



Contribution and Development of the Maratha's Education: A Analytical Study on 'Chhatrapati Shahu'

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Abstract

The paper endeavour to great men has enormous importance in the analytical study of History. As History gets richer from the contribution of such great men of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. With the intention of social-economic development and accountable contribution of the development of the education. Shahu has made an remarkable in the history of modern Maharashtra as a benevolent king, and able administrator and a remarkable social reformer and reactionaries. His true follower of Mahatma Phule as he was. He was all his life fighting to eliminate of the social disparity. By the by he has used the education is a vast weapon for social change. Therefore in this research study thrash out about the contribution of Shahu Maharaj education of the Maratha's.

Key Words: Shahu Maharaj; Education

Introduction

The paper attempt to great men has enormous importance in the analytical study of History. As History gets richer from the contribution of such great men of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. They give new dimensions to the society with their shrewdness and ambitions, while creating and leaving a new landmark in History. He was the person, who existing nations with his benevolent and righteous attribution towards the Maratha Empire. While standing the rise and development of his personality, we have to

study the Saint Tradition of Maharashtra, Shahaji Raje and the overall historical period from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to Maharani Tarabai. Chhatrapati Shahu stands as the brightest star in the darkness of the unfavourable situation prevailed in the medieval era. With the intention for, social-economic development and accountable contribution of the development of the education.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study about the Matatha education by historical perspective.
2. To analysis of Maratha education of Chhatrapati Shahu.

Method of Study

The present study is basically an historical study, which is based upon secondary sources of information. After collecting and analysis of the data, conclusions have been drawn. The relevant books, journals and newspapers etc. In view of nature of study and objectives the present studies involve the historical method as well as analytical methods.

Tool for the data collection

The secondary sources includes the News papers, biographies, thesises, project reports, articles, books, encyclopaedia, gazetteers, Journals and etc.,

Epigrammatic History of Maratha Empire

Shahuji Bhosle(1682–1749) was the Chhatrapati of the Maratha empire created his grandfather, *Chhatrapati* Shivaji. More popularly known as *Chhatrapati* Shahu, he came out of captivity by the Mughals and defeated his aunt Tarabai in an internecine conflict to gain the throne in 1708. He was the son of the second Chhatrapati Sambhaji, who was killed by the Mughals in 1689. During the Mughal-Maratha war of 27 years Shahuji was imprisoned by the Mughals at the age of 7 years after the fall of Raigad fort, the Maratha



capital in Feb. 1689, when his parents were also captured. He spent his entire childhood and youth, from age 7-25, in the custody of the Mughals. Born a prince, he became a prisoner at the age of 7, became a Chhatrapati at the age of 26 and saw the empire spreading all over the continent. When the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb died in 1707, a war of succession ensued between his surviving sons. His mother was still held captive to ensure his good behavior, he could only obtain her release in 1719 when the Marathas became strong enough. After his release Shahuji had to contend with a competing claim by his aunt, Tarabai, and her son, Raja Shivaji II. With the assistance of Dhanaji Jadhav, Balaji Vishwanath who was later appointed the *Peshwa* or prime minister, Sardar Khanderao Dabhade who was later appointed the *Senapati* (Marathi: Commander-in-Chief), Shahuji prevailed over Tarabai in 1709 and consolidated his power in Satara. Tarabai then set up a rival Maratha court at Kolhapur.

Shahu's approached for disseminated of Education

During Shahu's absence, the brahmin enemies at home were busy criticising the policies of Shahu and supporting Rajopadhye in his fight against the Maharaja. Shahu's determination to usher in social equality had brought all reactionaries together. The policy of 50 percent reservation for the Backward classes added fuel to their opposition to Shahu. Shahu on his return from England, had to face this non-cooperation. Shahu's policy was dubbed as "caste before merit" policy. But Shahu was determined to pursue the policy.

Just at this, domestic calamities befell Shahu. His mother Anandibai Ranisaheb, breathed her last on 1902. Shahu insisted on performing the

last rites according to the Vedic rituals, at whatever cost. Even on this sad and solemn occasion, the mean minded brahmin priests refused to perform the obsequies as per Vedic from as the was regarded a Shudra. This unseemly behaviour of the brahmins was most insulting and mortifying to the Maharaja. Undaunted by these and mean behaviour of the brahmins, Shahu ordered that those priests in the Royal household who refused to perform Vedokta rites should be removed from service and grants and inams of a large number of brahmin priests all over the State were confiscated. It is clear from the above account that Shahu was being driven into the battle which and begun in Maharashtra with Mahatma Phule, to establish a new society based on social justice and reason. Shahu was thus shaping into a fearless leader of the new Maharashtra.

