

**Impact
Factor
2.147**

ISSN 2349-638x

Reviewed International Journal



**AAYUSHI
INTERNATIONAL
INTERDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH JOURNAL
(AIIRJ)**

Monthly Publish Journal

VOL-III

ISSUE-VI

June

2016

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CHIEF EDITOR – PRAMOD PRAKASHRAO TANDALE

Educational work of Chandram Chavan Guruji

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Abstract

There are many social reformers in the Maharashtra, who gave their contribution to the socio-educational development of Maharashtra. Mahatma Jotiba Phule, Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and other many reformers gave attention for the educational developments. Especially they laid stress on the education of the downtrodden. Laman or Banjara is one of the backward communities of the Maharashtra. Chandram Chavan Guruji worked for the upliftment of this community. Chandram Chavan Guruji was a teacher of the Solapur District Local board. For the educational development of the Banjara community He established the 'Magas Samaj Seva Mandal and started his work of social reforms. During the few days because of his hard work he developed the Neharunagar educational campus near Solapur. Through this educational campus he provided educational facilities to his Banjara community of Maharashtra and especially Solapur district.

Keywords: Banjara, Laman, Magas, laman tanda, worker, Backward, Traditions, District Local Board, Varna **Kaikadi, Takari, Mang, Mang, Garudi, Faseparadhi, Palmor, Chhapparband, Kanjarbhat, Bestar, Rajput, Bhamta**, etc.

Introduction:

Education is the mean of all round developments especially social developments. Therefore the study of the educational developments must be an important for the today's society. The education developed in the India as per the need of the society. In the early days in ancient period education is free for all Varna and castes. But later on it is only for the Brahman Varna of the society. In the last days of ancient period education is completely closed its door for the shudras. In medieval period Muslim system of education is open to all for the Muslims. In medieval period Hindus and Muslims were their own independent educational systems in India. With the establishment of British rule, the missionaries started their work for the education in India. Thereafter the British government started its efforts for the educational developments in India especially from the charter act of 1813. After independence the government adopted grant in aid policy in the educational field. Some social reformers took advantage of the government scheme and worked for their community. Among them Chandram Chavan Guruji of Solapur played an important role in the educational development of the Banjara community.

Hypothesis of the Study: The present study will endeavor to test the following hypothesis.

There are many laman tandas in and around the Solapur district. Chandram Chavan Guruji especially worked for the educational development of the Banjara community. The people from the Banjara community took advantage of the educational facilities developed by the Chavan Guruji. The Banjara community is traditional and backward in all sectors of the life. But the work of Chandram Chavan Guruji became helpful for them for the socio-educational and economic developments. Not only the people of Solapur but also people of all over Maharashtra took the advantage of the work Chandram Chavan Guruji. The educational campus provided the educational facilities not only for the Banjara

community but also all the backward communities of Maharashtra. The people like Kamale Guruji helped Chandram Chavan Guruji in his educational service.

Objectives of the Present Study: The major objectives of the present study are listed below:

1. To study the efforts of the Chandram Chavan Guruji for the educational developments.
2. To focus on the role of Kamale Guruji for the educational developments of the Banjara Community.
3. To focus on the work of the Chandram Chavan Guruji other than the education.
4. To study the educational facilities provided by the educational campus of the Neharunagar.

Methodology and Resources / References:

The present study is basically library based and fully relies on the primary and secondary data. The data is collected by the visited to the hostels and boardings of the Solapur city conducted by the Magas Smaja Seva Mandal. The data is collected from the souvenirs, periodicals, proceedings, annuals and notebooks of the related various educational institutes of the Solapur city. Some unpublished Ph. D. thesis, newspaper clippings from Daily Anandvritta Ani Kalptaru as well as Solapur Samachar are also used for this study. Interview of the eminent personality of the education field of the city is helpful for the cross checking and the lacuna of the information. Bombay Legislative Council Debates, Files of the Education Department from the Bombay Archives are also used for the data collection. All this collected data interpreted in the light of the hypothesis and objectives of the study.

