

Dr. R. Shanthakumari - A Woman of Lifetime Achievement in Education and Service

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Educational and Social Activities



Dr. R. Shanthakumari

Dr. R. Shanthakumari is a highly accomplished and esteemed educator who has an impressive record of accomplishment in the field of education and social service. She served in various institutions in Tamil Nadu, India. She had an extensive teaching experience of 31 years as Associate Professor of History at A. P. C. Mahalakshmi College in Tuticorin and continuing teaching and administrative posts after her retirement. She has made a significant impact on countless students' and teaching faculty's lives. After her retirement, she held the position of Principal at MANO College, Sathankulam (Women) from 2016-2019 and MSU Constituent College, Nagalapuram from 2019 to 2022, which was later converted into Government Colleges. Her commitment to excellence was recognized with several prestigious awards by various institutions and NGOs. She received the Best College Teacher Award from the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2010, highlighting her exceptional teaching skills and her dedication to the development of students' success. Besides, she was honoured as the Best Author for her book on "Personality Development" by the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2012. This book displays her expertise in the field of personal growth and development and her contribution to developing the personality of the students through this book. She demonstrated exceptional leadership skills as the Best District Organizer of the Youth Red Cross in Thoothukudi District. She received a state-level award from the Tamil Nadu branch of I.R.CS for her service. Her contributions to social work have been outstanding, earning her recognition from various organizations. The India Red Cross Society of Orissa presented her with the 'Best Performer of the Youth Red Cross National Award' for acknowledging her remarkable efforts in humanitarian work nationally. She was also honoured with the 'Sevai Thilagam Award by the Thiruvalluvar Kalakam at Tenkasi, Tamil Nadu for her commitment to community service. Indeed, her remarkable achievements extend beyond education and community service. Dr. R. Shanthakumari received the 'Best Rotary President Award' from Rotary International in recognition of her exemplary leadership and dedication to social and academic service. She has also been acknowledged as the 'Best Women' by GIANTS International and the 'Best Organizer' of Blood Donation Camps by the Thoothukudi District Collectorate.

Dr. R. Shanthakumari has rich contributions to research and historical studies. She received the 'Vanavariyar Endowment Award' from the History Congress for her outstanding research article. She gained certification as a 'First Medical Responder' from the National Headquarters of LRCS, giving prominence to her commitment to emergency medical services. In recognition of her contributions to society, she was honoured with the 'Life Time Achiever Award' by the Gandhi World Foundation, Chennai, highlighting her achievements and position as a genuine role model and inspiration to others. She has accomplishments in the field of education and research through scholarly writing. She published nearly twenty research articles in renowned magazines like "Social Change". It shows her dedication to contributing knowledge with academic discourses.

Dr. R. Shanthakumari prepared course materials for the B.A. History program (History of Archaeology) at DDE, Annamalai University. Her expertise has also been recognized in various seminars, workshops, and courses, where she acted as a resource person at national, state and district levels. Her experience extends to the convening of 70 programs including workshops, camps, training programs, conferences, and seminars on national, state, and district levels focusing on the development of the institution and students. In terms of positions held, she worked as a member of the Senate at MS University Tirunelveli, as a panel member for education. She also contributed to the Confederation of Indian Industries in Tuticorin as a member of the State Disaster Response Team IRCS in Tamil Nadu and acted as the district organizer of the Youth Red Cross in Tuticorin District from 2000 to 2010. Her ten-year tenure had seen many accomplishments in propagating the activities of the Youth Red Cross Movement. She served as a panel member of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Cell at Sibi Flour, a corporate entity in Tuticorin. Her leadership positions in various organizations such as the Rotary Club of Pearl City, SAHELI GIANTS International, and PALMS Toast Master International have seen development and service in those sectors. In addition, she has served as the coordinator of the Road Safety Patrol at APC College in Tuticorin since 2001 until her retirement from regular service as professor of history. She was involved with the YRC - APC College Unit as the program officer from 1999 to her retirement. She rendered her service as the staff in charge of the Union Activity Committee from the year 2000 to 2006. In addition, she acted as an active member of the NAAC Steering Committee at APC College, Tuticorin. Dr. R. Shanthakumari's involvement in research work includes evaluating four Ph.D. theses and serving as an external examiner for conducting Ph.D. viva voce exams. She guided two M.Phil scholars.

