



Prof. G.G.Wankhede

Interviewer: Ms. Shilpi Gulati

Camera/Sound: Ms. Divya Cowasji

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Prof. G.G. Wankhede is Professor and Chairperson, Centre for Higher Education, School of Education, and Dean, Social Protection Office. He joined the faculty body of TISS in 1983. For more details: <http://www.tiss.edu/lefttop/faculty-staff/Academics>



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Shilpi: We actually wanted you to tell us about the SC/ST cell in TISS. As students, as people working here we want to know how strong it is.

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G. G. Wankhede :The cell is constituted in this Institute as a part and is mandatory as within the government of India Act. UGC also has the provision for constituting this cell in all the educational Institutions across the country.

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G. G. Wankhede :When I joined in 83 - 84 this cell was not there. In '86 the cell got constituted with the permission of the government and University Grants Commission. The purpose is very clear that students, the employees and the faculty who belong to marginalized section of the society, deployed kind of sections of the society, should not face or go under any difficulties. In the context of the justice and the clarity and doing away with these handicaps. Because the entire population come from diverse backgrounds. Different cultures, different languages, and different social categories.

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G. G. Wankhede :Constitutional commitment - government is committed to implement set objectives in terms of justice, equality and providing actions to the opportunities so that the provisions are implemented properly. Number one is that no discrimination takes



place. Number two to look into their day to day problems and difficulties and this could be at a different level. Students may have problems at academic level, economic level, at administrative level or may be at cultural level. So the government has ensured that injustice does not take place on campus. Prior to this establishment the management was done informally.

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G. G. Wankhede :But later it took a wider shape. The cell has a very wide scope. In a sense, the cell is responsible to report to the government of India and report to UGC on activities undertaken or whatever events that took place in here.

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G. G. Wankhede :But fortunately our campus has been sensitive from the beginning. It has been fair to students and employees that belong to SC/ST/OBC. They also had different levels of problems. Now they are handling everything formally.

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G. G. Wankhede :And in turn what has happened, when I took over, I am responsible to the Director and to the Institute and to the Government of India and University Grants Commission. In a way it is very structurally functioned and is complicated and looks very difficult. And first thing cell took over was to create awareness among the beneficiaries or the stake holders.



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G. G. Wankhede :Because most of the students who have been studying here generally come from the deprived backgrounds, vernacular background etc. and they find it difficult. They are not aware of the facilities made available to them by the government.

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G. G. Wankhede :That was one of the difficult tasks to achieve. Second was generating awareness and sensitizing the general population so that they could also help in implementing the whole set of objectives, rules and regulations.

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G. G. Wankhede I am very happy to say that as a Liaison Officer since last 14 years the achievements are great in the sense that I see a very clear cut difference today, as compared to 20 years ago. Available officially provided facility made for the community of students is fully implemented. The role of the cell is the full implementation of these provisions.

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G. G. Wankhede :So we are implementing the total policy unlike any other institution and the university and it is functioning at all the levels. At the student level, administrative level and also the faculty level. We are the first and I am very happy to mention, to implement the reservation policy being a central university at the professor level.



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G. G. Wankhede :Whereas still other institutions are protesting against the fear that the quality will be hampered. I am not boasting but by law and order provided by the government it is fully implemented properly with sensitivity.

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G. G. Wankhede: And then above that the institute is providing additional facilities which are no where else in the country. At social level, at personal level, at academic level and at administrative level. Students coming from the remotest village can get in and they are studying here. And then in addition to that we provide facilities like hostel. There are accommodations there are food, there is travel, printing facility is provided to them. Of course the upper limit of family income is there but majority come from below the limit. So majority get benefited from this.

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G. G. Wankhede :In addition I must also mention that the Institute has a unique program called pre admission coaching. All the students belonging to SC/ST/OBC and minority communities after they apply they are invited to attend 3 day orientation. So that they get prepared to face the interview. There are talks about the written test, group discussion, personal interview, confidence building etc. And you will be surprised to know that most of the students are first timers to Mumbai city. In the beginning they come with some kind of discomfort or the shock, but slowly they settle down and they get used to this environment.



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G. G. Wankhede :In addition to that, the students with 40 percent marks can apply for any of the courses for having any under graduation degree. Next are students coming from vernacular background that face the communication gap for that also we have a solution. In terms we appoint good English language teachers and once they complete the course and think that they are poor in English and communication they are supposed to join classes. We have also instituted Language lab for this communication for students.

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G. G. Wankhede :They are open to all. Not only for SC/ST/OBC. Plus we provide facility like the travel. They cannot travel from remote places of this huge country so we take care for their travel, boarding, lodging during their entrance exams and after pre admission coaching also.

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G. G. Wankhede :And they have the facility with upper limits with re imbursements and they have it for the practical field work also. The book bank is there and is funded by the bank of Maharashtra and government of India. We have GOI scholarship. And this scholarship is available for OBCs also and then we have Top class scholarship. The students from this category who are admitted and score highest marks, the first five are picked



and Government of India give them Top Class scholarship

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G. G. Wankhede :Provision is there for laptop worth 45,000 Rs and fees for everything is reimbursed. The pre admission coaching gives such good results that every years 20 - 30 students from these categories get admission in open merit.

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G. G. Wankhede :Last year students from ST who topped in Social Work course in Masters level and OBC element which was introduced in 2008 so we have 27 percent of them also and 3 percent for the PWDs.

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G. G. Wankhede :Now the show does not stop there. After the admissions the day to day activities are supervised and issues are resolved. Including all the faculty member and class are pro active about this thing. The Director is very sensitive in this issue.

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G. G. Wankhede :They are supportive for the cell. We have brochures also proposed every year for the students and we distribute it across the country and out side the country also. Information brochure is for the readily available material in hand. So that students do not get confused. Financial assistance is provided to all. In addition those from open



category are also provided this. Now every year, the aid applicants are increasing and they are also doing very well in academics.

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G. G. Wankhede :And the whole focus is not only to make them perform well but focus is different in personality, confidence, and motivation and complex. Especially for students who come from rural and vernacular backgrounds, they carry a lot inferiority complex in them

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G. G. Wankhede :This is an old institution and urban based and mix of students of different regions. So naturally they will have a problem. The cell also organizes career counseling for them.

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G. G. Wankhede :As a whole, the cell is trying its best and has many achievements that are academic and have material and non material achievements. Across the country from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. We have students studying here and also the faculty.

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G. G. Wankhede :So for certain places candidates are not available for particular positions at professor level so we make extra efforts to reach out in formal and informal



way. Every selection at the admission and employment level needs to represent the cell. And nothing goes wrong and discrimination does not take place.

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G. G. Wankhede :But is a mandatory thing to have this cell in all committees. We are the first to implement whatever comes from UGC and government of India and I am happy to say this. And reservation at professor level, we are the first to implement this.

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G. G. Wankhede :Second is this that representation of SC/ST categories as statutory body of the Institute. We received and implement it. The Dean of Student affairs also is very supportive and functions mutually. There are still many things to achieve and a long way to go because TISS has definitely set an example but every year new students come in and some issues are new and new difficulties are faced.

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G. G. Wankhede :In a way a learning experience, and to my fellow colleagues also and students also. But I am very happy and proud of mentioning this institute has done a great job and shown commitment to our vision and the mission statement. We are really implementing and I am sure trying to do the best to the last in the society.