CHAPTER - 6

The Middle Class Educated Women and Women Organizations in Gujarat-1880-1947

I

The Middle Class Women of late nineteenth century: General

The significant impact of the education movement for women in late nineteenth century was the substantial increase in the formally educated women. However, women's education movement had not percolated to the lower section of the society. Till 1920, the movement continued to remain restricted to cities and towns and to the upper section of the society as discussed earlier. After 1920, the process of mobilization of masses for the freedom struggle began. It was during this stage that substantial numbers of educational institutions were set up in villages and tribal areas all across the country. As a result of this, tribal boys and girls had access to the formal education system.

The main beneficiaries of late nineteenth and early twentieth century women education movement were urban girls particularly from upper
section of the society. This is because most of the educational institutions were in cities and towns. There were ten training schools for women in Bombay presidency around 1889-1900. One of them was in the city of Ahmedabad namely the Mahalaxshmi Female Training College. ¹ We have already discussed the significance of this institution in the previous chapter. High castes women and women who lived in the vicinity studied in this institution. Nevertheless, the formal education for women had grown tremendously since its inception in 1850. By the end of the nineteenth century there were 82,163 numbers of girls in educational institutions of Bombay presidency, although most of them were from urban section of the society. ² These women i.e. formally educated women of middle and upper classes became a distinct segment of Indian society during this period.

The formally educated middle class women of late nineteenth century India, were distinct mainly in terms of their social roles. ³ Formal education system had played a significant role in increasing their social participation. Women's mobility outside the home increased primarily

¹ A Review of Education in Bombay State 1855-1955, p.389
² Ibid, p.265
due to school system of education. Educated women were more associated with social organizations and social activities during this period. However, their ideas on women's role in the family largely remained the same. This was because the traditional ideals of Indian women were deeply embedded in the society. These ideals gave importance to domestic roles of women than the other public roles. Further, formal education reinforced the traditional roles of women as ideal wives and ideal mothers.4

**Victorian Ideals regarding educated women:**

The impact of Victorian ideals in reinforcing the traditional roles of women can not be ignored. These ideals played a significant role in bringing an attitudinal change particularly among the western educated men and women. It is important to bring this point here since Victorian ideals were integral to curriculum of girls' schools in India.

Regarding women, the Victorian literature of this period emphasized the traditional roles of women. The Victorian literature of this period in fact captured the cultural ideas of gender differentiation and idealized

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4In a Memorandum to the Government of India, dated February 5, 1913, Sir Dorabji Tata considered that the chief defect of female education in India was that it did very little for the formation of character, that the object of education should be to imbues girls with a sense of responsibility for duties which as wives, mother and members of society, they would have to perform, Government of Bombay, Educational Department, Compilation, 1916, No. 80, Pt.II.
domestic roles of women. In Walter Arnstein's study on middle class culture the domestic roles of women such as caring for and serving for others were celebrated in the first half of nineteenth century England.\(^5\) However, it was the perception of caring and serving that encouraged many middle class educated English women to get associated with social works such as missionary works, charity, teaching and nursing.\(^6\)

At the centre of Victorian ideals were the motherhood and the cult of domesticity.\(^7\) Domesticity and motherhood were portrayed as sufficient emotional fulfillment for women and many middle-class women regarded motherhood and domestic life as ideal for women's nature. Domesticity also entailed pressures to conform to other new standards. Numerous publications of this period informed educated middle class English women of this period to how to be good wives and household managers. Mrs Beeton's *Book of Household Management*, contained advice on

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\(^5\) Sarah Stickney Ellis; 'The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits' in Walter Arnstein(ed), 'The Past Speaks' 1993, pp. 172-175

\(^6\) For detail see 'Nobody's Angels: Middle Class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture' by Elizebeth Langland, 1995

\(^7\) The Victorian era, 1837-1901, was characterized as the domestic age *par excellence*, epitomized by Queen Victoria, who came to represent a kind of femininity which was centered on the family, motherhood and respectability. Accompanied by her beloved husband Albert, and surrounded by her many children in the sumptuous but homely surroundings of Balmoral Castle, Victoria became an icon of late-19th-century middle-class femininity and domesticity. Lynn Abrams 'Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain', 2001, p.9
how to become the perfect housewife, and how to create a domestic interior that provided a welcoming haven for the man of the house. This book was first published in 1861, and remained a bestseller for over 50 years.\textsuperscript{8} The Victorian period regarded motherhood not only as a biological phenomenon, but a social responsibility, a duty to the state and thus a full-time job, which could not easily be combined with salaried work. And mothering became something that was no longer natural but which had to be learnt.

The female charitable activity such as child care and relief work was given a religious connotation as well as a sense of moral superiority. These ranged from missionary and Sunday school societies to female-run benevolent institutions, and societies for the care of widows, orphans, the sick and the infirm.\textsuperscript{9} Christian missionaries inspired many educated middle class women to form association; to encourage charitable activites. The formation of female associations during this period was largely the result of evangelists' propaganda of the ideal womanhood.

Educated Victorian women believed that the key to philanthropy was personal touch, so the lady reformers ventured out to those in need. Across the country it was found that one of the best ways of reaching the poorest families was by employing a 'Bible-woman' from the working classes who would more likely be welcomed inside as 'a motherly woman of their own class'.\textsuperscript{10} Women's mission to women was an extension of the female role of service and self-sacrifice. Thus, we can see how Victorian ideals regarding women were in accordance with Indian ideals of womanhood and hence, these were accepted and emulated largely by educated Indian middle class women.

\textbf{II}

\textbf{The Middle Class women of late nineteenth century Gujarat: The case studies}

We will now take up the case studies of some of the prominent educated women of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century Gujarat. These women played active role in public life but their perception towards traditional roles of women role in Gujarati society remained the

\textsuperscript{10} Lynn Abrams, 'Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain', 2001, pp.10-11
same. Their thoughts and ideas were not in contradiction with the society at large. However, they condemned the customs of early marriage and widowhood as these were major constraints to women's education and emancipation. Driven by this sense of awareness these women favored ongoing movements of women education and women's reforms. These women were Harkor Sethani(1820-1876), Parvati Kunwar(1831-1881), Gangaben Pranshankar(1868-1939), Jivkor(1852-1916), Krishnagauri Hiralal Rawal(1871-1950), Vidyagauri Nilkanth(1876-1958) and Sharda Mehta(1882-1970).

