Literature Review:

Malharrao Holkar had the various skills right from their childhood such as he worked as a shepherd, has a habit of horse riding, perfect in sword handling, also ready to handle enemy at any time and beat them into the battle. He had learned all these skills from his maternal uncle Bhojraj, who was also like parent and a guru for him.¹

Malharrao Holkar went towards the North India where he acquire the areas such as Mewad, Udaipur, Nagor and Ajmer with his small army. In order to stop these activities of Holkar the king of Mughal emperor appointed Ayodhya’s Subhedar Sadat khan and sent him with two army battalion. Even though Malharrao Holkar defeated the Mughal’s army with his Ganimi skills.²

Shejwalkar has emphasized in his book “Panipat 1761” on two important things, Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of “Maratha Empire” is the matter of inspiration of the Maratha society. The defeat in the third war of Panipat is the wound on Maratha people and it is still fresh. The Maratha’s have more value of Panipat’s defeat than thrilling victory.³

In “Yeshodhan” book, Late Rajwade critizises that “For the defeat of panipat both Govindpanth Bundhela and Malharrao Holkar were totally responsible” but shevalkar told that if we saw the previous period Holkar, we found the patriotism, belief in kingdom and unitarian attitude in his work. Thus we can’t blame him for the defeat of Panipat battle.³
The Maratha marched on Malva region and convinced their subhedar, Jaysing to compromise and thus grabbed Malva region. Malharrao Holkar and Ranoji Shinde not only showed but also proved their power and courage. Due to their courage Bajirao Peshwa gave the private Jahagirdari to Malharrao Holkar, Shinde and Pawar in the Malva region.\(^4\)

It is very important for us to know the work and contribution of Malharrao Holkar to study the Maratha Empire. We have to understand the contemporary period’s social, economic, religious, cultural and political situations, we also have to understand their impact on social system. Also we have to understand the geographical situation which is totally responsible for all these reasons and without of which the research work is incomplete.\(^5\)

The first Bajirao Peshw had the varied personality. Shinde, Holkar and Pawar were trained Subhedar under him. Due to his abilities such as boldness, open heartness these subhedar’s called him as their boss. The best of Bajirao was Malharrao Holkar.\(^6\)

In 1754, Malharrao and his son Khanderao Holkar has coiled the kumbheri fort but they were not succeeded to get the fort khanderao as they decided to blast the wall of fort but unfortunately his son was dead by the artillery of the enemy. Malharrao failed down by his son’s death. Then again he newly started to stand the Maratha Empire. So the courage, loyalty, highlighted again.\(^7\)

Malharrao Holkar ordered and distributed the works and duties of the military in the battle of panipat with honesty. He did not oppose to Sadashivrao
and leave the battle of Panipat. He performed his duties and worked as a real and brave soldier. He did not run from the Battle field. Though Malharrao and Gaikwad returned alive from the battle it does not mean that they were timid.⁸

The war of Panipat is the most important event in the Indian history. The battle of Panipat did not destroyed the empire of Maratha’s and the power of Abdali was also not increased. Both the power became weak and dependable. After the defeat in the battle of Panipat, Marathas crossed the Naramada river, Shinde and Holkar collected the taxes and revenues from Jath, Rohile and Rajput in 1728 AD.⁹

If we see the period from 1728, we found that Ranoji Shinde and Holkar were the excellent and powerful united soldiers. They both fought in almost all wars. They both were equal in all qualities and duties. It means that they both were closely attached with Maratha Empire and dedicated their lives for Marathas.¹⁰

When the Maratha Empire was spreading its power in the north India, Malharraao Holkar sent the information of the contemporary political situation of that times as well as the information regarding the agreement of battle movement, tax and revenue through the letters to the Peshwas. It means that Malharrao Holkar gave all the information of the administrative system to Peshwas.¹¹
Sardisai’s book ‘Marathi Riyasat’ had been written with full authenticity and evidences, the book reject all criticism which was labelled to Malharrao Holkar. Therefore this book is the unbiased book for the present research work.\(^\text{12}\)

There are difficulties between the historians and the historical trust. On the one side history means the combination of the objective trust, the historians should not be attached to their inner feelings and emotions. They should totally depend on the realities and historical source, document and trust.\(^\text{13}\)

After khanderao Holkar’s death, Malharrao Holkar handed over the local administration of his Jahagirdari from Indoor to his daughter-in-law Ahilyabai Holkar. He used to correct the problems of Ahilyabai by post when he was on expedition in the North. He trained Ahilyabai for social, political, religious and economical field. Malharrao was truly a versatile personality.\(^\text{14}\)

How the researcher has to test the document is prescribed in the book, Samajik Sanshodhan Paddhati ani Tantre. The true study is what the researcher has to do without having any bias or grudge.\(^\text{15}\)

Shejawalkar has stated four theories of defeat in Panipat. This was taken as a reference from this book for the critical study and the critical analysis of the downfall of Panipat and refusal of the charges applied against Malharrao.\(^\text{16}\)

Bhausaheb’s “Bakhar” is historically valuable and one more aspect of this “Bakhar” is literary value. It is more powerful literary piece than other Bakhars. There is description of Bhausabeb Peswas region to the war of panipat, during
these events there is arrangement of various events related to Subhedar Malharrao Holkar and other members.\textsuperscript{17}

