CHAPTER-V
ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF VADODARA
A. VADODARA IN THE GAIKWAD REIGN

INTRODUCTION

The district of Vadodara, popularly known as Baroda, is one of the most economically, socially and culturally advanced districts of the state of Gujarat. It is situated approximately between 21°51’ and 22°50’ north latitude and 72°45’ and 74°30’ east longitudes. “It covers an area of 7,794 sq.km. which makes it the twelfth largest amongst the nineteen districts of the state. It accounts for 3.97% of the state’s total geographical area” (Sinha, 1992: 1). There is no strong evidence of how Vadodara was discovered. However, it definitely traces its origin to mid-Pleistocene period, when floods in Mahi River had formed the plains. Later at around 1000 BC, human settlement is believed to be started on the right bank of the River Vishwamitri. Around the beginning of the Christian era, a small township developed known as Ankotakaa (present day Akota). Due to its location on the trade route of Gujarat and Malwa (now Rajasthan) this township flourished into a commercial centre. This area was later called Vadpadarka due to the profuse presence of banyan –Vad trees which subsequently became Vadodara (in the belly of Vad-banyan trees) (retrieved from www.vmcegov.com/history).

Situated in the central part of the mainland Gujarat, its geographical location is important. Through its long history, Vadodara (known as Baroda) has been a conduit for communication, movement of people and exchange of cultures. During the British period, region was a princely state under the protection of the British. After Independence, it was designated as a class I princely state until its merger into the state of Gujarat on 1st May 1960. The region comprising the Vadodara city and its rural hinterland continue to bear the historical imprint of two thousand years of civilization. For the present study, it is important to look at the historical and socio-economic background of Vadodara to understand the factors that contributed to make it a cultural capital of Gujarat. Also there is a need to comprehend the fact that in spite of the progressive policies of the princely states which are the embedded values that denigrate daughters.
This chapter, divided in to two sections, covers the ethnographic background of Vadodara from past and present. The Part-A delineates the demographic, socio-cultural and economic aspects of Vadodara in Gaikwad reign up to 1949. The subsequent section, i.e. Part-B examines the changes and trends in demographic, socio-cultural and economic composition of Vadodara post merger with the state of Gujarat in Independent India.

**5A.1 VADODARA (BARODA) - INCEPTION TO PRINCELY STATE OF GAIKWAD UP TO 1949**

Historically several dynasties have ruled over this township like the Guptas, Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas and Solankis to name a few. After 1298 AD, during the Moghul rule in Gujarat, Vadodara became a district town continued to be an important centre for trade, commerce and even military settlements (Rajyagor and Tripathy, 1979: 1-2). However, the history of Vadodara completely transformed after defeating Moghuls by Pilajirao Gaikwad in 1732 AD and re-capturing the territory by Damajirao Gaikwad II in 1734. After which, continuous wars and quarrels for expansion of the reign by other Gaikwad rulers like Sayajirao II, Ganpatrao and Khanderao resulted in establishment of Baroda state with a vast area to its credit and Vadodara city being the capital of their rule. Gaikwad rule changed the legacy of Vadodara during their rule from 1734-1949 (215 years) till its merger in the state of Gujarat making it a ‘cultural capital’ (*sanskaar nagari*) of Gujarat. Famous Gujarati poet Premanand has described it as the ‘brave yard’. The state of Baroda at that time comprised of five districts i.e. Baroda, Kadi, Navsari, Amreli and Okhamandal to enable smooth and efficient functioning of the state affairs by Gaikwad rulers (Kantawala, 1992: 138).

**5A.2 GEOGRAPHICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAYOUT OF THE DISTRICT AND THE CITY**

Broadly speaking the district of Vadodara is surrounded by the Panchmahal district on the north, Kheda district on the north-west, Bharuch on the south and the state of Madhya Pradesh in the east. The district is divided into three sub divisions for the administrative purpose. Earlier they were Vadodara, Dabhoi and Petlad. But after Petlad was included in the newly formed district of Anand now it is divided in to Vadodara, Dabhoi and Chhota Udepur which are further sub-divided into eleven talukas and one mahal. These talukas are namely Vadodara, Karjan, Padra, Savli, Vaghodia, Dabhoi, Sankhedha, Jetpur Pavi, Chhota Udaipur, Nasvadi, Sinor and Tilakwada Mahal (ibid: 1-2).
Of all the talukas, Vadodara taluka has the highest population and is the main centre for administrative and commercial activities. Further, Vadodara city of the Vadodara taluka is the epitome of glory since the Gaikwad’s rule. The old city was a square surrounded by a wall, 4 gates then named as western side as Laheripura darwaja, the eastern Pani darwaja (now popularly known as Panigate), the northern Champaner darwaja and the southern Gendi darwaja. Mandvi was the presidential palace for the rulers. During the British rule several locations in Vadodara city were converted into infantry battalion where barracks and residential bungalows were built (Nimbalkar, 1992: 22). The Gaikwad rulers were involved in the beautification of the city with lovely gardens, wider roads, palaces of high monumental values and costly sculptures. The city, even after expansion has remained a walled city with scratches of the glory of Gaikwad reign and British battalion settlements.

**5A.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF VADODARA IN THE GAIKWAD PERIOD**

**5A.3.1 POPULATION**

Vadodara has been a hub for commercial, educational and cultural activities and thus has always attracted migrants who later settled in permanently. The first census for Baroda state was taken on 21st February, 1872 along with the general census in the Bombay Presidency (Kantawala, 1992: 138). The population of Baroda state in 1881 was 21,85,005. In the successive years due to famines and epidemics of plague there was a drop in the population. This decline though not steady was experienced till 1901. In 1901, the population of the state declined to 19,52,692. After which, there is a constant rise in the population of Baroda state, district and the city as well, especially after 1921. In 1921, the population of Baroda state was 21,26,522 which increased to 24,43,007 in 1931 and in the last census under the Gaikwad reign in 1941 the population of Baroda state had risen up to 28,55,010 (www.censusofindia.gov.in - Census of princely states in British India, 1871-1941).

The population of Baroda district (also known as Baroda division) of the Baroda state was recorded as 5,90,338 in 1901. From there onwards, the district has seen a constant rise in the population. Except for the period 1911-1921 where the growth is below 10%, there is a rising trend in the percentage growth of population in each decade till 1941 (Rajyagor and Tripathy, 1979: 147). The city of Baroda being the headquarters for political and military activities during this period, its population had the maximum rise in the decade from 1921 to 1931 amongst all the divisions of the state. In 1921, the population was 94,712 and increased
to 1, 12, 860 a total increase of 19% in 1931 and it further increased to 1, 53,301 in 1941 (Baroda Administrative report, 1932: 303 and Rajyagar and Tripathy, 1979: 154).

### TABLE 5A.1

**DECADAL VARIATION IN THE POPULATION IN VADODARA DISTRICT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Decade variation (in %)</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>5,90,338</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>308,451</td>
<td>281,887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>6,96,878</td>
<td>+18.05</td>
<td>365,810</td>
<td>331,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>7,54,830</td>
<td>+8.32</td>
<td>396,456</td>
<td>358,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>8,78,436</td>
<td>+16.38</td>
<td>461,854</td>
<td>416,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>10,45,537</td>
<td>+19.02</td>
<td>550,337</td>
<td>550,637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### 5A.3.2 SEX RATIO

Along with the first census of the state, records were maintained for the sex ratio of the state as well. The records, until its merger has shown an increasing trend for the overall state but a declining one for the urban area (Baroda city). There was a general problem of under-enumeration of girls. As per the census of India report 1911, special measures were taken for collecting the data for sex ratio owing to the problem of under-enumeration of girls due to ‘pardah’ in certain communities and other customary practices of neglecting a girl child. In the census report it was clearly reported that “It is possible that some portion of unmarried girls, who have passed the age of puberty while still unmarried, and young married women living in *pardah*, may not be reported” (Desai, G., 1911: 132).

