CHAPTER-VII

IMPACT ON SOCIAL AWARENESS OF WOMEN IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The reformist writings in the late nineteenth century emphasised the issue of women’s rights to make consciousness among women and the Muslim social reformers gave their opinions in the light of Islamic perspectives.

During the period under review, an early advocate of women’s rights was Syed Mumtaz Ali who personally concerned for the status of women. From his childhood he had to observe many women in his own family who led their lives miserably and faced social discriminations. Although he was a well-educated Muslim but married to an uneducated woman whom he taught the primary level of education. However, she died by leaving two children. Thus, his personal loss and observations turned his attention to do something for women and finally he succeeded in it by publishing the journal *Tahzib-un-Niswan* with the help of his second wife Muhammadi Begum who was an educated lady. Abu Athar Hafiz Jalandhar, one of the contributors of *Tahzib-un-Niswan* wrote an article on *Maulvi Mumtaz Ali* which originally published in *Makhzan* in 1927 and later on reprinted in *Tahzib-un-Niswan*. He asserted that Mumtaz Ali also wrote *Huquq-un-Niswan* (Rights of women) which was unique in the sense as it gave the references of *Quran* (Holy book of Muslim) and *Hadith* (Sayings of Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H) commentary with his logical arguments. It highlighted Mumtaz Ali’s approach towards women’s rights and his involvement in religious debate early in his life. This pioneer work discussed various reasons about the superiority of men over women and the logical views of Mumtaz Ali. It also stated the equality of men and women on most of legal matters according to which the daughters were given the rights of inheritance and *mehr*, the question of polygamy was rejected unless the wife permit it, widows were allowed to remarry and child marriage was considered as illegal but only allowed in certain circumstances mentioned in *Quran*. In short, this work describes the rights of women and their role in Muslim family life.

2. Urdu journal published from Lahore in 1901 by Hafiz Jalandhari.
At that time, Rashidul Khairi, editor of *Ismat* said about the miserable condition of women through his novels such as *Hayat-i-Saleha* (Saleha’s life), *Subh-i-Zindagi* (Morning of life), *Sham-i-Zindagi* (Evening of life) and *Shab-i-Zindagi* (Night time of life) and also gave his statements on polygamy, rights of inheritance, divorce and *Khula*. He depicted the pathetic story of a married women in article *Aisi Biyahi se Kunwari Bhali* (Better unmarried woman to have bad marriage) which showed that how an inappropriate marriages ended the lives of women. The misery of a married life was also shown from a poem in his journal which stated the complaint of a married girl who oppressed by her in-laws. He also cited an addition *Tamaddun* (civilization) for men in *Ismat* whose chief purpose was to bring changes in men’s behavior towards women. Rashidul Khairi in an article *Sharia ka Khoon* (Murder of Islamic Law) included a letter of cruel husband who after hearing the birth of daughter wrote to his wife that the news of girl’s birth was worse than hundred punishments. Thus, his writings persuaded the necessity to aware women about their social rights.

Another social activist Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah also articulated his ideas on women’s rights. Being a legal practitioner himself, he greatly emphasized all the legal rights of Muslim women which granted in Islamic law and *Hadith*. However, the women were unaware due to the lack of their Islamic knowledge. Thus, he stated the need of women’s responsiveness toward their rights. He highlighted all the world religions and asserted that Islam is unique in the sense to acquire knowledge and *Masawat* (egalitarian approach) in the matter of women’s rights. He stressed the fact that Islam is the first among all religions which treated woman as a legal personality by granting her rights of inheritance and property. Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah informed that women did not have any significant role in ancient Rome, Egypt, Iran and about Hinduism they were deprived of their rights as it evident from *Manusmriti*.

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8 *Tamaddun* was a journal of Rashidul Khairi published in 1911.
(Hindu Law book). He also informed about the culturally advanced European countries such as Europe and America where the women enjoyed no legal rights. Later on the laws were passed there in favour of women and the British Parliament passed the Married Women’s Property Act in 1882. Thus, the women occupied a respectable position in west under the influence of Islamic Shari’at Laws. Thus, all these instances showed the impact of Islam on various rights of women.

We find that most of the Urdu journals of women in early twentieth century discussed the matter of women’s rights and duties to aware them as the women were socially exploited due to lack of knowledge of their legal rights. The magazine Tahzib-un-Niswan included a debate Aurat Ghulam Nahi which asserted the fact that women should know about their rights on which many prominent personalities like Khawar Durrani, Riffat Husain, Salima Begum, Jamila Begum and Sultana Kazia gave their statements. Thus, it provided a platform through which the women became able to understand their rights. Sultana Kazia wrote about ignorance of women in article Zehniyyat (Mentality) which stated the inferior position of Indian Muslim women as compared to the ladies of other Muslim countries because they did not know the social rights which given to them in Islam. Thus, the foremost duty of women was to know their legal rights.

All the Urdu journals provide us detailed information about women segment of society particularly Muslim middle class in early twentieth century and it also reflected the gradual change in their social status and privileged position in society during the first half of twentieth century.

In order to discuss various themes like Khiyar (Mutual agreements in Muslim marriage), Nikah (marriage), polygamy, Wirā’sat (inheritance), child-marriage, Talaq (divorce), Khulā (separation from women’s side), Mehr (dower money given to the bride), Purdah, household duties, dress and costumes, customs and ceremonies etc, the journals gave examples of women in early days of Islam and their social status.

13 Feminist writer from Calcutta.
The magazine *Anis-i-Niswan*\(^{16}\) said about the rights of women with reference of Quranic interpretations. It gives extensive information about the condition of women before coming of Islam and how their position has changed after the reveal of the *Surah Al-Nisa* (related to women) under the title of *Surah Al-Nisa Ke Mutabiq*.

To quote:

In order to understand the status of women, first it is necessary to know about the **condition of women in pre-Islamic period** (age of *Jahiliyah*) where the women were regarded as a piece of property and treated as chattels. They enjoyed no rights and their social status was low. The man could marry as many wives as he liked and could divorce according to his wishes. It showed that the practices of polygamy and polyandry were prevalent in Arab. The women were also deprived from the right of inheritance. When a man died his elder son or other relatives had the right to possess his widow and married her if they pleased, without setting a dowry on them or marrying them to others or prohibiting them from marriage. Not only this, the women also lost their lives. When a father was informed about the birth of a daughter, he buried her alive. Thus, the mother tried to escape from this painful destiny dig hole herself to throw the girl or to strangle the daughter after their birth\(^{18}\).

Maulana Abdus Salam Nadvi in his article *Huquq-un-Niswan aur Islam* (Women’s rights and Islam) says,

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\(^{16}\) Edited by Shaikh Muhammad Ikram and his wife Mrs. Ikram.

\(^{17}\) *Anis-i-Niswan*, vol-1, no-5, (May, 1939), p-3.

This un-Islamic and illegal practice to bury the girls or to kill them is quoted also by Maulana Shibli Nomani in an article *Aurat aur Islam* (Women and Islam) in the journal *Purdah-Nashin* in the following words:

"..." (verse 4, ayat 3:22:24), relation between husband and wife, how to deal with children and orphans (verse 4, ayat 6:11:12), legal practices of inheritance.

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Also cited, Musluma, vol-6, no-11, (May, 1938), p-13.
Anis-i-Niswan, vol-1, no-3 (March, 1939), pp-3-5.
(verse 4, ayat 11:12:176) and divorce\textsuperscript{25} (verse 4, ayat 20:35) with especial references of \textit{Surah Al-Nisa} and \textit{Al-Baqara}.

The magazine \textit{Noor Jahan} cited an important tract entitled \textit{Islam main Aurat ki Haisiyat} (position of women in Islam) by Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum of Bhopal. She informed that women were given more rights in Islam than any other religion. She stated that Islam treated the women with kindness and banned the abuses such as polygamy, female infanticide which prevalent in pre-Islamic period. Thus, she emphasized the honourable position of women in Islam. Her vision for women’s right and duties was also shown from her work \textit{Muslim Home-A Guide to Muslim Married Couple}\textsuperscript{26}.

Considering the position of Muslim women in the society with other religions, Begum of Bhopal expressed her views:

To quote:

\begin{quote}
Islam ne kuch bhi jo hoga adhikar dila ke acha or kuch mila an ka kuch mubarak hoonga...\textsuperscript{25}
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\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Anis-i-Niswan}, vol-1,no-9, (September,1939),pp-2-6 and vol-1, no-10, (October,1939), pp-2-5.

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Noor Jahan}, (Amritsar), ed. Sultan, Sa’adat, vol-1, no-6, (June, 1926), p-25.


\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Noor Jahan}, (Amritsar), vol-1, no-6, (June, 1926), p-27.
As a matter of fact, the Urdu journals widely discussed the problems of marriage, inheritance and divorce of Muslim community to spread social awareness among women. On the problems of marriage the editor Mumtaz Ali said about the peculiar experience of men and women in Muslim society where the men got the opportunity to receive western education and the women were deprived of it. Mumtaz Ali argued that though the Muslim girls were illiterate but it did not mean that marriage with the European ladies were a right decision. Actually, this marriage was against social norms which troubled the family set up as they were unable to adjust with their Indian in-laws. As a result of this, the couples become separated in extended family\textsuperscript{28}. It is mentioned that in society the only criteria to select the boys was his education, employment and no one cared for other qualities, while for girls her beauty and complexion was given more consideration. Though, the other qualities of girls such as their manner, attitudes and duties towards their in-laws were also need special attention. Thus, the ideal Islamic path should be followed in which the mutual agreement of boys and girls was obligatory for their marriage\textsuperscript{29}. In this matter, the journal \textit{Khātoon} also advised the parents to take the consent of their daughters about their marriage as the unsuitable marriages would destroy the lives of daughters\textsuperscript{30}. The eminent writer Siddiqa Bano in journal ‘\textit{Ismat} also favoured the mutual understanding of two parties in marriages which was ideal to led a happy married life\textsuperscript{31}.

