Predicting Postsecondary Attendance through Cultural Norming: A Test of Community Expectancy

M. Wade Derden, National Park Community College
Michael T. Miller, University of Arkansas

Abstract

Efforts to enhance college going rates have employed a number of strategies, such as improving recruitment efforts and enhancing financial aid packages. Little effort, however, has been directed at looking at the social and human capital that might impact a residential community, and the subsequent influence this community might have on a student's decision to attend college. Utilizing 18 community level variables in one case study US state, the study tested community expectancy as a predictor of college attendance. Study findings moderately supported community expectancy, and provided a strong research agenda for further exploration into how community's impact individual behavior.

Keywords: Community expectancy, social capital, human capital, college going rates, postsecondary attendance, higher education

Introduction

There have been multiple efforts to increase the rate at which young people completing a secondary education go to college. Frequent studies and efforts have been directed at early college awareness, secondary school counseling, mentoring, financial aid packaging, and even marketing strategies that report the benefits of college completion. Despite an array of efforts and significant financial commitment to recruitment, the college completion rate in the United States has changed only slightly over the past five decades.

Deggs and Miller (2009) suggested a different factor that might impact college attendance: the community's expectation of what youth should or should not do. They identified five elements that can impact an individual's decision making about life roles and perceptions: formal education bodies, civic agencies, informal associations, religious affiliations, and home life. To make this suggestion, Deggs and Miller drew on three prominent philosophical sets of writing, including Dewey's (1899/1980, 1916/2004, 1938, 1939) writings on the intersection of community, democracy, and education. Erikson's (1950/1993, 1968/1994) identity development theory because of his belief that adolescents either struggle to identify with accepted communal norms and become participants in that community, or they struggle with rejecting those norms and become alienated. The third domain of knowledge forming the foundation of this community expectancy was Schlossberg's transition theory (as cited in Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998) in combination with life course theory (Elder, 1994, 1998; Giele & Elder, 1998) and Swidler's (1986) concepts of settled and unsettled lives.

Deggs and Miller's model of community expectancy can be translated to college enrollment by arguing that an individual learns from both formal and informal actions, and a life time of informal actions and expectations are conveyed to a youth throughout a community. These expectations are conveyed by neighbors unintentionally talking about where they attended college, about religious leaders purporting the value of education, and even from public speakers or politicians who proclaim the value of questioning and exploration beyond the town limits. Through four studies, they had found moderate positive support for the idea that communities do have the power to convey an expectation of right and wrong to community members.

The purpose for conducting the current study was to specifically identify the variables that can compose community expectancy and to correlate these variables with college attendance. In addition to identifying the variables that contribute to college going, the study explored whether latent factors exist among the social, cultural, and human capital variables that might be used to identify community expectations of college attendance.

Background of the Study

The study began with the assumption that community expectations of postsecondary attendance can be detected, and if this is possible, it presents a new battery of approaches that might be useful in recruiting students to college. The concept of community expectation, as outlined in the Deggs and Miller (2009) model, suggests using human, social, and cultural capital as measures of community expectancy, and this discussion uses those three forms of capital as primary elements of literature to review.

A review of literature related to social, cultural, and human capital yielded 18 variables that may indicate community expectancy's role in a student's decision to attend college. The identification is problematic, but given Dewey's (1899/1980, 1916/2004, 1938, 1939) suggestion that community should be viewed as a pseudo-organism, the variables that shape individual level behaviors, values, and norms could be converted to the community level for the purpose of studying community expectations. For example, parental education level was deemed a relevant determinant of college choice (Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999), therefore, the percent of the population over 25 with a high school diploma or equivalent and the percent of population over the age of 25 with a bachelor's degree could be used as a substitute for representing communal education levels. Variables suggested by theory and found in previous research were also included. For example, the central nature of cultural capital to Bourdieu's (1986) theory and Rowan-Kenyon's (2007) implication that students who participated in art, music, and dance classes should show higher rates of college attendance led to the inclusion of the percent of local industry in a community dedicated to the arts, recreation, and entertainment as a variable in the study.

Using measures of poverty, income, and diversity were determined to be appropriate for inclusion, as they have all been consistent elements that have been correlated with college enrollment (Perna, 2000; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007; King, 2008). As familial income was a significant indicator of college attendance, a similar variable measuring the average income per capita should suggest attendance rates among a community's student cohort. Likewise, as an indicator of communal socio-economic status (SES), the percent of population below poverty within a community could correlate positively with a community's expectation of college attendance.

