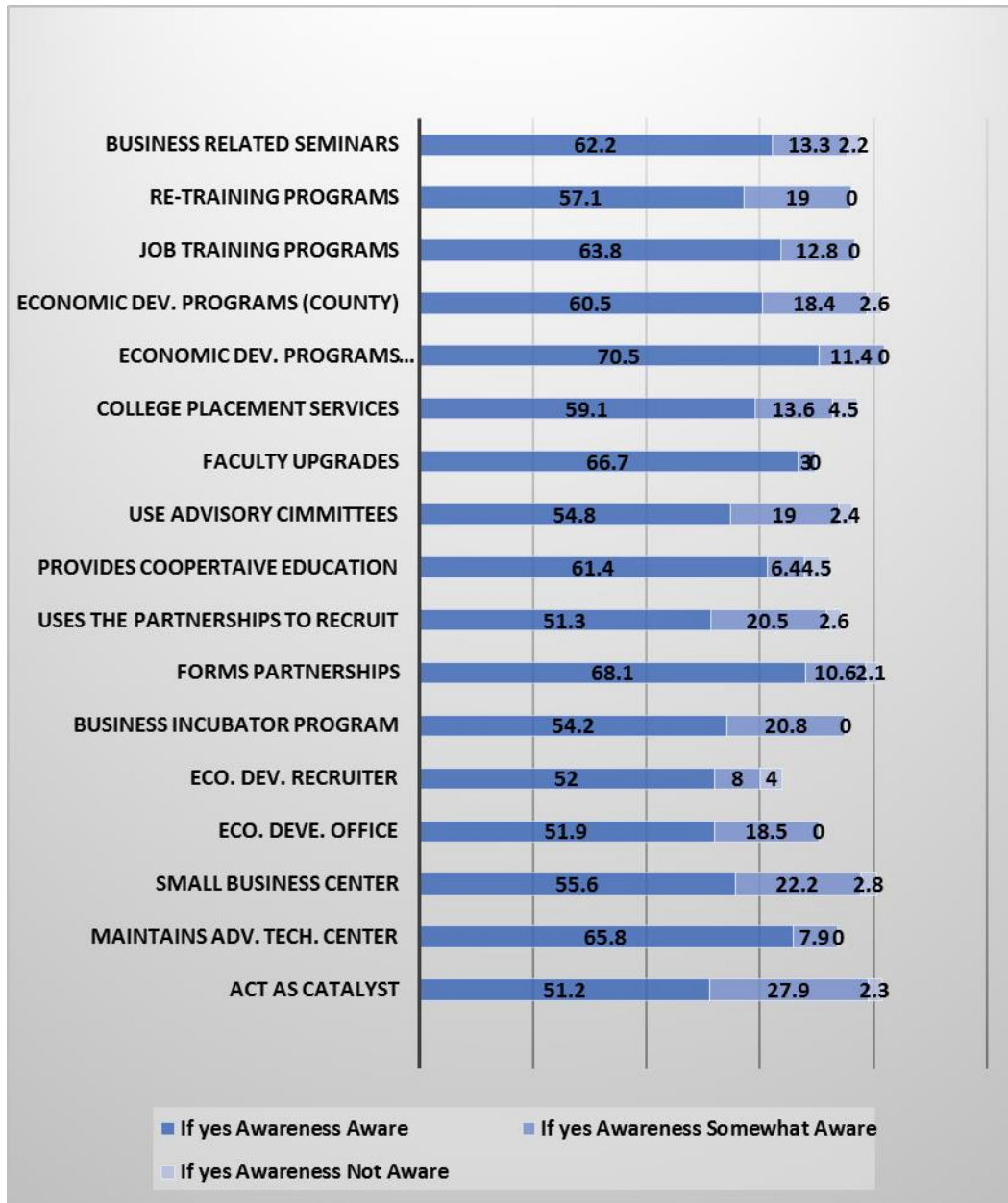


Figure 13. Strategies implemented by the community college: Awareness level.

Research Question Five

Is there any significant difference the community college in this study has made based on workforce growth, economic development and population growth?

This question is designed to provide evidence that the community college in this study does make a difference in the communities it serves.

The rural Mississippi community college in this study has developed effective economic development strategies. The Workforce Development Center at this rural Mississippi community college works in partnership with local businesses, industries, agencies, and other organizations to coordinate and offer educational and training programs and services. These programs and services are designed to enhance an employee's performance and thus achieve organizational objectives. This center is committed to developing a trained workforce for all employers located in the college service area, thus enhancing the economic growth of the region (Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2005).

The Workforce Development Center at this community college in this study was created by an act of the Mississippi Legislature in 1994 to provide workforce training and support for new, existing, and expanding businesses and industries in the state. The Workforce Development Center offers programs and services designed to assist individuals and companies in meeting the challenges of a changing workplace. For many businesses and industries these include on-site customized training, industry or firm-related pre-employment training, and basic skills classes (Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 2004).

In this study, the community college's significance was also shown when it received a National Emergency Grant to financially assist employees after the closing of a major factory in a town where one of the branches of the college is located.

When respondents were asked about this rural Mississippi community college’s contribution to the population growth, overall, 81% stated that this community college does contribute to population growth in its service area. Ninety-six percent (96%) of respondents agree that the community college in this study has a direct influence on an increase in the employment rate. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of respondents indicated that “because of [this community college’s] profound workforce training, businesses have increase in sales, especially in the food and beverage industries. Overall, 100% of participants responded that “evidently [the community college in this study] contributes to the overall perceptions of economic development of its service area.”

