

***Assessment Report for
Institutional Accreditation of
Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College, Mumbai, Maharashtra***

Section 1: Preface

The seed of Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College (RJC) was sown when a primary school was established by Hindi Vidya Prachar Samiti in 1938. The Samiti owes its origin to the efforts of Shri Nand Kishor Singh 'Jairamji', a former postman who had served in the military in the First World War. In 1963, the Samiti, in its silver jubilee year, established the Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala Arts & Science College with the help of industrialists and philanthropists and a generous donation from the Shriram Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala Trust. In 1981, the College started its Commerce Department in response to the rising demand for commerce education and changed its name to Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College. The mission of the college is to 'cater to academic excellence' and 'provide facilities to improve the inherent talent of students'. Most of the students of RJC come from middle class families. The management runs several other educational institutions including a junior college, English- and Hindi-medium high schools and primary schools. The College administration is headed by the Principal and four Vice-Principals, each with assigned administrative responsibilities.

RJC is affiliated to University of Mumbai and enjoys grant-in-aid from the Maharashtra Government. It was recognized by the UGC in 1972 under Act 2f. It is a recognized linguistic minority college.

The College is located in Ghatkopar, a busy area of the metropolis of Mumbai. It shares a campus with a school and has a five – storied building. It has a central library, computer centre and facilities for sports and physical education. However, the administration feels that lack of space is the greatest hurdle for expansion.

The College has Arts, Science and Commerce faculties. It has nineteen departments in all. It has BA, BSc, BCom and BMS (Bachelor of Management Studies) programmes at the undergraduate level. Teachers of several departments participate in post-graduate teaching under Mumbai University and practical classes at postgraduate level are conducted by three of the Science Departments. In 38 years since its establishment the College has grown enormously. It has more than three thousand undergraduate students, and enrolls postgraduate students in five departments. It has more than one hundred teachers including temporary and part-time teachers. The College has recently introduced two self-financing courses and the venture has been successful in terms of enrolment and viability.

The College is co-educational and about forty per cent of its undergraduate students are women. In post-graduate classes and research programmes, women outnumber men. The drop-out rates in various undergraduate programmes are substantial and the success rate of about sixty percent. The teacher-student ratio is about 1:34.

The College has an annual plan of academic activities. The numbers of its teaching and working days satisfy UGC norms.

The College encourages research, though it does not provide any research funding but there are several ongoing research projects funded by UGC, CSIR, University of Mumbai etc. About 25% of the teachers are engaged in research and about 35% of the teachers have either Ph.D. or M.Phil. to their credit. RJC has a rich culture of extension activities, which is supported by the administration and the affiliating University.

The College went through an elaborate process of self-study according to its own plan before they applied to NAAC for assessment. The criterion-wise report according to NAAC format was prepared by departmental sub-committees entrusted with the responsibilities. The reports were examined by teachers of other departments who staged mock NAAC visits in several

stages. This process of introspection has helped the College in realising its strengths and weaknesses even before the process of assessment carried out by NAAC.

On receiving the application for assessment, National Assessment and Accreditation Council formed a peer team to visit and assess the institution. The team consisted of Prof. P. K. Chaudhuri, Director, School of Studies (Sc.), Netaji Subhas Open University as Chairman and Prof. D. Shrijay Devaraj Urs, Director, Centre for Women's Studies, University of Mysore and Prof. Premendu P. Mathur, Dept. of Life Sciences, Pondicherry University as Members. Dr. M. S. Shyamasundar, Assistant Adviser, NAAC, provided guidance and all assistance to the peer team. The peer team visited the College during September 4-6, 2001.

During the visit of the College, the team visited all the departments and facilities, went through relevant documents and interacted with various authorities of the academic and administrative set up of the College. The team met representative groups of students, parents and alumni. The peer team has assessed the institution after validation of the self-study report through all these interactions and presents its observations, including commendable features and issues of concern in this report.

Section 2: Criterion-wise Analysis

Criterion I: Curricular Aspects

Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College offers a wide range of subjects and program options in its undergraduate courses of study. Its Arts Faculty teaches five languages, English, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi and Sanskrit and six other subjects in humanities viz. Economics, History, Geography, Political Science, Sociology and Philosophy. The Science Faculty offers Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science, while the Commerce Faculty teaches Commerce & Accountancy and Management Studies.