The formal education system and organizations associated with social reforms provided an opportunity for women to participate actively in society. Women particularly from wealthy families or Sethanis, in Gujarat began to participate in social activities such as charity work and philanthropy. One such woman was Harkor Sethani (1820-1876). Harkor Sethani was the wife of famous businessman Sheth Hathising Kesaringh. She was first and foremost of the women philanthropists of modern Gujarat. Harkor was born in an ordinary Jain family at Ghogha. But she was able to raise high due to her and fearless nature

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11 Gujarat Shala Patra, March 1867, pp.70-71
deep sense of social commitment. In the field of women education, Harkor sethani did pioneering work by setting up the first girl’s school in 1856 in Ahmedabad. Commenting on this school Miss Marry Carpenter, an educationalist and social reformer from Britain said that, ‘eighty girls between the age groups of six to eleven were receiving their education in this school. Most of these girls were widows.’ For the training of female teachers, Harkor sethani, with the help of social reformer Mahipatram Rupram, began the normal classes in this school.

The philanthropic works of Harkor sethani ousted any male philanthropist of this time. In 1856, Harkor donated a sum of Rupees 5,000 to start Gujarat Provincial College. In addition, at the time of famine in 1865, Harkor sethani had set up fair price shops in affected areas.

In 1868, during the flood crisis in Ahmedabad, she spent Rs. 70,000 in relief works. One of the important charity works of Harkor sethani was the hospital she built for the poor. She donated Rs. 52,000 and Nagarsheth Premabai Hikabhai gave Rs. 22,250 to the government.

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12 Harkor was known for her stubborn and fearless nature.
13 Budhi Prakash, Dec. 1858, pp.122-123
15 Budhi Prakash, May 1856, p. 94
16 Buddhi Prakash, Oct. 1874, pp. 227,29
towards the purpose. From these funds ‘Hathisingh Premchandbhai Hospital’ was started on Relief road in Ahmedabad.\textsuperscript{17}

On June 12, 1856, \textit{Harkor sethani} was presented a gold medal by the British government and given the title of ‘Nek Namdar Skhawat Bahadur’. In the same year, the \textit{Gaekwad} king presented her with \textit{Chatra, Shall, Mashal, Palaki} along with the title of \textit{Chobdar}.\textsuperscript{18}

On the death of \textit{Harkor sethani} on October 5, 1876, \textit{Gopal Hari Deshmuhk}, a social reformer, recalled her and said that ‘at present, there does not seem anyone in Gujarat who can compete in charities and female education with late \textit{Harkorben}. She did not just give the money and left it at that. She herself took deep interest in the progress of women’.\textsuperscript{19}

Another prominent women of late nineteenth century Gujarat was \textit{Parvati Kunwar}(1831-1881). She was the wife of \textit{Mahipatram Rupram}, a noted social reformer and Gujarati writer.\textsuperscript{20} After \textit{Mahipatram’s} visit to England, \textit{Parvatiben} looked after his social activities.\textsuperscript{21} She used to

\textsuperscript{17} Buddhi Prakash, from 1855-59 edition
\textsuperscript{18} Buddhi Prakash, July 1856, p.58
\textsuperscript{19} Buddhi Prahash, April 1877, p.84
\textsuperscript{20} Mahipatram Rupram, ‘Parvati Kunwar Akhyan”,1881
\textsuperscript{21} In 1889, Gujarat Vernacular Society started an award for the Gujarati literary writing. This award was named Parvati Kunwarbai award.
attend Ladies meeting organized by English women and educated Gujarati women. In these meetings topics related to women education were discussed and debated. It is to be noted that during this period, ladies meetings were increasingly becoming forums for educated Gujarati women to interact and socialize with European women. European women's outlooks and perspectives in such meetings played a significant role in shaping educated Gujarati women ideas on women reforms.

The first woman writer of Gujarat and an entrepreneur, Gangaben Pranshankar Yagnik (1858-1939)22, was another significant women of this period. She like Harkor Sethani, contributed towards the progress of women education in Gujarat. Gangaben became widow at the age of twelve.23 Her sister sent Ganga to school. As she completed her school education, Ganga was able to get a job as an assistant teacher in primary school.24 For her further studies she went to Mahalakshmi Female Training College at Ahmedabad. Due to her determination and hard work, she was appointed as head mistress of Victoria Jubilee Girl's

22 For detail see, Damodar Revadas Shah 'Mahikanth Directory', Ahmedabad, 1905 and Manilal Ranchhodlal Dwivedi 'Mahikanth Manual', 1892
23 See the volumes of Budhiprakash from 1894 to 1898.
24 After getting the job, Ganga left her in-laws house and lived on a rented house near the school. Until her death in 1939, she carried her struggles without the help of her relatives.
school. Ganga left Vavol and came to Mansa in 1887. There she became the headmistress of a school.  

The social thoughts of Gangaben became clear in her two novels namely Vahen Khandar Pothi(1891) and Devi Triya Nishedh Nibandh(1892). In her first book Ganga protested against superstitions and other social evils prevailing in Gujarati society. She condemned polygamy system in the society. She wrote that, ‘the cruel tradition of marring two wives has oppressed Gujarat since long. Many innocent women have suffered widowhood... This is a gross injustice against women. Such example really makes the eye red with anger and rage’.  

Gangaben was an entrepreneur too. She entered the profession of medicine and pharmacy for earnings. She became popular especially with women and was affectionately called as Gangaben Vaidya. In about 1879, she founded at Mansa a hospital called Garbhajivan-Aushadhalaya and later opened its branch at Ahmedabad.