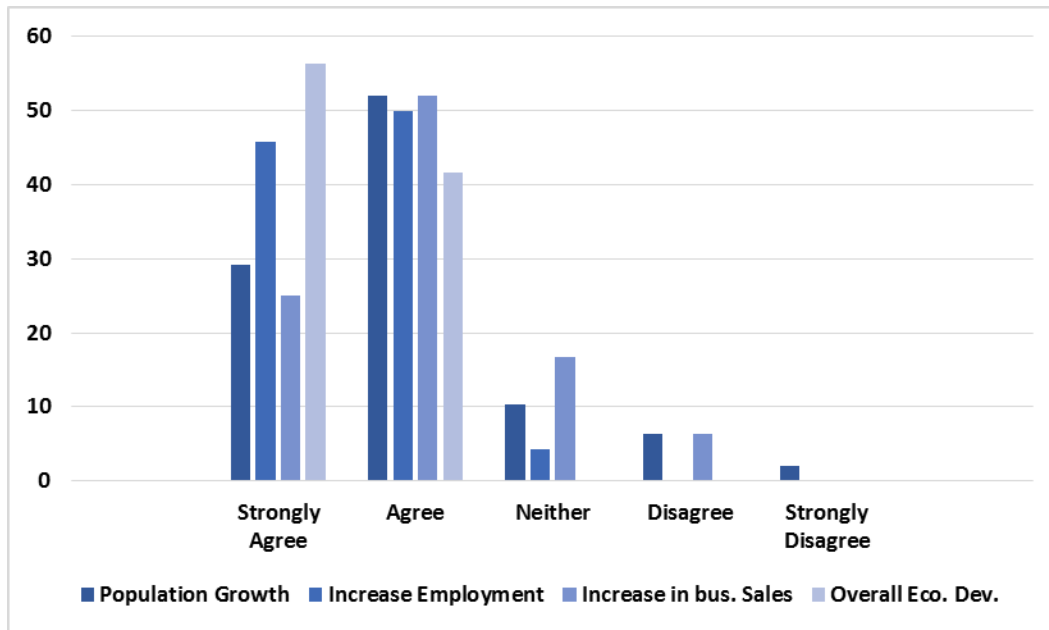


Figure 14. Significant differences between the community college in this study and economic development.

Test of Significance

Question Five: Is there any significant difference the community college in this study has made based on workforce growth, economic development and population growth? Specifically, the participants were asked if there was a significant difference the community college in this study made in their service area that influenced workforce growth, economic development and population growth.

A t-test of significance conducted on responses and accepted positive percent of 51 percent of higher using .05 significance level resulted in a .00 P-value. Hence, the response value is very significant. Therefore, the community college in this study significantly contributed to the workforce growth, economic development and population growth of its service area.

Table 1

Output of Significance

	t-test for Equality of Means				
	Sig(2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std.Err or difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
				Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.000	40.2000	2.59829	34.7412	45.6588
Equal variances not assumed	.000	40.2000	2.59829	34.3222	46.0777

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into three sections: Summary of the Study, Conclusions and recommendations.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate and analyze whether community colleges foster economic growth in the service area in their community and to also analyze the perceptions of economic development contributions of one rural Mississippi community college to its service area. This study sought to investigate whether the community college in this study served to stimulate or promote sustained economic growth in the surrounding communities and determine and document how this community college has contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship and small business development.

Previous studies indicating the role or contributions community colleges have on economic development in their service area supports this finding (Carnevale, 2002; Lancaster, 2002; Office of Institutional Research, 2004; Pennington, Pittman & Hurley, 2001). These studies reveal that never before have community colleges been in a better position of contributing more to the economic development of their communities than they are now. The results of many of these studies have shown that local community

colleges have had a significant positive impact on the economy and have generated a return for students, society and taxpayers.

The research instrument that was used in this study was developed by the researcher based on specific theories posed in the Literature Review. The survey instrument was pre-tested for validity and reliability and conducted exclusively by the researcher. The instrument was developed to collect data and to assess the perception people had of the economic development of targeted areas. The survey was composed of the following three sections: (a) Section I was demographic information, (b) Section II comprised of statements relative to community college economic contribution, and (c) Section III listed economic development strategies utilized by community colleges.

A pilot study was conducted on 25 administrators and other associates of Delta Community College who were employed and/or associated with the college during the summer of 2015. Key demographic results indicated that 48% of the surveys were returned. Overall, all of the participants agreed that Delta Community College provided low-cost education that resulted in an increased employment rate for service area residents and made great contributions to stabilize economic growth in the service area. The researcher was confident that the instrument adopted for this pilot study would be culturally competent for the research area and population.

The population of this study consisted of local business owners in the targeted community college service areas, local elected officials, targeted community college president and administrators, economic development planners, and Mississippi Development Authority. All participants were over the age of 18.

Prior to collecting the data, the researcher requested and received permission to conduct the study from the Institutional Review Board of Mississippi State University and the president of the rural Mississippi community college in this study.

Data were collected from the middle of June 2015 to July 6, 2015. From 100 survey questionnaires distributed to the participants, 48% were returned, which was used to analyze this study.

Data were collected, arranged and analyzed using different statistical techniques, and the community college economic contribution statements were measured, using a five-point Likert scale using (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neither; (4) disagree; and (5) strongly disagree. Frequency and valid percentages were used to analyze demographics characteristics of local elected officials, targeted community college president and administrators, economic development planners, and Mississippi Development Authority. The information included position, college, age, gender, ethnicity and years of experience.

