

7.3.1 Institutional Distinctiveness in the area of extension and outreach activities

Chhatrapati Shikshan Mandal's arts and commerce College Padgha is an institution, committed to provide higher education to underprivileged tribal students from Padgha and nearby villages. Earlier students had to commute to Dombivli, Kalyan, Bhiwandi, Shahapur for quenching their thirst of higher education. This was the reason why major chunk of young brigade from Padgha was deprived of higher education. Now this institution, started 15 years ago, purely on no grant basis, caters to the needs of local students as well as students from nearby villages with the aim of "education for all and education on demand"

Students of our institution are highly motivated by social service and patriotism as a result of which we adopted a small village Kumbharshiv and took the oath of development of that village by various activities, conducted by NSS volunteers during their residential camp. Our institution has set up public library in Kumbharshiv by providing books and book shelves. Every year our NSS volunteers construct Bandhara on the river in Kumbharshiv village which results in increase in water level in nearby agricultural land. It helps locals to use this water for many purposes. Every year tree plantation programme is organised there in the presence of villagers and eminent personalities

Our best practice "Plastic bag free society" is also practiced in this adopted village Kumbharshiv through rally, street plays and door to door distribution of cotton carry bags to locals for buying vegetables and daily essentials. During residential camp in that area students conduct rally by carrying boards, displaying messages about save water, save trees and save electricity. They also create awareness about evil effects of plastic carry bags and motivate villagers to use cotton bags.

NSS students stitch the cotton carry bags by using sarees provided by ladies from college and other areas. Free distribution of cotton bags in local market and Kumbharshiv area is very unique feature of the institution. Institution initiated the drive of banning plastic bags and impressed by this social activity Padgha gram Panchayat also banned the use of plastic carry bags.

Every Year students prepare attractive rakhees and nearly 1200 to 1500 rakhees are sent to our soldiers protecting our border. Students also tie rakhees to trees in the surrounding areas as a part of "Vruksh bandhan" programme and spread the message of saving trees for our future generation. Every year on first day of Diwali festival, students light earthen lamp during the programme "one lamp for our soldier."

Institution has developed the facility of rain water harvesting to solve the scarcity of water and installed solar panels as a source of green energy. These two facilities help the society by way of making water available to needy people in the area and saving regular electrical energy for the society respectively.

Department of Lifelong learning and extension (DLLE) students visit "pasayadan balbhavan" at Khadavali, a home for young beggars and offer some financial help and snacks to this home and spend time with those young boys. These students also visit residential school for

tribal boys. All teachers and students contribute some money to this school. These visits created a sense of social commitment in the minds of students so they are ready to get involved in different types of social work.

Every year DLLE Students conduct survey of women in and around Padgha village by administering questionnaire. Data collected and analyzed by the students help them to understand social and educational status of women and difficulties faced by them. Students observed mass illiteracy among women, strong preference for customs and traditions, wrong approach towards ability of men and positive as well as negative approach towards Society.

Every year students of the college sensitize the people about safety rules while travelling by roads. They stand near toll naka, holding the boards, carrying road safety measures like

- Follow the traffic rules
- Wear helmets while driving the bikes
- Not to take alcoholic drinks while driving.

Mass illiteracy in Padgha area, particularly among women inspired the students to find some remedy. This sense of responsibility of students resulted in drive "My mother, literate mother." Every student started teaching their mothers, how to read and write.

Students of the college distributed water bottles and biscuit packs to the workers, migrating to their native places. During COVID pandemic the institution worked as a vaccination centre and reduced the pressure on other centres.

Every year students create awareness among people about banning the use of thermocol sheets for decoration during Ganpati festival. Some students were assigned the responsibility of conducting survey in the year 2022-23 to find the water sources in their villages and their current status. They expressed the need of cleaning some sources like lakes and wells so that this water will be suitable for drinking.

Institution arranged the exhibition of seasonal vegetables, brought by students from their own farms or surrounding areas. Students, under the guidance of expert, prepared some recipes, using these vegetables and explained the health benefits of these vegetables.