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25 Budhiprakash, April 1897, pp. 78
26 Himatlai Pandya and Pranshankar Joshi(eds), ‘Sudharshan Granthavali’, 1909, p.880
27 In 1891, Gangaben published a book named ‘Hunnar Varnan’. This book included useful information on methods of preparing medicines and other indigenous industries. The book became so popular that by 1908 its seventh edition was published. In the seventh edition, the methods of preparing soaps, paper, detergent, tooth powder and incense sticks were explained.
28 Babuno Patro-6: Gangabeheyme, 1930, pp.45-7
29 For detail see ‘Bhonaia Bina Sangharsh Yatra!’ by Makarand Mehta, Praya, January-June 1995
The late nineteenth century was a period when the issue of widow remarriage was had gained importance all over the country. In Gujarat too widow remarriages had become a volatile issue particularly among the social reformers. The first widow remarriage in Gujarat took place in 1872.\textsuperscript{30} This marriage created furor in the society. The widow who remarried was \textit{Jivkorbai} (1852-1916).\textsuperscript{31} She belonged to \textit{Visha Khadyala} caste. \textit{Jivkor} studied up to third standard in \textit{Kervada} in \textit{Bharuch} district.\textsuperscript{32} At the age of 12 \textit{Jivkor} became widow. However, she managed to continue her studies further and became a teacher in \textit{Kanyashala} at \textit{Kervada}.\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Jivkor} came in contact with a young man of her caste \textit{Lallu Mathurdas}. Both decided to get married. However, both had to suffer the harassment from their community. With the help of social reformers \textit{Jivkor} and \textit{Lallu} got married on August 26, 1872.\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{30} Navalram Jagannath Trivedi, \textit{‘Samaj Sudharamu Rekhadarshan’}, 1934, p.81
\textsuperscript{31} See Indulal Yagnik \textit{‘Atmakatha’} Pt.2; 1955, p.269; Old files of Gujarat Kelvani Mandal, Ahmedabad.
\textsuperscript{32} Maganlal Haribhai \textit{‘Bharuch Jila ni Bhoogol’}, 1871, p.12
\textsuperscript{33} For detail see Ramaniklal Dalal, \textit{‘Shrimati Jivkor Lallubhai Shah’}, J.L. New English High school’s annual journal \textit{‘Saurabh’}, 1957, pp.1-6
\textsuperscript{34} Hargovinddas Dwarkadas Kantawala, \textit{‘Jivkoni Jivankatha’}, Kadhyaatna Mitra, No.8, 1927, pp.289-93
In 1908 Lallubhai died at the age of 62. As Jivkor had no children she became alone. However, she began to take interest in social activities. Along with Sulochanaben Desai, the grandmother of famous Gujarati educationalist and social reformer Ambalal Sakarlal Desai, she established Vanita Vishram. This institution worked for the rehabilitation of destitute women. In this institute Jivkor began to teach widows and other girls. As Jivkor gave a huge amount of donation, it came to be known as Jivkor Vanita Vishram.

Among the rural women who did pioneer work in the upliftment of women's social position, Krishnagauri Hiralal Rawal (1871-1950) name comes first. She was born in Lunawada, in an Audich Sahastra Brahmin family. She was married at the age of eleven to Hiralal Vidhyaram Rawal who himself was a teacher in Victoria Jubliee Kanyashala at Santrampur. Krishnagauri carried her studies and in 1887 was appointed as an assistant teacher. With the full support of her husband she carried her

35 See Khadyata Mitr's files from 1915-1937
36 Jivkor had donated her entire possession to a school, situated in the centre of Ahmedabad city. The schools was named after her i.e. Jivkor Lallubhai Shah High school.
37 Ahmedabad Vanita Vishram's Annual Report, 1911-12
38 For detail see Makrand Mehta, 'Krishna Gauri Raval- Gujarat ma so Pratham Mahila Naval Kathakar ane Samaj Sudharamu ', Kumar, July 1995, p.1
further studies in Female Training College at Ahmedabad. After her studies in training college krishnagauri was appointed as the headmistress of the school in Santrampur. In 1888, she was transferred to Lady Ray Kanyashala at Lunavada where she was appointed as headmistress. At Lunavada, along with teaching she emphasized and encouraged girls' education. She introduced the subjects like childcare and cooking in the school.

A Bombay based social reformer Jamnadas Sakkar had started Gujarati Hindu Stri Mandal and a newspaper Stri Hitopadesh in 1903. Krishnagauri became the member of Mandal and frequently wrote in Hitopadesh. In June 1915 issue of Budhiprakash she had asked her daughter and other women to read Stri Hitopadesh for themselves and for their female members of family.

Krishnagauri was the first woman writer of modern Gujarat. She wrote a novel Sadhguni Hemant Kumari in 1897. The story of this novel was based on the new social and literary awakening that centered on women reforms.

39 Budhiprakash, Vol.56, No.1, January 1920
40 Ibid, p.90
41 Sundari Subodh, 1909, p.126
42 Sundari Subodh, 1912, pp.120-127
The first women graduates of Gujarat, Vidyagauri Nilkanth (1876-1958) and Sharda Mehta (1882-1970), were the representatives of contemporary women movement in India. Vidyagauri Nilkanth and Sharda Mehta were sisters who belonged to Gujarati Nagar Brahmins, a caste known for education and social progress. Vidyagauri and Sharda were the granddaughters of Bholanath Sarabhai Divetia, one of the founders of the Prathana Samaj in Gujarat.

Both the sisters had their primary education at one of the girls' schools in Ahmedabad, Maganbhai Kanyashala. Vidyagauri studied in this school till class VII and joined the Anglo-Vernacular classes of the Mahalakshmi Female Training College in 1887. Shardaben followed her sister there.

In 1889, Vidyagauri, at the age of thirteen, was married to Ramanbhai who was twenty-one. Ramanbhai was the son of Mahipatram Ruparam, one of the leading social reformers of his time, an educationalist and the principal of the Teachers' Training College. Vidyagauri, no doubt got full support from her husband and in-laws to

43 See 'Jivan Sambharana', Sharda Mehta, 1939
44 Gujarat Shalal Patra, Jubilee No., 1911, pp.12-55
45 Sharda Mehta, 'Jivan Sambharana', 1939, pp.24-26
46 Ibid, p.28
continue her studies. Vidyagauri passed her Matriculation examination in 1891 standing first in Gujarati in entire Bombay University. In 1894 she enrolled herself in Gujarat College, the first Gujarati Hindu girl to do so. Because of frequent pregnancies, it took eight years for Vidyagauri to complete B.A. course.\textsuperscript{47} Finally in 1901 she and her sister Shardaben got graduated, the first two Gujarati women to do so.