*Pardah* however was practiced only among a few upper caste Hindus (such as Rajputs, Marathas and Lewa Kanbis (*Patidars*) and among a few elite Muslim communities (such as the Pathans and the Shaikhs). Therefore there is no possibility of under-enumeration. The decline was generally seen as an outcome of migration or epidemic of plague. (ibid: 134). Albeit, there were discussions on possible causes such as high female mortality (which obviously leads to declining sex ratio) due several reasons like female infanticide in specific communities, neglect of female infants as a general practice, infant and child marriages and premature sexual intercourse, abortions of young widows at the hands of unskilful midwives.
and so on (ibid: 136). These factors are discussed in the religion and caste wise sex ratios later in the chapter.

From the table 5A.2 it is evident that unlike the sex ratio of Baroda state, the city has a sharp decline in its sex ratio. Migration of the male population for employment can be seen as a major cause here. Because the age wise sex ratio of the city shows that the female population in the productive age of 20-50 is the lowest. The age group of 0-5 years where infanticide and neglect is the major cause for mortality, the sex ratio of Baroda city is remarkably higher than that of its state counterpart. It was 990 (0-5 years) in the year 1911 and falls to 838 for the age group of 15-30. This trend is seen even in later years where the female population in the city in the age group of 0-5 years was 949 but declines sharply to 803 in the age group of 15-30 in 1931 (Census of India, 1932: 164). Hence, the decline in the urban areas can be clearly traced to the migration pattern and immigration of adult males to the urban centres in search of livelihood which results in males outnumbering the female population in the city.

However, for the state as well as the city it is imperative to look in to the other causes of declining sex ratio as well. For that it is important to analyse the caste wise as well as religion wise sex ratios along with its social environment, customs and habits to understand the factors influencing the trend in sex ratio.

**TABLE 5A.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sex Ratio of Baroda State</th>
<th>Sex Ratio of Baroda City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India (www.censusofindia.gov.in - the census of princely states in British Rule 1871-1941), Census of India, 1911 and Mukreja, 1941: 16.
5A.3.3 RELIGION AND CASTE WISE SEX RATIO OF BARODA

The religion wise distribution of population is only an indirect and remote indicator of the female index. But the particular social observances of a religion and its rituals and practices may have a direct impact on the figures of female population. Seclusion of women, early marriages, neglect of a girl child and enforced widowhood observed as a part of religious and social practices have their bearing on the female index of a particular area.

As per the religion wise distribution of sex ratio in the state in 1911, Hindus had one of the lowest sex ratio. It has been declining from 924 in 1891 to 918 females per 1000 of males in 1911. In 1911, Jains and Parsis had the highest ratio with 987 and 1,326 respectively owing to absence of early marriages and seclusion of women. For the same reason animistic tribes also had a high ratio. Muslims in spite of the practice of seclusion and marginal decline since 1891 had a better ratio, 939, than their Hindu counterpart in the same year. The distribution in the city shows slightly different pattern because of the migration pattern of different religions. Jains and Parsis, being the entrepreneur groups, migrated maximum to urban centres other than Baroda like Bombay and Poona. The native Christians in the city is a very small group and mainly drawn from the converts from Hinduism, and hence their ratio is more or less the same as that of the Hindus. Looking at the different age groups amongst the religions (which are affected by the emigrant and immigrant pattern) apart from Hindus, in all other religions girls outnumber boys in the age group of 0-5 years. In successive years of age, the ratio for girls in all religions declines owing to migration in the productive age group. It continues to decline in Hindus due to migration as well as practice of early marriages (Desai, G. op cit: 141).

Looking at the caste wise distribution in the year 1911, “the sex ratio amongst the lower castes such as Bhavsar, Chamar, Darji, Dhobi, Garoda, Gola, Luhar, and Sutar was favourable to girls. Whereas there was paucity of girls in the higher castes like Brahmin, Vania, Rajput, Maratha and Kanbi” (Desai, G. op cit: 142). Evidences in the same census report also depict the practice of female infanticide existing amongst the Rajputs and Kanbis. The sex ratio in the year 1911 amongst Rajputs was 839 and amongst Kanbis it was 833. In all the caste groups in the tribal or animists the ratio was fairly above the average.

This trend continues in the following census reports as well. Though after the efforts of British Government in Gujarat and social reforms by Gaikwad, there was a decline in child
and infant marriages however; evidence of lower sex ratio was still found in the state. After
the Infant Marriage Prevention Act was passed in 1929, the census of 1931 did show a
marginal improvement in religion wise and caste wise sex ratios. Hindus improved from 918
in the year 1911 to 940 in the year 1931. Similarly Muslims also showed a marginal
improvement and reached 948 in the same year. Amongst certain tribal groups due to
‘Hinduisation’ there was a decline in the sex ratio. The caste wise distribution also showed a
positive picture after the implementation of the Acts and the reforms especially amongst the
Kanbis and Rajputs where the ratio improved and reached 912 and 925 from 839 and 833
respectively. “Amongst the Kanbis, also known as Lewa Patidars, universalisation of
education helped in extinguishing the practice of infanticide”(Census of India, 1932: 159).
The ‘Pardah’ castes like Marathas and Rajputs in Hinduism and Pathans and Shaikhs in
Islam had the lowest sex ratio in the year 1931. The sex ratio in Baroda city continued to
show the differences according to the age groups in later years as well. Where amongst all the
religious groups the sex ratio in the age group of 0-5 years was high and declined in the
productive age group from 15-30 and even in age group 30 and above. It proved that
migration was the sole factor affecting sex ratio in the urban Vadodara during that time.

5A.3.4 OCCUPATION WISE SEX RATIO

Since the caste status dominated the occupation of the group in India, the occupation
wise sex ratio more or less reflected the same numbers as that of caste wise sex ratio. The
land holding group comprised of Lewa, Anavala, Kadwa and Rajputs had the lowest sex
ratio. Whereas the learned and professional groups like Nagars in Hindus, Saiyed among
Muslims and Parsees showed the highest sex ratio. The artisan groups who belonged to the
low castes groups reported high sex ratio (Census of India, 1932: 156). The data was
demystifying the popular myth of high female status in the economically affluent groups even
as early as 1931.

Hence it can be concluded that in Baroda state customs and traditions of religions and
castes influenced the sex ratio. Whereas, in the urban areas of Baroda city, high rates of male
migration, seems to be the only reason for low sex ratio. The high sex ratio in the age group
of 0-5 years proved complete absence of infanticide, infant marriages or seclusion of women.
When compared to other provinces in India during this period, Baroda under the Gaikwad
reign showed a better picture than Bombay, Bengal and British ruled Gujarat or even better
than that of India in terms of sex ratio (Census of India, 1932: 89).
5A.4 LITERACY AND LEGACY OF WOMEN’S EDUCATION IN BARODA UNDER GAIKWAD REIGN

Although Baroda was not under the British rule directly, which is known for its imposition of modern educational system in India, it was always a pioneer in the field of education and specially in initiating reformative action for women’s education. As put forward by Rajyagor and Tripathy (1979) in the Gujarat state Gazetteer, “The Vadodara state was in the vanguard in the sphere of female education” (Rajyagor and Tripathy, 1979: 670).