While discussing the rights of Muslim women regarding \textit{Khiyar} (Mutual agreements in Muslim marriage), the journal \textit{Saheli} gives the following version:

\textbf{\textit{Tahzib-un-Niswan}, vol-4, no-10, (30 March, 1901), pp-102-103.}\textsuperscript{28}
\textbf{Ibid}, vol-43, no-52, (16 March, 1940), pp-253-56.\textsuperscript{29}
\textbf{Also cited,} \textit{Saheli (Amritsar)}, ed. Ferozuddin, Khadija, vol-3, no-7, (April, 1927), pp32-33.\textsuperscript{30}
\textbf{\textit{Khātoon}, vol-6, no-6, (June, 1910), pp-278-80.}\textsuperscript{31}
\textbf{Ismat}, vol-74, no-2 (February, 1945), pp-88-89.\textsuperscript{32}
\textbf{\textit{Saheli (Amritsar)}, vol-3, no-7, (April, 1927), p-32.}
Sakina Begum from Lahore wrote an article in journal *Sharif Bibi* about the legality of *Nikah* (marriage) in Islam in which she explained the word *Nikah* as a sacred social contract between bride and groom which based on mutual agreement of both parties, procedure of *Nikah*, its various conditions and other related issues like *Mehr* (dower given to the bride) etc and also gives a list of relations with whom marriage is unlawful in Islam like grand-mothers, sister, grand-daughter, sister’s daughter, brother’s daughter, aunts etc.\(^{33}\)

In this regard magazine also included a fascinating novel *Gudar Ka Lal: Khwateen aur Ladkiyon ke liye Ek Nasehatkhez Novel* (Ruby in rags: a Novel with advice for women and Girls) which mentioned the incompatible marriage and polygamy.\(^{34}\)

About the practices of *Polygamy*, an article in *Tahzib-un-Niswan* mentioned the grief of a woman whose husband had four wives and she had looked after three children more of her husband from other wives. In spite of that, she was not well treated by her husband.\(^{35}\) However, Rashidul Khairi said that no man could do justice to more than one woman in spirit of Quranic injunction. He said that the Quran permitted polygamy in certain cases otherwise monogamy.\(^{36}\)

The editorial of *Sartaj* contains a discussion about polygamy in Islamic context. In certain cases, polygamy is permissible. To quote:

"...\(^{37}\)"

Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah also criticized polygamy strongly and stated Quranic injunctions. In that regards, he noted the social legislation which passed in Turkey to end polygamy there.\(^{38}\) Rashidul Khairi in his novel *Saukan ka Jalapa* (Sorrow of Rival Wife) mentioned the helpless wife who suffered due to the remarriage of her husband. He also criticised fathers for abstained the daughters from their legal share of inheritance. for example, in *Mauda*\(^{39}\), a father preferred to keep his whole property intact rather than to share it for the welfare of his daughter.\(^{40}\)

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\(^{36}\) *’Ismat*, vol-20, no-3, (March, 1918), p-8.


\(^{38}\) *Khatoon*, vol-5, no-1, (January, 1908), p-43.  

\(^{39}\) place in Nagpur.

About the right of *Wirā'sat* (Inheritance), Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah particularly mentioned the state of Punjab and U.P Tenancy Acts which denied the Muslim women their share of agricultural property. He also gave reference of Baluchistan, Sindh, Gujarat and Bombay where the Muslim communities deprived daughters a share of *jaidad* (property) in their family. Thus, he suggested Muslim to follow *Quranic* injunctions strictly.

In the February issue of *Noor Jahan*, 1930, gives a detailed information about the Muslim law of *Haq-ul-Miras* (inheritance).

To quote:

The reputed journal *Muslima* gives the following version of the law of inheritance:

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Also cited, *Noor Jahan*, (Amritsar), vol-1, no-7,8, (July, August, 1926), p-47.


43 *Sartaj*, vol-1, no-1 (June, 1929), pp-22-25.


Another important social matter which deals in women’s journals was **early Child Marriage** and various controversies related to it. Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah stated that early marriage was prevailed in India and it was not found in other countries. The Hindus practiced child marriage which found in their religious text such as *Dharma Shastra, Smritis* and they performed it as their religious duty. The *Pandits* also gave interpretations on different marriage age which based on superstitious beliefs. The age of puberty gave priority of the consent of two parties at legal marriage which hardly followed among Hindus or Christian. An English critic Katherine Mayo who wrote *Mother India*, greatly criticised early marriage which prevailed among Hindus but she did not point out Muslim on that regard. Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah also wrote about the opponents who tried to manipulate Islamic Laws\(^\text{45}\). However, Syed Mumtaz Ali cited a list which mentioned different ages and penalties regarding the age of marriage\(^\text{46}\).

The magazine *Noor Jahan* cited a number of articles in it which discussed the *Sarda Act* against child marriage passed by the Central legislature\(^\text{47}\). The author Mir Aziz-ur-Rahman stated that the *Sarda Act* was passed on 28\(^\text{th}\) September, 1929 which fixed the marriageable age of girls and boys as fourteen and eighteen years. The marriage before that age was prohibited according to this Act\(^\text{48}\).

About *Sarda Act*, the journal *Zeb-un-Nisa* quotes:

> اس ایک کئے کو 18 عسال سے کم عمر کے اور ایک سال سے کم عمر کی ایک اور ایک کئے گئے ہے۔
> اوہ بیٹھے ایک کئے کی عدای سے روزہ کرنا ہے۔
> "کہ منا کا یک کئے کو 18 سالوں سے ہرنے کا"۔

This Act came into effect on 1\(^\text{st}\) April, 1930 which not only applied for both the communities. He favoured the aims of this act and also pointed out that Islam did not support the early child marriage and argued that a universal registration of birth was necessary without which it was ineffective\(^\text{50}\). Another writer from Saharanpur, Qamar Jahan Begum also wrote about the birth certificate of children regarding this act\(^\text{51}\).

\(^{48}\) Ibid, pp-56-58.  
\(^{50}\) *Noor Jahan*, (Lahore), vol-8,no-1,(January,1930), pp-56-58.  
\(^{51}\) *Noor Jahan*, (Lahore), vol-7,no-12,(December,1929),pp-37-40.
Regarding the early child marriage, the magazine Zeb-un-Nisa mentioned that it adversely affects the health of girls as they became mother in too young age and unable to bear the whole burden of family life. The child which born were also suffered from mal-nutrition due to their immature birth and the early marriages were also practiced by Lower class Muslim also. Later on, many voices of Muslim leaders arose against this act. One of the religious association of Muslim, Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind opposed this act when it was discussed in legislative assembly. The President of this organization, Maulana Mufti Kifayatullah in his newspaper Al-Jamiat opposed this act. The other member Maulana Muhammad Yaqub, criticized those Muslims who tried to impose this legislation in the presence of Muslim Personal law.

Now come to the question of Talaq (divorce), the journals included different terms and conditions of it with special reference of Quranic laws and mentioned the reasons for separation. Islam is not in favour of Talaq (Divorce), though it is permissible in Islam in certain circumstances like mal adjustments.

In an article on Talaq wa Khulá (Divorce and Separation), the editor Muhammad Ikram expressed his views, Talaq is permissible in Islam only in certain circumstances like mal adjustment etc. It give chance for further consideration of reconciliation between husband and wife. But if they do not find any way to continue their marital relation, they are free to separate from each other.

To quote:

52 Zeb-un-Nisa, vol-1, no-3 (July, 1934), pp-4-6.
53 Noor Jahan, (Lahore), vol-8, no-2, (February, 1930), pp-119-123.
The journal *Muslima* laid stress on the following condition of *Talaq* in Islam. If the couple have differences between them, they may live separately for some time but it is not a permanent solution and it may create some other problems of their characters. Therefore, Islam gives an option either for reconciliation or for *Talaq*. In the case of *Talaq*, the husband is bound to give some proof of his accusation /bad character.

To quote:

> جزاء كالمقصود كفاية إذا صارت كفت فت كم صارت كفت فت كم
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As the women could not get justice due to the negligence of their husbands in early twentieth century, the Ulema and the elite classes took various steps to solve this problem. Thus, various journals acted to aware the women about their social rights of *Khulâ (Separation from women’s side)*.

To deter the women from the right of *Khulâ* is against Islamic injunction as Islam gives them the right of *Khulâ*. The women from the places of Hyderabad, Bhopal and other Islamic provinces have availed this right. However, in Hindustan the Muslim men used to divorce their (noble) wife whenever they wished, but the oppressed women have no right to separate from their husband and they remained to live miserably. In extreme cases the oppressed women began to leave their religion. Thus, the women should raise their voice for the right of *Khulâ* which given in Islam.

