Chapter-V
Expansion of Institutions

The leaders of the Singh Sabhas, Chief Khalsa Diwan and the Sikh activists went a long way in bringing about the awareness in their community about women education. They were unanimous in their attack on the social taboos which had degenerated the position of women. They felt that no moral, social and intellectual progress can be attained if women are steeped in ignorance. They advocated that if a community wants healthy, upright and unselfish member, the quickest, surest and the easiest way is to educate that most powerful of all influences- the mother at home. The hand, head and heart of Punjabi girls and women should be evenly and harmoniously cultivated, so that they may discharge with grace and efficiency the duties of whatever stations of life they belong to, as wives or mothers or responsible members of society.¹

The important phase in the history of Sikh educational movement was started with the foundation of Sikh Educational Conference of Chief Khalsa Diwan. The ideal of the Sikh Educational Conference was to impart education to every Sikh girl, boy and adult, whether rich or poor. It has not only worked for the education of boys but also of girls for whom a large number of educational institutions were established. The one of the aims of Sikh Educational Conference was to further the cause of women education among the Sikhs.² By working on its aim the conference did great efforts to expand women education in the province. At the very first session of the conference, held at Gujranwala in April 1908, Sardar Shivdev Singh Oberoi³ emphasized on ‘education of Sikh women’.

The annual sessions of the Sikh Educational Conference have been an occasion of great public interest and enthusiasm. People from all walks of life

² Brief Report of the Educational Committee of the Chief Khalsa Diwan of the Year 1928, Published by Educational Committee, March 1929, 1, see also Mohinder Singh, History and Culture of Punjab, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1988, 122.
³ Sardar Shivdev Singh was born at Sialkot in 1873. He was appointed as honorary magistrate by the Government. He served Educational Committee with dedications. The office of the Educational Committee remained at Sialkot for 17 years. He gave his house to the office of Educational Committee without taking any rent. He worked for the expansion of education. He started a Khalsa Kanya Middle Pathshala and a Khalsa school. He was elected as President of 12th Educational Conferenc of Gujarat in 1920.
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participated in its proceedings. It became tradition that as the venue of the conference shifted from year to year, a Sikh education institution whether for boys or girls was usually its gift to the town where it was held. The conference soon became a source of inspiration for the Sikhs. Schools sprang up in quick succession throughout Punjab. There were only seven Khalsa schools in 1908 when the conference came into existence and by 1947, the number went up to 340. A number of divinity schools and schools for orphans, for blind and for the handicapped were established. Over two dozen libraries and literary associations also came up. At the conference stages intellectuals and activists appealed the masses to come forward for the cause of women education. So many protagonists came and brought with themselves Sikh kanya pathshalas, sometimes with boarding houses. Sardar Shivdev Singh, Honorary Secretary of Educational Committee founded Khalsa Kanya Middle Pathshala at Sialkot in 1907 which he ran 25 years and bears the whole expenditure. Another activist Kaur Singh started Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala with 64 girls on roll at Sukho, Rawalpindi on November 16, 1910. It was served by his wife and two other women. They provided knowledge of handicrafts to girls along with basic instructions. There was a Sikh kanya school in Rawalpindi. It had a boarding house for the far lived girls. The school provided free education and lodging for the girls. For first time free books and slates were given to the girls. For monthly meal five rupees were charged. On the same lines a Sikh kanya pathshala was started at Qadian. It had boarding house for outsider girls. Needle work was also taught.

Sometimes, appeals were made publically from specific area for opening of the school for girls. Such kind of appeal was made from the uneducated girls of doaba in 1910s. As a result a Sikh Kanya Pathshala was opened at Doshanj Kalan, district Jalandhar. There were eight to ten schools for boys in the area but not a single school for girls. The protagonists of girls’ education, therefore, took debt for the building of the pathshala. The Sikhs living outside the country contributed rupees 8000 for the building. Maharaja Patiala and a contractor Sher Singh of Sandwan also contributed