Maharaja Sayajirao-III was a herald and forbear of education in Baroda. He had realized the role of education in the socio-economic and cultural development of the state. He had a clear vision, and believed strongly in female education as well. In 1885, Sayajirao-III stressed on the importance of education and stated in the memorandum:

“We cannot do better than educate all our subjects. This is absolutely necessary for the realization of my ambitions and wishes for the future of my people” (Stanley, 1931: 213). “I would particularly emphasise the importance of the education of girls. It is unremitting watchfulness and conciliatory supervision of intelligent and educated mothers which are the powerful factors in giving right tone to infant minds, and which are the best agents for the eradication of crooked ways. Women regulate the social life of people, and men and women rise or fall together. To fit the girls for their function in our social life, I would give my special attention to opening of girl’s schools” (Rajyagor and Tripathy, op cit: 670).

He opened several primary and secondary schools along with the first training college for women teachers in 1882. In 1875, there were just two schools in the state which rose to eight in 1880. In 1892 primary education was made compulsory resulting in a significant rise in literacy levels for both boys and girls. Baroda became the first in not just native areas but in British India to implement this Act. In 1891, the literacy was just 8% and increased to 31% in 1941. There was a noteworthy increase in the literacy rate in the city as well. It was 22% in the year 1891 which almost doubled up to 45% during 1941 (Kantawala, 1992: 146). The number of literates in the English language had more than doubled in the decade from 1921-1931. Female literates had also increased drastically during this time. During the decade 1931-1941, there was a marked rise in female literacy rates of 114.2%. Compared to other states like Bombay Presidency, Gujarat or western India Provinces, at that time, Baroda had the highest female literacy percentage (Mukreja, op cit: 89-90). By the end of the year 1936
there was one college, 2500 primary schools, 75 secondary schools and 26 high schools in Baroda state. Schools were also opened for physically disabled children (www.vmcegov.com).

Sayajirao had realised the importance of higher education, scientific and artistic knowledge and contribution of libraries in these fields. He believed that “Libraries are the only agencies for perpetual, universal self education….they are the integral part of public education” (Nagar, 1992: 11). The central library of Baroda and Kala Bhavan, an institute for technical education are his gifts to Baroda.

For Sayajirao, the role of women should not be constrained to the domestic chores. Though he never advocated radical shift in women’s social responsibility, he made efforts to sharpen her skills through formal and informal type of education. In his opinion, education and economic self-reliance were two major weapons for women’s empowerment. His wife maharani Chimnabai had also propagated the same philosophy and had made contribution in the field of women’s empowerment as well. She was the first one to come out without the ‘pardah’ and had appointed an English tutor for her education (Desai, N. 1992: 248).

Amongst the major steps taken in the field of women’s education some of them were:
- Female Training College: started in 1882 with an aim to train female teachers for primary and secondary schools. It was the first of its kind in the country that time.
- Zenana classes: Special classes were conducted for those girls who could not attend regular schools, owing to pressure of domestic duties.
- Special subjects taught: Advocating traditional social responsibility of women, on Maharaja’s insistence, embroidery, cookery and drawing were also taught along with the regular curriculum in the schools.
- English education: In Girl’s high schools English was taught as a subject. In the year 1910-11, there were 171 girls learning English in the high school (Baroda Administrative report, 1912: 144-146).

There was a remarkable rise in the number of school going girls. The first all-girls school (Maharani School) which started in 1905 had just four students but rose to 222 in the year 1920 (Desai, N., 1992: 250). In 1881 in the entire state there were approximately 1200 girls enrolled in various schools. This number had increased to 70,000 in 1927-28.
formal education and other courses, physical education was an important part of women’s empowerment in schools of Baroda.

**5A.5 SOCIAL REFORMS AND STATUS OF WOMEN IN GAIKWAD REIGN**

Because of his efforts, Sayajirao was rightly described as an “ideal social reformer, multi faceted persona” and under his rule it was “golden era for Baroda, which had also become a centre for women’s emancipation”. (Desai N, op cit: 249). This period was considered as an enlightenment period with several landmark social reforms, introduction of new Acts, efforts for women’s empowerment and building of a ‘cultural capital’ of Gujarat.

As discussed in the section on sex ratio, due to the extravagant cost of marriages amongst certain communities in Gujarat (see notes), female infanticide was very high. Maharaja Sayajirao had realized that the evil of infanticide was a major cause for declining CSR thereby a major hindrance in women’s empowerment. After the British passed the Prevention of Infanticide Act in 1871, Sayajirao was one of the first one to implement it in Baroda state. There was also a wicked practice of marrying off young girls to older men, resulting in large number of young widows. Looking at the plight of widows in Hindu families, The Widow Remarriage Act was passed in Baroda in 1901. Under this Act, widows were allowed to remarry giving their children a legal status as well as a share in the property of the first husband.

Like any other part of the country, child marriages were prevalent in the state as well. Incidences of the same are revealed in the gazetteers, census reports and other accounts of women at that time. It was also a major cause of high rate of school drop outs and lack of education among young girls. Here special mention should be made of the first two women graduates of Gujarat, hailing from Vadodara, Vidyagauri Nilkanth and Shardaben Mehta. In her autobiography ‘Jeevan sambharnaa’, Shardaben, states that early marriages of girls (below the age of 12) in her family were very common. In fact, “12 years of age was the highest limit for girls to get married. In most cases young girls were married to older men or widowed men. Marriage of her elder sister Vidyagauri Nilkanth at a very young age was a major hindrance in continuation of her education. Amidst great difficulties and facing lot of opposition from the society, she (Vidyagauri) could finish her high school and graduation only because of her husband’s support” (Mehta, 1983: 7-10).
Sayajirao also realised that the major hindrance in equal educational opportunities to women was the practice of infant and child marriages prevalent in society. He passed an Act known as Infant Marriages Prevention Act in 1904. The marriage age for girls was decided as 12 and for boys it was 16, ensuring at least primary level education for girls. Strict action was taken against the parents who practiced child or infant marriages. There was a marked decline in the number of young widows and female infant mortality rate. (Desai, N., ibid: 259). This Act was recorded to have had a “high educative value and that under its influence impetus had been given to a movement of reform which among the higher and better educated classes had appreciably raised the age limit for marriage, and which in its turn had influenced, though to a smaller extent, the other classes as well” (Stanley, op cit: 221).

Reforms were also undertaken in the health sector. The census of 1941, very clearly suggests a remarkable decline in maternal mortality rates. This can be owed to wide extension of facilities for the medical relief for men and women. The enlightened policy of providing at least one dispensary within a five mile radius, which would mean provision of medical relief for at least 104 places, had been extended in the decade of 1931-41. In 1940, there were around 117 medical institutions in Baroda state. The extension of medical relief to women in particular had received marked attention during the decade. Several steps like antenatal advice, organising child welfare and maternity relief clinics and training nurses were undertaken under the trust of Maharani Shanta Devi. The efforts had a prominent positive impact on maternal and infant mortality in the state and city. The infant mortality had declined from 35.2% of live births in 1920 to 21.3% in 1940. Maternal mortality in the city was controlled and brought down from 14 to only 5 of total deliveries (Mukreja, op cit: 23).