As an affiliated college, it follows the pattern of course options and examinations prevalent under Mumbai University, with an annual pattern of academic activity and evaluation. In the

first year of the B.Sc. program, the students take a Foundation Course and three optional subjects. In the second year they have to opt for two optional subjects in addition to a second Foundation Course. In the third and final year, a student studies only one major subject with a suitable applied component. Similarly, a first year BA student studies a Foundation Course, a communication-skill-oriented paper in English, a regional language or Hindi and three optional subjects. In the second year, they study a second Foundation Course, the optional subjects with an applied component. In the third year, a student can study either one or two of the major subjects. The B.Com programme consists of one Foundation Course and six commerce subjects in the first year, a second Foundation Course and five commerce subjects in the second year and five commerce subjects including two applied components in the third. Thus, both the BSc and BA program have provision for specialisation. The BA program has an option for a wider range of study while the B.Com programme is a package of essential components with very little option available to the student. All the programs have built-in career-oriented components like Drugs and Dyes, Business Communication, Travel & Tourism or Advertising.

The major programme in Physics, Mathematics and Statistics and the Bachelor of Management Science include computer courses with practical components.

No foundation course on Computer Applications is offered for all the undergraduate students and Commerce students get no exposure to Commerce oriented Computer language or E-Commerce. However, the College has applied for extension of affiliation in Computer Systems as an optional subject in B.Com programme.

The College offers a three year Bachelor of Management Studies Programme taught by the Commerce department. The College can admit students to the MA Programmes in Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, English, Philosophy and History and MSc in Botany, Zoology and Chemistry. The teachers participate in the centralised post-graduate teaching. However, practical classes in science subjects are conducted at the College laboratories.

As an affiliated college, RJC cannot have any flexibility in the time frame of studies or provision for horizontal mobility of the students. For the same reason the College cannot by itself introduce a new program or modify the curricula of existing programs as prescribed by the affiliating university. A new course can be started only after receiving approval of the University. At present the College can introduce self-financing courses only since new posts are not being approved. However, the teachers participate in the review and revision of curricula as members of the University Boards of Studies and thereby participate in the framing of the syllabi. The College does not have any system of obtaining feedback from potential employers regarding the contents of the courses.

Criterion II: Teaching – Learning and Evaluation

Admission to the various undergraduate courses of the study are done on the basis of their performance in the Higher Secondary (XII std.) examination. Being a linguistic minority institution the first preference in admission is given to the students whose mother tongue is Hindi or Gujarati. As per the University requirements, all the students who pass out from R.J. Junior College and seek admission to the College are admitted. Being a minority institution the college does not have to follow the statutory reservation policy. Open category students who do not fall in the above categories are admitted in order of merit. Students are admitted to self-financing courses in order of merit on the basis of their performance in common admission test conducted by the University. Admissions to PG classes are made on the basis of their performance in the third year degree examination in order of merit through centralised admission by the University. There is neither provision to assess the students' knowledge and skills for a particular programme after admission nor does College provide any bridge or remedial courses to the educationally disadvantaged students. However, advanced learners are encouraged to do better through additional reading and to participate in various quiz contests, exhibitions etc. The College follows annual pattern of examination except in the B.M.S. course where semester system is followed. The syllabi are unitised. Last year the College had 280 working and 200 teaching days. The teachers plan their teaching

programme for an academic year in advance and the progress through the teaching schedule is monitored, though no formal teaching plans are prepared. Although class-room lecturing is still the principal mode of teaching, various teaching aids like projectors, charts and models are used by the teachers. There is, however, no facility within the College of preparing audio-visual aids. The students are informed of the evaluation methods in the beginning of the academic year and the overall performance of students is being monitored by attendance record, tests, mid-term examinations and internal assessment. The students are required to obtain a certain minimum percentage of marks in the internal evaluation to be eligible to appear in the final examinations. As per the University regulations, the examinations of first and second years are conducted by the College while the final year examination is conducted by the University. Various committees are constituted for efficient and fair conduct of examinations. Coding of answer books is done to ensure an unbiased evaluation process. The degrees are being awarded by the University on the basis of the performance in the University examination conducted in the final year alone.

The College has dedicated and qualified faculty to handle various programmes. Several teachers hold Ph.D. degrees and many of them are in a process of acquiring it. Many teachers are recognized for P.G. teaching and a few are recognized guides for M.Phil. and Ph.D. Faculty are encouraged to participate in various seminars and conferences apart from refresher and orientation programmes. However, a very small number of teachers have attended national and international seminars during the past two years. The College has conducted few workshops mainly on curriculum development. It is suggested that the academic departments may organize content-oriented seminars with invited speakers so that the faculty members have an opportunity to discuss the emerging areas in their respective disciplines. Participation of teachers in seminars conducted at other institutions may also be encouraged. Teachers are granted study leave to pursue their M.Phil. or Ph.D. degrees. A few of the faculty members are actively engaged in research and were able to get research projects funded by agencies like UGC, DBT, CSIR, BRNS and some industries. Special mention may be made of the Department of Botany, which has four ongoing projects, and one of the

teachers is a recipient of UGC's Career Award in Science. Linkages with many Universities, Institutes and industries are established by the faculty.