In his book “Dnyat-Adnyat” Ahilyabai Holkar (known-unknown Ahilyabai Holkar) impact of Malharrao Holkar on Ahilyabai is clearly seen as Malharrao Holkar considered Ahilyabai as his daughter. He used to tell Ahilyabai about the political events by post Ahilyabai used to hold the administration at Indoor. Ahilyabai’s work is very important by multi-dimensional views. Malharrao Holkar is the key person behind the ultimate change in Ahilyabai Holkar.\textsuperscript{18}

Though the first meet of Bajirao Peshwa and Malharrao Holkar was looked as the enemies but Bajirao Peshwa identified Malharrao’s inner qualities, and gave him Mansabdari of 500 Soldiers. Malharrao has acquired the skill of handling people, the Ganimi kawa, to have one hand one with foes. While working with his self-performance and good job Bajirao Peshwa offered Malharrao Holkar the Jahagiri in Malwa region.\textsuperscript{19}

To fight with Nizam is like just to die infront of artillery and if in order to defeat Nizam means use of Ganimi strategy was the only option. Chatrapati Shivaji Raje created the Hindavi Swaraj with the Ganimi strategies. Then Santaji Ghorpade applied this method to trouble Aurangzeb. The next was Bajirao Peshwa to use Ganimi technique and lastly Bajirao trained Malharrao Holkar for Ganimi technique.\textsuperscript{20}

In the thirteenth chapter of Peshwa Daftar, many letters were embossed, and it is useful to interpret the huge events in Maratha History, Malharrao Holkar,
Ranoji shinde, Udaji Pawar etc. were some remarkable assistants in Peshwa Darbar. This information is useful to know about the job of these Sardars.21

Ranoji Bhosale tried Nanasaheb Peshwa not to get the Peshwa post after Bajirao Peshwa’s death. By getting support of Malharrao Holkar and Shinde, Nanasaheb Peshwa get the peshwa post. This clearly shows the ability of Malharrao Holkar.22

The wife of Malharrao Holkar had the abilities like him and she was with self-esteem and straight-forwardness. She give support to Holkar and handle the work in the absence of hum very well. She used to tell Malharrao Holkar some useful tips. On the basis of this Holkar’s view about women is clearly understood. 23

Malharrao Holkar had demanded Ranoji Shinde in peshwa Darbar from Bajirao peshwa. They did every expedition in the north India together. They had good friendship also, with eminent power, foresight and courage; they had extended the Maratha Empire unto the Attock.24

By giving the robes to Bajirao Peshwa, Shahu Maharaj gave him a big responsibility. In order to teach a lesson to nizam, the major sardars as Bajirao Peshwa, Malharrao Holkar, Shinde, Pawar came together and beat the Nizam by using ganimi kawa, made him to do tryst with Maratha at Palkhed.25

After the death of Balaji Vishwanth Peshwa, Bajirao became the next peshwa. He created the status in the capital of the Monarch at Delhi by developing the Maratha Empire in the North India. In the Maratha emperor,
Malharrao Holkar was the important person to Bajirao and both were from same age group.\textsuperscript{26}

In the second half of 17\textsuperscript{th} century there was arrival of British, Dutch German traders in India. Such traders established their colonies in South India. By establishing colonies in India, they increased their power and Rule. To stop the establishment of these people Maratha gathered together under Malharrao Holkar’s leadership for the Vasai expedition and had achieved success.\textsuperscript{27}

Shivaji Raje had opposed the caste discrimination and appointed the Islam people in administration at higher post. To carry this, Bajrao Peshwa, Malharrao Holkar, Bhausaheb Peshwa had also opposed the caste politics and gave muslims the secular treatment. \textsuperscript{28}

In the period of Shahu Maharaj, Raghugi Bhosale was the prominent Subhadar in the south India. Shahu Maharaj told him to keep hold on Bangal. But there were clashes between Peshwa & Bhosle. Raghuji Bholsale was defeated by peshawas and Malharrao played the pivotal role in it.\textsuperscript{29}

The ancestor of Marathas were Maurya, Yadava, Kadambha, Chalukya, Ganga, Rashtrakut, Hoysala, Shilahara, Chavan, who had ruled over Maharashtra and India in total. Malharrao was born and established his own Jahagiridari in this soil of Maharashtra.\textsuperscript{30}

By establishing Hindavi swaraj, Shivaji Raje protected the rayat (people) from the unruly Adilshahi, Mughalshahi. The same task continued by Sambhaji, Rajaram, Shahu, Peshwa, and Holkar after Shivaji Raje Bhosale.\textsuperscript{31}
The Third battle of Panipath was fought between Afghans and Maratha. The defeat of Maratha in this war is immemorable. There are certain reasons behind the defeat in the third battle of Panipath. Most of all reasons are shortage of food supply, unformed unity of Subhedars and dearth of a solid leadership.

Thus, the responsibility of defeat of this battle is not towards Malharrao Holkar.  

Bhausaheb’s Bakhar as a secondary resource is historically important. This book reveals the information about Maratha in the period from 1740 to 1761. There is also inclusion of letters sent to Shinde and Holkar by Nanasheb Peshwa from “Pune Darbar”.