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4 Souvenir of Central Khalsa Orphanage, Published by Bhag Singh Ankhai, Amritsar, n.d, 15-16, see also Khalsa Samachar, March 22, 1932, 3.
7 Khalsa Samachar, November 23, 1911, 5.
8 Ibid., February 16, 1911, 6.
9 Khalsa Samachar, June 20, 1912, 7.
rupees 1000 each. Government grant of rupees 400 per annum was also attached to it. A local committee ran the institution successfully. Later on it started boarding house for the girls coming from faraway places. The institution became famous under the management and secretoryship of Bhai Kartar Singh who collected money from the countries like Burma. He left the government job and made a jatha of ladies including his family members for the cause.\textsuperscript{10} It remained a famous institution of the doaba. Sardar Narayan Singh served the school as Incharge Manager and Sabheda Devi as Head Mistress. The visit of Sardar Kartar Singh made the people of Burma remained in touch with its affairs for many years. In 1917, a person Sardar Kundan Singh sent rupee 1500 for the institution as financial aid.\textsuperscript{11} The district Inspector Jalandhar Hemraj visited the pathshala on October 13, 1916. He went to conduct an examination. He admired that registers of the school were well organized. The building of the school was located at good place and airy. He also praised the boarding house for the girls and noticed that besides education, the girls were taught needle work, cooking and well organized in preparing and serving langar managed that turn by turn.

\textbf{(जन्य छंद) 13 October, 1916.}

\begin{quote}
"अनु में, में सिद्ध वटिझा धवक्षा जेमें पर व्रिणिक्षुम किशा, भुज नाम नींददर भुज दह में बजी भेद तथा तक किदे गत, भिदुं दे केंद्र किरह भेद ढूंढ हिन्दुम है, पड़मंदा दे बर्किहिं नौबंधी आनन्दध आज़ा दे एंड आनन्दध भुजुर है, नज़ार जेन्द आनन्दध बधी है में हिंद मुहोत आनन्दध पह बड़ी मंडल दे उत्तर बड़ी देखी है। मंडली हिन्दहिं भव में वड़ी दुनी बझें, दुनी मतःकु दे जीं भेद में तो तो छोटा। ... हिंद रखाका रखिं धवक्षा व्रिणिक्षु है, सिम हिंद घराल दे हिंदिनां दे मुखिया दे आ दे हिन्दिनां दे व्रिणिक्षु धृष्ट सह तवीं दह। एकचर्चा के ही जीत जमार放过 रियंग दह न दे दवीन्द्रो आन आज़ा दी में नेना नवंसीं दह, बर्किहिं नौबंधी भृषों अनि लखादान जें।"\textsuperscript{12}
\end{quote}

Many visitors came to the school and admired its building and arrangements. Once Sohan Singh, a sub-overseer from Burma visited the school on June 23, 1917. He found its building and boarding airy and well maintained and appreciated the

\textsuperscript{10} Khalsa Samachar, June 20, 1912, 3-6. \\
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., July 19, 1917, 4. \\
\textsuperscript{12} Khalsa Samachar, November 23, 1916, 7.
service of Bhai Kartar Singh who was managing the school. He also praised the intelligence and good nature of the Headmistress and noticed that she treated the girls as her daughters. The girls were provided not only with good education but also taught stitching and cooking.

"On 23-6-1917 H.I. Singh Singh, village (Majitha) said Bhai Kartar Singh was managing the school. He also praised the intelligence and good nature of the Headmistress and noticed that she treated the girls as her daughters. The girls were provided not only with good education but also taught stitching and cooking.

The Sikh Educational Conference provided great encouragement for the expansion of educational institutions for women. The girls being educated, were bound to help in social upliftment. Education had begun to break down the seclusion or the purdah. Women began to attend Educational Conference and more significantly, took an active part like donating ornaments to help in the spread of education. By the year 1913, there were one Sikh Kanya Mahavidya, 7 kanya Middle Schools and 60 kanya Primary schools for women.

### Table - 1

A list of Sikh educational institutions working under the management of Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School for Boys</th>
<th>School for Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 Khalsa Samachar, July 5, 1917, 4.
15 Khalsa Samachar, June 12, 1913, 5.
The figure shows that the Sikhs remained forward in the field of primary education of girls than boys for whom 60 schools were established. The figure also shows that they took more interest to impart elementary education to women than higher. The primary education for girls was one of the principle questions of the time and was obviously the need. The Sikh Educational Conference made the programme that there should be at least one primary school in every village. Such a target could not easily achieve. Of the hour the Sikhs felt this worked hard for the purpose. They realized the importance of Sikh religion and religious training in the life of a girl especially at the early stage. To open *kanya pathshalas* in every town and village of the province was their ideal.

