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# Does college education really matter?

Does college education really matter? This question often rises up among general public, whether it is a graduate student from high school who wants to get college education or parents who are trying to do their best by giving their progeny a better future or it is a government that worries about the number of dropout from college, the question deserves a full attention. It may find an easy answer among other thinkers but comes up with a satisfying answer is the hardest challenge one can never giving to itself.

Taking in consideration this question can imply two points of views: importance and necessity. Therefore, making an attempt to understand the set question by using those two points of views may sound like this: College education is important but not necessary. Why? Answer this another interrogation will reveal a lot of information, but before that, it will be safe by starting to dig into the meaning of college education or better what is higher education is.

According to dictionary.reference.com, higher education is “education beyond high school, specifically that provided by colleges and graduate schools, and professional schools.” Looking chiefly into this definition, it appears that the word “higher” infers to “beyond high school”, precisely to college. Consequently, college education is education beyond high school. What matter in this second definition is the word “college”; reading dictionary.reference.com again, it says college is “a constituent unit of a university, furnishing courses of instruction in the liberal arts and sciences, usually leading to a bachelor's degree.”

Wrapping things up, it comes out that college education is a learning process leading to a degree, bachelor’s degree. Defining college education comes to learning and rewarding. Learning is one thing all humans are subjected to. Without being absolute firm, no human being comes in this world with a full knowledge of knowing everything and has no need of anything. The justification is that a simple matter of living together required the learning of other people behaviors. But in contrary, rewarding is not an absolute value in one’s life. Rewarding is just another thing humans praise themselves with. Hence, college education is important for the value of learning; but not necessary because the price is not fortuitous.

College education is important for three reasons: gaining knowledge, making an ultimate discovery and enriching the society. College education is important because there is a gain of knowledge. College education gives the knowledge to the individual; it gives the opportunity to one to learn new things necessary to live on earth; things like solving problems and understanding its surrounding world. For example, solving problems that involve equations or geometry of three dimensions requires the acquisition of such knowledge, mathematics. There are other courses people can get with college education: chemistry, biology, physics, communication, history and many others. The list may be extensive but what is all about is knowledge. For instance, in delivering his speech about the importance of education a national to students across the nation, the U.S. president Barrack Obama said, “You'll need the knowledge and problem-solving skills you learn in science and math to cure diseases like cancer and AIDS, and to develop new energy technologies, and protect our environment.”

All the courses teaching in college are knowledge important to humans’ life. And by learning those courses, people are confronted themselves with other realties: defining who they are and what they are capable. College education is also important for the fact that it helps the individual to make an ultimate discovery. Students make tremendous discoveries while they are in college. College helps students to define themselves; it also helps students to learn humans’ behaviors and to see others like teachers, classmates behaving can change their view of life.

College also teaches people how to make a judgment. Being in college, students are capable of thinking critically and making critical decisions on different subject; they can make a distinction between beliefs and facts. In instance, the course of philosophy and physics that students learn in college are knowledge that help them to know what are beliefs and facts.

Through college education, students can possibly find their limits. What student can do or cannot do is set by how much knowledge they can claim to have. College education helps students on how to make a choice or to make a clear discernment. When students choose the classes, they usually go by their need or feeling or they have been directed by the advisors, at the end of the classes, they are evaluated and graded, in result, some may pass the classes and others not. So, Students find their limits by confronting their knowledge to the test. By evaluating and grading students, it tells the public what they are up to.

Indeed, college education contributes to the development of the society. By getting college education, students become more mature. Because of the knowledge they got from the college, they can behave in a good manners. Through College education students learn the fundamental skills that will lead them during their careers: self-respect, self-confidence and self-motivation.

After college, some are going to be teachers, and so they will transfer the knowledge they have to the next generation; some are going to be doctors, being doctors, they will treat sick people and help them stay healthy; some will become lawyers, and for instance they will defend or attack the society’s rule; and more, some will become politicians who can lead the city, state and country, they will represent others’ voices. Teachers, doctors, lawyers, politicians and many others are vital for the life of the community. In order for the society to growth, it needs engineers who can build roads, schools, hospitals; it also needs lawyers, congressmen and president who can represent the voices of others; and finally, it needs researchers who can use their creativity to make new things that are good for the society and can generate new jobs.

As result, college education contributes to society growth is that college sets up students for the use of society. One fundamental aspect of the society is that it has to keep growing up to respond to the needs of humans being: humans’ productivity is responsible for the increase of the population. And as the numbers keep going up, the problems are increasing too. The need of food and infrastructures become essential.

Nowadays, the population of China is evaluated in billion; it was not certainly the same number “1,343,239,923” as the Central Intelligence Agency(CIA) estimated in July 2012 as compare to time of imperialism, when the country was under the power of Great Britain, France and Russian. The “1,343,239,923” of Chinese are people with the need of food, healthcare, housing, education and jobs. It is not surprising to see China’s economic leading the world; and yet with its rank of the most populated country in the world, China is still doing better than the past two centuries. Something has played a huge impact on this big progress and that is college education.