Shardaben got married at the age of fourteen to Sumant Mehta who was four years older than her and then a student at medical college.\textsuperscript{48} An unmarried girl of fourteen was a cause of worry for parents during this period. Hence Shardaben recalled in her biography that pressure was exercised on her family to get her married to any available person as unmarried girl as old as she, would bring bad name to the family.\textsuperscript{49} However, her parents waited and married her to a suitable man. Hence, Shardabaen was also married to highly educated family. Immediately after marriage Sumant Mehta left for England to study and Shardaben continued her studies.\textsuperscript{50}

Both the sisters were actively involved in women’s education. A Mahila Vidyalaya was started at the initiate of Shardaben. The school was

\begin{footnotes}
\item[47] Ibid, p.31
\item[48] Sharda Mehta, opt. cit., p.34
\item[49] Ibid, pp.41-42
\item[50] Ibid, p.45
\end{footnotes}
meant to provide an opportunity for married girls and young widows to continue their education. Along with Indulal Yagnik, one of the leading business man and social reformer of Gujarat, Shardaben started a women's college which was affiliated to the Karve Women's university.\textsuperscript{51} Vidyagauri and Shardaben together translated Ramesh Chandra Dutt's 'The Lake of Palms' in Gujarati.\textsuperscript{52} Vidyagauri was associated with his husband in the public activities. After Ramanbhai's death Vidyagauri became the principle office – bearer and organizer in many of the associations.

Thus, the two sisters were not only the first women graduates of Gujarat but also opened the doors of higher education to hundreds of women in Gujarat.

Certain significant aspects were evident from the case study of these women. First of all, most of these received moderate education largely in vernacular schools and were qualified for the various jobs mainly in the teaching the professions. Second, these women were from high castes mainly Jains and Nagar Brahmins. Awareness towards women education was high in these castes. Hence, even though women like

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid, pp.28-48
\textsuperscript{52} Stree Bodh, Jubilee No., 1907, pp.88-89
Krishnagauri and Jivkor who had to face harassment from their family, the community at large did not oppose their pursuits for education. Third, for all these women early marriage was a major constrain to their education. The discussion on Vidyagauri Nilkanth supports this point. Vidyagauri could complete her graduation only after nine years because of frequent pregnancies. However, for women like Jivkor and Gangaben Rawal, life became much harder as they became widowed at a very early age. Women like Jivkor showed courage to oppose their family and tradition and availed the legal and educational opportunities for women. In this way some of these women were considered as rebel. Nevertheless, they fought with odds and through education and subsequent employment, these women became self independent.

Fourth, education was a sort of gateway through which these women could get access to public institutions and associations. All these women were directly and indirectly involved in public activities largely related to women's education. The education virtually brought the status, the self respect and the awareness in these women.
Women Organizations of Gujarat-1888-1920

The increasing social participation of educated middle class urban women paved the ground for the formation of women organizations. Late nineteenth century period witnessed the emergence of a small number of women organizations. These organizations however, were formed and supported by male social reformers. The members of these organizations were usually the women of upper section of the society who were involved in social activities. Most of the women organizations of this period did not involve in the political activities but worked as auxiliary units of social reform associations.

The earliest women association of late nineteenth century Gujarat was Gujarat Ladies Club-1888. The need for a common place for educated Gujarati women led to the founding of Ladies Club in Ahmedabad in 1888. Most of the educated Gujarati women had common things to share such as ideas on women education, child marriage and other

54 Ibid, p.34
issues of women. There was a need felt among these women to have a platform where social as well intellectual interaction between them could take place. Before the establishment of Ladies Club, the Ladies meetings of educated Gujarati women along with English women were quiet common. One such ladies meeting took place in the bungalow of eminent English lady Miss ... in 1874. In this meeting wife of Mahipatram Rupram, Parvati kunwar was absent. Therefore, a message was sent to Parwati Kunwar stating that, 'I am sorry that you are unable to come to the ladies meeting this afternoon. I send you now, however, a little remembrance which Miss Carpenter gave me for you. She made many enquiries of me about the girls' schools in Ahmedabad and asked me after you also'.

Thus the growth of such Ladies meeting led to the establishment of Ladies Club. When Ladies Club was established the first generation of formally and non-formally educated women such as Parvatikunwar, Harkunwar and Shivkashi were no more. Women like Vidyagauri Nilkanth who were highly educated and aware about the women's movement in western countries were behind the establishment of Ladies Club. The Club was also the outcome of Sorabhji sisters Miss Marry,

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56 Mahipatram Rupram, 'Parvati Kunwar Akhyan', 1881, p.95
57 Gujarat Shala Patra, January 1869, p.13
Miss Fuloz, Miss Cornelia, Miss Alice and Miss Shoji. These sisters made contacts with eminent English Ladies and educated Gujarati women. The collective efforts of these women led to the establishment of Ladies Club.

The Club was cosmopolitan in nature as it had Hindu, Parsi, Muslim and English members. The club encouraged outdoor activities like tennis, badminton and tea parties. Hence ladies club was a small beginning towards women's participation in modern public institutions.

A significant women association of this period that took part in political activities as well was, Gujarati Hindu Stree Mandal. This association was established in 1903 at the initiative of Gujarati Shetias and reformers like Sir Gokuldas Parekh, Sir Vijbhukandas Atmaram, Sir Narandas Purshotamdas, Sir Lallubhai Shamaldas and Karsandas Mulji. The first president of the organization was Jamnabai Nagindas

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58 *Buddhi Prakash*, June 1891, pp.143-44
59 The club provided an opportunity for women and men to interact and participate together in the social functions organized by the club. One such social function organized by the Ladies club was ‘Garbo Party' in 1898. In the Garba Party eminent men such as the assistant judge of Ahmedabad played Garba with women members of the Ladies club. Sharada Mehta, opt. cit. p.36
60 Gail Olivia Pearson, opt. cit., pp.58-59
61 Ibid, p.59
Sakkai. It also included wives of men sponsoring the Mandal like Lady Dhunkoverbai Purshotamdas Thakurdad, Lady Parsanbaj Gokuldas Parekh, wives of the reforming Sethias. Its membership was thrown open to women belonging to Brahmans, Banias, Jains, Bhatias, Lohanas and Kshtriyas.

The main objective of this association was to raise the 'social, economic, moral and political status of women without offending the religious feelings of any section of the community'.

The political activities of this association came into prominence in 1917 when women of this Mandal sent a resolution to Lord Willington that Gujarati women were prepared to help in the war effort; collected Rs. 918 for the war widows and orphan fund, and spoke at a propaganda meeting presided over by Lady Willington.

