

# CONTRIBUTIONS IN VARIOUS FIELDS BY RAJARSHI CHHATRAPATI SHAHU MAHARAJ

## Abstract

This study paper attempts to explore the contributions of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj in social, political, economic, educational, and agricultural domains, among others. Additionally, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, the emperor of Kolhapur area, and his innovative ideas that the Indian government and the rest of the globe have used for their progress are showcased in this research paper. The socially revolutionary Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur (1874–1922) is well-known in India. Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj purposefully used his influence in politics, business, and law to advance the interests of the Bahujan people in Kolhapur state as a whole. He enacted legislation in 1902 designating half of the seats in state government employment for members of the backward classes. Thus, basic education became both free and required in his state in 1917. Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj implemented numerous initiatives to support the social, economic, and educational advancement of the pottery community. The goal of the current study paper is to conduct a clinical analysis of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj's contributions to the general improvement of the pottery community. About twenty hostels for kids from various castes and religions were founded in Kolhapur by Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. During his tenure, Shahu Maharaj, an accomplished leader, was linked to numerous progressive initiatives. From the time of his coronation in 1894 until his death in 1922, he actively promoted the interests of his state's lower caste subjects. One of his top concerns was providing basic education to everyone, regardless of caste or creed.

**Keywords:** Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, Educational Work, Water Management of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Chatrapati Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj (Shahu Maharaj) was one of the few princely state heads who sincerely attempted to broaden the appeal of the untouchable's movement for social justice and human rights. In addition to promoting it, he also ensured its sustainability and longevity in Maharashtra and elsewhere. Shahu Maharaj was born in the Ghatge family in Kagal on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 1874. His name was Yashwant at the time when he was in Kagal during his childhood. His father name was Jaysingrao and his mother name was Radhabai. After the death of Shivaji Maharaj, the fourth king of the Kolhapur Sansthan, his wife Anandibai adopted Yashwant and named him 'Shahu' on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1884. Shahu Maharaj spent four years in Dharwad from 1889 to 1893 for his educational and physical development. Then he married with a daughter of Gunajirao Khanvilkar of Baroda on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1891. The name of his wife was 'Lakshmibai'.

Shahu Maharaj was the admired king of Kolhapur and he ruled the state of Kolhapur for 28 years. Shahu Maharaj made valuable contributions in political, social, cultural, agricultural, arts-sports and educational fields during his reign. Maharaj has made primary education compulsory and free and encouraged women's education. Inter-caste marriage was initiated and efforts were made to eliminate caste discrimination. He set up educational hostels to spread education to reach all levels of society; he worked to carry forward the Satyashodhak Movement. He has taken initiatives and made notable efforts in the field of agriculture, service, industrial sector etc. Shahu Maharaj contributed a lot to economic development by performing socio-economic development.

Maharaj implemented long-term policies regarding water management. Until 1922, the Maharaj has served as the king of common people and king of the Kolhapur state. Because of his magnificent social, political, economical and agriculture work, his name was not confined to the Kolhapur Sansthan, but he gained popularity throughout the Maharashtra as an ideal king, a leader of the Bahujan Samaj.

### Objectives of the Research:

- To study the contribution of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj in Kolhapur district in the field of agriculture.
- To review the water management done by Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj in Kolhapur District
- To review Shahu Maharaj's contribution to the industrial sector.
- Contribution of Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj to the sport of wrestling.
- To study the educational thought and work of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj.

**1. Research Methods:** For the writing of the said research article, tools such as published literature, bibliography, websites, etc. have been used as secondary sources.

**2. Limitation of Research:** A major limitation of this research is that the current research is related to the work done by Shahu Maharaj in the fields of agriculture, water, education, and wrestling in Kolhapur district. The findings of this research may not apply to other areas.

## **Chapter Scheme:**

- Chapter 1:** Contribution of Shahu Maharaj in Agriculture
- Chapter 2:** Water Management of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj
- Chapter 3:** Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj and Industrial Sector
- Chapter 4:** Shahu Maharaj and sport of wrestling
- Chapter 5:** Educational work of Shahu Maharaj and his thoughts

### **Chapter 1: - Contribution of Shahu Maharaj in Agriculture**

The region of Kolhapur has experienced the huge drought conditions during the four-year period from 1886 to 1899 which affected the ryots, livestock, and agricultural sector. As a result to this, the second of the two manifestos issued by the Maharaja in 1902 was the 'Universal Irrigation' policy. After studying, he built dams, dug wells, and implemented water irrigation schemes at various places. In Kolhapur, the separate irrigation department of was formed by the Maharaja.