Other elements of a community that are entwined with both education and poverty included the community literacy rate, the number of secondary school activities, proximity to a postsecondary institution, and per pupil spending. Community literacy, a community-wide fac-

tor, bridged the gap between education and poverty and can be considered as both an indicator of the overall academic preparation of a community and the overall community's ability to assess the value of education (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001). The per pupil expenditure (PPE) at the district level and the number of secondary school activities (such as clubs and sports) were used as indicators of community expectancy of postsecondary attendance as they represent both the wealth of the community and the community's dedication to extracurricular programming. Together these variables may indicate communal encouragement of student involvement, a factor seen as critical to college choice (Stage & Hossler, 2004; Perna, 2000; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Additionally, a community that hosts a college in its city limits or nearby may promote college attendance through the creation of social capital linkages (Hoenack & Weiler, 1975; Miller & Tuttle, 2006; 2007).

Variables that assist in understanding basic demographic elements of communities can also provide insight into community expectancy. Anderson and Subramanian (2006) sought "to understand the extent to which neighbourhood factors independently predict educational outcomes in adolescents" (p. 2013). The authors took a communal approach and examined individual/household variables, neighborhood variables, and municipal level variables in Sweden. They provided the reasoning for including the demographic indicators of human capital: average family size and the community dependency ratio. The dependency ratio was determined by combining the age 0-14 and over age 65 population, dividing that number by the population aged 15-64 and then multiplying by 100 (Yaukey, 1990). Similarly, population migration is a standard demographic measurement of population movement and can assist in understanding population shifts that may result from changing community dynamics, such as the closing or opening of a factory or other large employer. A high in-migration level can correlate positively with college attendance in the sense that it brings in more cultural diversity, potentially more social networks, and a greater variety of life-experiences. Out-migration, conversely, can lead to population stagnation and socio-cultural decline and less interest in activities related to leaving the community, such as going away to college (Shaffer, Deller, & Marcoullier, 2004).

The percent of workers reporting as self-employed in all industries for both genders, the homeownership rate, and the unemployment rate may all provide useful insights into community expectations of college attendance by examining the economic health of a community. Self-employment can indicate a more vibrant and diversified local economy, and, it may also be indicative of higher education levels (Shaffer, Deller, & Marcoullier, 2004), however, in rural areas, farmers and farm laborers could skew these results. The homeownership rate of a community would likely project an expectancy of postsecondary attendance since owning a home could be considered a sign of wealth (Shaffer, Deller, & Marcoullier, 2004). Additionally, high rates of unemployment have been found to negatively affect college enrollment and success (Anderson & Subramanian, 2006).

Merton's (1968) work on communal stability led to the inclusion of the community's crime rate. A high crime rate, as an indicator of communal instability, could possibly result in lower community expectancy for citizens to do something different, such as expending the effort, dedication, and time to attend college.

Rates of religious adherence were also included as a measure of social networking and bonding opportunities, both important elements of a strong social capital (Anderson, 1981; Putnam, 2000). Church attendance may promote college attendance, especially for members of denominations that encourage further education, such as those that promote or require seminary trained church leaders. Anderson (1981), for example, found that being actively involved with

the Jewish faith was strongly correlated with higher college grade point average and persistence in college.

Research Methods

As an exploratory study, multiple regression analysis and factor analysis were used to address the purpose of the study. Multiple regression was performed to identify which of the 18 identified independent variables significantly affected community-level college attendance rates, as indicated by the school district college going rates among the sample. Also, due to the exploratory nature of the study, the second analytic procedure was an exploratory factor analysis intended to identify latent factors among the independent variables. Data were collected and used in the State of Arkansas. Although the use of this mid-sized state is a limitation of the study, it does provide a strong initial step in an analysis of this nature.