In 1905, Hindu Marriage Act was passed legalizing inter caste, intercommunity and hypergamy marriages. It was a major step in the area of eradicating the rigid endogamy of caste system. There were several other Acts like, Hindu Inheritance Act 1910, Hindu Divorce Act 1931 passed and implemented during this time giving immense power to woman in terms of equal rights and freedom from economic slavery. In one of his speeches Sayajirao had stated that “Working hard for women in this new era is not enough. She should have equal contribution in the household decisions. There should be deliberate efforts to attain this. There should be invention of new machines making her life easier in the household and other creative activities…She should be given freedom to change the basic structure of the
household…Efforts from both the sides would ensure construction of a new modern society” (Bhagwat and Captain, 2004: 92).

Several women’s associations and women’s organizations were started during this time, they helped women to get formal and informal education, self employment, health facilities, recreational and fitness facilities and a platform to assemble and fight for their rights. Some of these that are worth mentioning are Maharani Chimnabai maternity league, Shri Chimnabai stree udhogalay (self employment and training centre), Chimnabai vihar club, stree mahasabha mandal, ladies sports centre, All India women’s association (AIWA), Arya Kanya Mahavidyalaya. With the help of these institutions women became economically, socially, politically and culturally self sufficient and independent. These efforts and reforms in totality can be viewed as the foundations on which Vadodara established itself as the ‘sanskaar nagari’ of Gujarat.

As it was rightly said, Baroda in the Gaikwad reign was in the ‘golden era’ where it became one of the most progressive states of British India. Women’s literacy, maternal health care and social reforms for women empowerment made a long term impact on the overall status of women in the state. In spite of the influence of general normative constructions regarding role of women, Baroda did project itself as a role model for gender equality and empowerment. The sex ratio pattern in the age group of 0-5 years clearly indicated absence or negligible incidences of female infanticide and the decline in the sex ratio in the urban areas in the productive age group points at the impact of large scale migration of men in search of livelihood. And hence, it is important then to understand the transition from the glorious past of the state to the hitherto situation where Vadodara is witnessing a dismal decline in the sex ratio, especially in CSR. It is crucial to look at the factors that played a role in this decline.
INTRODUCTION

As seen in the previous section, Vadodara was at the forefront of development during Gaikwad reign. Not just in terms of economic development, but even in social parameters like literacy and gender equality, it had made its mark. Hence, it is important to note the major changes that came about in its socio-cultural and economic composition after its merger, as part of Gujarat with Independent India which altered the status of women particularly in the context of sex ratio and CSR. This section, which is the section- B, which is in continuation of the earlier section of the chapter, gives an insight into the major demographic and socio-economic transitions that took place in Vadodara after its merger in 1949.

After independence, like many other Princely states and Provinces in India, Vadodara too merged with the Independent India. It ceased to be a state and became a part of Bombay Presidency and later after 1st May 1961 it became one of the 26 districts in Gujarat. Even after the merger, Vadodara continued to be a socio-economically and culturally important centre for Gujarat. Geographically it covers 7,794sq.km of the area and as per the 2011 census it is the third most populous district after Ahmedabad and Surat with a population of 41.58 lakhs. Vadodara, for the administrative functioning, is further divided in to 12 talukas (sub districts) namely Chhota Udaipur, Dabhoi, Karjan, Kwant, Naswadi, Padra, Pavijetpur, Sankheda, Savli, Sinor, Vadodara City and Waghodia. The district comprises of 1,537 villages, 11 statutory towns and 14 census towns. (District census handbook, 2001: xvii and Census of India, 2011: 59)

Vadodara district is one of the rapidly urbanising districts of Gujarat. Large industries and higher education facilities located in Vadodara district have helped in rapid urbanisation of the district. About 45 percent of the district population resides in the urban areas as against 38 percent in the state (Das et al, 2003: 8). The city of Vadodara is one of the fastest growing urban centres of the district. Since the study concentrates only on Vadodara city of the district, the following discussion will limit itself to the composition and characteristics of Vadodara city vis-a-vis the district. The city of Vadodara, like in Gaikwad reign, continues to
be an important location in the district. It has attracted a large number of immigrants not just from Gujarat but all over the country due to its industrial and educational significance. In terms of population, the city is one of the most populous cities of Gujarat and has witnessed a rising trend in population as well as in density since Independence. In 1951, the population of Vadodara city was 2, 11,407 which rose continuously reached up to 16, 66,703 in 2011 as per the census records. In terms of density the city is growing as well. In terms of density from 9,527 per sq.km in 1991 it has increased to 11,021 per sq.km 2011 (Das, 2006: 3; Mehta, 2012: 53).

However, this increase in the population and urbanisation has not been gender neutral or balanced. There has been a sharp decline in the CSR of Vadodara both at the district as well as the city level, which is discussed later in the chapter.
5B.1 RELIGION AND CASTE COMPOSITION OF VADODARA

Religion and caste are important variables in understanding the ethnography and demography of a region. It further reflects the socio-cultural background, traditions and normative constructions in a particular society. The composition of population based on religion in Vadodara reflects more or less the same trend as that of Gujarat state and the nation at large. As per the Gazetteer of Vadodara based on 1971 census the district comprised of predominantly Hindu population with almost 90% of them following Hinduism followed by Muslims which were 7.8%. Unlike the national trend Jainism is the third largest religion in the district. The reason can be that Jains are dominant business community of Gujarat and the geographical location of Vadodara as a golden corridor for commerce and trade attracts them to the district. There are a very small number of Buddhists (289) in the district which are difficult to reflect in the distribution table (Rajyagor and Tripathy, 1979: 161). There are no significant changes in last 30 years in terms of religion-wise distribution of population. The city further reflects a similar composition with marginal differences. The majority i.e. 84% of the population in Vadodara city follows Hinduism. Muslims account for 11%. Here too Jains comprise the third largest group for the same reason of migration to the
urban areas for economic activity. The following table enumerates the major religious communities in Gujarat, Vadodara district and Vadodara city.

### TABLE 5B.1
**DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGION IN GUJARAT, VADODARA DISTRICT AND VADODARA CITY (2001)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELIGION</th>
<th>Gujarat (in %)</th>
<th>Vadodara district (in %)</th>
<th>Vadodara city (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>84.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhism</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jainism</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District census handbook, 2001 and (Yellosa, A., 2009: 468)

The major castes in Vadodara amongst Hindus includes Brahmin, Rajput, Maratha, Vania, Luhana, Patel(Lewa Patidar), Kachhia, Mali, Bharvad, Rabai, Bhavsar, Darji, Ghanchi, Gola, Kansara, Khatri, Kumbhhar, Luhr, Mochi, Salat, Soni, Suthar, Bhat, Charan, Dhobi, Hajam, Bhoi, Bajania, Kharva, Machhi And Vaghari. Among the Muslims Shaikh, Saiyed, Mughal, Pathan, Vohra, Ghanchi, Fakir, Khoja are the major caste groups (Rajyagor and Tripathy, op cit: 170). Chamar, Mocha, Bhangi, Rukhi, Mehtar are some of the scheduled castes (SC) in the district. Whereas Bhil and several sub groups amongst Bhils, Chodhara, Dhankas, Naikas are some of the scheduled tribes (ST) in the district. The majority of tribal groups are found in Chhota Udepur, Nasvadi, Sankheda and Dabhoi talukas of the district (ibd: 187-190).