Demographic information for participants showed that the highest members of respondents were elected officials (35%), followed by community college board members (29%) and administrators (21%). In terms of their workplace, the largest number of respondents (54%) were from the community college in this study. In terms of the age of respondents, the largest numbers were between 51 – 60 years (33%). A majority of respondents were male (69%). In terms of ethnicity, a majority of respondents were Caucasian (73%). Forty (40) percent of respondents had 21 years or more of administrative experience.

The research questions of the study were:

1. Is there evidence to support the presence of contributions of community colleges and economic development in their service area?
2. Is there evidence of a direct relationship between the community college in this study and economic development in its service area?
3. What are the strategies implemented by the community college in this study in its service area?
4. Is there an awareness and satisfaction level on contributions in work force growth, economic development and population growth?
5. Is there any significant difference the community college in this study has made based on work force growth, economic development and population growth?

Research Question One

Research Question One was designed to examine whether the presence of community colleges contributed to the economic development of its service area. A perusal of the review of literature shows several studies that support the economic contribution of community colleges in their service areas. Pennington, Pittman and Hurley (2001) concluded that the presence of a community college has a positive contribution to an economic environment that produced more development than was present in the countries without community colleges. Lancaster (2002) discussed the community college's role in economic development citing Sampson Community College in Clinton, North Carolina as an effective community college system devoted to economic development in its service area.

Local elected officials, targeted community college president and administrators, economic development planners, and Mississippi Development Authority were asked to describe their responses to ten (10) statements relative to economic development using the five-point Likert scale: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neither; (4) disagree; and (5) strongly disagree.

The researcher's study concludes that 98% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the community college in this study contributed to the overall economic development of its service area.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two was designed to determine whether the community college in this study fosters economic growth in its service area. Participants were asked to respond to a series of statements about economic development by indicating the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Their responses were measured by using the five-point Likert scale: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neither; (4) disagree and (5) strongly disagree. The statement "evidently [the community college in this study] contributes to the overall [perceptions] economic development of the service area" received the highest percentage (98%). Among the most unique advancements and contribution made was the increase in income of workers in the service area as a result of providing individuals with associate degrees and technical skills needed to provide the skilled manpower for the current employment demand in the service area. This statement received the highest rating of 100%.

Research Question Three

Research Question Three was designed to find out what economic development strategies were used by the community college in this study. To answer this question, participants were given a list of 18 strategies used by community colleges and were asked to identify the strategy they used by answering ‘yes’ or ‘no’. The results revealed that of the 18 economic development strategies, 15 of them, as listed below, were implemented by the community college in this study. The strategies were as follows:

1. Act as a catalyst/leader in organizing a master plan (community-based programming) for economic development problems in their service area;
2. Maintains an Advanced Technology Center geared to demonstrate new technological equipment to businesses in the service area;
3. Maintains a small business center that provides assistance to businesses throughout the service area;
4. Maintains an economic development office to coordinate all of the two-year institution’s economic development services;
5. Forms partnerships with local businesses and government agencies in the service area;
6. Uses the partnerships to actively recruit new businesses to the area;
7. Provides cooperative education opportunities for students in conjunction with businesses and industry;
8. Use Advisory Committees to maintain the linkage between businesses and the community college;

9. Provides faculty with the opportunity to upgrade their occupational skills through a back-to-industry program;
10. Provides college placement services to graduates seeking employment in the work force;
11. Participates in the economic development programs connected with the local Chambers of Commerce;
12. Participates in the economic development programs connected with the County Commissioner;
13. Provides job training programs to existing businesses and industries;
14. Provides retraining programs to displaced workers; and
15. Offers business related seminars and workshops upon request to industries and government organization in the service area.

Research Question Four

Research Question Four was designed to determine the effectiveness, satisfaction and awareness level of local elected officials, targeted community college president and administrators, economic development planners, and Mississippi Development Authority to each of the 18 community college strategies.

The targeted population was given a list of economic development strategies used by the community college in this study and were asked to identify the strategies used by this community college by answering 'yes' or 'no'. If their answer was 'yes', the participants were asked to check the level of effectiveness, satisfaction and awareness level that strategy has on this rural community college.

Survey results revealed that strategy “maintains an advanced technology center geared to demonstrate new technological equipment to businesses in the service area” received a 63% most effective rating, a 66% satisfaction rating and 66% were aware of this strategy. When asked about the effectiveness, satisfaction and awareness level of the economic development strategy “use advisory committees to maintain the linkage between businesses and the community college”, 59% of respondents indicated that it was most effective, while 71% were satisfied and 55% were aware of the strategy.

Overall, 18 economic development strategies received a high level of effectiveness, satisfaction and awareness as indicated in Table 1.

Research Question Five

Research Question 5 focused on providing evidence that the community college in this study does make a difference in the communities it serves.

The rural community college in this study has developed effective economic development strategies. The workforce development center at this community college works in partnership with local businesses, industries, agencies and other organizations to coordinate and offer educational and training programs and services.

In Section II of the survey instrument, participants were asked to respond to statements relative to the community college’s economic contributions. Each participant was asked to check the response that indicated the extent to which he or she agrees or disagrees with the statement.

