

CONTRIBUTION OF RAJARAM BAPU PATIL FOR EDUCATION

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Abstract

Rajaram Bapu Patil has faced lot of problems while taking his education. He was aware of the political, economical, social and religious condition of the people of Maharashtra. In the critical economical condition, it was not possible to take education to the children who were living in rural area. As a highly qualified, he knows that the society should progress comprehensively. In the paper contribution of Rajaram Bapu Patil for education is considered.

Rajaram Anant Patil was born on 1st August 1920 at Kasegaon in Walwa taluka. He was brought up in religious environment. He took his primary education at Kasegaon. He was deeply interested in the studies. The school was up to fourth standard in the village. Considering his interest, family of Rajaram Bapu Patil decided to take admission at Nerle, six kilometers away from Kasegaon, for further studies. In all seasons, Rajarabapu Patil uses to walk six kilometers every day. Rarely he has remained absent in the school. Again there was problem after seventh standard. His keen interest in education forced his parents and teachers to take admission in the Prince Shivaji Maratha High school, Pune. Within a short time, he adjusted himself with the urban environment and once again concentrated on the studies. After high school education, he dreamed to take higher education, but at this stage his parents were not in a position to continue financial help. The family was economically sound in Kasegaon, but in those days there were no economical crops which can make money available for higher education. Rajaram Bapu Patil was also aware of the rural economical condition. So, instead of insisting to his parents, he started discovering new economical sources to complete his higher education. In this regard, he met Shriman

Sayajirao Gaikwad, social reformer and ruler of Badoda State. He showed all his academic performance to Shrima Sayajirao Gaikwad. The social reformer was very happy to see the academic performance of Rajaram Babu Patil. He enthusiastically agreed to give scholarship for higher education. Accordingly he took his higher education. After his graduation, he desired to take law degree. This time all the family members supported him. He took admission in Law College, Kolhapur and obtained the degree of LL.B. (Smruti Granth 4)

Rajaram Babu Patil has faced lot of difficulties to get education. He has learned a lot by the obstacles, which he has experienced in his education career. He was aware of the political, economical, social and religious condition of the people of Maharashtra. In the critical economical condition, it was not possible to take education to the children who were living in rural area. As a highly qualified, he knows what kinds of life rural people were living in the village. There were no schools, roads, electricity, economical sources to the people. There was lot of superstition among the people due to lack of education. He became restless. Right from the beginning of higher education, he has decided his ambition. Instead of enjoying lawyer practice, he decided to spend all his life for the upliftment of common man in Maharashtra. He dreamed to change complete scenario of the state. (Patil 5)

Rajaram Babu Patil made meditation regarding the contemporary problems of the society. He made definite plan of his work, which he has chosen voluntarily. He, at the initial stage, confined his social work in Walwa taluka. He knows that education is the only medium, which can change the living standard of the people, so at the outset, he established Kasegaon Education Society and started “Azad High school” at Kasegaon. There was a great challenge to get teachers. But he succeeds to solve every problem he faced while running high school. He also taught in high school for some months. It was a great challenge to get the students. He went in every house and convinced the importance of

education in their life. People also supported him. First highschool was started in the big house, which was provided by Jagalal Doshi without any rent. (Kasegaon Education record) In 1950 he started Sarvodaya hostel for the reserved category. The office record tells that there are number of students who have retired from the class one posts. He built the hostel building with the contribution of Kasegaon people and students labour. In 1957 he started highschool at Peth. In 1959 he started two more high schools at Wategaon and Bavachi. People helped for the building of both the schools. In 1961, he started Yashwnt high school at Islampur. In 1982 building was constructed. To fulfill the need of higher education of the students, Rajaram Babu Patil started senior college at Ashta. In 1967 Brahamadas high school was started at Belavade. In 1972 Lalbahdur Shastri high school was started at Bahe. For all these high schools Rajaram Babu Patil started junior colleges. At Sakharale he started Engineering College in 1983. This college is famous all over India. All these educational Institutions are affiliated to Kasegaon Education Society which is run under the leadership of Rajaram Babu Patil. (Kasegaon Education record)

Through the medium of Sangli District Local Board Rajaram Babu Patil attempted to admit maximum children in primary school. He took lot of efforts to convince the importance of education in the life. That was the turning point in the life of future generation. Then he tried to satisfy the need of high school through Kasegaon education society, but the area concentrated for high school was only Walwa taluka. It was not possible to cover the whole district. But the important work he has done was that he channelized the responsible people of the society to take lead in education.