The SC and ST population in Vadodara city comprise a very small group. Unlike Gujarat state and Vadodara district where the population of ST is higher than the SC population, the city’s ST population makes for only 4% of the total population compared to 6.8% of SC population. The rural to urban migration among these two groups is marginal owing to its unskilled or semiskilled nature of work in the farms, thus making them unfit for the industrial work in the city. As discussed in the economic composition of the city later in the chapter, Vadodara’s major economic contribution comes from tertiary sector which
absorbs the skilled and literate workforce. As per the Gazetteer the majority of SCs were illiterate in 1971 (35% was their literacy rates). However, with government policies and reservations there has been tremendous growth in literacy of these groups. Even in rural Vadodara the literacy rate among the SC groups has risen to 69% in 2001 (District census handbook, 2001: 50) On the other hand, the literacy rate among the STs continues to be low.

### TABLE 5B.2
SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE POPULATION IN GUJARAT, VADODARA DISTRICT AND VADODARA CITY (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gujarat (in %)</th>
<th>Vadodara district (in %)</th>
<th>Vadodara city (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled tribes</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### 5B.2 ECONOMIC COMPOSITION OF VADODARA-OCCUPATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME

Gujarat has been the front runner in the overall development of the country in the post-Independence era. With just 6% of India’s geographical area and 5% of the population of India, the state account for 21% of the country’s exports and 6.42% of the national GDP. South and central Gujarat is the industrial backbone of the Gujarat economy. Vadodara, an important centre in central Gujarat due to its geographical location, has been a golden corridor for internal and inter-state trade and industrial activities. With initial development in chemical industries and agro based fertilizers industry like Gujarat refinery, Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals (GSFC), Indian Petrochemical Corporation limited and Gujarat Alkalis and Chemical Limited (GACL) it has promoted many small scale industries in its vicinity (Vadodara Municipal Corporation report, 2010: 2-7). It has also attracted a good number of migrants for its employment opportunities, making Vadodara a cosmopolitan hub of Gujarat. City’s economy depends mainly on tertiary sector (58.89% in 1991).

The work participation rate has marginally improved from 1991 to 2001 from 30% to 32%. There is a huge gap between the male and female work participation rates. In 2001, there was 52% of male work participation compared to mere 9.6% of female work participation (Das, 2006: 1). As discussed earlier the majority of the work force in Vadodara city is engaged in non-agricultural, non-manufacture industries. The cultivators, agricultural labourers and household industry workers account for only 11% of the total workforce and
the remaining 89% is engaged in tertiary (trade and commerce) and service sectors. The male-female ratio in the sector-wise workforce more or less remains equal. i.e. majority of males and females are absorbed by tertiary sector of economy (District census handbook, 2001: 61).

In terms of ranking in income, Vadodara ranks fourth amongst the districts of Gujarat (Hirway and Mahadevia, 2004: 277). However, the rate of urban poverty is also quite high. A survey of basic services in the urban slums of Vadodara identified 96,000 families (2.8 lakhs) as falling below the poverty line i.e. the families were drawing an income of Rs 373 per capita per month. In other words, it would appear that 36% of the population of Vadodara lives below the poverty line (Vadodara Municipal Corporation, 2010: 5).

In last couple of decades, for several reasons, Vadodara has seen a downfall in workforce participation ratio and economic growth. The city’s growth rate has declined from 57% in 1981 to 27% in 2001 (Vadodara Municipal Corporation, 2010: 7). Competition in the global market, growth of Surat and Ahmedabad as major centres for trade and commerce for global investment and closure of several industrial units have all contributed to this decline. Even the workforce participation is lower at 32% compared to Surat which is 38%. Downsizing and voluntary retirement schemes in major industries have all contributed to this downfall in the economic growth.

5B.3 LITERACY RATES OF VADODARA

As mentioned in the previous section, right from the Gaikwad reign Vadodara has always been the centre for educational institutions and has retained a high literacy level throughout history. The establishment of Maharaja Sayajirao University in 1949 has carried the legacy and patronage of education of Gaikwad reign even after the merger. It was the only University with English as the only medium of instruction for all the courses. It houses 13 faculties and caters to over 1,00,000 students. The city boasts of its high level of literates coming from 120 public schools and 100 private schools. The district ranks 10th in literacy rate amongst the districts of Gujarat.

The literacy rates since 1949 have seen a rising trend and have always stood much higher than the literacy averages of Gujarat or India as a whole. Both at the district as well at the city level there is remarkable improvement in literacy levels (see TABLE-5B3). In 1961
the literacy rate of Vadodara city was 54%, when the literacy of Gujarat was mere 30.5% and that of India was 28.3%. It has risen in Vadodara and has reached up to 87.15% in 2001 wherein its Gujarat counterpart was 69.96% and the literacy in India was 65.3%. As per the census records of the latest census of 2011, the literacy of Vadodara was 93.37% Gujarat was 79.3% and that of India 74.04%. This clearly proves that the average literacy rate of Vadodara has always been high making it one of the most literate cities in the country. Women’s literacy rate is also very high owing to the historical reforms by Maharaja. At district level the rise is of almost 15% in last one decade. Even at the city level there is a considerable rise in women’s literacy. In 2011 the literacy rate of women in Vadodara was 88.99. There is an incessant rise from 1991 where it was 75.9 to further rise in 2001 when it was 82.44%. An increase of 13% in last two decades confirms the statement of Vadodara being the pioneer and promoter in women’s education.

### TABLE 5B.3

**OVERALL AND FEMALE LITERACY RATES OF VADODARA DISTRICT AND VADODARA CITY 2001-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy (in%)</th>
<th>Vadodara district</th>
<th>Vadodara city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70.76</td>
<td>81.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60.73</td>
<td>74.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Census of India, 2011: 54-56)

However, contrary to the popular myth that high women’s education signifies women’s empowerment, the declining CSR in Vadodara city proves it otherwise.

### 5B.4 TRENDS IN SEX RATIO AND THE CHILD SEX RATIO (0-6 YRS) - THE DEBACLE OF DECLINE

As discussed in the earlier chapters (Chapter I and IV) and also in the previous section, Vadodara too shared the problem of declining sex ratio with Gujarat in particular and India in general. Though it wasn’t rampant, the historical problem of female infanticide in certain communities continued even after the merger where evidence shows a continuous decline in sex ratio till 1970s. After 1970s with the introduction of new reproductive technologies (NRTs) and sex determination techniques in India, the former practice changed to female foeticide in a more rampant manner in 1980s in Vadodara. It started with sex determination tests with the help of dangerous techniques like amniocentesis or corean villi
biopsy (CVB) in 1980s and 1990s and later the process was made easier with the introduction of ultrasound technology.

Though the overall sex ratio in the district as well as in the city has increased after 1981, this is more due to the migration pattern in the urban areas and does not indicate anything about the female foeticide or sex selective abortion. It is only when we examine the CSR in the age group of 0-6 years that we realize the extent to which the evil of sex selective abortion has spread in the district as well as in the city.