Some of the faculty members use available computer facilities. However, an attempt to encourage more use of computers and information technology by the faculty is suggested. Though no formal mechanism of self-appraisal of teachers is available, an appraisal in the form of annual confidential reports of teachers is done by respective Heads of the Departments. However, self-assessment forms are being filled by teachers while applying for higher scales of pay. During the process of submission of self-study report to NAAC, student feedback on teachers was also obtained. The College may consider making it a regular feature and establishing an internal quality assurance cell to monitor it. Recruitment of the faculty is made through open advertisements in leading English, Hindi and Marathi newspapers and as per the norms of U.G.C., University of Mumbai and the Government of Maharashtra. During the last two years 2 teachers were recruited from the same college, 9 from other institutions and 1 from other state. The College has the liberty to appoint temporary staff out of its own funds, as is the practice for self-financing courses.

Criterion III: Research, Consultancy & Extension

The College offers mainly undergraduate and a few postgraduate programmes. A few teachers in Botany, Zoology and Chemistry Departments are involved in guiding M.Sc (by research) and Ph.D. candidates also. In all, there are 8 full-time and 3 part-time research scholars. During the past five years 17 students have obtained their Ph.D. degrees. About a third of the teaching faculty have obtained Ph.D. or M.Phil. by part-time research while in service and four members of the teaching faculty have acquired research qualification under FIP. The Department of Botany is engaged actively in research and is well equipped. Currently there are 4 ongoing projects from various funding agencies with a total outlay of over Rs. 11 lakhs. From this academic year, with the initiative of the department, a specialization in Plant Biotechnology is being offered. During the past two years a few faculty members have published scientific papers in various national and international

journals, which is very creditable. In the college about 25% of the teachers are involved in research activities. It is suggested that the College should take necessary steps in promoting research and spirit of enquiry among its faculty in particular and students in general.

Some of the faculty members are offering consultancy services. However, no funds were generated by the College on this account. It is suggested that the College can take advantage of nearby industries and business establishments and strengthen its consultancy services to them. A mechanism of sharing the fee between the College and the faculty may be evolved. This exposure will not only enrich the faculty but will also help students.

The College offers major extension activities through NSS and NCC. There are two programme officers for the NSS and one officer for the NCC amongst the faculty members. The NSS volunteers are trained in social work by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. The NSS unit of the college undertakes many social awareness activities, blood donation camps and adopted two Adivasi villages in Thane District. The volunteers laid approach roads, built community centre and created awareness of family welfare, health, hygiene and evils of alcoholism and tobacco. At present a nearby slum area, the Gowrishankar Wadi has been adopted for community developmental programmes. The NCC cadets have taken part in Republic Day Parades. For the past three consecutive years the cadets have received the Prime Minister's Banner. Many training camps have been organized. The NCC cadets have also participated in cycle expedition to spread the message of national integration, communal harmony and family welfare. Anti leprosy campaign and crowd control during Ganesha immersion have also been undertaken by the NCC cadets of the College.

Criterion IV: Infrastructure and Learning Resources

RJC is located in a crowded part of suburban Mumbai, near the Ghatkopar railway station. Its location makes the College easy to reach but it also makes it impossible to expand horizontally since no land is available. The College has a campus of about one acre shared with a high school. The five stories of its own building have a floor area of 5517 sq. mts.

There is regular maintenance of the building and sufficient funds are allotted in the budget for this purpose. Although the building is very large, the College is still plagued by shortage of accommodation. The College makes best use of its building by extending the time-table from 6.45 AM to 8 PM. The classes of BMS are staggered, which eases the space problem and at the same time allows guest faculty to take classes outside the office hours.

The college allows its infrastructure facilities to be used by outside agencies for holding classes and other activities outside the normal college hours. It is appreciable that in spite of the constraints of space two additional courses have been introduced recently and efforts have been made to utilize the infrastructure to the maximum. The time-table has been framed with utmost care. In order to meet the increasing demand of space a committee has been constituted to evolve a plan of action. The Peer team was informed that the State Government is in the process of changing its policy towards Floor Space Index with respect to educational institutions which would allow expansion of the building by about 5,000 sq. mts. The management informed the peer team that the college has been allotted a plot of 2,000 sq. mts in Versova which is about 12 km from the existing campus.

