

Varsha Kelkar Mane, M.Sc., Ph.D., FRSC, FICS



Professor Varsha Kelkar Mane has been a faculty and head of the department of Biotechnology, the University of Mumbai since over a decade. She has been an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and a Life Fellow of the Indian Chemical Society.

Her demonstrated expertise spans the gamut of areas of biochemistry, biotechnology, bioprospecting, environment, and diagnosis. She has over 40 publications in national as well as international journal, expounding managerial experience at National and International level and has mobilized multi million-dollar projects within last 5 years. She pioneered scientific research underlining the role of microbial ecosystems not just in deterioration, but in preservation of archival papers, polymers, rock surfaces as well as bone fossilization in India. She has developed numerous easy to use, economical tools and techniques for microbial sampling, green air purifiers, microalgal cosmeceuticals, on-field maturity testing for bamboo cultivars together with development of a green/ zero waste method of production of wool from bamboo, wheat, and rice straws and soyabean peels. Her seminal studies systematically exemplified and epitomized scientific rationale underlying ancient Indian wisdom of storing water in copper jars. Exciting atomic force micrographs taken at time intervals demonstrated the deflating enteropathogen when stored in contact with copper water. It also demonstrated the deactivating potential of copper water/ *Tamrjal* against a potent nosocomial pathogen *Candida albicans*. She is currently involved in exploring applications of her technologies to industry. She is an engaging speaker, a skilful mentor and colleague and believes in the adage “Teach what you know; learn what you do not know”.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in Microbiology-Biochemistry, a Masters in Biochemistry, and a Ph. D. in Applied Biology from the University of Mumbai. She was awarded the prestigious Daxina Fellowship in Biochemistry and was a research fellow at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research’s, National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Mumbai before she joined the University of Mumbai as a full-fledged faculty member.

She was actively involved in setting up the University of Mumbai- Dept of Atomic Energy’s Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences on the University campus, and in establishing a research laboratory at the department of Biotechnology. She has been a member of Association of Microbiologists of India; her work has been actively represented in national and international conferences. She established and sustained collaborations across countries in international globe girdling projects that have significantly enhanced her credentials in academic and industrial research. She is currently directing the overseas collaborations of the University of Mumbai