

### **7.3.1 Performance of the Institution in One Area Distinctive to its Priority and Thrust**

#### **Fostering Students' Comprehensive Development**

Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad, an affiliate to Shivaji University, Kolhapur, established on 7th August 1986 is the first women's college in Satara district. Karad, being one of the educationally active talukas, has a large population keen on giving higher education to their wards. Considering that women must be self-reliant and empowered in every aspect of life, the visionary leadership of Shikshan Mandal, Karad established Mahila Mahavidyalaya in Karad city. Within eight years of establishment, the college progressed and earned permanent affiliation in 1994 and the UGC listing in 1998. Since then the college has maintained its scholastic approach with a promise to provide value-based and skill based education as well as best possible facilities to fulfill girls' academic needs. We believe that the purpose of higher education is to provide a well-rounded education that will fit women to utilize their abilities to the fullest extent. Hence, since its inception every attempt is made for their holistic development to fulfill its vision statement:

**“Empowerment of girl students in pursuit of knowledge, values and self-reliance”**

Being a girls' college, our multi-faculty college is committed to nurturing and creating girl students hailing mostly from rural areas in the vicinity of Karad well equipped to be world citizens; women who are proud of their culture and heritage as well as possess a broad sensibility that vibrantly celebrates diversity in all aspects through access to higher education and awareness about social responsibilities. Through varied academic, cultural and outreach activities we strive to enable them for personal and professional growth. We believe in capacity enhancement rather than mere information generation by keeping them abreast to modern trends and advanced technologies. Woman power is the striking feature of the college with 99.9 % girl students and 59 % women faculty including the Principal, IQAC coordinator, Librarian and a Physical Director.

The institution recognizes the significance of skill development courses alongside traditional education considering their role in the enhancement of employability or starting a self-venture. The Centre for Skill Development in the college runs with an objective to boost innate skills, offer scope for entrepreneurship development and create job opportunities for girl students. The distinctiveness of the centre is students learn by doing and engage themselves in hands on training that leads to prepare themselves for entrepreneurship or employability. Students are exposed to good number of Skill Development Courses at a nominal fee of Rs.1000/- or less than 1000/- only as majority of the students hail from rural and weak economic background. The courses like Fashion Designing, Beauty Care, Kindergarten Teacher Course affiliated to Centre

for Lifelong Learning ,Shivaji University, Kolhapur, CCIT, Counseling, Spoken English, Income Tax, Tally with GST, GIS, Police Training, E- Banking, Travel and Tourism, etc. promise them financial independence. The courses are complemented with Entrepreneurship Development programmes that aim to develop entrepreneurial behaviour, promote self-employment and better business practices in students. On the completion of the courses, many students have started their own businesses. Many are supporting their families financially.

The NSS unit comprises 100% girl volunteers. In line with the vision of the college, it aims at empowering girl students by imbibing a spirit of national integration, dedication for social service and responsibility, dignity of labour, and leadership. Moreover, it attempts to inculcate the spirit of voluntary work among students and teachers through sustained community interactions. Also it plays a vital role in promoting inclusive environment for cultural, socio-economic and regional diversities among students. The NSS volunteers engage in community development activities, cleaning drives, and awareness activities through the year. The college boasts of remarkable record of NSS activities in the Shivaji University, Kolhapur. The NSS volunteers participate in various activities and programmes conducted by the University, Karad Municipality, Venutai Chavan Sub-Divisional Hospital, Karad and NGOs in and around Karad. The college has been successfully conducting Special Residential Camp in adopted villages since its inception i.e. 1986. The special NSS camp is one such activity wherein the volunteers from diverse socio-economic, cultural and religious background stay together for a week and work for the well-being of the society.

The effectively run Mentor-Mentee programme help the students in many ways. Many married women prefer to pursue their higher education while shouldering family responsibilities. The wholehearted cooperation from the faculty helps not only the academically sound students complete their degree course, but also the slow learners, married women, working girls/women, and students coming from financially weaker background.