Educational work of Chandram Chavan Guruji

In India and Maharashtra after the establishment of the British rule, due to the western education many social reformers came forward for the upliftment of the society. Also many institutions established for the socio-educational development. The 'Bramho Samaj' founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy (20th August 1828),ⁱ the 'Arya Samaj' founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati (10th April 1875), the 'Ramkrishna Mission,' founded by Swami Vivekanand (1st May 1897),ⁱⁱ etc. made considerable efforts for the educational development of Backward Community. In Maharashtra, Mahatma Jotiba Phule started school for them in 1952. According to him the theory of 'Downward Filtration' was wrong and its philosophy utopian. The best way to advance the moral and intellectual welfare of the people was to spread of education among the masses. Therefore, the Government should care more for the education of Backward Community. There was monopolisation by the Brahmins in administration due to their educational progress. One of the ways to promote education among the Backward Community was establishment of village schools without the Brahmin teachers. It was necessary to appoint men from Backward Community on municipal bodies to look after the interests of and amenities for the Backward Community.ⁱⁱⁱ Also the 'Prarthana Samaj' founded by Atmaram Pandurang Tarkhadkar (31st March 1867), Depressed Class Mission Society established by V.R. Shinde (1906), etc. made pioneering efforts for their education in Bombay Presidency.^{iv} Dr. Ambedkar distinguished himself as an extraordinary leader of depressed classes and made valuable efforts in the cause of their education. He established 'The Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha' (1924) with objectives of promoting education and culture, advancing and improving the economic conditions of them and representing their grievances for redress. He was of the view that, "by vesting them with political power, the problem of their education would be automatically solved. The only remedy is to adopt the principle of inequality and to give favourable treatment to those who are below the level." The Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha established a sisterly unit known as the 'Depressed Classes Education Society,' (1928) with an object of organising school education for Backward Community on sound basis.^v Also Mahatma Gandhi looked into the problem of education of the Backward Community. His approach towards their education became widespread. He felt that the major reason for their low enrolment was backwardness in socio-economic living. According to him preparatory schools for them were absolutely essential. For the secondary and higher education, he

strongly favoured vocational courses rather than mere literary education. The efforts were coordinated by the 'Harijan Sewak Sangh.'vi

The establishment of British Raj and spread of English education were responsible for the social awakening and renaissance movement in Maharashtra intensified. From the last three decades of 19th century various newspapers and social organisations came into existence in Solapur which gave impetus to the educational developments of Backward Community education. In and around the Solapur district Chandram Chavan Guruji took efforts for the educational development of backward communities. He was from the Banjara Community. Also his friend Kamale Guruji helped him in his educational work. Through their educational institutions they made valuable contributions in the field of education of their community. They strove hard and created a huge educational complex and all developed all their educational activities through the 'Magas Samaj Seva Mandal'.vii This institution mainly worked in the Solapur city and district.

Chandram Chavan Guruji:

Chandram Chavan Guruji was a social worker of the Maharashtra. He was a primary teacher in the school conducted by Solapur District Local Board. In 1947 India got freedom and the Government accepted more helpful policy for the educational development. Government decided to give grant in aid to the educational institution for their development. Chandram Chavan Guruji take advantage and with the help of friends like Kamale Guruji he established educational institute for the education of backward community. With the establishment of British rule over Bombay Presidency (1818), the Government became aware about so many criminal tribes who were involved themselves in petty, theft and dacoity. They disturbed the law and order in the Presidencyviii. Therefore as a remedial action, the Government of India passed the Criminal Act in 1871, which came into practice in Bombay Presidency in 1909. Under this Act the Government established many Criminal Tribes Settlements in the Presidency and one of them at Solapur in 1912.ix In the Criminal Tribes settlement of Solapur, these tribes from Solapur and adjoining districts. In it Kaikadi, Takari, Mang, Mang, Garudi, Faseparadhi, Palmor, Chhapparband, Kanjarbhat, Bestar, Rajput, Bhamta, etc. were kept under confinement.x When the settlement established (1912), its management was given to the American Marathi Mission. In Solapur settlement education was provided upto Vth standard. This primary education was free and compulsory for the boys between the age 5 to 12. The Government provided them educational facilities including slates, scholarships, etc. and vocational education including agriculture, manual training, carpentry, masonry, weaving, book-binding, etc. for boys and spinning, weaving, needlework, etc. for girls. Some of the boys were also sent as apprentices to mills, workshops, etc. After Independence this Criminal Act was cancelled by the Government on 13th August 1949 and all the educational facilities were stopped. A mission under the chairmanship of Dr. Antrolikar, a well-known freedom fighter of Solapur gave a petition to the Government with various demands of this community. Their principal demand was for the opening of an Ashram School and providing them free education upto higher level. They gave petition to Jawaharlal Nehru for making higher education free for them. All their demands were approved by the Government In 1953, the Government gave permission for the opening of the Ashram School for Solapur district. This school was opened at Lamboti, taluka Mohol district Solapur and higher education was made free for them from 1961.xi Chandram Chavan and Kamale Guruji take advantage of this and started efforts for the opening of the Ashram school for the Banjara community. By their efforts they created nehrunagar as an educational campus of Solapur.