Farooqi Begum, the Editor of *Rahbar-i-Niswan* highlighted the main aspects *Khulâ* which quoted at length:

> خلوة كلفاً قَالَهُنَّ نَحْوَةُ خِصْرَةٍ نَحْوَةُ خِصْرَةٍ  
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> خلوة كلفاً قَالَهُنَّ نَحْوَةُ خِصْرَةٍ نَحْوَةُ خِصْرَةٍ  
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> خلوة كلفاً قَالَهُنَّ نَحْوَةُ خِصْرَةٍ نَحْوَةُ خِصْرَةٍ  
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56 Muslima, vol-6, no-11, (May, 1938), p-14.
The journal *Noor Jahan* emphasized the right of *Khulà* (*Haq-ul-Khula*) and points out if right to divorce is the right of men, in that case, the right of *Khulà* is women’s right. If the male members overcome women’s right to *Khulà*, why the women cannot used the right of *Khulà* for their welfare.

To quote:

> "अगर तैले कर दूसरे का आँक गया है तो स्वतंत्रता में गुम गई है। दूसरा कमान चाहिए। इसलिए बूढ़े हुए तो करना चाहिए। करने के लिए उसके साथ है यदि उसके पास है।"  

The contributor Asif Ali in journal *Anis-i-Niswan* gives a list of the circumstances in which a woman could seek *Khulà* like the disappearance of husband from four year, his negligence or failure to provide the maintenance of his wife for a period of two years, if he had been sentenced to seven years imprisonment or more, if he failed to perform his martial obligations without any reasonable cause for a period of three years, if he was impotent at the time of marriage and continued be so, in the case of insanity or any other disease for a period of two years, if a woman had been married off by her elders before the age of fifteen or puberty and the marriage had not been consummated, she could abandon the marriage before attaining the age of eighteen years. The other is if the husband treated his wife with cruelty, have the habit to assault her or make her life miserable and attempt to force her to lead an immoral life and to get rid of her property, to prevent her from exercising her legal rights over it and if he had more wives than one whom he not treated equally in accordance with Quranic injunctions. Thus, these were the grounds on the basis of which a Muslim woman could obtain *Khulà* 59.

58 *Noor Jahan*, (Lahore), vol-8, no-2, (February, 1930), p-144.
A Bill was also passed according to which the women could seek a judicial Khulâ. It was introduced in Central legislative assembly in 1936 by Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, the member of legislative assembly, M.L.A from Meerut as well as a member of Jamiat and enacted in 1939.\(^{60}\)

However, the objection was raised by the Ulemas who were not satisfied with the proposed bill. According to which, the suits of the dissolution of marriage should be held in proper courts under the supervision of Muslim judges and if the judges was not Muslim, the suit should be passed from one place to another until it could find a Muslim official. After the decision, the suit would be referred back to the original court. If anyone appeals against the decision of trial court, then it would to the high court which decided again by a Muslim judge.\(^{61}\) About it one of the contributors of 'Ismat in article Qanun Tansikhat-e-Nikah-e-Muslimat Ka Hashar also said that without the appointment of Muslim judges, the cases of dissolution of marriage of Muslim woman could not be conducted. Thus, the objection of Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind was continued even after the passing of this act. Later on in 1940, the Central Committee of Jamiat approved certain amendments in it under the Presidentship of Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani.\(^{62}\)

The other related issue with marriage was about the fixation of Mehr (Dower money given to the bride). In the marriage contract, the woman is entitled for mehr but it should be fixed keeping in view the economic condition of the husband. It also protects the dignity of women by bonding in marriage and meant economic security of the girl.\(^{63}\)

While addressing the meeting of Anjuman-i-Dar-ul-Khawateen, Agra Nazr Karar asked how many women received the dower money (Haq Mehr) from their husband? At the time of marriage, large amount of money is fixed by girl's family beyond the capacity of boy which is against Islamic injunction.

\(^{60}\) For details see, Masturat, ed. Begum Bilquis, vol-5, no-11, (15 November, 1939), pp-9-16.


\(^{63}\) 'Ismat, vol-76, no-4 (April, 1946), pp-294-95.


Also cited, Saheli (Lahore), vol-6, no-5 (May, 1930), pp-13-15.
Often the husband avoided prompt payment thought that the ex-wife would exempt him from payment as she being harassed for long. Sometimes the Muslim husbands could seek support from the Ulema and Maulvis who articulated that those wives who would give up the right of mehr for the sake of their husbands, they were placed in paradise. They also lessen the amount of mehr sometimes without any strong reason. In this way, the men tried to keep away the Muslim women from their legal rights of mehr.

The issue of Purdah was another important matter which raised discussion in Muslim community. The early social reformer of nineteenth century, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was favoured purdah for the Muslim women to protect their modesty. However, the modernist reformers of early twentieth century argued on customary (riwaji) purdah in the light of Quranic injunctions and Hadith which reflected in women’s journals.

A lady from Hyderabad in ‘Ismat define the meaning of Purdah in Islamic context. Purdah is beneficial for women because it protect their chastity and honour. Purdah is define veiling which protect the women and their voice from the free mixing of male member. Islam give more emphasis on purdah than any other religion.

To quote:

Noor Jahan, (Lahore), vol-8, no-2, (February, 1930), p-143.
Also cited, Saheli (Amritsar), vol-4, no-9, (September, 1928), p-44.

Also cited, Noor Jahan, (Lahore) vol-8, no-2, (February, 1930), pp-142-45.


Syed Mumtaz Ali, editor of *Tahzib-un-Niswan* stated that Quran did not instruct the women to be kept segregated or cover their face strictly instead it prescribed *Shari'at* based *purdah* which maintain modesty of women. According to this, the women could uncovered their face and hands within veil and move freely in public places. Actually, he does not favour to abolish *purdah* but said for the reform of existing custom in which the men and women should keep modest behavior and allowed the women greater freedom to develop their status.68

The editor of *Khatoon* Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah also had an open-minded thought on the institution of *purdah* and his view was based on the study of Holy Quran and Islamic teaching. He did not oppose *purdah* but favoured for the complete change of the customary veiling (*rasmi purdah*) as in India it become adhered to an evil custom (*biddat*). Thus, he argued against the customary *purdah* which is evidenced from *Khatoon*.69 He stated that the *purdah* carried by women in India was in its extreme form which curtailed their freedom and socially restricted them. He said that such type of *purdah* was not prescribed in Islam and gave examples of the enlightened ladies from Prophet’s families in early days of Islam where they actively participated in all fields. He also gave references of *Sharai’ purdah* from outside world where the women enjoyed greater freedom. Thus, the seclusion of women in India regarded as a social status and prestige of upper classes rather than any religious identity.70 He further said about the Muslim jurists such as Abu Hanifa and Abu Yusuf who agreed that the women could move outside their houses and exposed their face and hands and the men should lower their gaze in presence of women. In short, Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah emphasized the *Shari’at* laws which suggested modesty for both men and women.71

Another observer of customary *purdah* was Rashidul Khairi, the editor of ‘Ismat who opined that in Muslim society a woman could perform *haj* along with men but still they remained in strict confinement because if any stranger heard her voice it

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70 *Khatoon*, vol-6, no-7 (July, 1910), pp-330-334.
was considered *haram* (sin). Not only that if a woman got a chance to go outside, they sit in a *doli* which already covered. He remarked it a double kind of *purdah* which was horrible and such type of extreme isolation was not mentioned in *Sharai’ Purdah*\(^{72}\). Thus, the early reformers regarded customary *purdah* as the main hinderance for the progress of women and there was no religious basis for it.

About the seclusion of women, various journals gave information of its origin with reference of epics, law of Manu and also from Quran. These studies proved that women were confined in their house from ancient times onwards in every religion and the ladies from *Sharif* families observed *purdah*. Thus, *purdah* was not a religious barrier but it was a social custom which was equally practiced by both Hindu and Muslim in different social context\(^{73}\). The journal *Saheli* in article *Purdah aur Islam* (Purdah and Islam)\(^{74}\) stated the beginning of *purdah* in Islamic perspective and included the view of social reformer Justice Ameer Ali who said that the seclusion of women was in vogue from pre-Islamic period (age of *Jahiliya*) when the women continued to enjoy freedom in every field. Thus, it is wrong to assume that women kept in strict *purdah* in early days in Islam.

The *Purdah* which was in vogue among the Muslim was not mentioned during the period of Khalifa. The women from upper section used to come in front of men. During the 7th A.H, the Khalifa became old and the Islamic government suffered a lot under *Tataris*. At that time, there was discussion among the ulemas that is the women opened their face, hand or not?

To quote:

> حسّن لیوْن بَعْد آخِر کل مسلمان بندریں رائج تھے، فلکیاں کے زمانے میں اس کا کچھ تامنہ نہیں تھا - اس کے بھی کس بہتری پر قوم بارہیں مزدور کے ساتھ آئے تھے - مسلمانوں کے صدی کَبیری میں بہت فلکیا ضعیف ہو گیا اور مذہبی اور اسلامی کوئی کام کرو نہیں بمتر کریں اس وقت جس میں اس پر پًاژ چوہن کے گمان ہے۔

\(^{75}\) *Ismat*, vol-62, no-6, (December, 1938), pp-451-452

\(^{72}\) *Anis-i-Niswan*, vol-1, no-3 (March, 1939), pp-12-15.

\(^{73}\) Also cited, *Noor Jahan*, (Amritsar), vol-1, no-3 (March, 1926), pp-22-27.

