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## CONTRIBUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MAHARASHTRA'S EDUCATION: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON CHHATRAPATI SHAHU

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History gets richer from great men and their contribution in social and economic development of the society. Carlyle rightly pointed out that the history of the world is but the biography of great men, reflecting his belief that person shape history through both their personal attributes and divine. Very few, in history, whose existence, social standing, by his ideas or actions directly or indirectly, during his lifetime or after his death may have such an influence upon his own or another society which can be recognized significant as he left a noticeable mark in history and in the further development of society. Rajarshi Shahu was one of the great social reformers and revolutionary king in twentieth century, who left a noticeable mark in history in the further development of the society.

As benevolent king and able administrator and social reformer, Rajarshi Shahu has made a remarkable contribution in social and economic development especially accountable contribution of the development of the education. He spent all his life fighting to social and economic disparity. He realized that the education is key weapon for social and economic change. To develop education system, He launches number of programme and policies in his dynasty; it gives modern face to Maharashtra. Therefore, in the present study an attempt is made to analytical study of Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu's contribution in the context of education development.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To study the India's education by historical perspective
2. To study Chhatrapati Shahu's educational contribution and development

### Methodology

The present study is based upon secondary data. The data is collected from different books, journals newspapers and internet. Keeping the view of study and objectives the present study involves analytical method.

### History of India's Education

Education is one of the important social aspect and most powerful instrument of national development. It is vital to human resources development. It plays important role in imparting knowledge, values and developing skills of human resources which ultimately increase the growth and productivity of the nation. Therefore, ensuring access to quality education for all, especially for rural and poor population, is central to the economic and social development of the society and nation. In India, education has historical background. Post independence era, in India, witnessed an increased emphasis on education as a means of national development. Govt. of India launches number of programmes and policies for development of education system in India. Different committees and commissions were appointed to review the education system. Now the Indian educational system is one of the largest and most complex in the world. Initially, education was open to all but as time progressed the education was imparted on the basis of caste and related duties that one had to perform as member of specific caste. In ancient period, Gurukul System of

education was observed. After Gurukul System Buddhist education was started in India. The famous Nalanda and Takshshila universities found in that period. Then after, different ruler framed their education system based on religion and religion was the education. Indian Education System got set back during the period of Muslim ruler. This situation continued upto the arrival British Empire. During British period education system in India developed considerably. But in that period, the education was in the hands of privilege class. The common people were far away from education. It was Shahu, who brought revolution in education with extending educational facilities to all especially social and economic backward community before independence.

### **Chhatrapati Shahu's Contribution to Education**

During British period there were number of Indian rulers under the power of British Government ruling in India. They had their own states. Baroda, Kolhapur, Rajkot, Hyderabad, Junagad etc. states were big and famous states in India. Kolhapur was one of the leading states in India, which ruled by Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. Rajarshi Shahu was a great visionary person who started number of programmes for welfare of society especially social and economic backward and downtrodden people in the states. Alongwith irrigation, agriculture, industrial and trade development policies Shahu concentrated his attention on educational development also. The state Baroda and Kolhapur were famous for their educational activities in that period. Chhatrapati Shahu was not only rulers but also educational reformers. He realizes that education is the only means to improve the condition of the people. His view was that the education should be in the hands of common people. He tried for exhaustive spread of education. To extend education facilities especially backward and downtrodden people he launches number of programme and policies. He had provided educational facilities with establishing schools and boarding houses. As well as primary education Chhatrapati Shahu started secondary and higher education facilities.