The responses revealed that overall 81% of the respondents stated that this rural Mississippi community college does contribute to population growth. Ninety-six percent (96%) stated that this rural Mississippi community college has a direct influence on the

employment rate. The results also revealed that 100% of them responded that “evidently [the community college in this study] contributes to the overall perceptions of economic development of its service area.”

Conclusion

Community colleges have played an integral part of higher education since their establishment over 100 years ago. Since their inception, the community college system has developed to include over 1600 institutions, enrolling 5.5 million students in credit courses and employing almost 300,000 faculty members (Coley, 2000). Another 5 million students participate in some form of non-credit activities (Cole, 2000).

Never before in their half century or so of existence have community colleges of America been so well positioned to play a major role in America’s future. Never before have community colleges been in a position of contributing more to the economic development of their communities.

The community college in this study is a public comprehensive community college serving a seven-county district as established by the Mississippi Legislature. The College’s mission is to provide educational programs, economic development services and cultural and recreational opportunities to constituents from the college service area and beyond.

This study was conducted to bring attention to and highlight some perceptions of economic development contributions that the community college in this study has on its service area.

The researcher designed a survey instrument to collect the appropriate data to adequately analyze the contribution of community colleges to their service areas, and

more specifically investigates the contributions one rural Mississippi community college made in its service areas.

Data collected and analyzed in the study overwhelmingly indicated that the community college in this study made significant contributions to the overall economic development of its service area.

Recommendation

In accordance with the findings of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations. The first group of recommendations is in the areas of education and services provision, and the second group is research recommendations.

Education and Services Provisions

1. This study found that a rural community college provides a low cost education option for service area residents. Increase funding for education and training will ensure greater economic opportunities through job development and economic growth. Community college leaders need legislative support. The researcher recommends that community college leaders continue to collaborate with lawmakers in an effort to maintain low cost tuition as well as holding them accountable for mid-level funding that promises per FTE (full-time equivalent) for community college students and to start new program that fill the gap of skilled workers in Mississippi.
2. This study found that there are different opinions and attitudes about what strategies are most effective. The researcher recommends that community

college leaders identify what economic variable are productive or what economic factors need to be implemented in the community college service areas.

3. This study found that some rural community colleges did not employ Economic Developer Recruiters. The researcher recommends that community college leader employ an Economic Development Recruiter to ensure that economic development assistance is offered to all local businesses.
4. This study also found that few rural community colleges implement strategies to provide incubator programs. The researcher recommends that community college leaders meet with lawmakers, organizations, and other agencies to implement and maintain business incubator programs that permit entrepreneurs to start new businesses without the overhead.

Research Provisions

1. More research is recommended to investigate how the number of students' enrollment can be increased to boost the number of community college graduates to support the current job skills needed in the service areas.
2. More research is needed to find quicker ways to retrain the current pool of displaced workforce in the community.
3. Further research is needed to investigate how many firms or businesses came into the area, and how many were established as a result of the training provided by the community college in this study, and further study how these numbers can be increased.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Section I:

Demographic Information: Please check the box that best describes your response:

1. My position is:
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Administrator
 - Community College Board of Trustee
 - Elected Official (Superintendent of Education included)
 - Economic Development Planner
 - Mississippi Development Authority
 - Member of Chamber of Commerce
 - Local Business Owner
 - Other

2. My College, my place of work or Affiliation is:
 - Copiah-Lincoln Community College
 - Other

3. My age in years is: 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61 and over

4. My gender is:
 - Male
 - Female

5. Choose the group that most closely identifies your ethnicity.
 - African-American
 - Caucasian
 - American Indian
 - Hispanic
 - Asian/Pacific Islander
 - Other _____

6. Number of years of experience as an Administrator, Business Owner, etc.
 - 0-5 years
 - 6-10 years
 - 11-15 years
 - 16-20 years
 - 21 years or more

7. Type of Business
- Education
 - Retail
 - Wholesale
 - Service
 - Construction
 - Agriculture
 - Other

Section II: Community College Economic contribution. For each statement, please check the ONE response that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. (*Answer the questions that corresponds to your work place*). The scale ranges from 1=STRONGLY AGREE to 5= STRONGLY DISAGREE.

8. Copiah-Lincoln Community College has provided Economic Stability to its service area for decades.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree
9. By providing individuals with Associate Degrees and skill development, Copiah-Lincoln Community College has added to the income of its service area.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree
10. By limiting expense growth, Copiah-Lincoln Community College provides a low cost education option for service area residents.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree

11. Copiah-Lincoln Community College contributes to population growth in its service area.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree
12. Copiah-Lincoln Community College accounts for increase in local tax collections.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree
13. Copiah-Lincoln Community College has direct influence on an increase in the employment rate in its service area.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree
14. Copiah-Lincoln Community College has influenced new business firms to locate or relocate in its service area.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree
15. Because of Copiah-Lincoln Community College profound workforce training, businesses have increase in sales, especially in the food and beverage industry.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree

16. The presence of Copenhag-Lincoln Community College increases the attractiveness of the community and encourages the start up and or relocation of other businesses to the service area.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree
17. Evidently Copenhag-Lincoln Community College contributes to the overall economic development of the service area.
- 1= Strongly Agree
 - 2= Agree
 - 3=Neither
 - 4= Disagree
 - 5=Strongly Disagree

III: Economic Development Strategies used by Community Colleges.

Below is a list of economic development strategies that community colleges can use.

If your community college uses these strategies, please check 'yes' or 'no'. If your response is 'yes', please check the level of effectiveness, awareness and satisfaction this strategy has at your community college.