Students' Health Check-up and follow up has been a sustained activity of the college since 1993-94. Since most of the students come from rural area, majority of them are unaware about health issues like - reproductive health, hygiene, communicable diseases, oral health, healthy food and dietary habits. Hence throughout the year to ensure physical, mental, psychological and social wellbeing of students, various activities are organized with the cooperation of the Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences, Karad, and Lions Club of Karad(Nakshatra) with whom the college has done MOU. The college has also formed Red Ribbon Club for AIDs awareness in association with KIMS, Karad. Along with health checkup, lectures on the aforementioned issues are conducted all the year round.

Food Festival is the unique activity of the college organized by Department of Home Science every year since 1993-94 with an innovative approach to develop informally the traditional culinary art of cookery. Various food specialties prepared by the students are exhibited, sold and enjoyed. It is an exercise in food catering, marketing skills, entrepreneurship and art in students. Food festival is a platform to ignite innovative skills of students. Participating in various competitions like mehendi, rangoli, hair-style, handicrafts, flower arrangement, etc. organized during the festival, they not only exhibit their artistic approach and creative ideas but learn to further their innovative skills as well.

Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Karad is the only college in the jurisdiction of Shivaji University, Kolhapur that begins with a National Anthem, prayer which is dedicated to mother land and Maharashtra Geet. The singing of prayer intends to bring everyone together on a common platform forgetting their socio-economic status, religious beliefs, diverse opinions, etc. It helps to develop inclusive environment in the campus. Moreover, the day begins with a positive note. The prayer is followed by a Morning Assembly for which students and faculty gather in the corridor for a talk delivered either by a faculty or by student/s. The organization of Morning Assemblies aims at promoting social awareness, developing critical thinking abilities, motivating them to reach the society with a 'message' and preparing them for a confident public speech. It also aims at motivating the students to read books for additional information.

Gender sensitization being a human right and constitutional obligation, the college takes initiatives for gender awareness and sensitization through various activities. We practice to bring a positive change in the attitude and support equity among genders within the college and in our outreach. Providing safe and supportive campus is a concern for both the parent institution and college administration. Considering the fact that every girl student has a right to live with dignity and have access to education in an environment that is safe, protective and conducive to grown, every effort is made for the safety and security of students as well as women staff. The student strength of the college and the number of women staff reflects the trust of the parents on the college as far as its comfort and safe ambience is concerned.

24 hour CCTV surveillance is maintained in the college through high resolution cameras having day and night facility of recording. 26 cameras have been set up at the key areas in the campus as the college accords utmost priority to the safety and security of students and staff.

The college has constituted the committees as per the norms laid by University/ UGC – Anti-Ragging Committee, Students' Grievances Redressal Committee, Internal Complaints Committee, Special Cell Standing Committee, Discipline Committee and RTI Cell. The

committees monitor discipline in the campus, care for the well-being of the students and the staff and assure the adherence to human / constitutional rights and values. The college aims at zero-tolerance against any kind of harassment. Emergency numbers are also displayed in the college so as help students and women staff to contact the concerned police personnel / department.

The Karad Police Station along with the NSS Unit conducts a workshop to address the problems of the girl students and provide them emotional and legal support. Students are motivated to approach Nirbhaya Squad to deal with sexual harassment and enrol in for self-defence course. The police officials' visit and interaction with students create awareness about security measures provided to women, children, elderly people, legal provisions for women, and psychiatric assistance if needed. Workshops with demonstration are held to train girls to use every day articles like pen, stole, bag, etc. as weapons of improvised self-defence weapons to their advantage.

The college has Students Counselling Centre run by the Department of Psychology that helps students to deal with emotional, academic, stress related issues, etc. The department runs a certificate course in counselling that avails students of a career opportunity in counselling.

Assistance is provided for Scholarships and Freeships to the students in the college. The mentors take continuous follow-up of the same. The needy students are given financial assistance from the Students' Aid Fund. The help empowers the academic and career goals of the students.

The college sincerely works towards sensitising the girl students to gender related issues by organising programmes such as – workshops on health issues, women's problems, legal rights and laws, mental stress, personality development, etc. The sensitization is also done through celebration of the days like Yoga day, Constitution Day, Independence and Republic Day, Youth Day, International Women's Day, AIDs Awareness week, Oath on Addiction Day, Observance of Birth and Death Anniversaries of eminent personalities, etc. A hording displaying the first women succeeded in varied fields in India has been mounted on the entrance wall to motivate the students to follow their own career dreams.

