

# Assessment Report for Institutional Accreditation of The College of Arts, Jejuri, Pune District

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## Introduction

Acharya Atre Vikas Pratishthan, Purandar Tehsil, Pune District, has set up the College of Arts at Jejuri, which is the most revered and holy settlement of Maharashtra, as it is the seat of the most popular deity of Maharashtra, viz., Khandoba. The College is managed by a Trust, viz., A.A.D. Trust and it is affiliated to the University of Pune.

The Peer Team constituted by N.A.A.C., Bangalore, consisting of Prof. Afzal Mohammed (Chair person), Dr. C. Srinivasan (Convener-Member) and Dr. J.L. Mewafarosh (Member), visited the College at Jejuri on January 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> 2004, so as to assess its academic performance and the degree of its success in achieving excellence.

It was noticed that, except that it is the holy abode of Khandoba, Jejuri does not offer an academic-friendly environment which could be helpful to promote a degree College. Located at a distance of about 65 kms. from Pune City, the Arts College of Jejuri is presently housed in a rented historic building in Holkar Wada, covering an area of 1,675 sq. mts. The Management has,

however, recently acquired a piece of land, admeasuring 7.25 acres and has also drawn up a tentative Plan to construct a permanent building for the College.

Realising the social and economic background of Jejuri and also its disadvantaged geographical location, the Promoters of the College have laid more stress on "Development through Education, Sports, Arts and Culture". The College mainly caters to the needs of higher education to the students belonging to socially and economically depressed classes in a rural area which is also well-known as a drought-prone area. It was informed to the Peer Team that almost 80% of the total students belong to the categories such as E.B.C., S.C. and S.T. It may not be out of place to mention here that both the College Authorities and the Management are fully conscious of the great disadvantage of not having the required physical and academic infrastructure due to non-availability of a proper building. The present building, in which the Arts College is housed, is a 200 years' old dilapidated structure - with mud floor and walls and leaking roofs, which require constant repairs. This has restricted the Management in acquiring the appropriate academic Accessories, Equipment and Furniture for Library. Computer Laboratory, Language Laboratory and Gymnasium, etc.

## **Criterion I: Curricular Aspects**

Being a single faculty College, it provides instructions in four special subjects, viz., Marathi, Hindi, English and Political Science; and two General Subjects, viz., Economics & Psychology. The College also offers two complimentary short-term part-time Certificate courses, viz., Certificate course in Communication Skills and Computer Literacy course. In collaboration with the Vanasthali Rural Development Centre the College also participates in Pre-Primary Teacher's Training Course.

Since the College is affiliated to the University of Pune, the curriculum of each subject is designed, reviewed/revised by the Board of Studies of the University every 3 years. However, it was brought to our notice that the subject teachers of the College often participate in various Workshops organised by the University for curriculum design. ✓ The faculty conceptualises new academic programmes and submits proposals through the Management. It normally takes about one year to introduce the new programme, after it is conceptualised. Attempts are being made by the College to introduce 1 or 2 additional programmes, including B.Com. courses. The Alumni and Parents have expressed their desire to introduce post graduate courses also.

The teachers of each subject prepare an Annual Teaching Plan which covers topics of lessons by each Unit. The teachers try to stick to the Plan as much as possible.

There is no scope for an academic audit since the College has only a single faculty of Arts. However, the L.I.C. of the University of Pune visited the College in June 2002 and recommended for an additional division to be started by the College. Permission has now been granted for two years..

As an innovative exercise, some of the teachers intend to introduce a short course in Personality Development, in collaboration with Mahatma Phule Institute of Management, Pune.

#### **Criterion II: Teaching, Learning and Evaluation**

This College, being located in a backward rural area, the Teachers and Management make an effort every year to persuade the parents in Jejuri and adjoining villages to send their children for admission in this College. It is interesting to note that the staff members and even senior students organise programmes like "Dnyana Ganga Gharo Ghari," by visiting schools in different villages and publicising the importance of the College in their area. The Management also collects names and addresses of students completing their

secondary education from different schools in adjoining villages and send them invitations by mail to join the College. During the last two years, the strength of the students had been 288 and 272 respectively. The College has normally about 200 teaching days out of 285-90 working days in a year. It is surprising to note that the ratio of non-teaching staff to teaching staff is around 6:13 which is abnormally high for a small College like this.