\(^{74}\) *Tahzib-un-Niswan*, vol-31, no-18, (5 May, 1928) and pp-415-419;


\(^{74}\) *Purdah-Nashin*, vol-6, no-7 (December, 1911), pp-30-34.

\(^{75}\) *Muslima*, vol-6, no-11, (May, 1938), pp-16-17.

\(^{74}\) *Saheli*, (Amritsar), vol-3, no-6, (March, 1927), pp-49-52.

\(^{75}\) Ibid, p-49.
Haya Meerthi in his article *Rasmi Purdah* published in *Khatun-i-Mashriq* says that in my opinion the present *rasmi purdah* should be continued but he was against strict purdah.

To quote:

76 इसके लिए, राज्य के लिए गुणों दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जाने के लिए दिखाए जानें।

The other magazine *Purdah-Nashin* in support of *Purdah* cited an article of renowned Muslim scholar, Maulana Shibli Nomani who gave instances of glorious *purdah* observed ladies from Islamic period and their achievements. Thus, he viewed that *purdah* was not a hindrance and considered it as a symbol of Islamic culture. He was not in favour to discard *purdah* (be purdagi) but intended moderate form of *purdah*.

Apart from this, the periodical *Anis-i-Niswan* mentioned an informative article *Ghoonghat* (veiling). The author Shaikh Abdul Qadir wrote that *Ghunghat* is not observed for going outsides, but it observed inside the Hindu household by women in front of father-in-law and all elder male relatives for respect. In this context, he differentiates Muslim *purdah* which followed inside or outside the home.

Besides the origin of *Purdah*, various journals cited the growing resentment which generated among the Muslim. During early twentieth century, the women from outside world such as Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan and North Africa were enjoyed the liberty movement but the Muslim women in India deprived from it because of their strictness in *purdah*. The journal *Khatoon-i-Mashriq* cited an article *Hamara Purdah* (Our Veil) which stated the need of changes in customary *purdah* in India due to the changes in society. The writer gave references of outside world where the women left *purdah* and took participated in various activities. He said that the liberty enjoyed by women in outside world is suited to the condition prevailed there, but that was not appropriate for Indian Muslim ladies. He also

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76 *Khatoon-i-Mashriq*, vol- 1, no-3, (December, 1929), p-55.
77 *Purdah-Nashin*, vol-6, no-7, (December, 1919), pp-4-8.
78 *Ghoonghat* is a dupatta or head scarf worn to cover the head.
Also cited, *Saheli* (Lahore), vol-21, no-5, (May, 1930), pp-33-34.
*Awaz-i-Niswan*, vol-5, no,9 (September, 1938), pp-77-81.
gave example of educated Muslim women from respectable *Sharif* families of Hyderabad such as Begum Khadiv Jung, Mrs. Ameer Husain and Mrs Sofi\(^{81}\) who received education within *purdah*. Thus, *purdah* was not an obstacle in the path of women’s progress\(^{82}\).

Some remarked that *purdah* restricted women’s freedom and deprived them from education. However, the periodical *Saheli* mentioned the satirical verses of great poet Akbar Allahabadi in support of *purdah* who was a strong supporter of cultural identity of Muslim society\(^{83}\). The journals also noted the name of modern reformist Begum of Bhopal, Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum who spoke at *Madrasah-i-Sultania* regarding the custom of *Purdah* and wrote the book *Al-Hijab or Why Purdah is necessary* in 1922\(^{84}\). She herself visited many Islamic countries such as Turkey, Arab, Egypt and other western countries noticed that the women followed Islamic *purdah*. Thus, she advised such type of *Sharai*’ *purdah* to the country of Hindustan and argued that *purdah* was a religious binding on every Muslim woman and suggested various ways to impart education to the women\(^{85}\).

The journal *Purdah-Nashin* noticed the view of Lady Dufferin\(^{86}\) about *Táalim-i-Niswan aur Purdah* (women’s education and *Purdah*).

At the time of departure from Hindustan lady Dufferin opined, ‘those ladies who maintained their life in *Purdah* were lucky’. She said that *purdah* which is prescribed in Quran was not a hinderance in the path of education. It is generally viewed that after gaining education, the women would become ill-mannered due to their negligence of upbringing, ill-mannered and bad company.

\(^{81}\) Obtained M.A degree from A.M.U.


\(^{83}\) *Sartaj*, vol-1, no-9, (September, 1925), pp-3-9.

\(^{84}\) *Khát oo-i-Mashrig*, vol-2, no-3 (March, 1930), pp-38-40.

\(^{85}\) *Saheli* (Amritsar), vol-21, no-4, (April, 1941), pp-9-10.

\(^{86}\) Wife of Viceroy Lord Dufferin.
Some argued that the strictness of purdah affected the health of women due to which they were suffered from various diseases. The various articles in Saheli opposed the exaggerated form of purdah practiced in India according to which the women were confined in their houses and faced many health problems. Thus, it favoured Sharai' purdah which practiced in European countries and suggested that the women should follow the injunctions of Quran and Hadith with regard to their dress and manners and maintained the modesty in purdah.

The male also criticized purdah which cited in Tahzib-un-Niswan. It is stated that purdah affected domestic works. However, many unmarried girls supported it and some were tried to prove that purdah was not an obstacle in the way of female education and the overall degradation of women.

A moderate critic of purdah, Shahzad Jahan Begum believed in the system itself and she opined that if someone wanted to discard it, she welcomed her. She said about those ladies who abandoned purdah committed many mistakes in social gatherings because they were not trained how to conduct themselves in social gathering. Thus, she suggested the male members to accompany them in the initial stages and trained them the basic of conduct.

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In another instance, Sufia Midhat Khanum wrote that in many families where purdah was not observed there were vulgar jokes which exchanged between the brother-in-law(sala) and the sister-in-law(Sali). Thus, such type of conduct was not favourable in Islam. She said that those ladies who courageously leave purdah and took training in riding, mountaineering and participated in meeting with men were criticized by other as ill-mannered. The author did not criticise it as she thought it was baseless to judge someone ill-mannered if she did not observe purdah. She also pointed out some families where the unmarried girls were instructed that they did not show their face to women of other families. The reason behind this was many unmarried girls were lack of proper manners thus, the elders advised them not to expose themselves to the ladies of other families as it degraded their family status. However, many educated girls did not favour this perception91.

In Saheli one of the article Purdah aur Qurani Ahqam(Purdah and Quranic law)92 mentioned the proper way of veiling with reference of Surah Noor and Surah Al-Hijab which clarify that Quran did not put unnecessary veiling and gave the concept of purdah for women in a dignified way. In fact, the journals of early twentieth century favoured Islamic purdah and mentioned the name of Khimar purdah93 which was in vogue in Islamic period. Thus, such types of purdah keep the women from bad eyes and protect their chastity. It is said that Quran did not make it obligatory for women to cover face and hand but suggested to open those portion which is necessary94.

The magazine Noor Jahan cited an article Purde par ek dilchasp Bahes (An interesting discussion on purdah)95 which mentioned the opinions of many eminent personalities who argued on the matter of purdah. Pandit Nanak Chand96 opined to discard purdah as he thought that it was a detrimental for women’s social and educational development. Pandit Thakur Dutt97 also said to give up purdah but favoured to maintain decency. Another was Maulvi Mahboob Alam who did not favour the customary purdah in India as it restricted women in their houses which was

93 Khimar was long cloth (orhni) which covers from head to toe.
95 Noor Jahan (Amritsar), vol-1,2, (February, 1926), pp-75-77.
96 Eminent educationalist of Punjab.
97 Influential Vaid Leader.
not in accordance of Islam. He supported Islamic purdah and also gave reference of her daughter Fatima Begum who got graduate degree within purdah.

Thus, the journals reflected that there were three groups of people who debated on the issue of purdah. There were some who totally opposed to purdah, some were demanded to lessen the strictness of purdah with relevant religious injunctions. The other were wished to maintain purdah system but believed that the changes in purdah was contradictory to Islamic law.

Turning to other aspects, the relationship between husband and wife and their rights and duties have also been discussed. One of the writers of Tahzib-un-Niswan, Tayyaba Begum wrote about the duties of women towards their husband that the women should give priority towards husband’s duties. However, Mumtaz Ali stated that both have equal rights in society and they should respect the likes and dislikes of each others.

The relationship between husband and wife is best explained by a contributor of Payam-i-Ummid. The husband should treat his wife politely in every situation and the wife should show their obedience and sincerity towards her husband. On certain occasion, the wife feel tired and helpless due to the over burden of household activities, at that moment she need husband’s sympathy.

To quote:

The women were guided to carry their relationship with in-laws respectfully. The conflict between the mother-in-laws (sas) and daughter-in-laws (bahu), conflict between husband’s sister (nand) and his wife (bhabi) were very common which raised due to the unawareness of women towards their duties.
The next informative theme widely discussed in journals was **domestic life of women** such as health, hygiene, child-rearing, frugality and the habit of saving, recipes and handicrafts.

The household duties are best expressed in journal *Niswani Duniya* in the following words:

> In the above line, the emphasis is given: The education of women should be confined to the study of Quran, books of theology, fundamentals of religion, prayer, fasting, etc. To know about God and Prophet Muhammad, rights of parents, obedience of husband, necessity of purdah, entry of unknown women in the houses, upbringing of children. The girl should run household activities, knowledge about accounts, savings, stitching, cooking, cleanliness and maintenance of house etc which were the main spheres of activities of women.