One of the leading women organizations of pre Gandhian period that worked for grass root women was Vanita Vishram-1907. This organization had branches in Ahmedabad, Surat, Bombay and other

62 Ibid, p.58
63 The resolution along with other issues related to women education, expressed deep concerned over the on going agitation against women's higher education. Government of India, Education Department, A Proceeding, March 1916, No. 55-59
64 Naniben Gajjar, ‘Gujaratna Stree Mandalo: Vanita Vishramnan Anubhavo’, Vasant No. 10, 1910-1911, pp.204-7
parts of Gujarat. The first *Vanita Vishram* was started in Ahmedabad in 1907 by *Sulochana Desai*, a child widow and the daughter of *Ambalal Sankarlal Desai*, a reformer and an educationalist. This institution was meant primarily for widow who were given training in vocational courses. In 1919, Gandhi laid the foundation stone of a girl’s school. This school was run and managed by Ahmedabad *Vanita Vishram*. However, it was Surat based *Vanita Vishram* that became very popular during this period. *Surat Vanita Vishram* was founded by two child widows namely *Bajigauri Munshi* (1867-1926) and *Shivgauri* (alias *Naniben*) *Gajjar* (1871-1945). *Bajigauri* belonged to Nagar caste and *Naniben* was from *Vaishya Suthar* caste. *Vanita Vishram* was the result of the team work among the family members of the widows and other eminent social reformers.

The *Surat Vanita Vishram* was started with two widows and seven girls. The self-denying and self effacing images of *Naniben* and *Bajigauri* led to increase in the number of students.

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65 Ibid, p.205
66 CWMG, Vol.XV, pp. 409-11
67 Speeches of Bajigauri Munshi and Naniben Gajjar at the time of the inauguration ceremony of the Surat Vanita Vishram on May 15, 1907. Source: Gujarat Mitra(Surat) dated May 17, 1907.
68 For detail see, Mehta, Makarand, ‘Institution Building and Social Change in Western India: A Case Study of Vanita Vishram of Surat, 1907-1920’, Samipiya, Vol.XIX, Nos. 3-4, p.35
Education was free in Vanita Vishram. There were nominal charges for the inmates. This together with the institution’s teaching and training programs attracted girls and elderly women. Vocational courses such as sewing, tailoring, embroidery work, mechanical drawing and carpentry were taught.69 As the student turned out by Vanita Vishram started earning as self employed artisan-entrepreneurs, the institution became very popular. In 1914 the management had to shift to a bigger house in order to accommodate the increasing number of student.

Another branch of Vanita Vishram was established in Bombay in 1915. It was started by Zaveribai Bhagvandas Narottamdas with the help of Sir Vithaldas Thakardas and Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas.70 Gradually other branches of Vanita Vishram were started at Rajkot, Bhavnagar and other cities of Gujarat.

Thus, the pre-Gandhian women organizations of Gujarat gave the first experience of educated women in public arena. Women for the first time getting into the public activities in an organized way.

These organizations were steered and directed by males. While male inspired and male guided women organizations did significant work in

69 Bombay Directory of Public Instruction on the Progress of Education in the Bombay Presidency in the Quinqueinnum 1912-1913 to 1916-1917, p.97
women education and women reforms, there were restrictions and limitations imposed on these organizations by its organizers. First and the foremost limitation of these organizations was that they worked as auxiliary units of male led social associations. Women had very less voice in these organizations. This was because of the fact that male reformers regarded the household as the primary focus and fundamental activity for women. Hence educated women were expected to focus primarily on family and then on social activities outside the house. The area of activities of these organizations was limited to relief work and social work of mainstream organizations of male reformers. The ideas and aims of pre Gandhian women organization remained integrated with those of the social reformers. Like male social reformers these organizations wanted no widespread changes in the traditional social roles of women but sought for more social participation through extension of educational facilities and social welfare works.\(^\text{71}\) Women organizations of this period therefore, acted as a bridge between the world of the household and the world of public affairs.

\(^{71}\) Urmilaben Girdharlal (Pub.) "Jyoti Vikas Yatra", 1955, pp.10-30
Women Organizations of Gujarat: 1920-1947

This period witnessed the strengthening of women's organizations all across the country. Unlike late nineteenth century, women organizations of this period were founded by women themselves. Women's problems, their solutions and actions were now taken over by women organizations. Hence, in true sense women organization of this period were not under the tutelage of male organizers.

As discussed in the previous chapter Gandhi made women visible in national movement. He valued the endurance power and self resistance power of women. In order to channelized these powers of woman Gandhi mobilized women of all section of the society into Satyagraha movement. Gandhi inspired women to join Satyagraha movement as a fight against suppressive and oppressive systems. Thus, he gave meaning to women's involvement into the movement. Women organizations emerged as a major agency for the constructive activities of the Satyagraha movement. These constructive activities included picketing, prohibitions, women education and women reforms. Hence, in

72 Forbes, G, opt. cit. p.32
This way social reforms movement got integrated in the national movement. Women organizations largely took the charge of social development activities.

The period from 1917 to 1927 witnessed the emergence of National level women organizations. Three of the major national women organizations of this period were: The Women's Indian Association, The National Council of women in India, and the All-India Women's conference or AIWC. These women organizations had their branches at regional level.

The most important of national level women organizations was the AIWC. This is due to the fact that women from all section of the society represented this organization. This organization was founded in 1927 by the efforts of Margaret Cousins and other women belonging to the WIA. The plan for establishing this organization came when Mr. Oaten, director of Public Instruction in Bengal, urged women to decide what kind of education was suitable for Indian girls. Margaret Cousins sent circular letter to women leaders throughout India suggesting they organize local conferences to discuss educational issues. Each

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73 Ibid, 33
74 Ibid, pp. 45-50
75 Aparna Basu and Bharati Ray, 'Women’s Struggle: A History of All India Women’s Conference 1927-1900', 1990, p.35
conference would prepare a memorandum on female education for presentation at an all India conference to be held at Poona. The first meeting of this organization was held at Poona. There were 87 members from the local reception committee, 58 delegates from local conferences and over 2,000 participants, men and women. The president of the first meeting of this organization was the Maharani Chimnabai Saheb Gaekwad of Baroda. The Rani Saheb of Sangli delivered the opening address. In the opening address the Rani insisted women needed a special type of education, not feminist in nature for that would imply antagonism between men and women, but education to help them understand their position as 'supplemental' to that of men.

The Maharani of Baroda focused on social customs—especially Purdah and child marriage—which hampered the growth of female literacy. This was a time of women's awakening, she said, noting women's new interest in politics, but she too called education compatible with 'women's nature'.