Sample

The study relied on data from 63 Arkansas communities with populations between 2,000 and 30,000 residents, as identified in the 2000 U. S. Census Bureau's decennial census. Using a random number table, 80 of the 120 incorporated Arkansas communities within the population range were selected; however, because school district data were necessary, 17 of the 80 communities were eliminated from the sample. All communities in the state's highly urban Pulaski County, under the auspices of the Pulaski County Special School District, were eliminated. A total of 63 communities remained to be included in the study, with a population range of 2,008 to 27,752 (mean community size 6,500). School districts ranged in size from 3,517 to 32,505 students (mean school size 11,257), with data being drawn from the National Center for Education Statistics (2010).

Data were collected from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (dependent variable) and multiple other sources, including: Y2000 US Decennial Census, the Arkansas Activities Association, the Arkansas Institute for Economic Advancement, the Association of Religion Data Archives, the Criminal Justice Information Division of the Arkansas Crime Information Center, and the national Center for Education Statistics. The state of Arkansas, the case state in the study, has a largely rural population of approximately 2.9 million residents (80% White, 15% Black, 5% other racially identified citizens). The state's geography, and subsequent population patterns, is divided between the southeastern Mississippi Delta region and the northern Ozark Mountains. The largest elements in the state's economy are agricultural production, mining, and retail operations. So although Arkansas is but one case state, the geography and demographic distribution are similar to many other North American rural settings.

Data Analysis Results

An initial regression was performed to identify the main effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The main effects and the final regression model were tested for heteroscedasticity using a scatterplot of the unstandardized residuals, a review of the histograms and a normal probability plots, and White's Test for heteroscedasticity. Heteroscedasticity was not a problem, but multicollinearity issues created expected difficulties due to the similarity of many of the variables. To control for and identify multicollinearity, significant correlational rela-

tions were identified using a correlation table with Pearson's coefficient of determination (Pearson's r). Variables with a correlation equal to r=.70 or above were highlighted as a potential collinear relationship. The VIF and tolerance values were also used to test for collinearity. VIF values above 5 were treated with skepticism and tolerance values under .20 were viewed as problematic. Because multicollinearity was suggested in these tests a series of regressions were performed in which the dependent variable was removed and each independent variable was rotated into its position. Substantial increases in the R^2 and Adjusted R^2 values indicated that the independent variable in the dependent variable position was problematic. The results of this multicollinearity testing led to eight subsequent regressions manipulating suspect variables in and out of the regressions in turn and testing various combinations of interaction terms. For instance, the first four regressions focused on the interaction between the variables measuring the percentage of baccalaureate degrees and the variable measuring the average community income per capita. The process for each of these tests was as follows:

- Bachelor's degrees and average income were removed from the model
- Income was added back into the model without bachelor's degrees
- Bachelor's degrees was added back into the model without the average income
- Both variables were added into the model along with an interaction term generated from both variables

This strategy identified a suppressor relationship between the two variables in which income per capita, while not significant itself, was affecting the significance of the other variable. Another round of these tests followed the same procedures but focused on the interaction of the variables measuring the percent of nonwhite residents in the community and the literacy rate. Since neither of these variables had a significant impact on the outcome of the overall regression model, they were both removed from the final model. Likewise, in the course of these analyses, all consistently extraneous variables were eliminated. The final regression model was generated using only those variables that consistently had a significant effect on the dependent variable along with the suppressor variable measuring the average income per capita. This final regression model was used to answer the first research question. As previously noted, the study was intended to be exploratory in nature; therefore, despite the possible advantages of using a one-tailed test for significance (t=1.671) at p≤.05 and hypothesizing directional outcomes, a two-tailed test for significance was used in the analysis of the regression findings. Using a one-tailed test would likely have yielded a higher number of significant explanatory variables, but using a two-tailed test allowed for the observation and explanation of possible unexpected outcomes.

The second statistical analysis conducted was an exploratory factor analysis. This technique was employed to identify possible latent factors among the social, cultural, and human capital variables that the regression analysis did not identify. Ideally, the results of such a test would offer trends in the data identifying areas of interest for future inquiry into community expectancy. The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity were performed to determine whether this set of variables was acceptable for factor analysis (George & Mallery, 2003). Principal components analysis was used to extract the factors with extraction based upon the SPSS default of 1.0 for Eigenvalues. An orthogonal Promax rotation with Kaiser Normalization was used, as correlations among the factors were expected. Factor loadings with a value less than .32 (Costello & Osborne, 2005) were suppressed automatically.