By now Shahu realised that the main obstacle in establishing a new social order was ignorance of the people, absence of knowledge- 'avidya'. This 'avidya'-ignorance, as Mahatma Phule says, has brought about the downfall of the common people. It is the main cause of their misfortunes. Hence, in his statement before the Hunter Commission in 1882, Mahatma Phule urged upon the British Government to make primary education up to 12 years, compulsory and free; Government should spend more on primary education than on higher education.

During the 19th century under the Brahmin supremacy, the majority of the people were denied the right to education on the ground of being born in the lower caste. Education was the privilege of the Higher castes only. The British made education has open to all. But majority of the common people remained away from school as they neither had the means to take education, nor were they aware of the importance of education in man's life.



Shahu's educational policy was based on these twin principles of creating awareness of the value of education among the masses and making it easily available to them. When Shahu assumed powers of administration in 1894, the population of Kolhapur state was 9 lakh; the number of schools was 224 and the number of students was fifteen thousand. But most of them belonged to the higher castes. The percentage of literacy among the Brahmins was 79 percent, while among the Maharashtra it was less than nine percent. Out of the total number of 441 students in the Rajaram high school. Brahmins were 368, and out of 61 students of Rajaram College, 55 were Brahmins.

Strategy of Educational Policy

- a) To make primary education available for all and then, if possible, secondary education,
- b) Positive discrimination in favour of the disadvantaged classes while making education available to them,
- c) To open Boarding Houses in the city for students of all communities coming from rural areas,
- d) To arrange for employment of the first learners in the backward classes, so that their faith in education, as a means of advancement, was not shaken.

On assuming powers Shahu undertook an extensive tour of the state to know at first hand the start of things in the education system. His particularly identified the village offices, Chavadis – the temples, that could be used for starting new schools. He abolished the post of Director of Education with full powers and appointed one Kirtikar to it.

Primary Education

He opened a separate division for primary education and appointed Prof. Apaté as Director. An announcement was made on 1917 that free and compulsory primary education would be introduced in the state from the

Ganesh Festival of that year 1917. Shahu appointed a committee of **Raobahadur Karamarkar, Krishnaji Dhonde, Marathe, Prof. Panditrao and Vishupant Kale** to work out the details of the scheme for compulsory primary education. The report was to be submitted by Raobahadur Dongre, the Educational Inspector. The department was to be treated as a part of the Revenue Department. A village having a population of 500 to 1000 was to have a school at a convenient place. Shahu believed like Mahatma Phule, that more congenial relation between the teacher and the taught is created when both belong to the same social status. He therefore saw that the teacher appointed was from the majority community in the village. These new school in the temples, **'Dharmashalas' 'Chavadis'**, wherever ready accommodation was available. Whenever there was a demand from the people for building a new temple, it was to be so built that in one half of it a school could be accommodated and in the other, the Chavadi i.e. the village office. In order to ensure that all children attend school like now a days **Sarva Shiksheyan Abiyan (SSA)**. Shahu issued a declaration to his subject that it is the responsibility of the parents to send their children to school when they attain the schooling age. If they fail to do so within 30 days, the teacher was to report the names of the parents to the Mamledar, who fined them Rs. 1 every month of delay.

In order to meet the expenditure on education Shahu levied educational cess on doctors, pleaders, officers, money lenders and Inamdars whose income was more than Rs. 100. The above account gives an idea of the pains and the care that Shahu took to make his scheme of compulsory education universal and foolproof. The efforts bore fruit The scheme was started on 1917. In 1918 there were 1296



students in 27 schools and in 1922 the number of schools rose to 420 with 22000 students in them. Shahu also followed the policy of establishing libraries in different parts of the state and gave grants to them. In 1896 there were six backward class schools with 196 students. This figure rose to 22 schools in 1910 and the number of students 694, as a result of Shahu's encouragement to them. From his private funds he ran Boarding Houses for them in his Station Bungalow, Rukadi and Sontali Campus.

Equal Education to All

Shahu wanted to stop the practice of observing untouchability in society. He issued a declaration that the boys of the Backward classes were to be admitted in the regular schools for all communities and that they were to be treated on an equal footing with other students. Shahu arranged separated scholarships and freeships for them in schools. He liberally helped Backward class hostels even outside the State, at Nasik and Nagpur. He issued an order in 1911 that the Backward class students in the Rajaram High School and Rajaram College, be given freeship. Shahu paid particular attention to the education of girl students. Though girls were excluded from the jurisdiction of the compulsory education act, wherever he found girls taking education, he helped them liberally. He even started separate schools for girls where there was a demand, at places like Bhudargad. All lady students in Rajaram College were given freeship. He instituted special Darbar scholarships for clever lady students. He helped with funds girl students from the state for higher studies outside the state and abroad. Krishnabai Kelavkar, who was thus helped, was, on completion of medical studies abroad, appointed in the state hospital.