1	Act as a catalyst/leader in organizing a master plan (community-based programming) for economic development problems in their services area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Maintains an Advanced Technology Center geared to demonstrate new technological equipment to businesses in the service area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Maintains a Small Business Center that provides assistance to businesses throughout th service area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Maintains an Economic Development Office to coordinate all of the two-year institution's economic development services.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Employs an Economic Development Recruiter(s) to provide economic development assistance to local businesses.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Maintains Business Incubator Program that permits entrepreneurs to start new businesses without the overhead costs.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Forms partnerships with local businesses and government agencies in the service area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Uses the partnerships to actively recruit new businesses to the area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>

9	Provides cooperative education opportunities for students in conjunction with businesses and industry.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
10	Uses Advisory Committees to maintain the linkage between businesses and the community college.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
11	Provides cooperative education opportunities for students in conjunction with businesses and industry.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
12	Provides faculty with the opportunity to upgrade their occupational skills through a back-to-industry program.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Provides college placement services to graduates seeking employment in the work force.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
14	Participates in the economic development programs connected with the local Chambers of Commerce.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
15	Participates in the economic development programs connected with the County Commissioners.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
16	Provides job training programs to existing businesses and industries.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>

17	Provides retraining programs to displaced workers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>
18	Offers business related seminars and workshops upon request to industries and government organizations in the services area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	most effective <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat effective <input type="checkbox"/> not effective <input type="checkbox"/>	satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/>	aware <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat aware <input type="checkbox"/> not aware <input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX B
RESULTS OF SURVEY

Section I:

	Percentage
1. My position is:	
President	4.2
Vice president	10.4
Administrator	10.4
Community college Board of Trustee	20.8
Elected official	35.4
Member of Chamber of Commerce	8.3
Local business owner	6.3
Other	4.2
2. My college, my place of work or Affiliation is:	
Coplah-Lincoln Community College	54.2
Other	43.8
No response	2.1
3. My age in years is:	
21-30	2.1
3-40	10.4
41-50	25
51-60	33.3
61 and over	29.2
4. My gender is;	
Male	68.8
Female	31.2
5. Choose the group that most closely identifies your ethnicity:	
African-American	22.9
Caucasian	72.9
Hispanic	2.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.1
6. Number of years of experience as an administrator, Business owner, etc.	
0-5 years	8.3
6-10 years	14.6
11-15 years	14.6
16-20 years	18.8
21 years and more	39.6

No response	4.2
7. Type of business:	
Education	33.3
Retail	6.3
Service	22.9
Construction	2.1
Agriculture	2.1
Other	33.3

Section II:

	Strongly Agree(%)	Agree(%)	Neither(%)	Disagree(%)	Strongly Disagree(%)	Sum of agree/strongly agree
8. Coplah-Lincoln Community College has provided economic stability to its service area for decades.	66.7	27.1	4.2			93.8
9. By providing individuals with Associate Degrees and skill development, Coplah-Lincoln Community College has added to the income of its service area.	72.9	27.1				100
10. By limiting expense growth, Coplah-Lincoln Community College provides a	64.6	29.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	93.8

low cost education option for service area residents.						
11. Copiah-Lincoln Community College contributes to population growth in its service area.	29.2	52.1	10.4	6.3	2.1	81.3
12. Copiah-Lincoln Community College accounts for increase in local tax collections.	37.5	43.8	12.5	6.3		81.3
13. Copiah-Lincoln Community College has direct influence on an increase in the employment rate in its service area.	45.8	50	4.2			95.8
14. Copiah-Lincoln Community College has influenced new business firms to locate or relocate in its service area.	45.8	50	4.2			95.8
15. Because of Copiah-Lincoln Community College	25	52.1	16.7	6.3		77.1

profound workforce training, businesses have increase in sales, especially in the food and beverage industry.						
16. The presence of Coplah-Lincoln Community College increases the attractiveness of the community and encourages the start up and or relocation of other business to the service area.	41.7	50	16.7	6.3		91.7
17. Evidently Coplah-Lincoln Community College contributes to the overall economic development of the service area.	56.3	41.7				100
18. Average:						91.06

Section III:

Question	%	If response is yes, please check the following level		
		Effectiveness (%)	Satisfaction (%)	Awareness (%)
1. Act as a catalyst/leader in organizing a master plan (community-based programming) for economic development problems in their services area.	YES (81.3) No (10.4)	Most effective (37.2) Somewhat effective (51.2)	Satisfied(67.4) Neutral(16.3)	Aware(51.2) Somewhat aware(27.9) Not aware(2.3)
2. Maintains an Advanced Technology Center geared to demonstrate new technological equipment to businesses in the service area.	YES(70.8) No(18.8)	Most effective (63.2) Somewhat effective (15.8) Not effective (2.6)	Satisfied(65.8) Dissatisfied(2.6) Neutral(2.6)	Aware(65.8) Somewhat aware(7.9)
3. Maintains a small business center that provides assistance to businesses throughout the service area.	YES(68.8) No(25)	Most effective (55.6) Somewhat effective (30.6) Not effective (2.8)	Satisfied(36.9) Dissatisfied(8.3) Neutral(8.3)	Aware(55.6) Somewhat aware(22.2) Not aware (2.8)
4. Maintains an economic development office to coordinate all of the two-year institution's economic development services	YES(43.8) No(41.7)	Most effective (55.6) Somewhat effective (18.5)	Satisfied(55.6) Dissatisfied(3.7) Neutral(7.4)	Aware(51.9) Somewhat aware(18.5)
5. Employs an Economic Development Recruiter to provide economic development assistance to local businesses.	YES(39.6) No(45.8)	Most effective (56) Somewhat effective (16) Not effective (4)	Satisfied(56) Dissatisfied(4) Neutral(4)	Aware(52) Somewhat aware(8) Not aware (4)
6. Maintains business incubator program that permits entrepreneurs to start new businesses without the overhead costs.	YES(39.6) No(50)	Most effective (50) Somewhat effective (25)	Satisfied(66.7) Neutral(4.2)	Aware(54.2) Somewhat aware(20.8)
7. Forms partnerships with local businesses and	YES(91.7) No(2.1)	Most effective (68.1)	Satisfied(70.2) Dissatisfied(4.3)	Aware(68.1) Somewhat

