

Government Degree College Kaffota
District Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh
Ranking of Government Colleges in HP

**Criterion 5 Best Practices, Innovation and
Institution Distinctiveness**

**Key Indicator 5.1 Best Practices Description &
Outcome of Best Practices**

Metric 5.1.ii Women Empowerment



Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
RANKING FRAMEWORK	3
5. BEST PRACTICES, INNOVATION AND INSTITUTION DISTINCTIVENESS	3
5.1. Best Practices Description & Outcome of Best Practices	3
5.1.2. Best Practice 2: Women Empowerment.....	3
i. Title: Women Empowerment	3
ii. Objectives:.....	3
iii. The Context:.....	3
iv. The Practice:	5
v. Evidence of Success	6
vi. Problems Encountered and Resources Required	7
vii. Notes (Optional)	7

RANKING FRAMEWORK

5. BEST PRACTICES, INNOVATION AND INSTITUTION DISTINCTIVENESS

5.1. Best Practices Description & Outcome of Best Practices

5.1.2. Best Practice 2: Women Empowerment

i. Title: Women Empowerment

The college was established with the main objective of empowering women with emphasis on those belonging to marginalized sections of the society. The aim is to create the much-needed egalitarian rural society, where women are treated with utmost dignity and decorum. The college has envisioned a life-oriented education that empowers women through humanising and liberating process. Thereby, these empowered women would be the agents of change and development. It would enable them to overcome the conformist barriers of the society and transform themselves into courageous, self-confident, self-reliant, competent individuals, effective managers, assertive personalities, and decisive leaders.

ii. Objectives:

- To transform the rural women learners in academic excellence with knowledge and skills.
- To ensure intellectual, social and moral exercises, empowering them to meet the challenges of the world tomorrow.
- To inculcate the values of 'Generosity, Equality and a 'Sense of Social Responsibility' among the students.

iii. The Context:

"The future of India lies in its villages." – Mahatma Gandhi

The importance of rural population in Himachal Pradesh is reflected in the fact that with 89.97% of its population living in rural area, Himachal Pradesh is the least urbanized state in India i.e., Himachal Pradesh is the state with the highest percentage of rural population in India.

The Census of India data reveals that the rural population as percentage of total population in Sirmour district was also quite high at 89.21% in Census 2011.

The beneficiaries of the institution mainly comprise the rural populace, with most of the students coming from poor economic backgrounds and their parents mostly with agrarian backgrounds.

The primary objective of the establishment of Government Degree College Kaffota in a rural interior village of Kaffota in Trans-Giri area of Sirmaur District of Himachal Pradesh recently declared as Hatti Tribe was to enhance the educationally and fiscally backward population of this area. The college caters to the educational needs of students from the villages in tribal Hatti area of Shillai assembly constituency who are socio-economically disadvantaged in terms of education, skill levels and women empowerment. Almost 100% of the students are from rural background, far below the poverty line, studied under Hindi medium of instruction in government schools and are first generation learners. For most of the students, higher education remains only a dream, and the families could not think of higher education, when their survival itself is a challenge. Therefore, over the years, the college came across many hurdles in the realization of its goal by educating its women learners and empowering them.

Empowerment encompasses the process of increasing a woman's sense of dignity, her decision-making capability, her access to opportunities and resources and her ability to effect change. The institution rightly assesses the advantages and disadvantages of the locality and comprehends the role it can play to enlighten the community about gender equality and to enrich the opportunities for the women in and around the institution.

Education is one of the most powerful means of bringing about socio-economic progress among rural communities and it cannot be over-emphasized. Educated youth is capable of collectively bringing in significant changes and improving the whole community. Moreover, proper education will not just advantage the rural areas but benefit the entire economy of India.

The institution believes that rural upliftment and women empowerment can be achieved through education.

“If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)”

As an old African proverb, this maxim was initially popularised by Dr. James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey, a renowned Ghanaian educator and sociologist. It bears the fundamental belief that education is beneficial to all but incorporates the notion that when women are educated, the benefits will be aggregated and magnified and enjoyed by a wider context – the family and the nation. This maxim recognized the benefits of education for women and has repeatedly become the motivation for global development efforts to offer education opportunities for women. Women's education is considered to yield enormous inter-generational gains. The institution emphatically puts into practice this maxim.