Therefore, the resolution of first conference was to give education specific to women's role in the society. In the resolution stress was on

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77 Ibid, p.15
78 Ibid, p.14
79 AIWC on Educational Reform, Poona, Jan. 1927, New Delhi, pp.28-32,
the importance of moral and physical education, eradication of child marriage.

By 1928 the all India women's conference on Educational Reform decided there could be little progress in educational matters unless harmful social customs were eradicated. In 1929 the conference widened its scope to include social welfare activities. Afterwards, the organization made similar decisions as the number and range of social issues grew. Therefore, beginning with education, and then adding social customs that prevented the growth of women education, the AIWA continued to enlarge its purview.

By mid thirties the AIWC came to be known as All India Women's Association (AIWA) and began to work in two fold directions. One was the increase in the focus on women related issues and legal disabilities. Second was the concern for the welfare of nation. This concern led them to involve in Gandhi's program of reconstruction and social action. At all India Women Association (AIWA), Delhi in 1938, Gandhi recommend women to work for Hindu –Muslim unity, wearing of Khadi and spread

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80 In his speech at Gujarati Women’s Conference in Dandi, 1930, Gandhi said that ‘there are certain activities which are meant only for women. Prohibition and boycott of foreign cloths are such activities; which if you do not take up, will never be accomplished.’ Prabandhu, 20-4-1930
the principles of Ahimsa. In this way AIWA's involvement with the Satyagraha activities broadened its social base. Women from non upper class began to become its members.

By the 1940s the AIWA was established as a premier organization representing women from all section of the society. In 1941 the AIWA established its quarterly journal, Roshni, and in 1946 the AIWA set up a central office with a permanent staff. The provincial branches took up local issues to the central body. Given below are the extracts of Gujarat Constituent Conference, held on January 8, 1929.

Gujarat Constituent Conference, January 8, 1928(Extracts)

Resolution:

1. This conference places before the public and the teachers the Ideal of Education as the aim of life not merely as a means of earning a livelihood. From the Chair

2. This Conference appoints a committee of the following persons to draw up a scheme: (with special regard to developing the special individuality of children, and congenial to national development), of course instruction, mode of teaching and examination, for boys and girls, in primary and secondary school as also in training colleges for

81 The Hindustan Times, 28-12-1938
men and women, and to send it before 31-3-1928 to government to introduce reforms in primary and secondary education

3. This Conference requests the government to appoint a committee of representative of local educational institutions and eminent educationalists to formulate amendments to the primary education Act and the rules and regulations framed by government in connection with and regarding the same Act.

4. This conference urges government to give to the Municipalities the proceeds of the Entertainment Tax in towns, which was pledged for the spread of education and requests that the Municipalities should ask for the same.

5. This conference believes that the education of a child should at the age of three since at this age the development of senses in a child begins, and since the impressions of this stage lay the foundations of a child's future life, and recommends to government, Municipalities and citizens to found Nursery Schools and to arrange for training up proper staff for the same. This conference notes with gratification the efforts in this direction by the Dakshina Murti Nursery School.

6. Good physique being the chief thing in education, this conference draws the attention of educational Institutions on this point.
7. The Inspectress of girls' schools in Northern Division, has to supervise Gujarati Schools and therefore this conference urges government that a women knowing Gujarati well, should be appointed to that post.

8. This conference urges the Bombay University to give proper place to the vernaculars in Higher education.

Source: Aparna Basu and Bharati Ray; 'Women's Struggle: A History of All India Women's Conference 1927-1900', 1990, pp.45-55

In Gujarat, during this period, two significant women organizations came up. These were Jyotisangh (1934) and Vikas Gruha (1937). Both these organizations were the outcome of Gandhi's constructive programs.

The Jyotisangh was founded by Mrudula Sarabhai (1911-1972) on April 24, 1934 in Ahmedabad.\(^{82}\) Before turning to the discussion of Jyotisangh, it is significant to know the life history of Mrudula Sarabhai. Mrudula was the eldest daughter of a well known Jain industrialist and a mill owner of Ahmedabad, Ambalal Sarabhai.\(^{83}\) The study of the organizational leadership of Mrudula reveals that she was brought up in

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\(^{82}\) For detail see, Usha Bhatt; 'Amdavad Shaherni Stri netrutva Shakti (1920-1947), Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 1982, pp.153-177

\(^{83}\) Divatia, Krishnarao, ‘Bholanath Sarabhai’, 1888, pp.20-50
the atmosphere of nationalism. The house of Ambalal Sarabhai was a meeting place for the national leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and others. Ansuya Sarabhai, the sister of Ambalal and Indumati Chimanal Sheth, the cousin sister of Mrudula were active in the various activities of national movement.84

Mrudula was influenced by the nationalist and anti imperialist spirit from her childhood. She actively participated in 1920-21 and 1930-31 movements. To keep up the national spirit of women she founded a women’s organization named Jyotisangh. The primary focus of this organization was to imbibe the spirit of nationalism than the spirit of feminism to which Mrudula was highly conscious and aware.85

Mrudula's co workers in Jyotisangh were closely associated with the nationalist activities. The prominent worker of this organization was Pushpa Mehta who later on founded another women's organization known as Vikas Gruha.86 Other prominent women of this organization

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84 For detail see, Jyoti Vikas Yatra, Jyotisangh, 1971

85 Gandhi was glad to note that the association was mainly run by women, typifying their desire not to accept any inferior or slavish position for women. He hoped they had no intention of importing into India the movement for making women absolutely independent of men, which was out of keeping with Indian culture and was bound to do us untold harm. Harijan, 13-7-1934

86 Jyoti Vikas Yatra, Jyotisangh, opt. cit. p.15
were Lilavati Desai(1885-1936), Nanduben Kanuga(1887-1950), Chaturlakshmi Dewan, Champaben Mehta and Gangaben Zaveri.\textsuperscript{87}

These women were from high caste and belonged to well to do families. Therefore, Jyotisangh provided a space to the urban women to utilize their skills for the cause of national movement.

The Jyotisangh was initially founded with the objective of conducting constructive activities within the framework of Gandian Satyagraha movement. Later on, the objective shifted to train women on self employed activities. The organization imparted knowledge pertaining to handicraft industries, trade and commerce. It also laid emphasis on physical training of women.\textsuperscript{88} A large number of women became economically self sufficient through the guidance of and active support of Jyotisangh. Beside Jyotisangh tried to train women for the participation in the various activities of national movement.