government agencies in the services area.		Somewhat effective (21.3)	Neutral(6.4)	aware(10.6) Not aware (2.1)
8. Uses the partnerships to actively recruit new businesses to the area.	YES(68.8) No(18.8)	Most effective (48.7) Somewhat effective (33.3)	Satisfied(61.5) Dissatisfied(2.6) Neutral(7.7)	Aware(51.3) Somewhat aware(20.5) Not aware (2.6)
9. Provides cooperative education opportunities for students in conjunction with businesses and industry.	YES(81.3) No(6.3)	Most effective (68.2) Somewhat effective (18.2)	Satisfied(68.2) Neutral(6.8)	Aware(61.4) Somewhat aware(6.8) Not aware (4.5)
10. Use Advisory Committees to maintain the linkage between businesses and the community college.	YES(79.2) No(12.5)	Most effective (59.5) Somewhat effective (31)	Satisfied(71.4) Neutral(4.8)	Aware(54.8) Somewhat aware(19) Not aware (2.4)
11. Provides cooperative education opportunities for students in conjunction with businesses and industry.	YES(81.3) No(6.3)	Most effective (68.2) Somewhat effective (18.2)	Satisfied(68.2) Dissatisfied(6.8)	Aware(61.4) Somewhat aware(6.8) Not aware (4.5)
12. Provides faculty with the opportunity to upgrade their occupational skills through a back-to-industry program.	YES(50) No(31.3)	Most effective (62.5) Somewhat effective (12.5)	Satisfied(62.5) Dissatisfied(3.1) Neutral(3.1)	Aware(66.7) Somewhat aware(3.0)
13. Provide college placement services to graduates seeking employment in the work force.	YES(83.3) No(8.3)	Most effective (57.8) Somewhat effective (24.4)	Satisfied(61.4) Neutral(11.4)	Aware(59.1) Somewhat aware(13.6) Not aware (4.5)
14. Participates in the economic development programs connected with the local Chambers of Commerce.	YES(87.5) No(8.3)	Most effective (65.9) Somewhat effective (27.3)	Satisfied(75) Neutral(6.8)	Aware(70.5) Somewhat aware(11.4)
15. Participates in the economic development	YES(70.8) No(22.9)	Most effective (57.9)	Satisfied(65.8) Dissatisfied(5.3)	Aware(60.5) Somewhat

programs connected with the County Commissioner.		Somewhat effective (28.6) Not effective (2.6)	Neutral(10.5)	aware(18.4) Not aware (2.6)
16. Provides job training programs to existing businesses and Industries.	YES(89.6) No(2.1)	Most effective (76.6) Somewhat effective (14.9)	Satisfied(76.6) Neutral(2.1)	Aware(63.8) Somewhat aware(12.8)
17. Provides retraining programs to displaced workers.	YES(77.1) No(10.4)	Most effective (59.5) Somewhat effective (26.2) Not effective (2.4)	Satisfied(69) Dissatisfied(2.4) Neutral(7.1)	Aware(57.1) Somewhat aware(19)
18. Offers business related seminars and workshops upon request to industries and government organization in the services area.	YES(85.4) No(6.3)	Most effective (60) Somewhat effective (28.9) Not effective (2.2)	Satisfied(64.4) Neutral(11.1)	Aware(62.2) Somewhat aware(13.3) Not aware (2.2)

My position is

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
President	2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Vice president	5	10.4	10.4	14.6
Administrator	5	10.4	10.4	25.0
Community college board of Trustee	10	20.8	20.8	45.8
Valid Elected official	17	35.4	35.4	81.3
Member of chamber of commerce	4	8.3	8.3	89.6
local business owner	3	6.3	6.3	95.8
Other	2	4.2	4.2	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

My college , my place of work or affiliation is

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Copleh-Lincoln Community College	26	54.2	54.2	54.2
Valid Other	21	43.8	43.8	97.9
No response	1	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

My age in years is

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
21-30	1	2.1	2.1	2.1
31-40	5	10.4	10.4	12.5
Valid 41-50	12	25.0	25.0	37.5
51-60	16	33.3	33.3	70.8
61 and over	14	29.2	29.2	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

My gender is

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	33	68.8	68.8	68.8
Female	15	31.3	31.3	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

Choose the group that most closely identifies your ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid African American	11	22.9	22.9	22.9
Caucasian	35	72.9	72.9	95.8
Hispanic	1	2.1	2.1	97.9
Asian/ Pacific Islander	1	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