There were a number of such customs and rituals that created hindrance in the progress of girls' education. Apathy of the people towards girls' education owing to social and religious conservatism, the custom of early marriages and domestic cares and duties and practice of *purdah* were among them.\(^\text{16}\) It was fear among peoples also that the spread of education among women may lead to discontentment with a present restricted conditions of life and undue independences of thought and extravagance in living may take place of present domestic virtues. There is a fear that girls when they are educated may become unfit for home life, that they may become averse from tasks which constitute the glory and pride of orthodox Punjabi women.\(^\text{17}\) The necessity of framing suitable curricula for the girl students, the lack of competent women teacher and the want of religious teaching was badly felt. The government and socio-religious reform bodies had been working enthusiastically in this direction to make the girls' education popular. It was noted in the Education Report of 1905-06 that the old prejudices against educating women were breaking down, and urban middle class Punjabis were becoming more eager to send their daughters to schools, to keep them there to a later stage, to pay fees for their education, even to send them to boarding houses. The tide had begun to turn and people had begun to show anxiety for educating girls by lending their houses rent-free and offering prizes and sweet meats at annual functions.\(^\text{18}\) Boarding girls schools became popular. In the past, parents had shown unnatural reluctance to send their girls away to school. But a great change


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occurred now that it became difficult to provide girls hostels to meet the ever increasing demand.\(^{19}\)

Reformers of this period laid stress on the differentiation of curricula for the girls and held that it ought not to be taken for granted that the instructions which are suitable for boy must necessary be good for Punjabi girls. They recommended that the standard of instructions for primary school for the girls be simpler than that for boy’s school. The Sikh reformers were extra careful in preparing the syllabi for girls at the primary levels. They kept in mind the utility of it for the future of women. It was generally felt that the curriculum should be so designed as to develop and train all the faculties or powers of the scholars to the maximum to make them fit for the discharge of the duties and responsibilities of domestic and civil life, to make the acquisition of knowledge a thing of pleasure and not a task.\(^{20}\) They stressed on religious education for women to transmit religious and moral values to the children of the community. They also advocated that the skills of home science like cooking, nursing and tailoring should also be taught to women. In addition to basic literacy, the girls should learn sewing, embroidery, cooking, music, poetry, games, arithmetic, hygiene and literature of Sikh religion. To train them in these areas, separate classes were arranged in middle and high schools.

The people were becoming conscious to educate their daughters for the very reason to find good matches for them. Women themselves wanted to get education for many reasons, as child widows they wanted self honour and dignity. Women were interested in education because they loved economic and social freedom and there were some who really interested in gaining knowledge.\(^{21}\) The Report on the Progress on the Education in the Punjab during Quinquennium Ending 1921-22 noted a most striking increase in the number of indigenous or elementary schools for girls. It refers the statement of the Chief Inspectress,

Even in villages and outlying districts the former indifference or even antagonistic attitude towards the improvement of the intelligence and status of women was passing away. The Punjab was particularly

\(^{19}\) Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab during the Quinquennium ending 1921-22, 129.
\(^{20}\) Amrit Walia, Development of Education and Socio-Political Change in the Punjab 1882-1947, 182.
\(^{21}\) Phulwari, July 1935, 666.
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fortunate in having a large number of private schools which were
supported by private bodies of every denomination.

Efforts of the activists had begun to yield results. The Report of the
Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan noticed that the percentage of literate
women among Sikhs had increased from 1.2 to 2.7 in 1921 and further to 4.9 in
1943. The intellectuals from other communities drew their attention towards the
progress of education among Sikhs. They visited and attended the sessions of Sikh
Educational Conferences and noted their achievements. The Lieutenant Governor of
Punjab stated about the success of Sikhs in education in 1913 that the Educational
Conferences of Sikhs resulted development of education among them. The important
thing was that they were fully aware about the education of their women. The women
education among Sikhs progressed rapidly. The Khalsa Samachar noted the statement
of Lieutenant Governor in Gurmukhi language.