Chhatrapati Shahu's main attention was on primary education because he realized it is the base of all education. He had to fight against privileged class of people before his order was declared about free and compulsory education. *Kesari* criticized that the work of Shahu on primary education was wrong. Chhatrapati Shahu in his speech replied in case of primary education, "No cake for few, until all are served with bread". He was trying his level best to make common people educated because he wanted to hand over the power of administration to his subject. He thought that without education common people would not in position to take responsibility and they would not prepared to make this change, they would lose the power. He expressed his thought that it is better to give primary education to all instead of the full education to few, if large part of the society would remain illiterate and few will get knowledge, the power will remain will go to some educated people and that would bring native bureaucracy so it is very essential to spread the knowledge in all society before the transfer the power. Therefore, he began to work for the extension of primary education. For better growth of primary education, he declared a Revolutionary resolution on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1917 and by this order he made primary education free and compulsory. To accelerate the pace of education, Chhatrapati Shahu had ordered that every village in the state should have school and it was conducted by a person of the caste to which the majority of the people belong. After free and compulsory education's resolution, Chhatrapati Shahu implemented another important resolution that parent should send their children to school within 30 days from the date of commencement of list of the students fit for school. If the parents failed to send their children to school they should charge one rupees fine per month till the child does not come to school. But in case of agriculture work, parents should be kept their children in house for fifteen days.

After implementation the resolution of free and compulsory, it was observed that the number of primary schools drastically increased from 27 for the year 1917-18 to 420 for the year 1921-22 and the growth rate was more 1400 percent. And in case of students' enrollment, it was seen that the number of students enrolled in school was increased from 1296 to 22,007 during the same period. Chhatrapati Shahu noticed that students of backward communities were not given good treatment in education and it was very difficult to learn them in the class. To avoid caste-ism, he ordered all students must learn in one school. Shahu ordered, if the students belong to backward community would be ill treated, concerned authority would be fined. For growth of primary education on large scale, there was need trained teachers in large number. So, Chhatrapati Shahu started teachers' training institution. In expanding education, the cost of primary education had been increased from rupees 71,098 to rupees 1, 33,700 during the period 1893-94 to 1921-22. As well as primary education, Chhatrapati Shahu expanded secondary education in his ruling period. In case of secondary education, it is seen that there were only 12 secondary school and 2208 students were studying in those schools in the year 1893-94, while the number of school was increased upto 24 and students' upto 2151 for the year 1921-22. Chhatrapati Shahu helped by every possible means to extend secondary education. For open high-school, free land and money were given by Chhatrapati Shahu to the leaders. For motivating students to enroll secondary school, scholarship facilities were made available. Sixty-six scholarships were given the students. In case of higher education, there was only Rajaram College in Kolhapur. Earlier, students belonging to upper class or sardar's family admitted in higher education. But, Shahu made efforts to admit students from all classes. And it was observed that the students from lower community in higher education steadily increased during the period 1893-94 to 1921-22. In case of women education, in Maharashtra Mahatma Phule brought revolutionary change. Chhatrapati Shahu got inspiration from Phule's educational work and tried his level best to develop women's education in Kolhapur State. He was very liberal about women's education. Earlier the condition of women in the society was not well. Unjust traditions have dictated her to follow many principles. She got subordinate place in the family and society. She was kept illiterate and was not allowed to take education. For changing the conditions of women, Chhatrapati Shahu had spread of women education. He opened many institutes for women's education. For promoting girls education, he offered scholarships and supported economic help. These efforts became fruitful in the state. The number of school girls increased 26 to 33 during his ruling, while number of girls enrolled in schools increased from 1419 to 1918 during the same period. Chhatrapati Shahu wished to give all types of education. As well as traditional education, he paid attention towards vocational and industrial education. Shahu realized that for over-all development of society, trained and skilled workers are essential. Therefore, He started professional schools in the state. For religion reforms he had taken revolutionary step to start Vedic School. The *Shivaji Kshatriya Vedic School* was started in July, 1920. This school became popular in Kolhapur State. For upliftment of society, Chhatrapati Shahu started miscellaneous schools like; Schools of language teaching, Sanskrit School, Urdu and Arabic school, Sardars' school, Infantry school, Boy Scout movement etc. A craft school was started for craftsman castes of *Karajagars* and *Jingars*. Delhi Darbar Patil School (1911) was giving lesson about village administration to village Patil. In 1914 another special school for the Talathies was opened. After the confiscation of Kulkarni watanas, the village record was transferred to the Talati. These works of Shahu proves his all round vision for all round development of the society. Kolhapur is known as mother of Boarding Houses. This honour is obtained in the period of Chhatrapati Shahu. He opened more than twenty hostels in his state to facilitate to students belonging from all