**TABLE 5B.4**

**SEX RATIO OF VADODARA DISTRICT AND VADODARA CITY 1951-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sex ratio of Vadodara district</th>
<th>Sex ratio of Vadodara city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>934*</td>
<td>922*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India-2001 and *Census of India, 2011a- Rural-urban distribution: 17

**TABLE 5B.5**

**CHILD/JUVENILE SEX RATIO (0-6YRS) OF VADODARA DISTRICT AND CITY SINCE 1991**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CSR AS PER THE CENSUS</th>
<th>CSR AS PER THE BIRTH REGISTRATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara district</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara city</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>839</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 5B.6
DIFFERENCE IN SEX WISE BIRTH -REGISTRATION FIGURES, VADODARA CITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Difference between the male-female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>11072</td>
<td>10150</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>10886</td>
<td>9501</td>
<td>1375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>11576</td>
<td>9638</td>
<td>2208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>13469</td>
<td>11745</td>
<td>1752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>15179</td>
<td>13204</td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 2011.

From the figures indicated in the tables 5B.4, 5B.5 and 5B.6 certain facts can be inferred in its primary reading

- Vadodara city has always had lower sex ratio than the district figures.
- The city of Vadodara has continuously seen a decline in the CSR in last two decades (except for the marginal improvement of 2011).
- In last two censuses (2001 and 2011) the CSR is well below 900. That is much lower than the average of Gujarat (886) and also that of India (914).
- The difference between urban Vadodara and rural Vadodara is startling. The sex ratio of children below the age of 1 year in rural Vadodara was 893 in 2001 where the urban figures are lowest at 797. This means there is a vast difference of 100 points in the CSR between the rural and urban areas. The extent of female foeticide in urban areas is much more than rural Vadodara. (Report by Health and Family Department, 2010: 9).
- Nine out of twelve talukas of Vadodara district have shown a declining trend in the decade 1991 to 2001.
- The decline in Vadodara city is one of the sharpest in the district from 1991 to 2001 with the absolute change of -72 points.
- According to 2011 census, amongst the 26 districts, Vadodara district ranks 15th and 14th respectively for the ranking of sex ratio and CSR in Gujarat.
- Almost 2000 female foetuses are eliminated every year in Vadodara city. (Calculated based on the CSR figures and the campaign material collected from the civil society organisations in Vadodara).
The sex determination test (SD) and sex selective abortion (SSA) had spread in Vadodara since 1980s. In first two decades amniocentesis and CVB were the popular methods. However in these methods there was a great risk involved to the health of the mother and the foetus. After 2000, a much safer method of Ultra sound Sonography (USG) to detect the sex of the foetus in the second trimester of pregnancy was developed. As per the study conducted by SAHIYAR STREE SANGATHAN, an NGO in Vadodara, in 1987 alone there were 2400 SD tests conducted (Shah, T. et al, 2002). As per the Table 5B.7 it is observed that the sex ratio of Vadodara city after the rampant use of SD and SSA (introduced in 1980s) had declined rapidly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sex ratio at Birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>809</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Within the district of Vadodara there is a vast difference in the CSR of various areas of urban agglomeration. The tribal area of Vaghodia has the highest ratio of 1,128 where as the Petrochemical complex has lowest with just 726. The industrial areas of GSFC, Bajwa, Tarsali or Nandesari has comparatively low ratio. Often the low ratio in industrial areas are attributed to high male migration but cannot be a factor here as the CSR mentioned here is of 0-6 years to which migration does not influence. The CSR in Vadodara city (under Municipal Corporation) is also lower than its district counterpart. These figures indicate that better industrialisation or urbanisation has further worsened the CSR. A preliminary assumption can be made that better access to new reproductive technologies (NRTs), better economic capabilities to incur the high expenditure to make use of such technologies, high levels of literacy and awareness, high rate of consumerist attitude induced by industrialisation has all resulted in increase in sex determination tests followed by sex selective abortions leading to decline in CSR.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Urban agglomeration/town</th>
<th>Sex ratio for 0-6 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara district (Urban)</td>
<td>834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara (Mun.corporation)</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jawaharnagar (Guj. Refinery)</td>
<td>914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrochemicals complex</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bajwa</td>
<td>833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarsali</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karachiya</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nandesari</td>
<td>729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSFC Complex</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranoli</td>
<td>902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaghodia</td>
<td>1128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Looking at the religion-wise CSR of Vadodara, Sikhs and Jains have the lowest CSR. As discussed earlier in chapter-I, Sikhs all over India has daughter deficit. What is more startling in Vadodara is the low CSR amongst Jains who being numerically small but economically prosperous community with a major principle of non-violence contradicts the popular myth about CSR varying inversely with economic prosperity or socio-cultural norms. However census data or demographic figures has its own limitations and is unable to give a causal relation between the two. It needs to be probed further.

Amongst the SC and ST population of the city, CSR continues to be lower than the district; however it is higher than the ratio of overall population in urban areas. One can assert from the following two tables that within the city of Vadodara, the SC and ST population has slightly better ratio than the industrial areas in the city.
TABLE 5B.9
RELIGION-WISE CSR IN VADODARA, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Jain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSR (0-6 yrs)</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India - 2001, Registrar General of India

TABLE 5B.10
SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBES SEX RATIO IN VADODARA, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Scheduled caste</th>
<th>Scheduled tribes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara district</td>
<td>921</td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara city</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District census handbook, 2001

There were campaigns undertaken by Sahiyar along with others in Vadodara in 1987-88. The group which was formed was called garbhajati parikshan virodhi manch (forum against sex determination tests) on the similar lines as that of FASDSP in Mumbai. Their campaign continued till 1994 using the data from their own study and conducting public awareness programmes. The marginal rise in the sex ratio at birth in the year 1997-98 can be attributed to the implementation of PNDT Act in the year 1996. However, as per the census records of all the years after that, there is a decline due to weak execution or complete absence of action taken under PNDT Act (Shah, Ghelani and Choksi: 2002, 8-10). The evil needs to be looked at from different perspectives, with different variables; it could be the occupation or class structure, religious or caste composition and the literacy levels of the population in Vadodara city. The present study in its subsequent chapters will be attempting to find out the micro structures and normative construction of a girl child in Vadodara resulting in the declining CSR.

5B.5 SEX RATIO AND CSR-2011: A RAY OF HOPE?

After a dark history of dismal CSR and a long battle against it, the city of Vadodara in last census had a reason to smile. Along with the CSR of Gujarat which was on rise from 883 in 2001 to 886 from 2001 to 2011, Vadodara too witnessed a rise from 834 in 2001 to 860 (Census of India, 2011). Within the district most of the towns and urban agglomeration saw a
marginal to substantial rise in CSR in last decade (see table 5B.11). However, the ratio still falls much shorter to the national average of 914.

**TABLE 5B.11**

**DECENNIAL CHANGES IN CSR IN URBAN AGGLOMERATION OF VADODARA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara (Mun.corporation)</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jawaharnagar (Guj. Refinery)</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrochemicals complex</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bajwa</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarsali</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karachiya</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nandesari</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSFC Complex</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranoli</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District census handbook, 2011.

The rise can be attributed to several factors including the government campaign of ‘beti bachao’ (discussed in detail in chapter VII C), implementation of PCPNDT (Often seen as a deterrent), stringent action against the laboratories, sonologists and radiologists, medical practitioners, awareness campaigns using ICT, Advocacy workshops, sensitisation programmes with the help of media and roping religious leaders in the campaign has all collectively resulted in this positive trend in the state (Didyala, 2009: 1). These are further probed during the field work and discussed at length in the chapters on the analysis of the field data.