Dr. R. Shanthakumari had the honour of representing Tamil Nadu in various national camps and workshops, including the Three Day YRC National Camp in Orissa in the year 2004. She participated in the Five Day Workshop on PMER in New Delhi in the year 2012. Moreover, she was nominated as an Indian delegate for the International Red Cross Conference in Korea. She was appointed as a Subject Expert by the MS University in the field of Tourism and served as a member of the Inspection Committee for course affiliation at Udankudi College. She has also been invited as a Visiting Professor under U.G.C Plan by Tamil University in Thanjavur. She participated as a member of the Board of Studies for Special Courses at St Mary's College. She completed various orientation and refresher courses within the stipulated period and has undergone state and national-level training courses on disaster management, first aid, planning, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting. Her articles were published in reputed Tamil magazines such as 'Kalki', 'Thangamangai', 'Sinegithy', and 'Mangayar Malar'. Her popular articles in popular Tamil magazines such as

"Isakki Amman" in *The Hindu Tamil News Paper*, "Kaveri Karai Purandu Vaara" in *The Hindu Tamil News Paper*, "Kalvi Sindhanaiyalar A.P.C Veerabagu" in *Kalki-Magazine*, and a series of history articles in "Pattam" - Dinamalar Supplementary attracted the reading audience for decades. She also published ten articles in *Amudasurabi Magazine* under the special column "Varalaru Tharum Velicham" and an article entitled "Yathumagi Nindrai Amma" about her parents between the years 2021-2022.

She was invited to give talks in TV and radio programs, including Doordarshan, Sun TV, Raj TV, All India Radio Thirunelveli, and Tuticorin Stations. All of them are based on Society. She was a member of the State Disaster Response Team formed by the Indian Red Cross Society, Tamil Nadu Branch. She served as a member of the editorial board advisory committee for various publications, including the Silver Jubilee Souvenir for A.P.C.M. College, Tuticorin and the "Journal of Youth Red Cross" in Chennai. She is also a member of several professional bodies, including the Indian History Congress, Tamil Nadu History Congress, Joint Indian History Congress, Indian Sociological Society (ISS), and South Indian History Congress and the research committee member of Pandian Educational Trust, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu, India.

Dr. R. Shanthakumari has written several books, including "Facts on Tourism" in June 1996, "Sutturala - I" in August 1998 and "Suttrula - II" in June 2002 all published by Shantha Publishers, Chennai. She also published "Thoothukudi Arulmigu Sri Vembadi Essakkiamman Thirukkivil Thalavaralaru" in July 2004 and "Facts of Blood Donation Special Reference to Tuticorin District" in August 2009. In December 2010, the author received the 'Best Author Award' from the Government of Tamilnadu for the book "Personality Development". She has published a book entitled "தேசத்தை மீட்டெடுத்த கதர்" (Desathai Meetedutha Kadar) published by Pandian Educational Trust in November 2021. It shows her sense of patriotism in the 21st century and her contribution to remembering the freedom fighters and the Independence struggle to the modern public who were fed up with identity crises. Also, she published research articles in reputed journals such as "Lights on History" in *Coral Voice*, published by Rotary Club of Pearl City, Tuticorin. She also published articles such as "The Power of Spirit" in Youth Red Cross, by the Indian Red Cross Society, Chennai in the year 2004, and "Agrarian Change in Thanjavur District during the Pre-Independence Period" in Recent Trend in Historical Studies. She has also written about the "Role of the Communist Party in enhancing the economic status of agricultural labourers". "The Accession of Kulothunga – I" in *Quest Historica*, "Valiant Women Warriors under the Vijayanagara Empire in Tamil Temple Studies", "Caste System Depriving Social Justice" in *Enrich* and "Indian Constitution and its Impact on Society" in the 46th *All India Sociological Conference*.

