

Institutional Distinctiveness

7.3.1. Describe/Explain the performance of the institution in one area distinctive to its vision, priority, and thrust.

Gondia district is situated at the easternmost boundary of Maharashtra. Earlier Gondia was a part of Bhandara district but later on it became an independent district. The characteristic feature of district is the considerable population of **Gond Tribe** (hence the name Gondia), local Adivasi tribe. Apart from Gonds, castes belonging to schedule category also have large population. Moreover the progress of district is largely affected by very violent Naxal activities. Due to this, most families are struggling for their daily livelihood.

Looking at the agony the great Late Shri Manoharbai Patel decided to uplift the standard of living of local residents, for this he thought that a better education is the way to do it. Therefore he established the Gondia Education Society to impart quality education to downtrodden people, which later on opened schools and colleges in every part of Bhandara (then Gondia was a part of Bhandara) district.

Deori is one of the taluka places out of eight taluka's of Gondia. It is situated in the heart of great Nagzira forest. Major chunk of Deori's population belongs to SC/ST. Deori remained the most underdeveloped taluka as compare to other talukas of Gondia. This is due to high amount of naxal activities and hesitant attitude of local Gond tribal people to upgrade standard of living. For the bread and butter most of the families were depending upon tendupatta collection (Bidi Labour), Moha Flower collection and labour in other's farm. The poverty was driving the youth from Gond Samaj into Naxal activities. This was all happening because of lack of higher education. There was no degree college in Deori before 1990. The nearest college was in Gondia which is 70 kilometers away from Deori. Only youngsters from better families were able to go for degree level education and the youth from ST category deprived of it. Keeping all these challenges in the view, Gondia education society had decided to set up a degree level college in such a backward taluka. This gives birth to **Manoharbai Patel College of Arts and Commerce**, to impart higher education to the youth belonging to backward category.

College has started giving education on tag line of '**Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhay**'. Initially there were only few students admitted but in subsequent years many more students added. Due to quality faculty, college was able to attract students from every part of society. But one of the biggest achievements of college is that the number of students belonging to Gond Samaj (ST category) has been increased considerably till date. And this becomes the college's **distinction**.

For many years college had only two streams i.e. Arts and Commerce but considering overwhelming response, Gondia Education Society decided to add one more feather in the crown i.e. it started science faculty in 2008 keeping in mind that the youth from Gond samaj should also have science as carrier option. Since then college has never seen back. It has constantly striving to set highest bench mark in the field of education. All the teachers are well qualified. All of them have zeal to pass on the knowledge to youth coming from downtrodden families especially from Gond Adivasi's. Every faculty member takes extra effort to encourage and motivate the adivasi families to send their wards for higher education. College provides very pleasant and comfortable atmosphere to these youngsters. Every member of college faculty makes them believe that they belong to the society. When they go out of the college after completing their

education, they become confident with dynamic persona. Many Passed students belonging to ST category went on for post-graduation. Many of them are in government jobs. Currently above 50% students of college are belonging to ST category.

Our future plan is to start Post-graduation courses in various subjects so that graduates of the college, need not go out of Deori for higher education. At present lots of challenges are ahead, to achieve this goal. The biggest challenge up front is the shortage of infrastructure, the tough rules and regulation laid by the affiliated university and lack of funds. Another problem is the lack of transport connectivity with remote villages of Deori. After 3.30 pm there is considerable decline in the frequency of buses or even complete absence of it. Being a naxal affected area, college cannot be extended beyond 3.30 pm. Due to time constrain extended teaching for the students is not possible. In spite of all these lacunas, we as a unit constantly are doing our level best to give quality education.

Abiding the social responsibility college will continuously walk along the path to hold the distinction in the education of youths from downtrodden families especially Gond Adivasis.