The initial factor analysis suggested a structure with six factors. Retaining only the highest of crossloading items resulted in the removal of two of the six factors. Crossloading items load at or higher than the minimum of .32 on more than one factor (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Because a different structure was suggested by this technique, a series of new factor analyses restricting the possible factors to five, four, and three were performed to create the most parsimonious model. A final factor model with four factor groupings was used to address the second research question.

Findings

Despite problems with multicollinearity, the variables measuring the number of secondary-level competitive clubs declared by a school district, the net population migration, the percent of population 25 and older with a baccalaureate degree, and the unemployment rate had the most consistent and largest effect on the school district college going rates for the Y2000 postsecondary cohort from the sampled Arkansas communities. Initially, the interaction term between average income per capita and the percent of population 25 and older with a baccalaureate degree was found to have a statistically significant effect; however, the standardized beta coefficients for the percent of baccalaureate degrees and the interaction term were higher than -1/+1 threshold at 2.413 and -2.611, respectively. This finding suggested the existence of a suppressor variable relationship between the percent of bachelor's degrees and income per capita. An examination of the results from the previous set of regressions ran against the dependent variable of college going rates confirmed that percent of baccalaureate degrees was only significant in the models in which income per capita was included. With the knowledge of the existence of a suppressor variable relationship, a final regression model was performed that excluded the interaction term and included the variable measuring income per capita even though it was found to be insignificant. A summary of the final regression model that included only the variables identified as consistently significant along with the variable measuring income per capita in explaining dependent variable was reported in Table 1.

Table 1
Summary of Significant Variables Explaining Going Rates

Independent Variable	Unstandarized Estimate (*B*)	*t*	Standardized Beta
Secondary Clubs	.006*	2.134	.276
Population Migration	-.00001*	-2.843	-.348
BA Degree	.927*	2.807	.337
Unemployment	-.919*	-2.593	-.325
Income per Capita	-.000008	-1.121	-.192

Note. Adj. R^2 = .275; *df*=57. *p≤.05, two-tailed.

The Adjusted R^2 (.275) revealed that, given the number of independent variables, this model explained 27.5% of the variance in the dependent variable of community college going rates. The F test ($F_{5,57}$=4.323) revealed that the overall regression was statistically significant at

p≤.05. The constant (α), if all independent variables are zero, was .401. The variable measuring income per capita was not found to be significant. The unstandardized coefficients (*B*) and the t test results for each independent variable were as follows:

- On average, for each additional competitive club offered by a high school, college going rates could be expected to increase by .006 of a percentage point, holding everything else in the model constant. The t test was 2.134 (p≤.05) and therefore the variable measuring the number of competitive clubs in secondary schools was statistically significant.
- On average, given a one person increase in the net population migration of the county of a sampled community, college going rates could be expected to decrease by .00001 of a percentage point, holding everything else in the model constant. The t test was -2.843 (p≤.05) and therefore the variable measuring population migration was statistically significant.
- On average, given a one percentage point increase in the percent of population 25 and older with a baccalaureate degree, college going rates could be expected to increase by .927 of a percentage point, holding everything else in the model constant. The t test was 2.807 (p≤.05) and therefore the variable measuring the percent of population 25 and older with a baccalaureate degree was statistically significant.
- On average, given a one percentage point increase in the unemployment rate, college going rates could be expected to decrease by .919 of a percentage point, holding everything else in the model constant. The t test was -2.593 (p≤.05) and therefore the variable measuring the unemployment rate was statistically significant.

Decreasing the amount of extraneous variables strengthened this model so that this set of variables explained 27.5% of the variation in the dependent variable.

In terms of latent factors among the social, cultural, and human capital variables that could be used to identify community expectations of college attendance. A majority of the independent variables loaded on four factors. The interrelationships among these variables suggested that the existence of factors unidentified by the findings of the first research question were plausible.

The variables used were deemed acceptable by factor analysis according to the results of the KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity; although, interpretation of the KMO test rated the distribution of values between "middling" and "mediocre" (George & Mallery, 2003, p. 256). An initial scree plot suggested as many as ten possible factors, but those factors included crossloading variables. The principal components analysis revealed six factors with Eigenvalues higher than 1.0 with a cumulative explanation of 74.2% of the variance after the rotation converged in 16 iterations. Table 2 provided the variance explained by the six factors identified by the analysis.