The College has adopted a practice of evaluating the performance of the students at suitable intervals. The evaluative methods are communicated to the students at the beginning of the year itself through the Prospectus. The College has also resorted to the practice of preparing a questionnaire to assess the student's capabilities soon after the admission, which helps the teachers to watch the performance pertaining to their intelligence, attitude, awareness, intake capacity and interest in the subject.

The College has also started a practice, since 2002-03, to evaluate performance of the faculty for teaching, research and extension through self-appraisal method. The Principal evaluates the self-appraisal forms and advises the teachers to improve their skills. It is also planned to obtain student's feedback about the performance of the teachers from this academic year. The College itself does not conduct Seminars, Workshops or Orientation Programmes for faculty development. However, it encourages the teachers to attend such Orientation/Refresher programmes organised elsewhere for faculty

development. During the last two years, three teachers attended the Orientation programme and another three attended the Refresher course.

The College has also attempted to adopt some innovative methods for teaching which include visit to an English Language Laboratory, visit to Sahitya Sammelans, visit to Cyber/Internet Café and also to Jejuri Municipal Corporation and some Banks, etc. This provides an opportunity to students to learn from observation and personal interaction.

The Principal of the College, Dr. A. Dhekane, is a well-known writer in Marathi and has received several awards for her works. Mr. Shivaji Bhintade received the Best Teachers' Award from the Jejuri Municipal Corporation in the year 2000.

The College is administered by diversifying its administration and giving an opportunity to the faculty and staff to share the responsibilities and involve in decision making. As such, the College has already constituted several committees for the academic years 2001-03 and 2003-05. Some of these committees are: Steering Committee, Campus Development Committee, Library Advisory Committee, Discipline Committee, Time-Table Committee and Programmes Committee, etc. All the staff members are, by rotation, nominated

on these Committees as members. The Committee is chaired by the senior most Staff Member.

The College has started inviting senior educationists and experts to deliver the lectures and provide an opportunity to the teachers and students to interact with them.

### **Criterion III: Research, Consultancy and Extension**

The importance of research for College teachers nowadays is beyond doubt. Serious efforts are being made to encourage teachers in active service to pursue research work. Since the College is not recognised under 2F and 12B by the UGC, it does not get financial assistance either in the form of basic grants or project grants. Of the two teachers registered for Ph.D., one has recently submitted his thesis to Pune University. The Committee has noted with pleasure that Dr. Archana Dhekane, the Principal, is actively engaged in research work. Nearly 40 articles, along with 2-3 books, go to her credit. She is also working on 3 minor projects in Marathi.

Extension activities are vigorously pursued in the College. A number of such activities are undertaken in collaboration with local organisations such as 'Grameen Vansthalī Kendra', Lions Club of Pune, St. Andrew's

International Academy and Loctite Compay Ltd. Under community development, activities like improvement of road and playground, programmes for improvement of environment and adoption of a village are being carried out. Similarly, social work through N.S.S., Medical Camp, Blood Donation and AIDS awareness programmes are taken up by Staff and Students. Leadership development programme is also worth mentioning.

There is no placement cell in the College but efforts are being made in this respect. A 'Vocational Guidance Workshop' took place in the College in July, 2003.

The main focus of the College is on successful organisation of a good number of such extension activities.

#### **Criterion IV: Infrastructure and Learning Resources**

This College does not have its own building. It is being run on rental basis in a building in Holkar Wada, which is the property of A.H.C Trust. The building is very old and shabby, presenting a gloomy picture. The Trust running the College, has now bought a plot of land (7.25 acres) bordering the town. A Master Plan has been prepared for the new campus and College building; but it needs thorough revision. The Management should keep in view

the growing requirements for additional courses and other programmes at least for the next two to three decades.

The present inadequacy of learning resources and funds is a cause for concern.

#### **Criterion V: Student Support and Progression**

The College has recorded a very high dropout rate. It was 45.14% in the year 2001-02 which rose to 52.2% in 2002-03. This has to be checked and controlled.

Systematic record of students' progression to further studies and employment was not maintained by the College. However, the College has already started collecting this information and efforts are being made to maintain such information systematically. Through various extension activities mentioned earlier, much external support is being sought it.