As Jyotisangh expanded its activities were divided into various sections. In 1935 administrative section or Karya Karta Vibhag was formed (see Appendix I). Besides Jyotisangh developed various sections such as Shishu Mangal Vibhag, Vepari Talim Vibhag, Khadya Vastu Vibhag.\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{87} Vikas Gruh Karynodh, 1937-39, p.1
\textsuperscript{88} Prajabandhu, February 27, 1930, p.44
\textsuperscript{89} Jyoti Vikas Yatra, Jyotisangh, opt. cit. pp.20-45
Jyotisangh tried to assist the process of mental and physical development of women of various section of the society. To down trodden women it started several vocational courses and imparted knowledge on child care, home science and health.

Jyotisangh kept contacts with the national leaders especially women leaders. The aim was to involve women in various activities of national movement. Thus, while providing a forum to urban women, Jyotisangh remained basically a women's organization that was actively involved in constructive programs of national movement.

Vikas Gruha

Vikas Gruha, another significant women organization of this period was founded by Pushpaben Mehta in 1937.\textsuperscript{90} Pushpàben was a Nagar Brahmin. Her father, Harprasad Deasai, was a progressive man and her mother Hetuba was under the impact of Aurobindo Ghosh.\textsuperscript{91} At a very young age Pushpaben became widow. However, she continued her studies and got graduated in 1934. During this time she joined

\textsuperscript{90} See, Usha Bhatt, 'Stri Sahayak Pravruti- Jyotisandh Vikasgruh, Mrudulaben ane Netrutva Shaktinun Darshan (1935-1940)', \textit{Vidya}, Gujarat University, 1977.

\textsuperscript{91} Vikas Griha, Ahmedabad, 1937, pp.1-15
Jyotisangh. From that time she remained at the forefront of social activities.

On May 1937 Pushpaben established an institution named Vikas Gruha. The institutions activities were based on Gandhian principles of self-help and self reliant.

The main objectives of this institution were 1. To help destitute women by providing vocational training and making them self sufficient, 2. To provide shelter to destitute women and girls, 3. To render legal aid and assistance, 4. To establish temporary or permanent residential, vocational and educational centers.

Through Vikas Gruha, Puspaben mainly tried to bring changes in the social status of women in Gujarati society. She tried to ban the child marriages. She helped the women to claim for their livelihood, when they were deserted by their husbands. In Saurashtra, she strived to see that the principle of monogamy should be strictly followed.

Under Vikas Gruha various institutions were established: Each institution was for specific activity. In 1944 Shri Panchal Pragati Gruha, an

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92 Ibid, p.3
93 Ibid, p.5
94 Ibid, p.19
institution for social activities was founded in Halvad.\textsuperscript{95} In 1945, Shri Kanta Vikas Gruha in Rajkot was established. In the same year Vadhwan Vikas Vidyalaya was founded in Rajkot.\textsuperscript{96} In order to run these institutions effectively, Pushpaben kept close contact with the national leaders. This helped the organization financially. Hence, unlike Jyotisangh, the activities of Vikas Gruha were purely directed towards social development of women in Gujarati society.

IV

Contemporary ideas on women Liberation

The women intelligentsia of late nineteenth century and twentieth century constantly strove to improve the position of women. However, they did not desire to bring about a social revolution or question the very basic relationship in the family. Women took up professions outside the home like teaching, nursing, midwifery and later on office jobs. Most of these jobs were considered suitable for women’s nurturing and caring nature.

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid, p.25
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid, p.30
The Indian women intelligentsia rejected western notion of western ideas of women liberation that women were oppressed class and that there existed any kind of contradiction between male and female. The staunch critique of Indian social reformer's appeal to traditional notion of Indian womanhood (1858-1922), Pandit Ramabai Saraswati, decried the western notion of feminism. The women writings on women reforms of this period reflected in general the Indian women intelligentsia's notion of women liberation. Women Intelligentsia of this period felt that, 'Indian women very definitely distrust the use of such phrases as “women Emancipation” or “women’s Movement”. They have the feeling unconsciously or consciously that such terms imply something of feminine inferior; whereas in India there is little of the sex-antagonism that one often detects in accounts of women’s activities in European and American periodicals'.

She further stated that 'The women’s movement in India has thus differed very much from its sister movement in Europe. Man has not questioned women’s right to enter any field of activity or any profession although he held complete sway everywhere for many years now,


98 Gail, Olivia Pearson ‘Women in Public life in Bombay City with special reference to the Civil Disobedience Movement’, p.34
keeping the women out and restricting their influence and scope of work by rigid rules and customs. But when the day came for her to emerge from seclusion imposed on her, and take her rightful place along with him, it did not strike him as being new or strange. Thus, this movement cannot in any sense be said to be rebellion or a revolt against man; it is rather an attempt to regain lost ground. It is not actuated by any spirit of competition marked with violence; it is a movement of calm assertion.\textsuperscript{99}

The movement among Indian women was one which sought to ensure a better position for woman in the patriarchal family, to take those enlightened and responsible wives and mothers. '....by the discharge of their responsibilities alone would they maintain their great and ancient ideals of womanhood; prove themselves worthy daughters of the motherland...\textsuperscript{100}

Thus, women movement in India was not directed towards asserting the individual status of one woman against one man which could take place in an industrialized society where the notion of individualism were developed. The Indian women intelligentsia did not assert the independent individuality of women; it rejected the contradictions

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid, p.35
\textsuperscript{100} Ramabai Kamdar at The Bombay Special Congress, B.C., September 29, 1930, p.9 in Gail Olivia Pearson, opt.cit., p.215
between male and female and it argued from a perception of their powerfulness not oppression.

In late nineteenth century the emerging women organizations and women journals, here mention could be made of Stree Bodh, the first women magazine in India, supported women's traditional roles in society. In fact women intelligentsia of this period emphasized and even idealized the familial roles of women. This is vividly evident in the speeches of eminent scholars, women national leaders and women reformers delivered during the Stree Bodh's Golden Jubilee celebration in 1907.101

However, in post World War II women organizations began to incline towards social feminism.102 This served as an ideological base for their agitation against child marriage, suffrage movement and movement for women education. Social feminism became an ideological base for women organizations such as All India Women Association. This organization petitioned for women education, women's political representation, and amelioration of social evils with the objective of enabling women to fulfill their social obligation to the family and nation.