Table 2
Variance Explained by Six Factors Identified by Factor Analysis

	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a]
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	5.200	28.891	28.891	4.483
2	2.584	14.354	43.246	3.092
3	2.064	11.465	54.711	3.214
4	1.292	7.179	61.890	2.773
5	1.192	6.621	68.511	1.924
6	1.023	5.683	74.194	1.691

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
[a]When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.

In an ideal situation, three factors would have grouped the variables according to the social, cultural, and human capital categories. Likewise, five factors would have grouped the variables according to the Deggs-Miller (2009) Model of Community Expectancy. Six factors were identified but reduced to five after accounting for crossloading items. The fifth factor had one item with a loading higher than .32 and third and fourth factors had only two items loading higher than .32. Factors with fewer than three items are "generally considered weak or unstable" (Costello & Osborne, 2005, p. 5); thus, a new series of analyses were performed limiting the number of possible factors to five then to four and finally to three. Four factors provided the most parsimonious model although the variance explained decreased to 61.9%. This structure suggested a model of community expectancy that was not anticipated. Also, as Bourdieu (1986) suggested, this structure demonstrated that social, cultural, and human capital were highly interactive since they did not separate into individual factors. Table 3 presents the factor model suggested by this factor analysis process. Table 4 compared the findings to the Deggs-Miller model and the capitals categorization of the variables.

Table 3
Summarized Results of Factor Analysis

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor3	Factor 4
Poverty	.897			
%Nonwhite	.848			
Literacy Rate	.830			
PPE	.560			
Family Size	.535			
Unemployment	.494			

Crime Rate	.789		
BA Degree	.608		
Secondary Clubs	.504		
Income	.366		
Arts Industry		.863	
Self-Employment		.798	
College Proximity		.327	
Pop. Migration			.462
Dependency Ratio			.377

Note. Extraction Methods: Principal Components Analysis. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 4
Suggested Model Groupings Compared to Findings from Factor Analysis

Variable	Deggs-Miller Model	Capitals	Factor
Religion	Religious Affiliations	Social Capital	---
Homeownership	Home Life	Human Capital	---
HS Degree	Formal Educational Bodies	Human Capital	---
Family Size	Home Life	Social Capital	1
%Nonwhite	Informal Associations	Cultural Capital	1
Poverty	Home Life	Cultural Capital	1
Literacy Rate	Formal Educational Bodies	Cultural Capital	1
PPE	Formal Educational Bodies	Cultural Capital	1
Unemployment	Home Life	Human Capital	1
Secondary Clubs	Informal Associations	Social Capital	2
Crime Rate	Civic Agencies	Cultural Capital	2
Income	Home Life	Human Capital	2
BA Degree	Formal Educational Bodies	Human Capital	2
Arts Industry	Home Life	Cultural Capital	3
College Proximity	Formal Educational Bodies	Cultural Capital	3
Self-Employment	Home Life	Human Capital	3
Pop. Migration	Home Life	Social Capital	4
Dependency Ratio	Home Life	Social Capital	4

Based on the findings presented in Tables 3 and 4, potential latent factors previously uni-dentified could be suggested by these factor groupings. Explaining 28.89% of the variance, factor one consisted of variables—the percent of population below poverty, the percent of nonwhite population, and the percent of county population lacking basic prose literacy skills—that caused multicollinearity issues for the regressions. The strong loading of these variables together was not altogether unexpected. Also, it is particularly interesting that the majority of the variables identified in factor one were designated as cultural capital in the study. Cultural capital would

appear to be a legitimate means of measuring community expectations, especially as an indicator of important socio-cultural forces underlying the economic conditions of a community.

The variables of the second factor explained 14.4% of the variance and all had positive and statistically significant correlations with one another except for the correlation between per capita income and the crime rate. As the crime rate in a community increased, we could expect to find a higher income per capita in a community, a higher number of residents with baccalaureate degrees, and a higher number of competitive clubs within a community. This finding was interpreted as indicating the importance of measuring the communal quality of life when studying community expectancy of college attendance.