A recent study in *China Education* by China Education Center Ltd reveals that China education is the largest education system in the world and there are more than twenty million students enrolled in China’s higher education. This explains why the country imposes its supremacy around the world. With this example of China’s growth, it is clear that college education is a service of society.

Despite the fact that college education is a service of society, college education rewards students with a degree, a bachelor’s degree. So, people go to college not just for the knowledge but also for a degree. They go to college so that they can earn a parchment that will signal the rest of the world that they have the knowledge of something and they are potential workers. But is it necessary? Because humans being are not identic in their mind thinking, some people are smarter than others and for that reason not everyone will succeed in getting college education.

Indeed, college education is not necessary for two reasons: self-choice and no guarantee of success in lifetime. College education is one self-choice. In the United State, there is not a law that required people to get college education; therefore, people are free to get college education. College education required a good brain to be able to absorb all the lessons necessary to earn a degree. Earning a degree is a long learning process that often can take up to four year to be completed. Not everyone can scarify four year of life to get a degree, and for the most part, it will be difficult to complete such a program if the brain cannot assimilate the lessons and endure four years of learning.

Another reason why college education is not necessary is that college education does no guarantee success in one’s life. There are facts that affect people’s life for getting college education: the cost of the tuition and the loss of time. College education’s tuition is not cheap, for people who wants to go to elite university like Harvard and Princeton, Forbes Staff, in “*Five reasons to skip college”,* claimes that the tuition will go around “$160.000” this amount of money represent a huge amount of debt for people who cannot afford that kind of college, and yet they still want to earn a degree.

Some people who aspire to a better life think that getting a college education will increase their income but this is not fully true; because there is a slice difference between a student with a high school diploma and the one who has a bachelor’s degree. And according to Forbes staff again, “on average, the holder of a four-year college degree will earn 62% more over their lifetimes than a typical high-school graduate.” In addition, a recent survey published in March 23, 2012 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that in the weekly earnings in 2011, employees with high school diploma earn $638 and the employees with an associate and bachelor’s degree earn respectively $768 and $1,053. Comparing the weekly income of employees with the ones with associate and bachelor’s degree, the difference are $130 and $415 which can represent the budget spending on cars’ need in a month or so. So, to cover up the gasp, employees with high school diploma may choose to ride public transportation so they can save more and still be closed to those higher degrees.

Consequently, people don’t absolutely need a college education to succeed in their lifetime. And matter of fact, people who are less motivated will lose four years of their life chasing a degree that they could not earn because they drop out of college. And for that reason, Jordan Weissmann, in *Why Do So Many Americans Drop Out of College?* Writes,“Unprepared students sign up for school because they think a degree is their passport to the middle class.” It comes out that people shrink while there are in college because their minds are not set for the long journey that lead to the degree.

Thus, those four years are four years of losing precious money: the cost of the tuition owed for the less fortunate and the salary lost that could have been earned. Some will carry the debt in all their lifetime because unable to pay back. This failure does not just impact the individual, but also it affects the image of the country. It is also these facts that have pushed Harvard Graduate School of Education, in *pathways to Prosperity*, to say, “among all four-year colleges, just 56 percent of students meet this goal… the United States now has the highest college dropout rate in the industrialized world.”

But not everyone has the same need, some people think a college’s degree will set them in the middle class as Jordan Weismann claims in his article, but what they forget is that they are people who can still succeed in their life without college education. Even with the growing fast paced industry, there are still those small jobs that don’t required higher education: jobs like driver, singer and business owner. Truly facts, for those who are looking for honor and respect, there are people have been building their reputation around the world without a college degree: Andrew Carnegie, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg. (Biography)

To sum up, college education is very important because students gain knowledge and earn a degree; no matter how smart one were born or how much money and time it costs. College education helps one to define himself, to understand the society and the surrounding world in the better way. Because it teaches people respect, common value, how to brainstorm an idea, college education contributes to the growth of the society. Many jobs like biologist, spaceman, programmer, doctor and many others are well known today because of college education.

However, it is possible to succeed in lifetime without college education, not just because the higher tuition of many colleges, but also for the facts that some people are less motivated or have weak mind. These people can still do something to earn an income. In fact, some jobs like driver, dancer, and singer don’t need major education. It is only about talent, smartness, and luckiness. In addition, there are good examples of people who have succeed without a college’s degree: Andrew Carnegie, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg who are well-known, wealthy and well-respected in this world for the businesses they own. But they only represent few, not probably the ten percent of college graduate in the United State. So, it means college education is irreplaceable. Perhaps it would last forever.

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