Director of Education Department of Punjab wrote in the Punjab Education
Report of 1914-1915 that 'In all the districts of Punjab the activities of the Sikh
Educational Committee were being felt. The Educational Committee of the Chief
Khalsa Diwan was working strenuously to disseminate education among the Sikh
community.'

In 1920 Lieutenant Governor of Punjab Sir Edward Menglegun popularly
known as lat sahib noted as,

'I have been much struck on my return to the province after an absence
of some years to see how generously the Sikh community now
supports the cause of education. Wherever I go I see Khalsa schools

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23 Khalsa Samachar, April 24, 1913, 3.
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almost all quite new, well built and well founded which have been
provided by the liberality of the *panth*.\textsuperscript{25}

Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan opened many primary,
middle and high schools for boys and girls. Sikhs were quite advance in comparison
to other communities in the Punjab in case of the primary education of girls. In 1928
the number of primary schools went upto 82 which covered almost the whole state
like Peshawar, Attock, Jhelum, Gujarat, Shahpur, Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur,
Lyallpur, Montgomery, Ambala, Rawalpindi, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana etc.\textsuperscript{26} Majority of
the schools were established in Sindh Sagar *doab*, areas included Rawalpindi, Jhelum
and Attock. The number of schools here was twenty-five. Earlier this area was under
the influence of Baba Khem Singh Bedi who established 108 *kanya pathshalas* by
1880s. He propagated for the cause of girls' education and succeeded in setting a large
number of girls' schools both in Jhelum and in Rawalpindi.\textsuperscript{27} Due to the efforts of
Baba Khem Singh Bedi the area of Sindh Sagar *doab* remained forward in primary
education of girls. In Bari *doab* and Chaj *doab* the number of schools were nineteen
and fourteen respectively followed by Trans-Indus with 8 schools and Cis-Satlej with
6 schools. In Bist Jalandhar *doab* there was only one school in Hoshiarpur.

These *kanya pathshalas* generally named as Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshalas,
Gurmat Kanya Pathshalas, Sikh Kanya Pathshalas, Khalsa Kanya Pathshalas.
Somewhere they were named with the name of some women like Mata Bhag Devi
Kanya Pathshala, Bajuragwal (Gujarat) and Mata Sahib Kaur Kanya Pathshala, Neela
(Jhelum). There is one interesting thing that there were some schools which opened
for the girls of special castes like Aror Bans Gurmat Kanya Pathshala, *muhalla*
Kareempura, Peshawar and Majbian Di Kanya Pathshala, Jethuwal, Amritsar.\textsuperscript{28}

The importance of religion and of religious training in the life of a girl has
been emphasized, especially at the primary stage. The syllabus of primary girls'
schools was made carefully keeping these things in mind. Medium of the instruction
was Punjabi language. Emphasis was given to Gurmukhi and religion. Urdu was

\textsuperscript{25} *Ibid.*, May 12, 1920, 3.
\textsuperscript{26} *Report of Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan of the Year 1928*, Amritsar, 195-199, for
detail see appendix-VIII.
\textsuperscript{27} *Gazetteer of the Rawalpindi District, 1883-84*, The Civil and Military Gazetts Press, Lahore, 55-56.
\textsuperscript{28} *Report of Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan of the Year 1928*, Amritsar, 195-199.
taught in the 3rd class. Besides, some knowledge of Maths and Geography was also given.\textsuperscript{29}

In 1913, the number of such schools was 60. In the year 1933, the number increased to 126 and it reached up to 189 in 1946.

Increasing number of primary girls’ school under Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan.

The graph further indicates that the number of girls’ schools rose more than three times between the years 1913 and 1946.

Increase in the middle schools for the girls was not as rapid as it was in case of primary schools. From 1913 to 1931 the increase in number of middle schools was only four. In 1913 there were 7 middle schools which rose upto 12 in 1931. After 15 years the number of middle schools went upto 36 in 1946. It was good success. The prominent schools were Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala, Chakwal (Jehlum), Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala, Amritsar, Girls Oriental College, Jaspaloan (Ludhiana) and Rukmani Girls' School, Haripur (Hazara).\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{29} Guru Nanak Vidya Bhandar Trust de Schoolain Sambandhi Sankhep Report, Published in the Report of Educational Committee (Chief Khalsa Diwan), 1934, 80-81.