The College, even in the absence of physical sports infrastructure, has made commendable progress in sports. The college in the past years has groomed three international cricket players and 25 Ranji / National level players. The basketball team has won the university championship for three years in a row. All these achievements indicate a positive support of Management, Principal and Staff.

The College building accommodates several laboratories in each of the departments of Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology. There are separate laboratories for post-graduate students in the departments of Chemistry, Botany and Zoology. There is a research laboratory for Plant Biotechnology. The laboratories are adequate and well maintained. Postgraduate and research students have access to their laboratories during vacations.

The College has two computer laboratories, each with a Pentium II based server, 12 nodes, printers and a scanner. The college has Internet connection which is available free to the students of Computer Science. All science departments and the office are equipped with computers. The College is developing a software for the library transactions. It should also try to develop computer-based teaching-learning packages. It is suggested that all the departments may be equipped with computers. Networking would help sharing resources and will eventually lead to automation of office and library. Internet connectivity to library and various departments will facilitate teaching-learning process. Creation of a website for the college has been initiated but it needs to include more features so as to maintain dialogue with past students, potential employers and donors of the College.

The College does not have an auditorium. It uses an auditorium in the adjoining school building which belong to the Hindi Vidya Prachar Samiti. When it is not available, the reading hall in the library is used for its functions. The College has Principal's quarters within the building. However, it does not have any hostel facility or guest house.

The library is well-equipped with nearly 56,000 books and is kept open from 8 AM to 6 PM. The process of computerisation of library has begun and needs to be completed within a short time.

Criterion V: Student Support and Progression

The College publishes its prospectus every year. The prospectus contains details about the programmes offered and other relevant information.

The College has been encouraging and supporting various co-curricular activities to develop the inherent talents of the student community. Students actively participate in the various programmes organized through Associations, Gymkhana and inter-collegiate festivals. Such programmes immensely benefit the student community in the overall development of personality. The pass rate in the final examination is about 60%, a fact that needs introspection by the College authorities.

Several scholarships are available to students provided by the government and in addition to it, the college management has also instituted 17 merit prizes. Nearly 280 students are given these scholarships. There is no employment cell as such but teachers take interest in collecting details of the emerging job opportunities. There is no formal counselling centre while the staff and a part-time counsellor provides informal career counselling. Recently the College has also appointed a lady clinical Psychologist to offer personal counselling. This needs to be strengthened further by establishing a formal counselling centre. The college arranges for periodic health check-up and a stand-by doctor is also available in emergency.

The College collects feedback from its students and research scholars regularly. Some steps to improve students' amenities were taken in response to their demand as expressed in the feedback.

The Alumni Association that was in existence is not functioning actively. It is imperative that this association is revived and that should play an effective role in the growth of this institution. It is reported that statistics department has been maintaining the directory of all the final year students since 1983-84. It is suggested that alumni reports may be maintained by all the departments. The peer team observes that a good number of alumni have been holding important positions and are willing to help the College. Efforts are needed to enlist the support of these eminent personalities for growth and development of this institution.

The College magazine 'Harmony' encourages creativity. It is commendable that the College bagged trophy for the best magazine for the year 1998-99.

Criterion VI: Organization and Management

The College has a Local Managing Committee formed according to the Mumbai University Act, with the Principal as its Ex-officio Secretary. The Committee has representatives from the Management and elected representatives from teachers and non-teaching staff. The Committee approves the financial statements of the College before they are presented before the Managing Committee. It has been playing an effective role in bridging the gap between the teachers and management.

A number of committees are formed to carry out various activities. An equal proportion of senior and junior staff are represented to make it more democratic. Each of these committees involve students to manage the work of various Associations. Periodic meeting of staff are held not only to monitor the progress but also to resolve some of the problems.

Recruitment is done as per the guidelines issued by the government for minority status institutions. The UGC guidelines are followed for recruitment and career advancement of staff.

The College receives salary and non-salary grants from the state government. However, the recurring expenditure on many items have to be met by the College from its own resources. The management of the College arranges to make salary payment from its corpus fund when the government salary grant is delayed. The College has a system of internal audit. About 90% of the total budgeted amount is spent in meeting expenses on salary and allowances, while 3.5 % is spent on academic services.

Several welfare measures are available for the non-teaching staff. Free computer training has been provided to help them to computerize the administration. Generous financial assistance

is also provided to the administrative staff in the form of festival advance, cash awards etc. which has helped in maintaining a cordial relationship between non-teaching staff and the management. Involvement of both teaching and non-teaching staff in most decision-making process has instilled a sense of belonging among the staff.