For the development of the agricultural sector and as a solution to the drought situation, the Maharaja had a big dream of the Radhanagari Dam in the state of Kolhapur by constructing 20 new dams. The Shahu Maharaja has experimented with tea plantations on the Sahyadri slopes in the western part of the Kolhapur state. Besides, the traditional grains like various spices and pulses, Maharaja experimented with the production of new crops on the slopes of Sahyadri. He has organized various exhibitions for the farmers so that they could get modern technology and innovative information for the development of agriculture sector.

### **Chapter 2: - Water Management of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj**

Water management is an important and essential factor, which is realized by the King of Kolhapur. Hence, to solve the problem of water supply in the drought, the Maharaja started the work of digging wells from village to village in Kolhapur state through short- and medium-term plans. The funds required for this assignment were provided through the institution. In 1902, the Maharaja separated the irrigation department from the public work department for water management in drought so that it started its operation independently. Some ponds were repaired by removal of knots and new ponds were constructed in some place like Rankala in Kolhapur state, Tirtha Kalambe, Somay Lake in Panhala region etc. Epidemic diseases like cholera spread through dirty water, the drastic condition were personally realized by the Maharaja himself at the fair of Chincholi village. Therefore, he decided to clean the water pond and lake and provided pure and drinkable water to his subjects. It is seen that green revolution has been taken place due to Radhanagari Dam; the dam was completed by Rajaram Maharaj in the year of 1957. The Radhanagari Dam is supposed to be big dream and project of Shahu Maharaj and also the common people of Kolhapur reign.

### **Chapter 3: - Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj and Industrial Sector**

Along with the agricultural sector, Maharaj also paid attention to the development of trade and industry. He gave various facilities and concessions to traders from Pune and Mumbai to come to Kolhapur and to increase the trade and economic development of Kolhapur. In 1895, Maharaja has established the market 'Shahupuri' near the railway station. Maharaja encouraged the capitalists in these cities like Kagal, and Nipani, which are close to Kolhapur city for trade. Over time, Shahupuri became famous as a 'trade center'. In 1907, many families got employment by setting up a textile mill on a cooperative basis.

#### **Chapter 4: Shahu Maharaj and sport of wrestling**

Jaisingrao alias Abasaheb Ghatge was the father of Shahu Maharaj. He loved wrestling very much. Yashwantrao i.e., Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was fond of this game from his childhood. He was trained in wrestling by Wastad Daloba Shinde and Pandu Bhosale. Maharaja loved wrestlers (Mallas) as much as Malla Vidya. In many places, he encouraged the wrestlers by organizing Jangi Kusthas(Dangal). Maharaja revived 50 to 60 Talims so that Kolhapur wrestlers could compete with Punjabi wrestlers. Financial assistance was provided for the construction and repair of talims. Feri, Mace, Dandapatta, Bothadi, Bricks, Garlands, Arrows, and materials were given to the talims. Maharaj facilitated the provision of all the Kuraks in Lal Akhara for free.

Construction of a wrestling arena started in 1907 in Khasbag Maidan in Kolhapur and the arena itself was completed in 1912. The Maharaja planned the 'Ten Kalmi' scheme to construct eminent Mallas in the Kolhapur state.

#### **Chapter 5: - Educational work of Shahu Maharaj and his thoughts**

The upper class community was dominated over the education sector, according to the caste system, low caste people were deprived from the education system. Maharaja has started the educational movement in Kolhapur State following the ideology of Mahatma Phule to bring the exploited, deprived, marginalized and poor society into the educational stream while other people were deprived of education. The aim behind this was to encourage the backward people to pursue primary and higher education. Maharaj knew the need and importance of compulsory and free education. Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj created an educational initiative to free the mentality of slavery by realizing self-respect through education for the overall development of the entire society, to improve the society, to eradicate social disparity, and to provide education to the untouchables and Bahujans. Maharaja passed the Compulsory and Free Education Act in the year of 1913. Through this, schools were established in the villages, financial assistance was given to poor and backward children by giving scholarships and prizes, hostels were built for education, and through these efforts were made to eradicate the feeling of caste discrimination among the students, the Maharaja knew that teachers are a very significant factor. That is why they were selected in the school based on the quality of the teachers.

## **II. CONCLUSION**

A visionary and social reformer, Rajarshri Shahu Maharaj was dedicated to the advancement of his people and the socially underprivileged areas. He was an outspoken proponent of social equality for all people. During his leadership, he implemented a number

of ground-breaking programs to combat the caste system's discriminatory practices. Chhatrapati Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj has made tireless efforts for the development of social, political, cultural, educational, economic, etc., due to his contribution in various fields; the 'Kurno' community of Kanpur awarded him the title of 'Rajarshi'. The life of Shahu Maharaj is very extensive. The present research article light on work of Chhatrapati Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj in the fields of agriculture, industry, education, water management, and wrestling has been analyzed.

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