community, especially non-brahmin community. Shahu opened many caste-wise boarding houses in Kolhapur state. Earlier, upper caste (Brahmin) took advantage of education. Due to unawareness and poverty non-brahmin community were far away from education. To help these students for education, Shahu started hostel movement. It was indeed epoch making movement that spread all over Maharashtra. The name of hostels were as: a) The Victoria Maratha Boarding(1901), b) The Jain Boarding(1901), c) The Muslim Boarding(1906), d) The Lingayat Boarding(1907), e) The Clerk Hostel(1908), f) The Namdev Boarding(1911), g) The Kayastha Prabhu Boarding(1912), h) The Sarswat Boarding(1912), i) The Panchal Boarding(1912), j) The Indian Christian Hostel(1915), k) The Daivadyan Boarding(1916), l) The Arya Samaj Gurukul(1918), m) The Vaishya Boarding(1918), n) The Dhor, Chamar Boarding(1919), o) The Shahu Vaidik Boarding(1920), p) The Som Vanshiya Arya Kshatriya Boarding(1920), q) The Prince Shivaji Maratha Free Boarding(1920), r) The Sutar Boarding(1921), s) The Nabhik Boarding(1921), t) Shri Dewang Boarding(1921), u) The Bhai Samaj Boarding(1921).

Chhatrapati Shahu's educational activities were not confined to his state only. He had supported for extending educational facilities outside the state. He helped the Deccan Maratha Education Society and Shivaji Maratha Education Society in Poona. As well as educational institution, Shahu supported to boarding outside to his state. He started two boarding houses at *Pandharpur*. Shahu met number of social workers and discussed about spread of education among the masses in Vidarbha. Shahu met Panjabrao Deshmukh, who had completed his education from England. Shahu impressed his education work and promised all help to his Shivaji Education Society of Vidharbh. Throughout this work, Shahu wanted his efforts to spread education among the masses to be converted into a massive movement. Therefore, he promoted All India Maratha Shikshan Parishad. The first conference of All India Maratha Shikshan Parishad was held in 1907 at Dharwar under the Chairmanship of Keshavrao Jadhav and then after it was held continuously till Shahu's death 1922. Shahu's educational efforts gave inspiration to a number of social workers in Maharashtra to establish educational institutions for the masses. Karmveer Bhaurao Patil, Panjabrao Deshmukh, Karmveer Bhausaheb Hire, Shikshan Maharshi Bapuji Salunkhe, Karmveer Mamasahab Jagdale etc. were inspired by Shahu's educational work and they established educational institutions for masses in Maharashtra. These educational institutions have given modern face to Maharashtra.

### Conclusion

Chhatrapati Shahu was not only rulers but also educational reformers. In case of spreading education to all, Chhatrapati Shahu played historic role. He realizes that education is the only means to improve the condition of the people. His view was that the education should be in the hands of common people. He tried for exhaustive spread of education. To extend education facilities especially backward and downtrodden people he launches number of programme and policies. He had provided educational facilities with establishing schools and boarding houses. With revolutionary change in education, Shahu brought noteworthy change in socio and economic life of people. The outstanding achievement in education was possible because of Shahu properly implemented policies and programmes. Shahu's educational activities were not confined to his state only. His educational efforts gave inspiration to a number of social workers in Maharashtra to establish educational institutions for the masses. He was a phenomenal personality. He had rare qualities of head, heart and hand. He stood apart from others in many respect.

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