Number of years of experience as an Administrator, Business owner, etc

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-5 years	4	8.3	8.3	8.3
6-10 years	6	12.5	12.5	20.8
11-15 years	7	14.6	14.6	35.4
16-20 years	9	18.8	18.8	54.2
21 years or more	19	39.6	39.6	93.8
6	1	2.1	2.1	95.8
No response	2	4.2	4.2	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

Type of Business

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Education	16	33.3	33.3	33.3
Retail	3	6.3	6.3	39.6
Service	11	22.9	22.9	62.5
Valid Construction	1	2.1	2.1	64.6
Agriculture	1	2.1	2.1	66.7
Other	16	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX C
IRB APPROVAL



Burnell Harris <bh153@msstate.edu>

Study 14-375: The Economic Development Contributions of Community Colleges on Local areas: A Comprehensive Analysis of Copiah-Lincoln Community College

1 message

nmorse@orc.msstate.edu <nmorse@orc.msstate.edu>
To: bh153@msstate.edu
Cc: nmorse@orc.msstate.edu, Jed11@colled.msstate.edu

Tue, Jun 2, 2015 at 12:13 PM

Protocol Title: The Economic Development Contributions of Community Colleges on Local areas: A Comprehensive Analysis of Copiah-Lincoln Community College

Protocol Number: 14-375

Principal Investigator: Mr. Burnell Harris

Date of Determination: 1/6/2015

Qualifying Exempt Category: 45 CFR 46.101(b)(3)

Attachments: Stamped Informed consent in separate email

Dear Mr. Harris:

The Human Research Protection Program has determined the above referenced project exempt from IRB review.

Please note the following:

- Retain a copy of this correspondence for your records.
- An approval stamp is required on all informed consents. You must use the stamped consent form for obtaining consent from participants.
- Only the MSU staff and students named on the application are approved as MSU investigators and/or key personnel for this study.
- The approved study will expire on 1/6/2020, which was the completion date indicated on your application. If additional time is needed, submit a continuation request. (SOP 01-07 Continuing Review of Approved Applications)
- Any modifications to the project must be reviewed and approved by the HRPP prior to implementation. Any failure to adhere to the approved protocol could result in suspension or termination of your project.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/?ui=2&ik=c72745151e&view=pt&search=inbox&th=14db...> 6/6/2015

- Per university requirement, all research-related records (e.g. application materials, letters of support, signed consent forms, etc.) must be retained and available for audit for a period of at least 3 years after the research has ended.
- It is the responsibility of the Investigator to promptly report events that may represent unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This determination is issued under the Mississippi State University's OHRP Federalwide Assurance #FWA0000203. All forms and procedures can be found on the HRPP website: www.orc.msstate.edu.

Thank you for your cooperation and good luck to you in conducting this research project. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at nmorse@orc.msstate.edu or call 662-325-5220.

Finally, we would greatly appreciate your feedback on the HRPP approval process. Please take a few minutes to complete our survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PPM2FBP>.

Sincerely,

Nicole Morse, CIP
IRB Compliance Administrator

cc: Ed Davis (Advisor)

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/?ui=2&ik=c72745151e&view=pt&search=inbox&th=14db...> 6/6/2015

APPENDIX D
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE PILOT STUDY

January 10, 2015

Dr. Barbara M. Hanson, Chancellor
Delta Community College
7500 Millhaven RD
Monroe, LA 71203

Dear Dr. Hanson:

My name is Burnell Harris. I am pursuing the Ph.D degree in Community College Leadership at Mississippi State University. The purpose of this correspondence is to ask permission to conduct a pilot study at your institution. The title of my dissertation is "The Economic Development Contributions of Community Colleges on local areas: A Comprehensive Analysis of Copiah-Lincoln Community College".

The purpose of this research is to investigate and analyze whether community colleges foster economic growth in the service area in their community and further document how these community colleges have contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship and Small Business development through training, etc.

In conducting this research, all of my contact with you and your Administrators will be via e-mail or via the postal service and by telephone for clarification. The group of Administrators that I will ask permission to be included in this survey include Presidents, Vice Presidents, Administrators and Board of Trustees. I will need a hard copy of your response, so that I may include it with my survey.

If you participate in this study, each participant will be asked to complete a survey that will take about 10 - 15 minutes of your time.

There are no anticipated risks or discomfort. Each participant will have the right to receive a copy of the results of this study. You can be assured that participants' responses will remain confidential. Further it will be flash drive/password protected. Participation is completely voluntary.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 601-786-1911, or my major professor Dr. James Davis at 662-325-9258.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.



BURNELL HARRIS, Ph.D. Candidate
Mississippi State University

Dr. Barbara M. Hanson
Chancellor

7500 Millhaven Road
Monroe, LA 71203
Phone: (318) 345-9262
FAX: (318) 345-9563
Email: bhanson@ldelta.edu

February 2, 2015

Mr. Burnell Harris
P. O. Box 893
Fayette, MS 39069

Dear Mr. Harris:

Thank you for your correspondence regarding conducting a pilot study at Louisiana Delta Community College (LDCC). We would be glad to participate in your research to investigate and analyze LDCC's economic growth in our service area.

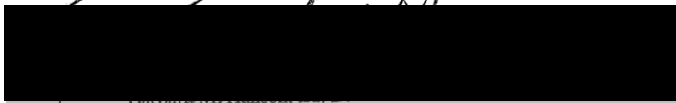
Whether you seek a certificate, an associate's degree, or an opportunity to strengthen your skills, LDCC has something for everyone. We believe in the development of innovative and relevant programs and services. Our Technical and Career programs offer a pathway to enhanced employment opportunities. Several of LDCC's programs, including Allied Health and Nursing, Automotive Technology, and Industrial Science, offer students hands-on clinical experience that helps prepare them for the workforce.