The new approaches towards **women's health** was emerged in early twentieth century due to the influence of west, the Indians realized the need to develop health and hygiene of mother and various steps were taken to make them physically fit and attractive.

The journal *Ismat* gave information that earlier the women were prohibited to discuss their health problems with family members especially with men due to the restriction of purdah. Generally, the male doctor was not permitted to check the female patient but if he allowed in some extreme cases, he could check her temperature and pulses through a hole in curtain. However, in cases of labour no male doctor ever called and the women were deprived from practical medical aid. Thus, the

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women were treated by the local *dai* (mid wife) who was usually an elder woman and did not have proper medical training. She was also unaware of the basics of hygiene due to which the expected mothers lost their lives. Thus, in early twentieth century the effort was made to improve the traditional methods of midwifery and hospitals like *Lady Hardinge Medical College* opened at Delhi in 1916, nurses training college and child-care centre were also built.

Some books were also published in vernacular languages which based on western pattern of treatment to increase awareness among women about health issue. Most significant among them were *Sehat-un-Nisa* (Health of women) and *Muhafiz-ul-Sibyan* (Protection of the Health of Children) which wrote in Urdu by Azizuddin. The first book contained a list of female diseases and its various remedies and the second book based on child-care’s tips. The other health-manuals were also written at that time both by men and women. These manuals informed traditional knowledge along with the method of scientific approaches in west. In short, it promoted the knowledge of *Unani tibb*. Among the most noteworthy manuals, one was *Kamil dai* (Perfect Midwife) published by Ishan and Company in Punjab in 1934 which gave useful knowledge of western and *Unani tibb* about the different stages of pregnancy and child birth. The other was *Zachchah Khanah* (Maternity Home) wrote by Nasiruddin Ahmad in 1934. This manual contained various diseases of women and their remedies which were based on western pattern of midwifery.

Besides this, the book written by female writer was *Tandurusti Hazar Naimat* (Health is wealth) in Urdu written by Zuhra Faizi in 1934. In this book the writer narrated her experiences of staying in America and England in which she highlighted the methods of health-care in these countries. Her another work was *Mufid-e-Niswan* (Benefit of Women) which based on *Unani tibb* and it dealt with eye, heart diseases, small pox and constipation. The author also suggested balanced diet to cure from such diseases in these manuals.

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103 For details see, chapter 6, pp-113-114.
104 Medical officer of local hospital in Rohtak, Punjab.
105 *Khatoon*, vol-8, no-5, (May, 1912), p-47.
107 Medical officer of Delhi.
109 younger sister of Atiya Faizi.
The journals also highlighted the benefit of exercise for women’s health. We find that the concept of health care arrangement for women was an unattainable matter and Mrs. Morisson Smith narrated the importance of exercise and healthy diet for women with British references. She also said about the fitness of women in European countries because of their regular exercise. Thus, Mrs. Morisson Smith suggested two types of indoor games such as badminton and morning walk for Indian Muslim ladies which they easily practiced in their home.

About physical fitness, the periodical *Khātoon* included interesting article *Chand Zanana Warzish* (Some female exercises) with figures which showed exercises of shoulders, neck, legs etc and also guided how to keep liver and lungs healthy and suggested exercises of arms and fingers which helped to relief from joint pain.

However, the journal *Saheli* not only mentioned the importance of health and exercise but also prescribed various healthy tips for teeth. In an important column *Hifzan Sehat* (Hygiene of Health), the women were suggested to use hair oil in summer and winter seasons such as *Gul-e-Surkh, Gul-e-Nilofer, Gul-e-Nafeesa, Buradah-e-Sandal Safeed* etc to increase their mental stamina. Naushaba Khatun Qureshi in an article *Ilm Ghiza* (Healthy diet) said about the fitness of digestive system and suggested to follow the proper manners in diet. In another instance, a hakim wrote in journal *Hareem* about some healthy diet according to which the balance ingredients in food should maintain which was helpful for health.

Some journals informed about unhealthy diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis etc and various remedies for it. The editor Bilqis Begum mentioned a book entitled *Dibachah Sehat* (Perfect Health) wrote by Latafat Husain which gave important information about women’s health-care.
Besides this, the journal *Zeb-un-nisa* included various beauty tips for women and their concerned to become slim due to the fashion of European countries and they avoided to take proper diet which was very harmful. The journal *'Ismat* suggested few tips to maintain personality by developing self-control which could also helpful to reduce obesity by using fresh vegetables and fruits in diet. Other magazine *Haya* also stated the influence of western countries due to which the women became inclined towards health and beauty. However, the journal *'Ismat* played a major role to give information about the homemade and pharmaceutical products for women. It mentioned one of the column called *Khanah Dari* (Domestic Work) wrote by Maulvi Muhammad Zafar which contained the health and beauty care prescriptions which made at home or brought from market. He advised skin care facial cream for those women who played tennis or other such type of game. He also mentioned the ingredients of this cream which made of Vaseline, wax, sweet almonds, rose water and egg. The various products which became popular among the women of Sharif Muslim families in Delhi were *Dilkushah Hair oil* produced by Dilkushah Perfumery Company of Punjab, *Roghane-Bahar, Jamal-e-Tail* and *Mothi* were produced by Baharistan Nazar Bagah Company in North India, the tooth powder *Shahi Manjan* and blush *Rukhsaroun-ki-Surkheer* were manufactured by Saeed Brothers Company of Delhi. The other was Facrine Pharmacy in Punjab which also produced many products for women.

Some individual efforts were also made by both male and female hakims for various products. Among the male Hakim Muhammad Yaqub Khan, ran *Dawa Khanah Noratun* at Delhi where made the products of *Pari Jamal Sabun* (beauty soap), *Zanana Singar Box* (female beauty bow) which contained soap, hair oil, eyeliner, lipstick), *Paris powder* (face powder), *Lali*(blush). The women Hakim who produced *Unani* and beauty care products for women was Wahida Begum. She also established her own clinic *Wahida Begum Unani Medical Hall* in 1933 in Delhi. Some of the noteworthy products of this clinic were *Raughan-e-Snoon wa Dandan-e-

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120 *Zeb-un-nisa*, vol-1, no-8, (August, 1934), pp-31-34.
123 *'Ismat*, vol-61, no-5, (October, 1941), pp-254,341,376
126 Daughter of Hakim Zia-ul-Hasan who was the grandson of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.
Mukamil (medicine for pyorrhea), Farhat Bukhsh Sharbat Nafees Afza, Mahsahal-e-Gesu-e-Daraz (tonic for hair care), Jarob-e-Dimagh and Khamirah-e-Rehan (tonic for healthy brain)\textsuperscript{127}.

Turning to other aspects, the journals widely discussed the concept of womanhood in which \textbf{the relationship between mother and child} gave special attention. Saeeda Zamiruddin of Hyderabad in her article \textit{Maon ki Sehat} (Health of mother) gave information about the basic necessity of maintenance of health of an expected mother which she could be achieved through proper diet, fresh air, ventilation and positive thinking. She mentioned that the social restriction of \textit{purdah} and confinement did not permit them to go outside of home to get fresh air and do exercise of breathing. Thus, it affected the health of mother. She also said about the cleanliness of houses which could protect the women from many dangerous diseases like tuberculosis and anaemia\textsuperscript{128}. The column \textit{Sehat Niswan} which was mostly mentioned in journal \textit{Saheli} also gave such type of healthy suggestions for an expected mother\textsuperscript{129}. The women were also instructed to maintain personal hygiene. A well-known writer, Sikandar Jahan Begum said to maintain cleanliness in houses, kitchen and clothes and gave the references of Arabia society where cleanliness was maintained very properly as compared to the Indian society. She also mentioned the need to keep hygiene to rear the children\textsuperscript{130}. Another was Ansa Ibrahim in \textit{Tahzib-un-Niswan} stated some bad habits of women such as thumb-sucking, nail-biting, putting the hair in mouth etc which caused many unhealthy diseases like indigestion, vomiting and loss of appetite etc\textsuperscript{131}.

About the rearing of child, one article of Kesar Dulhan entitled \textit{Bachcho ki Parwarish wa Sehat ke Mutabiq Chand Hidayat} (Child rearing and few tips related to health) suggested few tips that how to look after a new born baby. She gave the references of European countries in that regard. The mother should take care of their diet, sleep and cleanliness to keep the baby healthy and cheerful. The clothes of newly born child should be proper and they wear loose clothes and avoided to put any jewellery to them\textsuperscript{132}. The maintenance of mother’s health was also needed to keep the baby healthy.

\textsuperscript{129} Saheli, (Amritsar), vol-3,no-2,3,(February, March,1927),pp-17-18,52-53.
\textsuperscript{132} Khātoon,vol,7,no-6, (June,1909),pp-241-244.
However, in India the women suffered a lot after delivery due to their confinement in a separate room. Even, in hot weather the mother and child were prohibited from the breath of fresh air which was dangerous for them. The second basic thing was to maintain proper hygiene in food and drink. In an article *Tarbiyat-e-Itefal* (Training of children) Agha Rafiq was instructed healthy tips about the diet of child. She mentioned that after the birth of baby, the mother should feed milk for few months and at that time they were avoided not to give hard food. An useful information about diet was mentioned in article *Maon ko Hidayat* (Instruction for mother) which explained that sometime when the babies began to cry the mother assumed that it was because they were hungry and they did not think of any other possibilities like pain in throat and stomach or due to the wearing of uncomfortable cloth. Thus, she suggested that the mother should know the basic methods of child rearing and use of medicine to avoid such type of problems. The journal *Rahbar-i-Niswan* also mentioned some diseases of children such as chicken pox, diarrhea, cough etc about which the women should aware.