Among the factors that affect the sex ratio and CSR of a given area directly or indirectly, reproductive health of women, maternal mortality, infant mortality, birth order and age at marriage also play an important role. They are discussed here with special reference to Vadodara.
The Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) programme was launched in 1997 across the country with focused attention on greater community involvement, removal of contraceptive targets, decentralized planning, improving quality of care and reducing gender discrimination through building gender sensitivity in programme formulation and implementation. “In keeping with India’s Population Policy, the State Population Policy for Gujarat also strives at improving the quality of lives of the people, empowering women, reducing gender discrimination, ensuring support to achieve replacement level fertility of 2.1 by 2010 and respecting the reproductive rights of men and women” (Das, et al, 2003: 7).

Vadodara with its literate, urbanised and developed population has been pro-active in implementing the above mentioned programmes. The Vadodara Municipal Corporation’s Health Department offers ante-natal care services at no cost to slum-dwelling pregnant women through its Health Posts and Family Welfare Centres. The Family Welfare Program of the Corporation provides various health and nutrition services, such as family planning, maternal, and child-health services, which include ante-natal care services, immunization of mothers and children, nutrition health education, and emergency health-care services in case of epidemics and natural calamities such as floods. In this urban setting, multiple healthcare facilities are available to these women in government hospitals, family welfare centres, and aanganwadis, as well as clinics of private medical practitioners. Aanganwadis are centres run by the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), a national-level nutrition program in India for pre-school children, pregnant and lactating women, and women between 15 and 45 years of age belonging to the low socio-economic group. There are around 300 ICDS aanganwadis under Vadodara Municipal Corporation. Each Aanganwadi covers a population of 1,000 in urban and rural areas and 700 in tribal areas (Ghanekar, Kanani and Patel, 2002: 65).

But in spite of the various government programmes and policies implemented for improving the reproductive rights of women in Vadodara district, it lags behind in reducing the infant and maternal mortality and curbing its total fertility rate, particularly in the rural areas. Even in urban areas the prevalence of anaemia amongst the women in their reproductive age is high. According to a study conducted by the Department of food and nutrition of M.S. University amongst pregnant women in slums of Vadodara, the haemoglobin analysis revealed that 75% of the women were anemic (haemoglobin < 11 g/dl),
and 13% had severe anemia (haemoglobin < 7 g/dl) (Ghanekar et al, ibid). Another study conducted by the medical college to understand the health seeking behaviour amongst the pregnant women in urban slums of Vadodara revealed for nutritional supplementation, most of the women only occasionally visited aanganwadi. They seldom consumed the supplementary food given at aanganwadi. They either gave it to their children or shared with family members (Kotecha et al, 2012: 30). However it is evident from the same study that women prefer institutional deliveries and that too at private hospitals in order to seek better health care services. As per the District level health study (DLHS) report of 2007-08, the rate of women opting for institutional delivery in Vadodara is 50-60% (DLHS III, 2008: 7) (See figure 5.1). Reproductive health further influence the maternal mortality and infant mortality rates which are important aspects determining the CSR.

### FIGURE 5B.1
INSTITUTIONAL DELIVERIES OF WOMEN IN VADODARA

![Bar chart showing institutional deliveries of women in Vadodara](Source: DLHS-III, Gujarat: Vadodara, Government of India)

#### 5B.6.1 MATERNAL MORTALITY IN VADODARA

Maternal mortality is the outcome of a complex web of causal factors that include social, economic, educational, political and cultural causes as well as issues such as gender inequity, state of physical infrastructure, geographic terrain and the health system. India has been grappling against the issue of high maternal mortality rate (MMR) for ages. The latest record of MMR in 2010-12 is 178 women per 100,000 which have reduced from 254 in 2004-06. Comparatively Gujarat with its better economic development and availability of health facilities has still not managed to reduce its MMR. It was 178 in 2010-2012 which had increased from 160 in 2004-06 (www.censusindia.gov.in/MMR). No official data is available on the maternal mortality rates of Vadodara at city or district level. But from the
data retrieved from records displayed at Sir Sayaji Rao Gaikwad General Hospital (SSG), the average number of maternal mortality is 10-12 a month. One can infer from this micro level data about the MMR of Vadodara being on a higher side. Despite having a high rate of institutional deliveries and good quality of medical infrastructure for natal care, Vadodara’s MMR is high. This speaks volumes about the state of gender empowerment in the city as well as the district.

5B.6.2 INFANT MORTALITY IN VADODARA

Due to the high rate of institutional deliveries, better health care facilities, high level of literacy and awareness, and policies like Janani Suraksha Yojana and Chiranjeevi Yojana by the state government the infant mortality rate in urban Vadodara is constantly falling down. Unlike Gujarat, where the infant mortality has increased from 2001 to 2003, Vadodara has witnessed a rapid decline (See table 5B.12).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5B.12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFANT DEATHS REGISTERED IN GUJARAT AND VADODARA DISTRICT (2001-03)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>6731</td>
<td>8971</td>
<td>6135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadodara</td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>1481</td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Although the infant mortality rate shows a positive picture of the survival of the child in Vadodara, it doesn’t reveal anything about the gender equality in the survival rate. Study conducted on gender difference in nutritional status of children below 5 years in Vadodara city revealed that “malnourishment was more amongst girls (62.8%) than boys (58%). The possible explanation for the same are given as negligence of girls, poor nutrition, morbidity, less health care facilities and over all lower status of girl child” (Bhalani and Kotecha, 2002: 125). The change in malnourishment levels from 1996 to 1998 reports 20.2% of girl’s condition worsens in terms of malnourishment compared to 15% of boys, clearly suggesting a privileged position of male gender. According to Indian Academy of Paediatrics, 22.4% of children in Vadodara city were moderately or severely malnourished with a significant difference between male (16.9%) and female (28.4%) children (Bhalani and Kotecha, op cit: 129).
5B.6.3 BIRTH ORDER AND AGE OF MOTHER

As an impact of several laws preventing child and infant marriages passed by the Gaikwads and high literacy rate amongst women have contributed to push the means age of marriage amongst girls. The age at marriage has gone up in post Independence era. According to DLHS III, from 22% (DLHS II) of women marrying before the age of 18 years has gone down to 20%. Late marriages have also contributed to smaller number of children born per household. Following table indicates that maximum child birth of the first order has been in the age group of 20-24 and that of the second order is in the age group 25-29. Is also indicates that a very small number has delivered children in the age below 15. Also almost 50% of the women reported of having two or less than two children in the age group of 20-24 (DLHS-III, 2008).

### TABLE-5 B.13
LIVE BIRTHS BY BIRTH ORDER AND AGE OF MOTHER (VADODARA)-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth Order</th>
<th>Below 15</th>
<th>15-19</th>
<th>20-24</th>
<th>25-29</th>
<th>30-34</th>
<th>35-39</th>
<th>40-44</th>
<th>45 &amp; Above</th>
<th>Not stated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>7860</td>
<td>4239</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>13731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>3590</td>
<td>3782</td>
<td>1417</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>1295</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: retrieved from www.indiastats.com (official website of registrar general, Govt. of Gujarat.).