Magas Samaj Seva Mandal

Banjara or Laman is one of the backward communities. There are so many Banjara settlements or *Laman Tanda* around Solapur city and in the Solapur district. They had their own traditions, culture and language. They keep themselves aloof from modernisation. They are backward in education. In British period, the Government did not pay much attention towards their education. But in the course of time,

socio-educational workers like Chandram Chavan Guruji and others completed this requirement. Chandram Chavan Guruji worked in the school of district local school board and D. S. Kamale Guruji became a member of District Local School Board during 1950. They discussed the educational institution for them and in 1950 "The Laman Samaj Seva Mandal" was established under the guidance of Mamasahab Chitale. This mandal started its work from 1950, but gained momentum from 1951, when one of its founder members, D. S. Kamale Guruji became chairman of the District Local School Board. In 1951, the Mandal opened 32 primary schools at various Banjara settlements in the district in its first stage. Thus the Mandal completed the requirement of primary education. In 1954, when Kamale Guruji became Secretary of District Development Board, the Mandal extended standards upto VIIth in each of its schools.

Nehrunagar Educational Complex

After the primary education, the Mandal decided to establish a Highschool, Ashram school and hostel at District place and they choose a place nearby Solapur city. Chandram Chavan Guruji left his service in 1956 and devoted himself for this work. In 1957 the Mandal changed its name to 'Magas Samaj Seva Mandal.' The Mandal called a meeting of Banjara settlement leaders from all over the district and was promised cooperation in the establishment of a new educational settlement of Banjara community at district place. The scheme of the Mandal approved by the chairman of District Development Board, the Collector Mr. Sapre, in 1956 with an expenditure of about Rs. 7,00,000. The estimated new Banjara settlement scheme launched under the 'Nehru Scheme' and therefore this settlement named as 'Nehrunagar'. The place where Nehrunagar established was follow land, desolate, incommodiousness and unsuitable for the people. But hard work of Chavan Guruji converted it into modern educational complex. The institute took good shape because of the sustained efforts of the teachers like Chavan, Jeure, Kore etc. The institute started its educational activities by the opening of Jagruti Vidyamandir in 1959. This highschool well developed under the able guidance of Chandram Chavan.

Now-a-days, this institute manages various educational branches from Kindergarten to collegiate level. In 1997, there was a teaching staff of about 400 with 10,000 students. This institute mainly established, managed and sponsored by the Banjara community is open to all castes and creeds. The institution visited by National level leaders like Shankarrao Deo, Balasaheb Bharade, Indira Gandhi, etc. Shri Saint Tukadoji Maharaj came into Ashram per year for three days.^{xii} This institute educated many youths of the Banjara community. But on the other hand, the Magas Samaj Seva Mandal opened more than 42 primary schools, some high schools in the district and constructed the educational complex at Solapur. Magas Samaj Seva Mandal started its own hostels attached with their educational branches and provided accommodation to the students came from the rural area. After Independence Magas Samaj Seva Mandal and Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Fund Samiti did a major work for backward communities in Solapur.^{xiii}

Major Conclusions:

Through this study it is clear that now a days many people of the Banjara community got education and upgrade their life in sides from the educational institutions established by the Chandram Chavan Guruji. Major conclusions are as under:

1. The work of Chandram Chavan Guruji centered to the educational activities.
2. Chandram Chavan gave his great educational development of Solapur through his educational activities.
3. Chandram Chavan Guruji and colleagues created an educational campus as Neharunagar near Solapur city.
4. In and around Solapur city he started many schools and colleges near to the Laman Tandas or Banjara settlements.
5. Because of the social work of Chandram Chavan Guruji many people of the Banjara community became well educated and participated in the corporate life of the city.

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