A gnawing issue, discernible in the rural locality, is the hindrances encountered by the girls to pursue their higher education dreams. Economic, social, and cultural factors play a regressive role, thus impeding their academic journey. The institution has played a pivotal role in redesigning and redefining the contours of progress in the rural areas and focuses on empowering women to bring positive outcomes in their lives.

iv. The Practice:

The college is committed to the cause of empowerment of women through higher education. In order to achieve its vision and mission, the College focuses on the following aspects:

a. Academic empowerment

Quality education empowers women to acquire knowledge and promote experiential learning. The college provides the best of the facilities for academic empowerment in the form of smart classrooms, library resources, etc. The college creates an ambience for women to enhance their academic intellect and develop a holistic personality by encouraging them to follow their aspirations to achieve in the areas of interest.

b. Skill Enhancement

Low skills perpetuate poverty and inequality. When done right, skills development can reduce un- and underemployment, increase productivity, and improve standards of living. The college has been using different means to develop their soft skills, though add-on courses are not available at present, these have been proposed under the PM-USHA Gender Inclusion Grants.

c. Intellectual and Inspirational Empowerment

The college provides a platform for women to showcase and enhance their skills, creativeness, and innovation through various curricular and co-curricular activities. The innovative approaches provide opportunities for women to develop leadership qualities and organizational skills. They form an integral part of the decision-making bodies of the college.

d. Cultural empowerment

The college promotes inter-cultural harmony by organising and celebrating ethnicity of different regions and cultures through various competitive cultural events. It inculcates the values of tolerance and promotes secularistic principles.

e. Physical empowerment

The college also promotes the well-being of women through emphasis on health, hygiene, nutritionally balanced diet, stress management and psycho-social strengthening. The girls are encouraged to excel in the arena of sports and cultural competitions. The college organises the women empowerment programs for making them confident enough to struggle the battle of life.

f. Financial assistance

The college ensures that women are not deprived of quality education due to their financial constraints. Hence, the college under various government schemes and programmes provides financial support to girl students belonging to the economically weaker sections of the society. The college as per notification of the Government of Himachal Pradesh provides full waiver of Tuition Fees for the female Bonafide Himachali students.

v. Evidence of Success

The institutions efforts of women empowerment have resulted in the outcomes which have been detailed in the Gender Audit conducted by the institution.

A majority of the college students are first generation learners from remote, rural areas of the region. Due to orthodox and conservative background of the populace most of the girls were not allowed to attend or enrol for higher education in colleges like GC Paonta Sahib or GC Nahan.

These are amply reflected in the proportion of girl students in the total student enrolment of the college, their share in the scholarships provided by the state as well as central government, participation in NSS, Rovers and Rangers (girls as Rovers), sports and cultural competitions and activities, CSCA, awards and recognitions, their literary talents as college magazine student editors of different sections, their active involvement in providing stakeholder feedback.

The discounted bus pass scheme for students by Himachal Roadways Transport Corporation helps the students especially girl students commute to college daily from rural areas and helps them to continue with their education along with managing their rural livelihoods.

Table 1 Enrolment of Girl Students

Academic Year	2023-24	2024-25
Total Student Enrolment	243	179
Enrolment of Girl Students	176	132
Percentage of Girl Students	72.42	73.74

The percentage of female students in the college is above 70% which is an exceptional percentage in any co-educational college.

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Table 2 Number of Girl Students in College Students Central Association (CSCA)

Academic Year	2023-24	2024-25
Total CSCA Office Bearers	04	04
Girl Students as CSCA Office Bearers	02	02
Percentage of Girl Students	50	50

Increase in the number of female students taking up leadership positions in the institution.

Table 3 Number of girls as student editor in College Magazine “Bhanuja”

Academic Year	2023-24
Total Magazine Student Editors	04
Girl Student Editors	03
Percentage of Girl Students	75

vi. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

a. Problems Encountered

1. The modest and diffident students were reluctant to cross their academic borders affecting the successful conduct of awareness programs.
2. Students’ impulsiveness on issues of love in the adolescent age is a sensitive issue to be dealt with by the faculty members.
3. Insufficient resources and funding to organize events and workshops.
4. Resistance from conservative sections of the society.

b. Resources Required

1. It requires adequate staff and resource persons.
2. Adequate funds be sanctioned and released timely depending on the quality of the proposals submitted.

vii. Notes (Optional)

1. The National Education Policy 2020 is expected to provide impetus to the broadening of outlook through removal of the limitations of rigid academic schedule and greater emphasis on sports and cultural activities providing holistic development of the student.
2. Women should be encouraged to participate in leadership roles and decision-making processes in all areas, including academics, administration, and co-curricular activities.