The mother played an important role to train her children. Thus, the education was needed for women to fulfill this great responsibility. About it the article *Aurat aur Tarbiyat-e-Kirdar* (Woman and training of Character) stated that an educated mother expected to be more competent in managing her household duties and rearing of children. However, this qualification should not be consider as the only criteria to become a good mother as manner and etiquette was also an important quality which needed for it. She gave the example of best mother Hazrat Fatima who trained her sons Hazrat Imam Hasan and Hazrat Imam Husain in such a way that they became the best example of bravery and modesty in history of Islam. The journal *Sharif Bibi* also said about the important role of mother who could train her children properly and to learn manners. Sughra Humayun Mirza in *Parwarish Wiladat* (Rearing of children) stated that the mother should not speak lie infront of their children which gave bad impression. She also appreciated the child for their good work which makes

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135 'Ismat, vol.50, no-4, (April, 1933), pp-265-266.
137 Daughter of Prophet Muhammad.
Also cited, Ibid, vol-1, no-6, (June, 1910), pp-7-11.
them happy\textsuperscript{140}. The journal \textit{Sharif-Bibi} gave the reference of European countries where a mother played the role of first tutor of her children who imparted the basic knowledge of alphabet to their children by showing them pictures of every alphabet in a book which they interestingly learnt\textsuperscript{141}.

Fatima Begum in her editorial \textit{Bachcho ki Parwarish Maa ki Gode Main} suggested various tips for the upbringing of children. It is said ‘the lap of mother is the initial place for child upbrining.’ At this stage, the mother could easily mould the personality of children as she likes, and performed an affective role in the future development of the personality of their children.

To quote:

\begin{quote}
'\text{"\textit{Ismat}, vol-72, no-1, (January, 1944), pp-21-22.}\text{"}
\end{quote}

The magazine \textit{Saheli} also stated the same thing according to which the first \textit{madrasah} of a child was her mother who draw the alphabets with colours to learn them\textsuperscript{143}.

The article \textit{Tarbiyat ki Chand Usool} (Some Principles of training) stated about the change structure of middle class family where the women also played an equal role for the upbrining of their children. Thus, the approach should be positive towards them. She gave the example that if a child was doing something different that did not mean he was wrong. So, the parents should understand their behaviour and treat them politely. In short, it was their duty to train them to become an obedient and faithful child\textsuperscript{144}. However, the journal \textit{Sohag} cited different view about the training of children which mentioned to keep the child free as they were happy to adopt the learning in their own way. Thus, the parents should not forcefully treat them\textsuperscript{145}.

\textsuperscript{141} Sharif Bibi, vol-1, no-1, (April, 1910), pp-50-52.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid, p-7.
\textsuperscript{143} Saheli, (Amritsar), vol-3, no-4, (January, 1927), pp-43-44.
\textsuperscript{144} ‘Ismat, vol-72, no-1, (January, 1944), pp-21-22.
\textsuperscript{145} Sohag, ed. Salma, Iqbal, vol-2, no-2, (June, 1940), pp-34-35.
Apart from this, the other aspect of domestic affair of women was habit of saving and extravagance. The journal stated that the women had a general aptitude for saving money given by their husband for daily household expenses. As the women did not get extra pocket money thus it was not possible for them to buy any article of their choice if they did not save money. The women from low income groups also saved money regularly with the hope to accumulate money to spend on necessary requirements\textsuperscript{146}. Thus, it is necessary for women to know the way in which one could save. A list was prepared for daily expenses through which one could manage household expenditure easily.

To quote:

\[\text{"سب سے بدھ کہ کہاں مینے سب سے خریدنے کی کوچ خریدنے کی چھاذمہ کہا۔ کہاں مینے سب سے خریدنے کی کوچ خریدنے کی چھاذمہ کہا۔ "}\]

We find that the household affairs played an important role in women's life about which Munawwar Jahan Begum bint Syed Abdullah from Jaunpur gave references of Hazrat Bibi Fatima who was an efficient lady. Although she was an educated lady but herself did every work of household. The writer glorified this character and suggested every woman to become expert in domestic works along with education. Therefore, the journals gave various information about daily homely affairs of women such as cleaning house, washing clothes, utensils and how to maintain hygiene in these works\textsuperscript{148}. The magazine \textit{Masturat} stated that as the women were interested to wear colour clothes, so they should know about the dye of clothes and instructed the women how they used various colour dye in different clothes\textsuperscript{149}. The magazine \textit{Rahbar-i-Niswan} informed how to wash silk clothes and gave homely tips how to prepare Vaseline and tooth paste (\textit{Carbolic manjan}) through which the women could earn money\textsuperscript{150}. Besides this, the journal \textit{Tahzib-un-Niswan} mentioned remedial measures for some household problems such as how to remove spots of rain, oil, dust,

\textsuperscript{146} \textit{Tahzib-un-Niswan}, vol- 22, no-28, (12 April,1919), pp-228-29.


\textsuperscript{148} \textit{Muslima}, vol-2,no-4,( April,1938),p-25.

\textsuperscript{149} Also cited, \textit{Sartaj},vol-1,no-7,( July, 1926),pp-21-22.


tea, ink, blood etc. She also gave information how to wash dining tables clothes, silver pots, thermos and shawls\textsuperscript{151}.

The various delicious recipes of vegetables and non-vegetables dishes, sweet, drinks and pickles under the column of \textit{Hamara Bawarchikhana} and \textit{Dastarkhwan} is also significant\textsuperscript{152}.

Among the housekeeping activities, the journals gave some information about \textbf{embroidery works} and cited various pictures of beautiful embroidery design for clothes, pillow-cover etc\textsuperscript{153}. The journal \textit{Saheli} cited the technique of needlework, Fatima Begum\textsuperscript{154}, expert in needle work, and another lady Lateef Begum\textsuperscript{155}, expert in handicraft suggested various tips how to knit woolen boots, sweater for children with picture\textsuperscript{156}. Due to these expertise, the women of that time were skilled in stitching and sewing of their own clothes. The journal also included the pattern of silken cap for children\textsuperscript{157}. The \textit{Sharif Bibi} mentioned variety of embroidery works and a new kind of embroidery \textit{tar-kashi ka kashida} (to make pattern with thread) with picture\textsuperscript{158}.

In order to highlight the various design in handicrafts, a special issue \textit{Dastkari no}\textsuperscript{159} in journal \textit{Sohag} was also published which gave awareness to women about various types of cross-stitches, embroidery, less design and pictures with beautiful designer dresses for women, woolen coat, jacket and the cutting of blouse and \textit{kameez} (Shirt) and children dress, frock etc.

About the matter of handicrafts like stitching and sewing etc, we find references of European countries where the women were interested and quite advanced in it. But in our country if women are rich or poor, art of handicrafts is essential. Rich women could make their homes beautifully decorated and the poor or middle class women could easily solve their problem of poverty.

\textsuperscript{152} For details see, \textit{Purdah-Nashin, Tahzib-un-Niswan,Sohag,Masturat,Zeb-un-nisa etc.}
\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Muslima, Tahzib-un-niswan, ismat.}
\textsuperscript{154} Dress designer from Bangalore.
\textsuperscript{155} Designer from Lahore.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid, vol-3, no-12, (December, 1927), pp-70-71.
\textsuperscript{158} Also cited, \textit{Rahbar-i-Niswan}, vol-1, no-3, (August, 1934), p-10.
\textsuperscript{159} \textit{Sharif-Bibi}, vol-1, no-8, (August, 1910), pp-56-60.
\textsuperscript{159} \textit{Sohag}, ed. Salma, Iqbal, Dastkari no, vol-1, no- 9, (September, 1940), pp-22-27.
Further the editor Iqbal Salma suggested the opening of ladies centres of handicrafts, large or small so that different types of articles could be prepared and sold and the girls should learn the art of making these articles.

To quote:

The question of women dress and costumes was also not neglected in these journals. There was considerable discussion as to which type of dress should be appreciated for the ladies.

There various discussions of ladies dress (Zanana Libas), one respectable lady M. F. Begum mentioned her choice about the dresses of Arab and Turkey. She further said that the time has changed and the discussion on which type of dress should be used is not significant. However, an open-minded lady A.W.J Begum Dehlavi disagreed her and said the women could select their dresses according to their own choice.¹⁶²

Among the varieties of dresses from different places, A.W.J Begum Dehlavi said about the ladies dress of Arab which comprised of a long loose kurta covered the whole body with a head scarf. She narrated the similarities of Turkish’s women dresses with Orientalists in which there was long gown, a beautiful jacket with a bodice and the hair was twisted into knot like the Bengali women. She also talked about the women dresses of Delhi and Lucknow which were most in demand. In Delhi and Lucknow the ladies worn tang paijama (tight churidar) with kurta in the houses and in social gatherings they worn silk kurta, paijama with Hindustani and English jacket, silk dupatta and some times kamdani (embroidery) dupatta. In Lucknow, loose paijama and shawl was in vogue. However, the ladies in Hyderabad

¹⁶⁰ Sohag, vol-1, no-9, (September, 1940), p-7.
used Sari and also kurta with beautiful English jacket\textsuperscript{163}. In short, she said about the cultural value of different places with varieties of dresses which was in used.