Rajaram Babu Patil's sincere efforts, in the field of education, were immediately recognized by the leaders of congress party. In 1946, he was elected unopposed for Zilla Parishad and became Chairman of the Satara District School Board. At that time, today's Satara and Sangli districts were under Satara district. During this period, he attempted to convince the importance of education by organizing meetings of the people in every

village. He started primary schools in majority villages of Satara district. He travelled by old jeep. But majority time he has to cover distance by walking as there were no inter-connecting roads. He, with enthusiastic efforts, overcomes all the difficulties. He went in every village and farms to convince the importance of education. Without powerful passion it was not possible. He has decided to change the comprehensive scenario of the society which will definitely help to increase the living standard of the rural people. This was the great task considering contemporary problems in the society. He requested the President of Satara Local Board to construct inter connecting roads so that children living on the farms will come to school even in rainy season. He worked very hard and succeeded to admit maximum children in primary schools. (Interview)

Rajaram Babu Patil's great contribution as a chairman of Satara District School Board was considered by senior congress leaders, and in 1952, he was elected president of Sangli District Local Board, Sangli. He remained in this position for ten years. In these years, he changed the total scenario of Sangli district. Rajaram Babu Patil knows that education is the only thing which can change the life of common people comprehensively. So he decides to utilize the power for spreading the education. He was the chairman of education Board of old Satara district, but area of the district was large and hence there were limitations. But now he decides to take an opportunity. He travelled the whole district by walking to convince the importance of education in the life of the people. He gave his own example; otherwise he would have been working in the field like other uneducated people. He gave speeches in all the villages. He prepared proposals of primary schools of all the villages and send to the government for sanction. He himself went to the education minister and got sanctioned all the proposals even though minister has warned him regarding limitations of funds. He appealed the village people to contribute either by giving money or labour. Accordingly people got involved in building the rooms for the school. Generally land was provided by the grampanchayat which was available in ample

proportion at that time. He started schools in every village, but next problem was of the teachers. He personally met the people who have taken their primary education and requested them to join as a teacher. As he has respect in the society educated people agreed to accept the job. He himself uses to engage lecture whenever he gets an opportunity. He has worked as a teacher in his education society. For the education he always attempted to bring maximum funds from state and central government. Due to his sincere efforts government also supported him. Wherever he has gone in the district, he gave priority to visit the school. There he makes enquiry regarding students, their academic performance, teacher's problems, facilities in the school etc... He knows that only education can help to progress our nation and living standard of the people. Educational work done by Rajaram Bapu Patil was great achievement in his life. This has definitely helped to progress the next generation of the society. (Patil 36)

Due to his enthusiastic efforts, Rajaram Bapu Patil became very popular among the people of western Maharashtra. Government officers, colleagues and people started loving and respecting him. Naturally, central and state congress party leaders were attracted towards him. They appreciated follower's organisation skill of Rajaram Bapu Patil. His hard work and sincerity have made him more popular among the Social, Political and common people.

Education is an important activity in society; it gives an opportunity to man to understand the world around him and his place in it. In ancient times man was completely at the mercy of nature which was a complete mystery to him. The dark forces of nature were beyond the comprehension of man and to console himself he had to depend upon the existence of supernatural powers and that led to the growth of religion and superstition. Today whatever scientific outlook is developed in Sangli district, credit goes to Rajaram Bapu Patil.

References

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