101 The Stree Bodh Golden Jubilee Issue, 1907, pp.5-45
They sought a family order in which women would be respected and honored. Hence these organizations rejected the complete autonomy of women in society.

In 1935 All India Women Association formed a committee in which recommendation for a Central college was made. One of the objectives of this college was 'to foster in the women of India a scientific attitude towards the problems of life and living conditions and train them to give purposeful value to the use of science and art in fulfillment of their self realization both in home and country'.

Women leaders in Gujarat also favored social feminism than feminism. On the occasion of 'Lady Vidyaben Mani Mahotsav' held on 30th Dec 1936 the objective of women's higher education was underlined as to look after family and society. Dedicating life for social service was considered ideal for educated women. Lady Vidyaben was a role model for Gujarati women as 'she, instead of living a life of comfort, worked for the cause of women in the society'.

Thus, a significant shift in the objective of women education was seen from 1920's onwards. Now, along with looking after the household, social service was also desired from women's education. Educated women

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103 Sharma 'Committees and Commissions on Women Education', 1989, pp.183-184
104 Buddhi Prakash, Dec., 1936, pp.97-98
were expected to carry social activities. Two reasons could be attributed to this shift. One was the Victorian perspective about women's sharing and caring nature. This perspective of women, as discussed above, led educated women to involve in the social activities. Second was the Gandhian approach to national movement. Gandhi categorized the movement into constructive and destructive. The constructive part of the movement included social activities. Gandhi encouraged women to take up the constructive part of the movement and thus popularized the social service among women during this period. The following table illustrates the eminent educated Gujarati women in social activities and their active involvement in women organizations during Gandhian period.

Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Profession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kum. Maniben</td>
<td>Leuva Patidar</td>
<td>The Graduation degree from Gujarat Vidyapeeth</td>
<td>Social activist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vallabhbhai Patel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehta Pushpa</td>
<td>Nagar Brahmin</td>
<td>Post Graduation from SNDT University</td>
<td>Founder of Vikas Gruha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheth Indumati Jain</td>
<td>Jain</td>
<td>Graduation from Gujarat Vidyapeeth</td>
<td>Social Activist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desai Vijayaben Anavil Brahmin</td>
<td>Graduation from Jalandhar Gurukul</td>
<td>Social Activist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thakor Sumitra Kshtriya Brahma</td>
<td>Graduation from SNDT University</td>
<td>Social Activist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hegisthe Maharshrtrian Hemalata</td>
<td>Graduation from SNDT University</td>
<td>Social Activist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the second all India women's conference, women's memorandum on educational reform was presented. The shift in the objective of women education was evident in this memorandum. The Memorandum came up with following resolutions:

1. At every stage of education the spirit of social science should be inculcated.
2. In all education of girls in India teaching in the ideals of motherhood, and in the making of the home beautiful and attractive, should be kept uppermost.
3. In secondary education 'Alternative courses should be established to suit the needs of girls who do not intend to take up college education, these to include the subjects of Domestic Science, Fine Arts, Handicrafts and Industries.'

4. In the College Education 'the following subjects should be added as optional to the present curricula: The Fine Arts, Advanced Domestic Science, Journalism Social Science, and Architecture.'

5. Special encouragement in the way of scholarship should be offered to women students to attract them to take their degrees in Law, Medicine, Fine Arts and Social Science.105

Therefore the girls' curriculum at every level of education encouraged women to take courses on social service. Social service became one of the major fields of work for educated women.

V

Conclusion

The movement for women education in late nineteenth century resulted in the emergence of middle class women in India and Gujarat. These

105 Uma Sharma, ‘Committees and Commissions on Women Education’, 1989, pp.107-111
women were urban based and belonged to upper section of the society. Most of the educated middle class Gujarati women were Jains, Nagar Brahmins, Parsis and Baniyas. Emergence of educated women from these castes was obvious as women's reforms and women's education were initiated first in these communities. Our discussions on life and struggle of some of the eminent Gujarati women of late nineteenth and early twentieth century showed general features related to middle class educated women. First and foremost was the help and support rendered to middle class women by their husbands or reformers in their pursuit to education. Second, after receiving minimal amount of education these women got employment opportunities in teaching profession. Third, most of these women were increasingly involved in social activities. Fourth, the ideas and actions of educated women were consistent with the changes in the society. These women did not criticize the traditional roles of women on society or questioned the fundamental patriarchal values in the society. Hence, the main objective of educated women of this period was to improve the familial status of women through the spread of women education. The increasing involvement of educated women in social activities led to the formation of women organizations. The leading women
organizations of pre Gandhian period in Gujarat were Ladies Club, Gujarati Stri Mandal and Vanita Vishrams. These organizations did significant work in the spread of women education. The objective behind spread of women education was to upgrade the position of women in the family. However, these organizations faced lot of constrains and limitations. This was because women organizations of this period were run and supported by male social reformers. These women organizations largely acted d as auxiliary units of social organizations of males.

During the Gandhian period regional and national level women organizations began to mushroom all over the country. One of the significant features of these organizations was that these organizations were founded and run by women. Hence decisions and actions to problems were taken up by women themselves. Women organizations during this period emerged as a strong agency. These organizations were capable of influencing the decision making process at the central level. In Gujarat the important women organizations of this period were Jyotisangh and Vikas Gruha. However, the objective of these women organizations remained primarily to inculcate nationalist feelings in women.
Women intelligentsia of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century continued to emphasize family roles of women as the main objective of women education. During Gandhian period shift in the objectives of women education was seen among women intelligentsia. Women organizations particularly All India Women Association began to emphasize on social service as the objective of women education. The girls' curriculum of this period showed emphasis on social service courses. This consequently led to the increasing participation of women in social activities within the frame of national movement. This emphasis on social service also led to the creation of employment opportunities for educated women in social service sector.
Photographs:

1. The English Women's Domestic Magazine

Source: The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine, 1852–77. First Series, Volumes 1–8, 1852–60
2. Victorian women

Emancipated Victorian women

Victorian Husband and Wife

A Victorian mother, pushing a pram
Victorian nursery maid with children

Source: Lynn Abrams 'Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain', 2001, pp.2-9

3. Pushpa Mehta

Pushpaben Mehta: 1905-1988
Mrudula Sarabai (1911-1972)

Mrudula Sarabai with Gandhi in 1935