A social activist Bint Nazr-ul-Baqar\textsuperscript{164} suggested to improve ladies clothes and she was supported by a respectable lady Bint Nasiruddin Haider, as it was important to differentiate our dress from other communities. The journal \textit{Sharif Bibi} praised Bint Nazr-ul-Baqr for her effort to improve women’s dress. She stated that the dress should be Indian and in accordance with Islam\textsuperscript{165}. An honourable contributor Abru Begum\textsuperscript{166} suggested the ladies to follow Turkish dress which was Islamic and mostly liked by the educated men. She suggested the \textit{Parsee Saree}, jacket with less jewellery and shoes which were used in Hyderabad. She said about the \textit{Qasbah} (head-scarf) which was used by \textit{Parsee} but the Muslim ladies did not use it. She recommended the Muslim women to cover their head like the \textit{Parsee}. In short, Bint Nasiruddin Haider instructed the ladies to follow this dress.

Another eminent lady was Sultana Begum Dehlavi who stated that the ladies should chose dresses from their own community in spite to follow the dresses of Arabia and Turkish or English. She narrated her experience in a party which she attended in Lahore and realized that the Indians were followed different varieties of dresses but the English maintained one particular style. Thus, she emphasized the need to follow one proper dress that represented Muslim community\textsuperscript{167}. However, the journals \textit{Anis-i-Niswan} and \textit{Tahzib-un-Niswan} also suggested the women to follow Islamic dresses\textsuperscript{168}.

Islam is not prescribed to chose any particular dress for ladies, it mention that the fashion is whatever but the women should cover their body according to the Islamic \textit{Shari'at} and those who did not follow this restriction, they did not go to paradise.

\textsuperscript{163} Khâtoon, vol-2, no-2 (February, 1905), pp-94-98.
\textsuperscript{164} Urdu novelist.
\textsuperscript{165} Sharif Bibi, vol-1, no-5, (May, 1910), p-55.
\textsuperscript{166} Sister of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
\textsuperscript{167} Khâtoon, vol-2, no-5 (May, 1905), pp-189-199, 222-224.
Mrs. Zubaida Khatoon, was another well-known lady from Bombay also gave her views regarding ladies dress. She preferred the dress of Bombay ladies which would be suitable for ladies. She mentioned her own experience of a fashion competition of London in which many English ladies came with beautiful coloured dresses but she herself participated in her simple dress. She won the first prize and her dress was appreciated very much and the news was published in many newspapers of London. The magazine Khatoon cited the photo of this prize-winning lady.

However, the editor of Khatoon said about the exhibition which was an easy way to select ladies dress. He further mentioned a new Turkish style burqa designed by a talented lady Said Ahmad Begum Dehlavi which was a long coat with detachable veil covered head, shoulders and arms by maintaining modesty and the women moved anywhere comfortably by wearing this burqa. It was so popular in Lucknow Conference that she got the first prize for it. Thus, she opened a ladies store in Delhi where the poor girls were trained to stitch dresses. In short, it gave them an opportunity to earn money. We find another reference of ladies store which opened in Hyderabad named Deccan Zanana Store. This store provided great facility of shopping to the women.

The journal 'Ismat also gave suggestion about dresses according to climatic conditions. Shaista Ikramullah in an article Kaproh say mutaaliq Chand Batein (Some matters relating to Dress) said that it was important to know about the appropriate dress which could be worn in accordance with the needs of season, place and function. She gave few examples in that regards. If anyone worn red satin dress which

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170 sister-in-law of Atiya Faizi.
172 Ibid, vol-2, no-9, (September, 1905), p-450.
inserted with gold and silver embroidery in a lunch party in the month of June, it would look odd. On the other hand, if that person worn light coloured dress, she looks more attractive and comfortable. Thus, the author pointed out that the heavy embroidery dress was appropriate for dinner party in summer. Another instances, she asserted that a dark complexion woman should avoid to wear light colour dress such as sky blue and light purple. She stated that age factor of the user was also an important matter in the selection of dresses colour, design and other belongings such as matching shoes and purse etc.\textsuperscript{174}

In the selection of dresses, one must keep in mind the nature of function and place. If anyone went to visit a patient for the purpose of \textit{ayyadat} (visiting sick), she should wear simple and plain clothes and avoid wearing of heavy clothes with jewellery.\textsuperscript{175} The journal \textit{Hareem} also informed about the importance of suitable dress for the ladies which they chose according to the season.\textsuperscript{176}

We find that the editor of journal \textit{Sharif Bibi}\textsuperscript{177} gave a valuable suggestion about the question of women's dress. She said that if the women from various places send the photo of their dresses in this journal, it was easy to decide the dress. In short, this journal played a significant role about the matter of fashion which included beautiful pictures of ladies dress.

It gave interesting information about the fashion store which produced a new stylish \textit{Gharara} (full flared pants with a shirt) and double breast coat fashionable \textit{kameez} that was in demand among the ladies. This magazine also highlighted the women's fashion of Lahore with many pictures of dresses such as \textit{Gharara, Kameez, button wala paijama} and beautiful \textit{Shalwar} which worked by white thread.\textsuperscript{178} The journal \textit{Saheli} included an interesting fashion note with picture which showed various hair styles from the ladies of outsiders India and its fashion.\textsuperscript{179}

Thus, it can be said that the women's journals guided the ladies to choose dress in accordance with Islam and maintained the modesty in their dresses and also aware them about modern trends fashion.

\textsuperscript{174} I\textit{smat}, vol-56, no-2 (June, 1936), pp-441-42.
\textsuperscript{175} \textit{Tahzib-un-Niswan}, vol-43, no-33, (12 September, 1940), pp-908-909.
\textsuperscript{176} \textit{Hareem}, vol-20, no-7 (July, 1943), pp-39-41.
\textsuperscript{177} Begum, Fatima, vol-1, no-1, (April, 1910) and vol-1, no-8, (August, 1910), pp-32, 37.
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{Saheli}, (Amritsar), vol-4, no-4, (April, 1928), pp-149-160.
During the late nineteenth century, the women were practiced various useless Customs and Ceremonies and became a victim of it which highlighted in Women’s Urdu journals.

We find that a well-known writer of Meerut, Mrs. Niyaz Ahmad wrote an article in journal Khātoon on Baz Rasm (few customs)\(^{180}\) in which she mentioned those customs which were regarded as financial burden on the family. These customs are:

a) **Bakher** (distribution of coins or money at the time of marriage): At the time of bride’s Rukhsati (first time departure from parent’s house to the bridegroom’s house), the elders of the bride’s family throw some coins on the palanquin. So, that ultimately they may be picked up by the poor. By this charitable custom, they try to invoke the blessing of God for her.

b) **Fatiha Soyam or Tija**: On the third day after someone’s death, chana (a kind of pulse) and ilaichi dana (sweet grains) are distributed among the Maktab (school) children of affluent families. They should be distributed among widows and orphans. Then only this custom will be beneficial.

c) **Māyūn Baithna**: Before the marriage of few days or about a month, the girl in a very simple look was confined in a room. She should not wear any washed up clothes, she should not eat in the presence of others. The girl should sleep on ground only. This custom does not exist in other countries.

d) **Chauthi Khelna**: The bride first visit to parent’s house in which she is to play with fresh and dry fruits. Such customs should be reformed. There are a number of other customs as Moonchhon ka Koonda, Naumasia (name of a feast given in the ninth month of pregnancy), Gode Bharai (ceremony of blessing for child), Kheer Chatai (custom in which bride and groom feed each other sweet with rice and milk), Kaan Chhedan (piercing of ears) etc are such that involve great extravagances.

Mrs. Niyaz Ahmad said that her grand-father, the late Nawab Jan Fishan Khan Bahadur was very much against these Indian customs which was prevalent at that time. However, these customs were very common among women. The main purpose of these celebrations was to pass their time.

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\(^{180}\) Khātoon, vol-2, no-11, (November, 1905), pp-525-528.
A well-writer Khwaja Hasan Nizami said about the custom of *Lagan*. After the engagement of a girl, when her father fixes the date of marriage through a letter to the bridegroom, the four sides of the letter is coloured with different colours and folded with greengrass, five pieces of turmeric and two pieces of betel nuts\textsuperscript{181}.

The journals *Tahzib-un-Niswan* and *Ismat* also highlighted some unnecessary marriage customs\textsuperscript{182}. A lady from Bilaspur, Fatima Khatoon mentioned many rituals which were common among the Hindu and Muslim culture. Among these, one was *Manjha* Ceremony which celebrated atleast three days before of marriage. In this ritual, the girl was seated on a wooden chawki covered with a *dupatta*. Then, an aged married woman applied *Ubtan* (sandal wood) on her hand and other six ladies by following her rubbed it one by one. The singing also continued among the participant ladies during the course of this ceremony. In fact, the ladies took great interest in playing with this *Ubtan*. The girl's approval was necessary for marriage. Then the ritual *Muh dikhai* (showing the face) take place in which the relatives and in-laws were came to see the bride again and again and the bride was instructed to close her eyes. In this way the girl became silently torture by these customs\textsuperscript{183}.