The nature of employment opportunity appeared to be the common thread uniting the variables in factor three; however, the inclusion of college proximity made interpretation difficult. Obviously, individuals working in the arts, recreation, and entertainment industry have a higher likelihood of identifying themselves as self-employed, which explained the connection between this variable and the variable measuring the percent of communal population that was self-employed. Taking into account the proximity of a college and excepting one outlying community with a high percentage of artists (8.5%), this finding would seem to indicate that the percent of self-employed persons increases, and the percent of persons employed in the arts, entertainment, and recreation fields decreases as one moves further away from a college. As Arkansas is a rural and agricultural state, the inclusion of self-employed farmers and farm laborers likely affected this variable. Thus, there were two possible conclusions. First, this grouping could indicate that the types of employment available within a community should be considered when studying community expectancy, which verifies the use of human capital variables. Second, the high factor loading of the variable measuring the percent of population in the arts, entertainment and recreation field (.863) may by itself indicate the importance of an artistic element within a community. Either conclusion would require further investigation.

The fourth factor was a weak loading with only two variables measuring the net population migration of the county and the dependency ratio of the community. Although it could be discounted altogether, the factor four findings should be taken into account by those interested in community expectancy. Only a slight negative correlation existed between these two variables (r=-.054). Although not statistically significant, the negative correlation signaled that communities located in counties with negative population growth had, on average, a higher number of dependents. It could be that communities with high dependency ratios reflect limited population mobility, or stagnation. For whatever reason, these communities contained place bound populations. Although unexpected, this relationship would tend to support the assumptions of the study. Regardless, this finding taken into account with the final regression model's findings would at least appear to justify further investigation into demographic elements like population shifts as indicators of community expectancy.

Discussion

A number of conclusions can be drawn from this study, but of primary concern is the validity of community expectancy as a construct for further investigation into postsecondary degree attainment. It seems logical that communities, acting as pseudo-organisms, would collectively project expectations of behavior through the implicit and elicit messages about acceptable behavior they transmit to residents. A comprehensive review of the findings of the study appeared to suggest that community expectancy, albeit elusive, is measurable and may help explain the

community role in college choice. At the very least, further research into the area would be warranted.

Specifically, this study identified four community-level variables that correlated with the college going rates of the sampled communities: the number of competitive clubs offered in secondary schools, the population migration, the percent of population with a baccalaureate degree, and the unemployment rate. The identification of community-level variables that indicate communal expectations of attending college could be used to assist colleges seeking to recruit prospective students.

The use of specific social, cultural, and human capital appeared to be a valid construct for identifying explanatory variables indicative of community expectations. Although the findings of the study did not verify the Deggs-Miller (2009) Model of Community Expectancy, it did indicate that identified variables are likely components of larger interactive factors. No clear alternative to the Deggs-Miller model emerged from the findings; however, some areas of interest that may provide guidance for future research were identified. The areas identified by the study at the community level were 1) educational attainment, 2) socio-cultural forces, 3) quality of life, 4) employment opportunities, and 5) population mobility. Further research is needed into each of these areas to identify their specific component variables and to determine the nature of interaction among these areas and their variables before a comprehensive model of community expectancy can be generated.

A qualitative study that identifies the elements that differ among communities with high and low rates of college attendance would be a logical next step for research. One such communal phenomenon, as indicated by the factor analysis, was poverty. Poverty carries with it cultural legacies that are passed on through the generations, and among those legacies must be a valuing of educational attainment. Some groups in poverty may see education as a means of escape while other groups may see education as a tool of entrapment. Thus, carefully designed case studies of select communities may provide rich descriptions that could yield useful interpretations for the creation of a model of community expectancy. Furthermore, an ethnographic study aimed at resident opinions about college attendance and the community-level factors they believe encourage/discourage attendance could be useful.

The overall quality of life in a community appears to be related to college choice. A prospective student from a community with a financially stable populous will have a higher rate of college attendance. In short, a community with an educated workforce and more wealth translates into communal stability. More wealth and education also result in more taxes collected to support local law enforcement and the higher likelihood of more school activities.

Colleges have an important role to play in fostering appropriate community expectations of college attendance. College administrators should seek opportunities to get community residents on their campuses through various outreach programs (i.e., speakers' bureaus, drama, arts, offering facilities for meetings of local organizations, etc.). Such activities break down barriers that may exist between the public and the local community. Often colleges do this for the communities in which they are located; however, they should reach out regionally. Any opportunity to get a prospective student or a prospective student's family members on campus can potentially improve community expectations of postsecondary attainment.