\textsuperscript{30} Report of the Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan, 1928, 191.
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Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala, Amritsar remained famous for its religious instructions. Once Shri Mool Ji visited the school and praised its management. He stated that Gurmukhi was the medium of instruction in the school. English was taught in higher classes. Building was airy and clean.

One of the important features of the school was that it was managed entirely by women. The Chief Inspector reported in the Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab during the Quinquennium Ending 1921-22 that even where ladies committees exist, the ladies had not shown any interest to take an active part in the management of schools. There was fortunately one exception and that was Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala at Amritsar. It was managed entirely by women so far as domestic affairs of the school were concerned.

The middle classes started from 4th standard. These were known as first middle, second middle, third middle, fourth middle and fifth middle. Syllabus of middle classes was divided into two parts, reading and writing. In the first middle reading Guru Singh Itihas, Sukhmani, Japuji Sahib, Dhulhan Patrika and Grammar were taught. In second middle reading, students were taught Hindu scriptures like half portion of Hanuman Natak, half part of Vidaya Ratnakar and Viakaran Parsang. In 3rd middle reading 3rd and 4th pothi on Punjabi language and Arog Niyamawali were studied. In 4th middle 5th and 6th pothi on Punjabi language, remaining part of Arog

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31 Khalsa Samachar, January 29, 1914, 6.
32 Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab during the Quinquennium Ending 1921-22, 133.
Niyamawali and in 5th middle class remaining part of 6th pothi on Punjabi language, Binay Patrika and last part of grammar were taught.\textsuperscript{33}

In the writing parts students studied many subjects. In first middle class they learned to write letters or applications and dictation; decimal system, interest, proportional and square area in Maths; Geography of Punjab, India and Europe; History of India (first part), and Sughar Bibi in Hygeine Physiology. Cutting and stitching of cloths were also taught. The syllabus was upgraded in the next classes. In second middle students were taught to write letters and proverbs. Geography of Africa, America and Asia was studied. Remaining parts of history of India and Sughar Bibi was completed and girls were also trained in stitching and needle work. In 3rd middle class students learned the Geography of districts of Punjab; in 4th and 5th middle Geography of Punjab, India, Asia and world was taught. English was taught in all middle classes and Hindi was introduced in 5th middle standard.\textsuperscript{34} The table explains it further:

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
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### Table of the Syllabus of Middle Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Middle</th>
<th>2nd Middle</th>
<th>3rd Middle</th>
<th>4th Middle</th>
<th>5th Middle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> बाहु लिख, विषय, बार्ता, सन्दर्भ, विलिखन, योग्यता, पद्धति, विषयावलिता।</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> बाहु लिख, विषय, बार्ता, सन्दर्भ, विलिखन, योग्यता, पद्धति, विषयावलिता।</td>
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<td><strong>Reading:</strong> बाहु लिख, विषय, बार्ता, सन्दर्भ, विलिखन, योग्यता, पद्धति, विषयावलिता।</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> बाहु लिख, विषय, बार्ता, सन्दर्भ, विलिखन, योग्यता, पद्धति, विषयावलिता।</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing:</strong> वाक्य, विषय, विलिखन</td>
<td><strong>Writing:</strong> वाक्य, विषय, विलिखन</td>
<td><strong>Writing:</strong> वाक्य, विषय, विलिखन</td>
<td><strong>Writing:</strong> वाक्य, विषय, विलिखन</td>
<td><strong>Writing:</strong> वाक्य, विषय, विलिखन</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening:</strong> संस्कृतिक, सामाजिक, विश्लेषण, प्रवाह, अवलोकन-प्रेरक, मानकोत्तर</td>
<td><strong>Listening:</strong> संस्कृतिक, सामाजिक, विश्लेषण, प्रवाह, अवलोकन-प्रेरक, मानकोत्तर</td>
<td><strong>Listening:</strong> संस्कृतिक, सामाजिक, विश्लेषण, प्रवाह, अवलोकन-प्रेरक, मानकोत्तर</td>
<td><strong>Listening:</strong> संस्कृतिक, सामाजिक, विश्लेषण, प्रवाह, अवलोकन-प्रेरक, मानकोत्तर</td>
<td><strong>Listening:</strong> संस्कृतिक, सामाजिक, विश्लेषण, प्रवाह, अवलोकन-प्रेरक, मानकोत्तर</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note:
- विश्वेषण त्रिश्रवणम्