The departments have purchase committees comprising the Principal, a teacher member of the Local Managing Committee, the Head of the Department and one senior teacher of the department. Although the purchase committees decide on major purchases, each department has contingency funds to meet urgent needs. Each department sends a list of books to be purchased to the Librarian, according to the budget allocation.

Criterion VII: Healthy Practices

- The maximum utilization of space and scheduling of classes for the best use of infrastructure facilities.
- Making available the infrastructural facilities to outside agencies and teachers / students of other institutions.
- Process of coding of answer scripts to ensure fair evaluation.
- Maintenance of cordial relationship between teachers and students.
- Making evaluated answer scripts available to students for their satisfaction and improvement.
- Maintenance of campus discipline in spite of large number of students and crowded location.
- Hiring of sports facilities to tide over the space shortage. Promotion of sports and achievement of excellence by the students in several team games.
- Very positive attitude of the management towards the non-teaching staff.
- The rich variety of extension activities.

- The fulfilment of mission of the college by way of providing support to disadvantaged and handicapped students.

Section 3: Overall Analysis

In spite of several constraints, the College has grown in enrolment, program options, infrastructure and reputation among the academic community of Mumbai. This has been possible by meticulous planning, careful utilisation of resources, the sincerity of teachers, staff and the very responsive management. The harmonious relationship of teachers and staff with the students has contributed to the building up of a good academic culture in the college.

The College has been successful in catering to the needs of the middle and lower economic strata of the surrounding area of central Mumbai in imparting quality higher education.

The College offers opportunities for a wide range of co-curricular and extension activities for its students. There are various associations involved with academic, artistic and cultural activities. The NSS and NCC units are active. Sports excellence is promoted and nurtured by the management.

Several departments are active in research, the Bioscience Departments being the leaders in this aspect. Many teachers offer their expertise to University bodies but the consultancy offered by the faculty is not formal, nor is it charged for.

The College provides support to the students in various ways. Apart from counselling through day-to-day interaction with the teachers, the College has appointed professional counsellors for personal and career counselling for the students. The students have the benefit of various scholarships and other financial aids and are appreciative of the management for the support they receive.

The Management has, both short and long-term plans for augmentation of space, introduction of new diploma courses, construction of a hostel and having its own play-ground. With a

sympathetic State Government by its side, the Management visualises a higher academic status and a bright future of Ramniranjan Jhunjhunwala College in the new decade.

Suggestions:

The peer team is of the opinion that the following suggestions would help the institution to accomplish its mission to a greater degree:

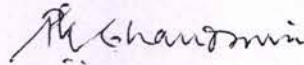
1. Construction of additional floor in the existing campus and establishing a second campus may be given priority.
2. Introducing short term diploma and certificate courses for the benefit of students.
3. Developing computer based teaching aids.
4. Encouraging the language departments to benefit from the use of computer.
5. Geography, which is taught in the first and second years only, should be offered as a major subject of study in the third year also.
6. Involving every student in Physical Education and encouraging further the sports activities.
7. Maintaining a profile of each student and adopting a tutor-ward system.
8. Strengthening of the Alumni Association and involving it in the developmental activities in a bigger way.
9. Providing seed money for initiation of research activities of teachers and helping them to make research proposals for funding by various organisations.
10. Formalising consultancy services.
11. Computerisation and air-conditioning of the library. Educational material in digital form (CD-ROM) etc to be made available in the library. Strengthening of the stock of journals and periodicals in the library.
12. Extending Internet connectivity to all the departments.

13. Establishment of a formal career guidance cell
14. Providing necessary encouragement for professional advancement of faculty members.
15. The College is mature enough to seek an autonomous status, which would pave the way towards updating the existing courses and introducing new and interdisciplinary programmes of study.

Names and signatures of the peer team members:

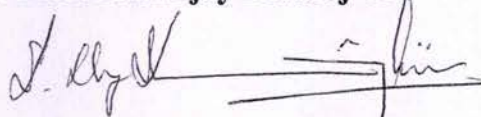
1. Name of the Chairman: **Prof. Pratip Kumar Chaudhuri**

Signature



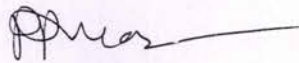
2. Name of the member : **Prof. D. Shrijay Devaraj Urs**

Signature




3. Name of the member : **Prof. Premendu P. Mathur**

Signature



I agree with the observations and recommendations made by the peer team in this report.

Name & Signature of the Head of the Institution



Prof. T S Y. Ram

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