Another custom was *Jahez* (dowry) which was given by groom to settle the marriage in which the parents of girl gave many expensive gifts and articles in kind or cash. Next custom was called *Salaami ki rasm*\textsuperscript{184}. The writer Basarat Ahmad Jahan in an article *Jahez wa bari ki numais* was mentioned the main motive of this custom to show off the gifts among the relatives which is against Islam. However, it was taken from Hindu culture where they followed *Tilak* in which the dower paid by the bride’s family to the bridegroom and it depends upon the status of the bride’s family. If the bride was unable to bring cash or expensive goods, she faced continuous tortures and the same humiliation was also faced the bride in Muslim family\textsuperscript{185}. The journal *Ismat* in an article *Rasm wa Rewaz*\textsuperscript{186} (custom and tradition) was also mentioned an extravagant custom of *Chaliswa* which celebrated after fortieth days on the death of someone. A grand feast was arranged on that day which was usually for show off\textsuperscript{187}.

\textsuperscript{181} *Khātoon*, vol-3, no-9 (September, 1905), pp-407-409.
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid, vol-32, no-36, (15 June, 1929), pp-559-560,1245.
Beside this, an interesting ritual was *Nath ki Rasm* (custom of nose ring) which was celebrated on the day of marriage. The groom brought the nose ring which was the marriage symbol of women and if the groom did not bring it, the marriage would not solemnised. Another was *Shadi ki anguthi* (wedding ring) in which the wedding ring was to wear on the fourth finger of the left hand which signified the never-ending and immortal love. This customs was originally taken from ancient Egypt, Rome and the Muslim also followed it. However, the journals gave references of the marriage of Hazrat Fatima, daughter of Prophet Muhammad, which was simply arranged.

Among the social customs *Sati* was prevalent at that time. One of the writers Abdul Khairi from Fatehganj Gharbi wrote about the cruel custom of *Sati* (the women burn herself on the funeral pyre of her husband). This custom was prevalent in ancient period and was practiced by Hindu women. It is believed that the near and dear ones of the women forced her to become *Sati* and their main intention was to take the jewellery of that woman. In some places, the woman along with her husband was tied in the funeral pyre so that she could not escape from *Sati*. In other places, there was a dug in which the corpse was kept to burn and the wife was jumped in the lighted dug. Sometimes the wife kept the forehead towards her husband’s feet and burnt the pyre. In one of the environs of Gujarat the women were forced to drunken opium. Thus, she became faint but few women were scared and they want to escape it. However, they don’t escape and forced to commit *Sati*.

Khwaja Hasan Nizami wrote an article on *Hindu Aurton Ki Devta* (Goddess of Hindu women) in which he stated about the belief of Hindu religion and their worship of thirty three crore of Gods and Goddess. He wrote about some of the important female worship of Gods and Goddess was such as the worship of Mahadevji and his wife Parvatiji which is considered important for the sake of children. The famous temple of Mahadevji is located at Banaras where thousands of women visited on Saturday and Sunday for this purposes. The women also worship

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192 *Khātoon*, vol-2, no-12 (December, 1905), pp-577-579.
river Ganga for children and few women worship the peepal tree for the same purposes. On some important occasion these women were also visited the grave of Muslim saints for the same motive. He also mentioned in his write up some unhealthy practices of Hindu women like labour pain at the time of delivery and worship of Sitla (missle). They considered these customs were necessary for the safety of the child. Thus, he not only discussed these social customs but also mentioned the age old blind faith of the people regarding these rituals.

Another was Haq Dehlavi in his article Khairāt (Charity) discussed the celebration of Bismillah khwani in Muslim traditional family. According to this tradition, when the child had attained the age of four years, four month and four days, a ceremony was held which called Bismillah Khwani. In this celebration, the child was dress-up like a groom. The Sharif Muslim families as well as the poor participated in it. An aged tutor/tutoresses was appointed to guide the child. The teacher taught them how to recite Surah 'Iqra' at first and trained the child to write it on Takhti (small board). Thus, the initial education of a child began at home. Another custom also celebrated when the child was grown up and became able to keep the fast and offer the namaz (prayer). The parents celebrated the Roza(fast) of the child and relatives were also invited.193

Besides this, some rituals which celebrated eagerly by the women of Delhi were very rare in other parts of the country. Among these one was Moonchhon ka Koonda. When the boy was fourteen or fifteen years old and became grew up, this ritual was celebrated. In this ritual feast, the close relatives of boys were gathered and they ate the milk and siwai (sweet dish) in the belief that the blessing of Bibi Hazrat bestowed on it. After that, the aged relative of the boy kept the earthen vessel in a safe place. There were many terms and condition among the women to follow this custom. Those women who deprived earlier due to some reason came infront of the boy and brought sandal on ashrafi (gold coin). They plastered the powder on the cheek of the boy due to the belief of the growing of long moustaches of this boy. Lastly, the mother of the boy dispersed the bātāshe (sweet) upon the head of that boy. In short, a fateha was performed to thank God for the child who attained the age of puberty.194

Ibid,vol-5,no-2(Febuary, 1908),p-76.
194 Ibid, p-76.
The editor of *Khātoon* gave references of Europeans who had strong faith on their religion and followed their tradition sincerely. According to them, a traditional old dress was kept in the royal family and the young European children would dress up that costume as a gift which became the symbol for their good health and prosperity. This practice was followed in Delhi where the dresses of aged women worn the children for their safety. All these rituals showed the superstitious belief among the Muslim women in society195.

One of the writers from Delhi, M.J. Begum who was against the superstitious customs wrote an article *Ek Shadi* in which she discussed the marriage ceremony of two respectable families and their belief and rigid practices in it. When the boy’s family went to the girl’s house for marriage, they put the sandal powder in the hair of in-laws and received them by giving the garland in their neck. One of the lady instructed the boy to tie a waist band. After that, when the bride came her feet touched to the shoulder of groom in the belief that the wife tied the shoes of her husband in the whole life. Another custom was that the groom leaps the bride into his arm and sat in the palanquin. In this way, the marriage ceremony was celebrated. After that when the bride came to the groom’s house, her mother-in-law washed the bride’s feet by milk in a pot. In this way, the all rituals of marriage were completed196. Thus, the above information stated that due to age old blind faith of people regarding their customs, the women celebrated each and every ritual very happily to fresh their mood.

The women’s journals also discussed some important ceremonies which were celebrated among the Muslims such as *Id-ul-Fitr*, *Shab-e-Barat* and *Eid Milad-un-Nabi*. One of the author, Syed Nizamuddin Ahmad Jafri wrote about the celebration of festival *Id-ul-Fitr* and its significance which celebrated after the end of the holy month of Ramadan197. The journals *Khātoon*, *Tahzib-un-Niswan*, *Ismat* and *Anis-i-Niswan* highlighted the significance of *Shab-e-Barat*. Besides this, these journals were also pointed out the useless celebration among the Muslim on that day which is not prescribed in Islam. One of the authors, Anis Begum Zia Qureshi said that the Muslims celebrated it by displayed firework to show their happiness on that day which is un-Islamic198. Women writer Shaista Akhtar Suhrawardy called the day of *Shab-e-Barat* as ‘All Soul’s Day’ in which special offer of prayers given for the

195 *Khātoon*, vol-5, no-2 (February, 1908), p-76.
remembrance of dead one. She also related it to the night of Shab-e-Qadr. Thus, she instructed the women to not celebrate it by showing fireworks like festival rather than respect this day.\(^{199}\)

Another was the **celebration of birthday of Prophet Muhammad (Mahfil-e-Milad)**. One of the articles in journal *Tahzib-un-Niswan* mentioned about the unawareness of women about the celebration of Mahfil-e-Milad as they related it to Milad Sharif. The editor mentioned that Milad Sharif was arranged occasionally in different places but he instructed that the birthday of Prophet Muhammad which was on 12\(^{th}\) Rabi-ul-Awwal should celebrate significantly.\(^{200}\) Akbar Allahabadi said about the lack of knowledge among the women about this day due to which they took the gathering of this celebration lightly. Thus, he instructed the women to known about its importance. The editor of *Ismat* said that though some were opposed to celebrate this day but he instructed the importance to celebrate the day of Milad-un-Nabi.\(^{201}\)

Apart from this, the journal *Ismat* mentioned the unnecessary custom which the women followed on the day of Muharram (first month of Lunar). Anis Fatima wrote that though it was mourning but the women celebrated it like marriage ceremony and prepared new dresses. She stated that on the 7\(^{th}\) day of Muharram, the older members of families were tied sacred thread on the wrist or shoulder to their children to offer fateha on the name of Hazrat Imam Husain. Not only this, the women also filled earthen pot with some milk and sherbet. Then they lay it in the fire pit which filled with earth and fixed a pomegranate branch on the mound. They performed it on the belief to protect their children from evil spirits.\(^{202}\) The journals suggested the women to remove these unhealthy customs and tried to understand the negative side of these practices.

Thus, with the emergence of women's Urdu journals and the spread of education make them socially aware to face the new challenges of life. As a matter of fact, ignorance of education and the purdah system (veiling) were the main hinderance in their empowerment and social status in the society during the first half of the twentieth century. We find that most of the noble ladies of the period under review not only make significant contribution in different walks of life but they also became role models for the future generations.