Analysing the different aspects of reproductive health of women in Vadodara, it can be inferred that low infant mortality and better health facilities improve the chances of survival for a girl child. However, the gender discrimination in terms of malnourishment amongst infant girl child, anaemia amongst women in reproductive age group, high maternal mortality rates and two child norms adversely affect the survival chances of girl child. These are the factors that play important role in deciding the size and sex composition of the family which eventually affects the CSR of the city.
5B.7 WOMEN IN VADODARA AND GODHRA RIOTS OF 2002

As one of the biggest blot in the history of Gujarat in the recent past Godhra riots of 2002 have not just changed the equations between religions but the violence against women has been at its worst putting her status in danger in the wider socio-economic milieu. A state where already the normative construction of a girl child gives her a secondary position, religious militancy and patriarchy as a combination can further devalue her. A couple of studies have been undertaken by civil society organisations like People’s Union of Civil Liberty (PUCL) and Citizen’s Initiative (Ahmedabad) to assess the impact of riots on women in Gujarat in general and Vadodara in particular. Fact-finding teams who visited various affected bastis and relief camps run by the jamaats in Vadodara have gathered a large number of testimonies and accounts of the violence from women.

The wide range of data collected by fact-finding teams reveal that the violence in Vadodara affected most women in some way or the other. Lives of minority women have of course changed drastically. However, women from all communities were affected by the fear and terror promoted by the state and the police. Hindu women were caught in a fear psychosis about attacks by the ‘other’. This largely stemmed from rumours that were being systematically spread by communal organisations in different areas, through various pamphlets and booklets, as well as rumour mongering by the local press.

Women, in particular, were subject to extreme forms of harassment by the Police in their own homes. In many cases this occurred when men had fled their homes out of fear of police repression. Police remained mute spectators to the stone throwing and abuses hurled by the mobs instigating violence. In addition the police forcibly entered Muslim homes, destroying property and assaulting and arresting innocent men, beating women (not even sparing pregnant women), issuing sexual and communal threats in abusive language, and vandalising their houses (PUCL, 2002: 7 and Hameed et al, 2002).

Dalit women did, more or less, allied with the upper castes during the violence. This has been seen in areas like Bavamanpura, Navidharti, Navayard and Fatehpura. This has resulted in the Hinduisation of Dalit women on a scale never before witnessed in Vadodara. Dalit women, frequently working class, have been badly hit by the post-Godhra violence. Continuous curfew as well as the atmosphere of fear has resulted in acute economic distress. Many women who worked as daily wagers or domestic help could not reach their places of
work, and many have lost employment. Loss of earnings has resulted in a rising incidence of
impoverishment and hunger.

“Overarching fear has become a part and parcel of life for women. Every woman we
met displayed a fear of the future - for herself, her family and her community. Although fear
and insecurity has permeated society at large, women contend with additional fears about
sexual assault and abuse as well as with fear for safety of family members, particularly
children. Insecurity is far more apparent at relief camps and when women have themselves
experienced or witnessed violence. All women reiterated their fears for a future where even a
basic guarantee to life and property could not be taken for granted. Even women who had not
suffered personal loss felt caught in the violence, merely by virtue of belonging to the
minority community” (PUCL, 2002: 5-13).

There has also been an overall devaluation of women and girl child in both
communities as communalism or religious militancy is often associated with masculinity
(Anand, 2007; Banerjee, 2003). A general belief was that one needs to have more sons to
protect not just one’s family but one’s religion against the other. Women often become the
gateway to make ‘impure’ the other religion by the means of rape. And hence, the general
attitude feared by the civil society organisation is “it is better to have less of them to avoid the
burden of protecting their virginity, chastity or modesty”. Although not much data could be
gathered on the subject and it is also difficult to judge the extent to which the riots may have
affected the attitude of the communities deepening the son-preference, nevertheless, it is
important not to ignore this factor altogether. It is imperative for the study to examine the
presence of this attitude in both the communities as it further contribute to the decisions
whether to have a girl child or not. A special effort has been made during the field work to
gauge the existence and extent to which such an attitude prevails amongst Hindus and
Muslims of Vadodara.

5B. 8 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN VADODARA: A BRIEF PROFILE

As seen in the previous section of the chapter as well, civil society organisations have
been at the forefront and have played pivotal role in the socio-economic development and
empowerment of women in Vadodara. Even in the post independence and globalization era,
civil society organisations and Non Government Organisations (NGO) continue to contribute
towards the emancipation of the society. There are a number of them working for social causes and particularly in the area of gender justice and empowerment.

➢ There are 34 NGOs in Baroda city and 20 NGOs in the rural areas of the district working for women and children. Majority of the NGOs have been established more than five years back.
➢ The main source of funding for the city based NGOs is through individual donations, followed by funding from other sources while income from fee and charges for services is reported as a source of funding by other NGOs. In the rural areas, all the NGOs receive government aid to carry out their activities.
➢ Regarding the activities of these NGOs, most have reported about carrying out educational or counselling activities, carrying out health check-up or providing special assistance in government programmes. A number of NGOs in the rural areas are also providing curative health services.
➢ Educational activities such as organizing balwadis, aanganwadis or ashramshalas or providing nutritional supplements for children are the other activities reported by various NGOs.
➢ A small number in the urban area are engaged in undertaking special programmes for women such as income generating activities or formation of self help groups while a few are conducting vocational training (Das, et al. 2003: 65).
➢ There are a few of them like Sahiyar, Olakh amongst others who especially work in the areas of emancipation and empowerment of women. They have also initiated and participated in various campaigns to save the girl child and thereby improve the CSR in Vadodara.

However, the contribution and impact these organisations have had on the CSR is yet to be assessed. The present study will do so through interviews of general population and civil society organisations working in Vadodara. It also covers the aspects of awareness of these campaigns amongst the population of Vadodara.

CONCLUSION

The section gives a broad picture of the transition in demographic and ethnographic characteristics of Vadodara from pre-Gaikwad progressive period to the post-Independence period marked by economic, political and socio-cultural changes. It is very important to keep in mind the ethnographic details discussed in this section to understand the problem of
declining sex ratio in Vadodara city. The demographic details pertaining to the religion, caste, linguistic communities, literacy, work participation, economic growth forms the base for conducting the field study. They all are related to the sex ratio and influence the trend in sex ratio of the city. The cosmopolitan, urbanised and economically developed nature of the city seem to adversely affect the CSR. This requires a micro-level and in depth investigation.

The reproductive health of women and related issues need to be located in the larger structure of status of women. The state of her reproductive health has a bearing on the survival of the girl child and decisions regarding the size and sex composition of the family. It needs to be linked with the normative construction of girl child in Gujarat which is discussed in detail in the next chapter. Post-Godhra riots it also become important to consider the impact of religious militancy associated with masculinity and its impact on son-preference or daughter aversion. The profile of civil society organisation helps to lay the foundation in understanding the campaigns pertaining to save the girl child. In nutshell, ethnographic data of Vadodara lays the foundation on which the present study builds its arguments and analysis.

NOTES
1. The necessity of marrying girls in the higher social groups and extravagant cost involved in the daughter’s wedding amongst these two communities (Kanbis/Patidars and Rajputs), had lead to an evil practice of killing girls by plunging them into a pot of milk, immediately after birth. This custom was known as ‘doodh piti’ (making the child drink milk).

2. Urban agglomeration is a concept adopted for the first time in 1971 in the Census of India. It was an improvement over the concept of town group adopted in the 1961 census. Very often the town grows beyond the statutory limit of the city. These outgrowths may or may not be qualified to be treated as separate towns but deserve to be considered in urban areas. Such an area with its outgrowth is treated as one urban unit and called urban agglomeration. It includes railway colony, university campus, port areas, industrial areas etc. In case of Vadodara the outgrowth mainly comprises of industrial areas (District census handbook, 1991: 15).
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