References

Anderson, K. L. (1981). Post-high school experiences and college attrition. *Sociology of Education, 54*, 1–15.

Andersson, E., & Subramanian, S. V. (2006). Explorations of neighbourhood and educational outcomes for young Swedes. *Urban Studies, 43*, 2013-2025.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241–258). New York, NY: Greenwood Press.

Cabrera, A. F., & La Nasa, S. M. (2001). On the path to college: Three critical tasks facing America's disadvantaged. *Research in Higher Education, 42*, 119–149.

Costello, A. B., & Osborne, J. W. (2005). Best practices in exploratory factor analysis: Four recommendations for getting the most from your analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research, & Evaluation: A Peer Reviewed Electronic Journal, 10*(7). Retrieved January 4, 2011, from http://pareonline.net/pdf/v10n7.pdf

Deggs, D., & Miller, M. T. (2009, October). *Entrenched expectations of rural community impediments for college attendance*. Paper presented at the Conference for Delta: Poverty, Education, and Economic Development: A Forum on the Future of the Delta Region, Phillips County Community College, Helena-West Helena, AR.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: The MacMillan Company.

Dewey, J. (1939). *Freedom and culture*. New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Dewey, J. (1980). *The school and society*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1899).

Dewey, J. (2004). *Democracy and education*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc. (Original work published 1916).

Elder, G. H., Jr. (1994). Time, human agency, and social change: Perspectives on the life course. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 57*, 4–15.

Elder, G. H., Jr. (1998). The life course as developmental theory. *Child Development, 69*, 1–12.

Erikson, E. H. (1993). *Childhood and society*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company. (Original work published in 1950).

Erikson, E. H. (1994). *Identity and the life cycle*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company. (Original work published in 1968).

Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., & Guido–DiBrito, F. (1998). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey–Bass.

George, D., & Mallery, P. (2003). SPSS for Window step by step: A simple guide and reference, 11.0 update (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Giele, J. Z., & Elder, G. H., Jr. (1998). Life course research: Development of a field. In J. Z. Giele & G. H. Elder, Jr. (Eds.), *Methods in life course research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches* (pp. 5–27). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Hoenack, S. A., & Weiler, W. C. (1975). Cost-related tuition policies and university enrollments. *The Journal of Human Resources, 10*, 332–360.

Hossler, D., Schmit, J. L., & Vesper, N. (1999). *Going to college: How social, economic, and educational factors influence the decisions students make.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

King, T. (2008). Fostering aboriginal leadership: Increasing enrollment and completion rates in Canadian post-secondary institutions. *College Quarterly, 11*(1), available online at www.collegequarterly.ca/2008-vol11-num01-winter/king

Merton, R. K. (1968). *Social structure and social theory*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Miller, M. T., & Tuttle, C. C. (2006). Rural community colleges and developing student perceptions of self-identity. *Community College Enterprise, 12*, 55–68.

Miller, M. T. & Tuttle, C. C. (2007). Building communities: How rural community colleges develop their communities and the people who live in them. *Community College Research and Practice, 31*, 117–127.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2010). School district demographic system: Map viewer—Arkansas school district total population, 2000. Retrieved October 31, 2010 from, http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/ed/index.asp?st=AR

Perna, L. W. (2000). Differences in the decision to attend college among African Americans, Hispanics, and whites. *Journal of Higher Education, 71*, 117–140. Retrieved December 21, 2009, from JSTOR database.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Rowan–Kenyon, H. T. (2007). Predictors of delayed college enrollment and the impact of socioeconomic status. *Journal of Higher Education, 78*, 188–214.

Shaffer, R., Deller, S., & Marcouiller, D. (2004). *Community economics: Linking theory and practice* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Stage, F. K., & Hossler, D. (2004). Where is the student? Linking student behaviors, college choice, and college persistence. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (3rd ed.), (pp. 170–195). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Swidler, A. (1986). Culture in action: Symbols and strategies. *American Sociological Review, 51*, 273–286.

Yaukey, D. (1990). Demography: The study of human population (reissue). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

Dr. M. Wade Derden is Chair of the Division of Social Sciences at National Park Community College in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Dr. Derden can be reached at mderden@npcc.edu

Dr. Michael T. Miller is a professor of Higher Education and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Education and Health Professions at the University of Arkansas.