Vocational Education

Shahu did not start formal traditional type of schools only. He was, even in those days, aware of the importance of vocational education. In his address to the Maratha Education conference in 1917 he says, "We should pay attention to all types of education. We should not aim at being farmers and soldiers only. We should enter other fields of employment like Commerce and Industry". He introduced vocational courses in his school. The courses in study were diversified and given vocational bias. Shahu started a Technical school – Abraham Technical Institute, on 1903. Another industrial school, Chhatrapati Rajaram Audyogik Mandir, Padmala, was initially started in Radhakrishna Mandir in Shahupuri and then shifted to Padmala. A craft school also was started for craftman castes of Karajagars and Jingars. Shahu started two special schools. One is Delhi Darbar Patil School (1911) to mark the occasion of Delhi Darbar. In this school village Patils were given lessons in village administration. Another "Satya Shodhak School" (1913) to train non-Brahmin youths to perform religious rites themselves, without the help of a caste priest. A book entitled, "Gharcha Purohit". Home-made Priest – was specially prepared under the directions of Bhaskarrao Jadhav. This school was so famous that students from outside the state also joined this school and the practice of getting religious functions performed without caste priests, spread all over Maharashtra. In 1914 another special school for the Talathies was opened. After the confiscation of Kulkarni watanas, the village record was transferred to the Talati. Another special school, "Shri Shivaji Vedic School" was started to train young non-Brahmin men in the performance of religious rites according to the Vedic system. The main purpose of starting these schools was to create a new order of social workers to rescue the



illiterate masses from the clutches of the Brahmin priests.

Shahu liberally helped meritorious students from the state went out of the state for study. During 1910-11, 15 bright students were sent out for higher studies at state cost. Shahu helped liberally even outsiders like Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, for study abroad. Shahu was, indeed, a champion, a friend of the needy students wherever they be. In this manner Shahu spent liberally from the state coffers on education. He regarded expenditure on education as investment in human resources, which yields ample fruit for the later generations.

The Mother of Boarding Houses

The foundation of the 'Udajirao Maratha Boarding' at Nasik Shahu Maharaja observed, "Just as England is the 'Mother of Parliament', Kolhapur is the 'Mother of Boarding Houses'". This shows how proud Shahu was of the number of Boarding Houses established in the city of Kolhapur and rightly so. Because these Boarding Houses were not just eating houses for the students coming to Kolhapur to prosecute their higher studies. Indeed Shahu's idea of starting separate hostels for students of different castes was meant for serving more than one purpose. It was a multipurpose strategy, adopted by the sagacious Shahu. It was indeed an epoch-making movement that spread over the whole of Maharashtra. A new wave of awakening and enthusiasm swept over the hither-to-uncared for and down-trodden millions, not only in the state it's in the whole of Maharashtra. The seeds of modern Maharashtra were sown in these Boarding Houses.

Establishment of Boarding Houses was a novel experiment of Shahu for the spread of education. There was not a single Boarding House in the whole of Bombay presidency, or the whole of India for that matter. There were

hostels or clubs attached to colleges. Shahu consulted his close friend and some experts in education before taking this revolutionary step to start separate Boarding's for various castes in his state. He is started another Boarding attached to the Rajaram College, for students of all castes. The meals for them were subsidized by the State. In the beginning students of both high and low castes took admission. But later on only students of high castes remained and all low castes students left the Boarding, as high caste students ill treated them. Mr. Gokhale was took incharge of the arrangement. In the end not a single low caste student remained in it. This is how a common arrangement for high and low caste students failed. Shahu was forced to stop it and make separate arrangements for different castes. His started about 23 Boarding Houses in Kolhapur during his life time. They were as follows-

- 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 Bhorl Samaj Boarding(1921)



v) The Rajaputwadi Boarding(1921)

Thus for some 25 years from 1896 to 1921 Shahu was trying his experiment of running Boarding Houses as an effective strategy of spreading education and creating awareness among the masses. He urged them, “to learn, to unite and to fight for their rights”.

