

CRITERION 7
INSTITUTIONAL VALUES AND BEST PRACTICES: Institutional
Distinctiveness

7.3.1 PORTRAYAL OF PERFORMANCE OF THE INSTITUTION IN
ONE AREA DISTINCTIVE TO ITS PRIORITY AND THRUST



VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
BARISHA, KOLKATA-700 008

7.3 INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS

Vivekananda College for Women plays a vital role in the expansion of higher education among the Indian women following the philosophy of Swamiji. The thrust area of the College is to ensure barrier -free higher education to the deserving girl students. Our initiatives are guided mainly by goal of equitable access which includes Equality, Quality and Excellence, Relevance and Value-based education.

The college aims at the academic, intellectual, moral and economic uplift of students. Mental alertness, cultural exposure, physical fitness, secular outlook, crisis management and intellectual resourcefulness are some of the qualities it seeks to imbue in students. The outreach programmes of the college try to ensure that enterprising and career-minded students find keys to future self-advancement and economic self-sufficiency.

Vivekananda College For Women, Barisha, Kolkata-700008, an independent Women's College since 1961 is located on the Diamond Harbour Road and Joka-Taratata Metro Railway route (Purple Line) adjacent to Behala Chowrasta with an easy accessibility to the heart of the city as well as southern fringe of the metropolis embracing a vast hinterland of urban and semi-urban status.

Over the years the college has consolidated its position as one of the premier institutions in the district, imparting learning in diverse areas of Humanities, Commerce, Social Sciences along with Biological and Pure Sciences in undergraduate courses. It opens avenue for higher studies by introducing post graduate programme in Geography and Bengali. It also achieves the rare honour of Place of Research in Geography under the aegis of University of Calcutta.

The excellent governance at the College comprising social leaders, educationists, technocrats in addition to a team of highly qualified, student-friendly faculty and efficient, sincere, welcoming office persons play the College to relentlessly march towards its mission.

Being a pioneer women's college in the southern fringe of Kolkata the college aims at producing self-reliant graduates to equip them to compete at tough job market. Since most of the students come from middle class to lower middle class and even poor class families, the college *extends*

financial help to the poor but meritorious, regular students from Students' Aid Fund and Seminar Society of the College. The institution seeks to improve the status and wellbeing of girls, specifically those from socio-economically disadvantaged families through financial incentives. It promotes an avenue of empowerment to students through these financial concession schemes of the College.

Over last five years nearly 4060 number of students receive financial assistance from college to continue their studies without any hassle. Due to financial hardship being faced by most of the parents during pandemic, Vivekananda College for Women considered the matter regarding payment of semester fees sympathetically. Students paid only the tuition fees to pursue semesters.

There is a cell to monitor various Stipend and Scholarship schemes of State and Central Government with a nodal officer at the helm. The cell looks after diligently for smooth procedural details of applying in various schemes of stipend, which are paid directly to bank accounts in the girls names. This financial assistance definitely helps to improve the status and wellbeing of girl students, which in turn acts as a facilitator in performance of the institution in one area distinctive to its priority and thrust.

For endorsement of strong women figures as role models to contribute to National Development, the college approaches to impart a holistic *education embracing general degree courses to higher studies creating an excellent innovation ecosystem*. Initiatives for creation and transfer of knowledge *through workshops, seminars, special lectures, student seminars, critical thinking initiatives in diverse areas bring a synthesis between cultural and scientific values which is essential for development of a nation*. Our students have consistently excelled at the University examinations and we have some rank holders in the last six years. Our students are fairly well placed in all walks of life, with most opting to pursue higher education of their choice.

Besides academic excellence, our objective has been to uphold social responsibility and inculcate good citizenry amongst our students. Reaching out to society at large, our students have consistently participated in social service platforms in College like NSS organizing regular NSS special camps have enabled students to connect with the marginalized sections of our society and

contribute to their well being in a rewarding manner. The college aims at congenial development of the students about mental and physical fitness. In this connection, a medical unit with basic amenities of this campus provides the need of the hour to provide general medical treatment (allopathy and homeopathy) and psychological counseling. Trained registered psychologists counsel students and staff to free from their mental stress, depression and traumas as well as regular health check up, blood group detection are done. Basic medicines are also provided free of cost.

Collaborations with other institutions, agencies and network with the neighborhood bodies and promote a closer relationship between the “world of competent-learning” and the “world of skilled work”. A functional MOU between **Geosolution** and the College has open many avenues towards this relationship. An exceptional example of Collection Development between the Academic Library of Department of Geography of the College and District Library of South 24 Parganas, a Public Library has been set up for the first time in the locality, which may optimise the use of such resources.

Publications in wide angle at global level, participation in international conference and seminars by research scholars and teachers attest in preparation of the students to achieve core competencies. A number of initiatives towards augmentation of entrepreneurship, soft skill development, capacity building initiatives are being taken by the college.

The use of new technologies, for teaching learning and governance of the institution is the need of the hour. The campus community is adequately prepared to make use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) optimally. Conscious effort is also invested in hardware and to orient the faculty suitably. Documentation, electronic data management, ICT literacy have been introduced in the HEI.

Thus, the HEI is relentlessly moving towards Quest for Excellence with distinctiveness towards its thrust area.