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35 The Table adapted from *Monthly Progress Report of the Girls’ Middle School Kairoon, April 1910-March 1911.*
The higher education among Sikh women was even less than primary and middle education. There was only one high school, the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur till 1932. It was world famous boarding school. The boarding housed married, unmarried and widowed women from India and abroad. The number of high schools went upto four in 1936. The other high schools were Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala, Amritsar, Gobind Girls High School, Abtabad and Sri Guru Hargobind Ujagar Hari Sikh Girls School, Sidwan Khurd, Ludhiana. The number of students was more in Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala, Amritsar but in quality, popularity and glory wise no one could surpass the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala, Ferozepur.

There were recognized primary, middle and high classes in Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala. Gurmukhi was taught from first standard and Urdu from ninth standard. English was also taught. There were total 312 students resided in the ashram from various places like Punjab, U.P, Bengal, Madras, Delhi, Sindh, Bombay, Burma, Africa, Port Blair and Malaya etc. Lectures of scholars were held in the institution from time to time to enrich the existing knowledge of the girls. Trips were also arranged for them.

There were 291 and 622 girls were studying respectively in the Gobind High School, Abtabad and Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala, Amritsar. Cooking, stitching and rag education were a part of syllabus of Amritsar School. Sikh Girls School, Sidwan Khurd, Ludhiana was famous in district Ludhiana. It was started by Bhai Narain Singh as a primary school at his village Sidwan Khurd in 1909. Bhai Sahib opened it in the memory of his only demised son. It raised up to middle standard in 1920s. It was boarding school. The wife of Bhai Sahib served the school as superintendent and widow daughter Harparkash Kaur as teacher. He donated his land and a well to the school and constructed a building within a part of his house. The family members of Bhai Sahib worked as honorary servants of the institution. Bhai Sahib registered the whole property of the institution in the name of ‘panth’ and made a local committee to run the affairs of the institution. The girls learned to make carpets, soaps, oils and the art of stitching, knitting, cooking, dying and fruit preservation along with basic

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28 Ibid.
30 Khalsa, 16 May, 1932, 1.
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instructions. One interesting fact was that sometime the students of institution went to the villages to teach those girls who could not come to school.\textsuperscript{41}

Considerable attention had been paid to the industrial training and handiwork for girls. Courses were made which were suited to the needs of the girls and to their environment. The improvement in handiwork was an illustration of the change.\textsuperscript{42} Several kinds of works were done by the pupils. At the Sikh Educational Conferences these works were displayed for sale in separate rooms. In the exhibition of 9\textsuperscript{th} Sikh Educational Conference special attention was paid by the visitors towards the clothes of daily use, *phulkaris* and other artifacts prepared by the girls of Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur, Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala Amritsar and Kanya Pathshala Sukho, Rawalpindi. Among them a *kameez* prepared with hands by Bibi Jasondhan and a purse of pearls by a blind student of Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur, a statue of deer and peacock by Bibi Sushil Kaur of Amritsar and *phulkaris* by the girls of Sukho Kanya Pathshala were praised by visitors.\textsuperscript{43} It was seen that general masses took more interest in the industrial training for their girls. The Khalsa *Dastkari* School Amritsar was fulfilling their needs. It was founded in 1913 through the efforts of Rai Bahadur Sardar Sadhu Singh one of the founder of the Diwan, with a view to impart training to women in cutting, tailoring, embroidery and other handicrafts. Later on, it was renamed as Teka Devi Industrial School after the name of Shrimati Teka Devi whose husband Sardar Mangal Singh had donated a big sum of money in the memory of his wife.\textsuperscript{44}