Supported for the Development of Education

Shahu’s educational activities were not confined to his state only. The non-Brahmin communities outside the state also looked up to him as their saviour and guide. And Shahu did not fail them. He not only liberally helped the Deccan Maratha Education Society of Gangaram Mhaske but accepted its presidentship. He also helped another educational institution of Poona, namely the Shivaji Maratha Education Society for its boarding house which was named, as per Shahu’s desire, “Chhatrapati Trabai Maratha Boarding House.” In 1913, two Maratha workers of Nasik, Raosaheb Thorat Patil and Ganpatrao More Patil, started a boarding house, “Udaji Maratha Vasati Grah” with Shahu’s inspiration. Shahu laid the foundation stone of the Boarding building in 1920 and helped it financially. During Shahu’s visit to Nasik, the members of the Nabhik Vasatigrah. Shahu donated Rs. 5000 to the Boarding. Shahu started two boarding houses at Pandharpur, one for the Marathas and the other for the untouchables. A free alms distribution centre was being run at Pandharpur by the Karaveer Chhatrapatis.

The 11th annual conference of all India Maratha Shikshan Parishad was held at Khamgaon, Vidarbha, in 1917, under Shahu’s Chairmanship. Shahu met a number of social workers from that area and discussed about the spread of education among the masses in Vidarbha. One of the persons Shahu met was Panjabrao Deshmukh, who had just returned

from England after completion of higher education there. Shahu impressed upon this young man the need of bringing education within the reach of the poorer classes. Shahu promised all help; the result was the birth of Shivaji Education Society of Vidarbha, that runs today a network of educational institutions all over Vidarbha. Shahu wanted to make Poona a centre of the non-Brahmin activities. He encouraged some Maratha leaders of Poona, like Baburao Jedhe to form a society for this purpose. The outcome of these efforts was the foundation of the famous Shivaji Society (1918). Shahu became its president. This society today runs a number of educational institutions in and around Poona. The priests who in-charge of the centre were misusing the money. Shahu noticed this and stopped the centre and the money saved thus saved was used for running the two Boarding Houses. Shahu’s adoptive father, Shivaji IV died at Ahmednagar. At Shahu’s instance the Maratha Shikshan Sanstha, Ahmednagar, started ‘The Chhatrapati Shivaji IV Boarding’. Shahu helped it financially from time to time. Shahu presided over the conference of the backward classes at Nagpur (1920).

Shahu wanted his efforts to spread education among the masses to be converted into a massive movement, an all embracing awakening among the masses. For that purpose an umbrella organization was needed. He therefore began to bring together all workers of the masses, the Sardars and Jagirdars and draw them into his welfare activities for the masses. He assigned to Bhaskarao Jadhav of Kolhapur and Khaserao Jadhav of Baroda, the task of forming an organization called ‘All India Maratha Shikshan Parishad’. The first conference of this organization was held at **Dharwar (1907)** under the Chairmanship of Khaserao Jadhav and then till Shahu’s death in 1922, annual

conferences were held at Bombay, Amravati, Baroda, Nagpur, Dhar, Gwalher, Kalyan etc. Wherever the meetings were held the workers as small and big, were urged to undertake educational activities for the masses by starting Boarding Houses. Hence the large number of Boarding Houses spread all over Maharashtra.

Thus Shahu was the foundation head of inspiration behind the educational activities not only in the state but outside the state, all over Maharashtra. The higher proportion of literacy in Maharashtra has its origin in this movement of Rajarshi Shahu. Shahu's exemplary endeavour to spread education among the common masses gave inspiration to a number of social workers in Maharashtra to establish educational institutions for the masses. Some of these are: a) Dr. Karmaveer Bhaaurao Patil-Rayat Shikshan Sanstha, Satara. b) Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh-Shivaji Education Society, Amravati. c) Karmaveer Bhausaheb Hire- Maratha Shikshan Sanstha, Malegaon. d) Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar-People's Education Society, Bombay. e) Shikshan Maharshi Bapuji salunkhe-Swami Vivekanand Shikshan Sanstha, Kolhapur. f) Karmaveer Mamasahab Jagdale- Shivaji Shikshan Sanstha Barsi, and others.

Conclusion

This outstanding achievement in education was possible because Shahu personally looked into its implementation. It was well planned for certain desired results. It was not unplanned and aimless as the present education system appears to be. Indeed the following prediction of Shahu's Guru and guide, Sir S. M. Fraser, expressed in his condolence letter to Rajaram Maharaj on Shahu's death, has come true in more than one sense. He kindled a torch in the Maratha country which others must and I believe will, hand on from generation to generation. Its

light can never now be extinguished, and his name will not be forgotten among the people he loved and served. Plato visualized a Social Orders where Philosophers would be beings. In Shahu, we have a Prince, a king behaving as a Social revolutionary. 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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