Dr. R. Shanthakumari has presented numerous research papers and participated in various conferences, seminars, and workshops. Her research paper presentations include topics such as communalism as an ideology for political mobilization, caste conflict, widow marriage, agrarian change, and the Devadasi system, among others. She has presented her papers at national and international conferences, including the National History Conference, South Indian History Congress, and International Seminar on the Development of Criticism in Tamilology. She served as the Chairperson in conferences such as "Literary Bricolage in Psychodynamic Perspective" and "Ecocriticism: Its Nuances and the Significance of Ecological Values in Literature." Additionally, she has conducted workshops on various subjects, such as "Teaching Communicative English and Online Teaching and Examination

Methods for College Students.” In summary, Dr. Shanthakumari has made significant contributions to the field of history, administration and especially in areas related to social issues, education, and literature.

Dr. R. Shanthakumari as a pioneer among the nine other Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Colleges directed the Directorate of Distance Education and Continuing Education of the Manonmaniam Sundaranar University with more than 500 admissions since its inception under her guidance in the centre at MSUC Model College. New classes have been introduced for the betterment of the students. Yoga in collaboration with Aliyar Yoga Centre and Hindi classes with a focus on spoken Hindi has been started in the college. The college has also implemented new practices such as conferring the Best Teacher Award, conducting elections for student leaders, selecting outstanding students through staff voting, and celebrating national days and women's empowerment. She made efforts to improve the infrastructure of the college with block development plans and a sponsored canteen motivating the students in institutional service and entrepreneurship. She purchased two water tanks for the welfare of the students and donated them to the college in the year 2019 where students suffered from drinking water. Various programs and events have been organized, including an antique exhibition, eye screening camps in collaboration with Thirunelveli Aravind Hospital, festival celebrations and academic association meetings. International and National Days and the Freedom Fighters Birthdays were celebrated on the campus by her guidance. Students were motivated to speak short topics, proverbs and news matters through the mic from the principal's office. Her contributions motivated the students in a clear direction of empowerment in studies and developing skills. As the Principal of MSUC College, Dr. R. Shanthakumari communicated with the students by regularly meeting them and providing opportunities to participate in programs inside and outside the academic zones to remove the gap and fear in the minds of the young minds. Faculty members have demonstrated their proficiency by publishing research papers participating in international seminars and conducting International and national Conferences. The English Department conducted Six international conferences and the Economics, Commerce and Mathematics departments conducted programs under her chairship. She received several awards and honours for her contributions and achievements. Publications have also been made on her. The faculty members of Sathankulam College created a booklet displaying her service and dedication of her with gratitude and appreciation. MSUC College experienced an increase in student enrollment under her leadership in the years 2016 - 2022. Overall, Sathankulam and Nagalapuram colleges have achieved academic excellence under her guidance. Her motivation and direction implemented innovative initiatives, improved infrastructure and provided a supportive and empowering environment for students and faculty in the institutions after her regular service.

The MANO College, Sathankulam; later Government Arts and Science College (Women), Manonmaniam Sundaranar University Constituent Model College, Nagalapuram; later Government Arts and Science College, Nagalapuram witnessed significant progress and accomplishments during the tenure of Dr. R. Shanthakumari as the Principal. She is nearly sixty-seven but never compromised in her service to the student community, development of educational Institutions and other charity works. Now, she works in the Thulasi group of Institutions. It will be a new era in her life in developing the institution. Dr. R. Shanthakumari is an erudite scholar, academician, administrator and a noble woman who has motherly love for the development of the students served and serving the academic institutions with a great

vision for the development of society. Such women are needed for society to empower our country India. She always says her Father, Mother, beloved sister (all late) and the Essaki deity in Thoothukudi guided her in her success. She is always responsible and compassionate. Such a family-oriented, respectful, thankful, polite, sagacious and audacious woman she is. Her loved ones will witness her dedication.

Images



Cover Page
“Yathumagi Nindrai Amma”
Amudhasurabi

Her Mother

With Parents (Img -1)
At a Family Function

Reference

[1] Images. *Amudhasurabi*. July 2022, Cover page, pp. 38 and 39.

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