LDCC serves an area of approximately 2,100 square miles and is committed to meeting the growing needs of her communities.

As to your request to correspond with our Board of Supervisors, please contact Ms. Sara Kleinpeter at our System office. Ms. Kleinpeter's phone number is 225-308-4421 and her mailing address is 265 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806.

I wish you all the best as you embark on a new and exciting chapter in your life.-

Sincerely,

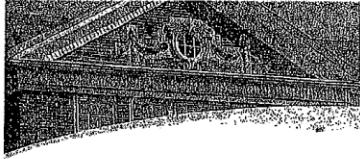


cc: Ms. Sara Kleinpeter

Bastrop Farmerville Lake Providence Monroe Ruston Tallulah West Monroe Winnsboro

Member of Louisiana Community and Technical College System

APPENDIX E
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY



January 28, 2015

Mr. Burnell Harris
PO Box 893
Fayette, MS 39069

Dear Mr. Harris:

Please accept this correspondence as approval to conduct your doctoral program research through Mississippi State University by surveying our administrators and Board of Trustees. Your point of contact for coordinating your efforts will be Dr. Jeff Posey, our Director of Institutional Research and Planning. If you have a survey to send by email, you can email the survey link to Dr. Posey and he will distribute it on your behalf to the appropriate administrators. If you have a paper survey, you can mail Dr. Posey all of your survey forms and he will send them by inter-campus mail to the appropriate administrators so they can be returned to you. He will also assist you with obtaining any telephone numbers you may need. As for board members, he can work with getting you a set of mailing addresses for our 27-member board. Dr. Posey can be contacted by calling 601-643-8411 or jeff.posey@colin.edu.

[REDACTED] and pursuit of the Ph.D. in Community College Leadership.
[REDACTED] please feel free to contact me at 601-643-8300.

Wesson Campus
PO Box 649
Wesson, MS 39191
Telephone: 601-643-5101

Natchez Campus
11 Co-Lin Circle
Natchez, MS 39120
Telephone: 601-442-9111

Simpson County Center
151 Co-Lin Drive
Mendenhall, MS 39114
Telephone: 601-849-5149

Date: January 26, 2015

Dr. Ronnie Nettles, President
Copiah-Lincoln Community college
Post Office Box 649
Wesson, MS 39191

Dear Dr. Nettles:

My name is Burnell Harris. I am pursuing the Ph.D degree in Community College Leadership at Mississippi State University. The purpose of this correspondence is to ask permission to conduct research at your Institution. The title of my dissertation is "The Economic Development Contributions of Community Colleges on local areas: A Comprehensive Analysis of Copiah-Lincoln Community College".

The purpose of this research is to investigate and analyze whether community colleges foster economic growth in the service area in their community and further document how these community colleges have contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship and Small Business development through training, etc.

In conducting this research, all of my contact with you and your Administrators will be via e-mail or via the postal service and by telephone for clarification. The group of Administrators that I will ask permission to be included in this survey include Presidents, Vice Presidents, Administrators and Board of Trustees. I will need a hard copy of your response, so that I may include it with my survey.

If you participate in this study, each participant will be asked to complete a survey that will take about 10 - 15 minutes of their time.

There are no anticipated risks or discomfort. Each participant will have the right to receive a copy of the results of this study. You can be assured that participant's responses will remain confidential. Further it will be flash drive/password protected. Participation is completely voluntary.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 601-786-1911, or my major professor Dr. James Davis at 662-325-9258.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Burnell Harris, Ph.D Candidate (net id bh153)
Mississippi State University

June 17, 2015

Dear Elected Officials, Economic Development Planners, Mississippi Development Planners,
Members of the Chamber of Commerce and Local Business owners:

My name is Burnell Harris. I am pursuing the Ph.D degree in Community College Leadership at Mississippi State University. I am presently writing my dissertation. The title of my dissertation is " The Economic Development Contributions of Community Colleges on local areas: A Comprehensive Analysis of Copiah-Lincoln Community College".

As you can see in my topic, Copiah-Lincoln Community College has been selected for the case study. Your participation will be very essential to the successful conclusion of this study. This correspondence is to ask you to participate in this study. This study will provide Community College leaders, lawmakers, business owners, economic development planners and local elected officials a clear understanding of what economic variables are productive in their service area and the importance of collaborating their efforts to advance economic development.

The purpose of this research is to investigate and analyze whether Copiah Lincoln Community College fosters economic growth in the service area in its community and further document how this community college has contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship and small business development through training, etc.

In conducting this research, all of my contact with you will be via e-mail or via the postal service and by telephone for clarification. If you participate in this study, each participant will be asked to complete the enclosed survey that will take about 10 - 15 minutes of your time and return it via e-mail or postal service by July 6, 2015 using the enclosed self-address envelope.

There are no anticipated risks or discomfort. Each participant will have the right to receive a copy of the results of this study. You can be assured that participant's responses will remain confidential. Further, it will be flash drive/password protected. Participation is completely voluntary.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 601-786-1911, or my major professor Dr. James Davis at 662-325-9258.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Burnell Harris, Ph.D Candidate (net id bh153)
Mississippi State University

MSU HRPP
Approved: 1/6/15 Expires:1/6/20