## **Criterion VI: Organisation and Management**

The College is run by a registered Trust which has appointed a College Management Committee. This Committee meets every quarter of the year. Besides this, a Local Management Committee has also been formed in accordance with the Maharashtra Universities Act, 1994. The minutes of its periodical meetings are properly recorded. Various activities of the College are carried out through different Committees, of which a teacher co-ordinator is the Head.

Recruitment of both the teaching and non-teaching staff is made according to the rules of Govt. of Maharashtra. There is a sound mechanism for financial management. The accounts are annually audited by a Chartered Accountant appointed by the Trust. They are also audited annually by the Dept. of Education, Govt. of Maharashtra.

The work-efficiency of the non-teaching staff is overseen by the Principal. The Principal sends selected members of non-teaching staff for training. Senior and highly experienced members of staff are invited from Govt. Departments and other agencies to provide guidance to the administrative staff on maintenance of records.

## **Criterion VII: Healthy Practices**

The College seems to be fully aware of its social responsibilities and is attempting to be instrumental in bringing about a social change in its rural area. It has undertaken diverse and extensive extra-curricular activities to provide the students a better and realistic perspective of their environment and also to make their College-life more enjoyable. A very novel activity is a visit by the Principal and teachers to the students' parents which created an emotional impact on both the students and their parents and resulted in improvement of students' attendance and commitment. Other activities, like organisation of voluntary work, music programmes, guest lectures, elocution competition, Youth Week, NSS & NCC activities, literacy programmes, vocational training, hill climbing, visit of the mothers of girl students to the College, folk art, programme for teachers' self-development, etc., are also being organised which create an healthy environment in the College.

A winter Camp is being organised every year, for the past five years, in different villages around the College. During the Camp, the students of the College take up various types of voluntary works in the village and also organise musical/cultural programmes to attract the villagers. This not only provides community orientation to the students but helps in participatory rural development.



Lectures, Talks, Group Discussions and Demonstrations are organised regularly so that the students could broaden their knowledge-base and learn through interaction with experienced persons. Seven such programmes were organised during 2001-02 and 13 were conducted during 2002-03.

**Points of Concern:**

It has been universally accepted that the quality of education needs a sound physical and academic infrastructure. In case of this College, in spite of good enthusiasm exhibited by the faculty and management, there is a considerable deficiency in physical infrastructure. Even academic infrastructure requires some improvement. The Management has now take upon itself to generate resources for constructing a separate building for the College. The Peer Committee has expressed its deep concern over the adverse effects on the academic performance of the College as long as appropriate accommodation is not made available for the College.

The College presently offers education only in a single faculty with four special and two general subjects. Looking at the growing demand for varied type of courses and also looking at the market potential for courses in Commerce and Information Technology, the Management should initiate necessary action to introduce some additional courses.

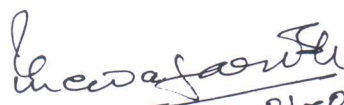
It is desirable that the teaching faculty should give top priority to teaching and research. It has been noticed that in their enthusiasm, they are paying more attention to extra-curricular activities and community services which are not in proportion to the academic activities. It is yet to be established whether the extra-ordinary high drop-out rate is due to external factors such as drought conditions, economic backwardness and social evils. However, the fact remains that 52.2% drop-out rate is not a healthy sign for any Institution which is committed to achieve excellence. This has to be checked at the earliest.

**Name and signature of the Peer Team Members**

1. Name of the Chairman : **Dr. Afzal Mohammed**

Signature   
10.01.04

2. Name of the Member : **Dr. J. L. Mewafarosh**

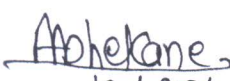
Signature   
10-01-04

3. Name of the Member Convener : **Dr. C. Srinivasan**

Signature   
10/1/04

I agree with the observations and recommendations made by the Peer Team in this report.

**Name and Signature of the Head of the Institution**

  
10.1.2004  
(Dr. Archana Dhekane)  
**Principal**  
Dr. Archana Dhekane  
PRINCIPAL  
Arts College, Jejuri  
Tal. Purandar, Dist. Pune

