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आंतरराष्ट्रीय आंतरविद्याशाखीय परिषद, पुणे  
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पुरुष कर्तृत्वाचे योगदान  
**The Contribution and Achievements of Men  
in Various Spheres at National and  
International Levels**

संपादक

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Renowned Evolutionary Botanist

# **Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Contribution in Education**

**- Prof. Dr. M.B. Desai**

## **Abstract -**

Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was a visionary leader. Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, an epoch-making personality, is not for an age but for all ages. He believed that social change can be developed through Education. Education is the only weapon by which the upliftment of the deprived class and empowerment of women can be achieved. He started free and compulsory education, conventional and non-conventional education to all classes of the society. At present Indian Government has adopted the same policy of providing free and compulsory primary education to all.

In today's period of 'New Education Policy 2020', the focus is on skilled education. If we adopt Shahu Maharaja's strategy of education, it will definitely lead to a drastic change in Indian Educational System and thereby we can achieve inclusive education in real sense.

**Keywords -** Visionary Leader, Upliftment, Deprived Class, New Education Policy 2020

## **Introduction -**

Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was a great king of the state of Kolhapur. His contribution in the development of socio-economic and educational field of India is remarkable. He tried his level best for the upliftment of the weaker sections of the society. His efforts for the progress of common people brought a social revolution.

## **Objectives -**

The present paper mainly focuses on the following

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objectives:

- 1) To study the educational status in Shahu Maharaj's period
- 2) To know the contribution of Shahu Maharaj in education
- 3) To study the Shahu Maharaj's educational strategy in contemporary relevance

#### **Division of the Paper -**

The present paper is divided into four parts. First part introduces Shahu Maharaj's contribution in education, second part gives detailed information about experiments of different hostels, third part deals with Shahu Maharaj's initiatives for girls education, conclusions are drawn in the fourth part.

#### **Methodology -**

The information for the present paper is obtained through secondary sources. The secondary data is collected from various reference books and information available on internet.

#### **Shahu Maharaj's contribution in education -**

Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj believed that all round development of the state depends only on the progress of education. That's why from the beginning of his reign, Maharaj has given top most priority to the education. He framed new policy of education and implemented it in a planned manner.

#### **New policy of education -**

As a first step, he appointed 'Educational Reforms Committee' to take review of the existing educational situation of the state and to suggest solutions to improve it. For rapid spread of education among all sections of people, he started new institutions in the form of students hostel by giving encouragement for the establishment of Maratha Students Hostel and Jain Students Hostel during the period from 1900 to 1905 A.D.

Shahu Maharaj had strong desire that backward class people should participate in the administration and have a voice in the public bodies. He believed that this social change can occur only by the transformation of education to masses. He tried to create awareness among the various communities to

a sense of their own duty to themselves and to the state. So Shahu Maharaj in his reign gave top most priority to education as the foundation of national development and effective means of social revolution. He therefore, made it compulsory to all the parents to send their children to school and those parents who will not obey the order will fine Rs.1 per month.

### **Experiments of Different Hostels -**

Shahu Maharaj workout the novel plan of establishing separate Students Hostel in Kolhapur City for student coming from different backward classes in rural areas. He thought that there should be separate hostel for non-Brahmin students, so that they would come into the flow of education.

#### **i) Victoria Maratha Boarding -**

After detailed discussions and consultation with Mahadev Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mr. Giles (educational officer of the government of Bombay) and well known Maratha social leader of Pune, Mr. Gangarambhai Mhaske, Shahu Maharaj finalized the scheme of Maratha Students Hostel with the help of his brother Bapu saheb Maharaj and his Diwan R.V. Sabnis, on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1901, Maratha Students Hostel was opened and was called 'Victoria Maratha Boarding House'.

Shahu Maharaj not only donated land to hostel but also gave a substantial endowment of Rs.47,000/- sanctioned an annual grant of Rs.550, provided a landed income of Rs.2000 a year and made provision for grant of scholarships on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1901. He issued a special Government Notification by which special permission was granted to the society to keep its funds in the Government Treasury.

#### **ii) Digambar Jain Boarding -**

On 15<sup>th</sup> August 1904, with the help of the Southern Maharashtra Jain Sabha and Seth Manikchand Hirachand of Bombay, the foundation ceremony was held with the auspicious hands of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. This Jain Boarding building was constructed at a cost of more than Rs. 18000 by Seth Manikchand Hirachand of Bombay under his personal supervision and was donated to Southern Maharashtra Jain Sabha for conducting its students hostel.



For the proper maintenance of Digambar Jain Boarding, Shahu Maharaj contributed Rs.2000 towards the Fund of the Boarding Sanctioned an annual grant of Rs.300. The number of students in the Jain boarding in 1902 was only 6 but it rose to 40 in 1905-06.

The Digambar Jain boarding of Kolhapur acted as a powerful means of accompanying in social change among the Jains. Thus Shahu Maharaj brought a cultural revolution among the Jains of the Kolhapur region.

#### **Initiative for Girls Education -**

Shahu Maharaj has made special efforts for providing education to women, especially who are from backward class of the society. He declared special scholarship named Radhabai Akkasaheb Maharaj scholarship and Shri Nandkuvar Maharani Bhavnagar scholarship for girl students in Kolhapur state. He also appointed the lady servant from backward community to give assurance to backward community girl students. He also made special efforts to provide English language education to girl students.

#### **Conclusion -**

Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was a visionary leader. He believed that social change can be developed through education. Education is the only weapon by which upliftment of the deprived class and empowerment of women can be achieved. He started free and compulsory education, conventional and non conventional education to all classes of the society. At present Indian Government has adopted the same policy of providing free and compulsory primary education to all. Really Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, an epoch-making personality, is not for an age but for all ages.

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