Till 1928 the 14 Sikh girls had been passed medical course form Christian Medical College, Ludhiana while 9 were studying there. 4 girls had been passed from Lady Harding College Delhi, while 8 were studying there.\textsuperscript{45} The Sikh girl students of Lady Harding College also got scholarships from the endowment fund given by Rai Bahadur Sardar Narain Singh of Delhi.\textsuperscript{46}

The increase in the number of institutions naturally added to the financial responsibilities of the Educational Committee of the Chief Khalsa Diwan. Many

\textsuperscript{41} Educational Committee, Chief Khalsa Diwan De Varshik Report 1938, 67-69.
\textsuperscript{42} Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab during the Quinquennium Ending 1921-1922, 129.
\textsuperscript{43} Khalsa Samachar, May 4, 1916, 2.
\textsuperscript{44} Souvenir of the Central Khalsa Orphanage, Amritsar, 19.
\textsuperscript{45} Report of Educational Committee Chief Khalsa Diwan, 1928, 62.
\textsuperscript{46} Khalsa Samachar, September 14, 1916, 5.
institutions opened in temporary buildings without any permanent fund to run them. At the occasion of Educational Conference a national fund was raised to meet purpose. Appeals were made for funds at the annual sessions of the Sikh Educational Conference. The Educational Committee was vested with full control over the management of all collected funds. Grants-in-aid were issued to Khalsa institutions from these funds. The following table shows the Khalsa girls' schools affiliated to and receiving grants-in-aid from the Educational Committee of the Chief Khalsa Diwan from its fund.

**Table for Khalsa Girls' School receiving grants from Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Rupees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala Amritsar</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala Lahore</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh Kanya Pathshala Rawalpindi</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh Kanya Pathshala Dinga</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khalsa Kanya Pathshala Sialkot</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala Chakwal</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2256</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Educational Committee granted rupees 8589 to primary schools of boys and girls and rupees 3048 to high, middle and lower middle schools of girls in 1931. It was a fact that the speed at which progress was made would have been impossible of achievement, if the Educational Conference had not been able to collect adequate

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48 *Brief Report of Educational Committee Chief Khalsa Diwan for the year of 1926*, 19.
49 *Khalsa Samachar*, April 30, 1931,4.
funds for the purpose. Sometimes, Sikh living in foreign countries sent financial help for the cause of education and the Chief Khalsa Diwan distributed that amount among various institutions. Once, aid of 300 rupees was received from Australia, the Chief Khalsa Diwan distributed that amount at the meeting of its executive body as 15 rupees to Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala Ferozepur, 15 rupees to Khalsa Bhujangan boarding house, Kairon, 15 rupees to Sidhwan Khurd Girls' School, Ludhiana. The rest of amount distributed to various kanya schools according to their contribution towards society.

One of the greatest landmarks in the education of girls was achieved in 1940 when first college for Sikh girls was started at Lahore. The college started classes of Bhudimani, Vidwani and Gyani. The arrangement of teaching English with B.A was also there. With the tremendous efforts of Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan the percentage of educated women increased. Sikh community ranked 2nd highest group in women literacy with 4.9% after Hindu with 4.46%. The remarkable feature of these Khalsa institutions was that a number of Hindu, Muslim and children from the depressed class also studied there. Like Arya and others, the member of any community could send their girls to Khalsa institutions.

For the growth of educational movement, some reformers wanted to impart gurmat and elementary knowledge to the children by establishing a number of primary schools. But it was not always possible to open schools exclusively for girls and boys. To solve this problem Sardar Dharam Singh, a contractor from Delhi came forward with the idea of co-educational institutions. It was the most economical method of educating the girls also. He viewed to impart gurmat and elementary knowledge to the children by establishing primary schools attached with village dharmsalas. An idea came first time to propagate elementary education among the community at the 4th Sikh Educational Conference, Rawalpindi. A national fund was also raised for the purpose. In 1915, Educational Committee made a scheme to impart elementary education to the Sikh boys and girls through gurdawaras and dharmsalas of the

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51 Chief Khalsa Diwan Di Karvai (1911-1919), Vol 2, Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar, 61.
52 Khalsa Samachar, September 26, 1940, 7.
54 Khalsa Samachar, November 16, 1933, 7.
Expansion of Institutions

villages. But the work was not done for next 10 years. In 1926 Sardar Bhadur Dharam Singh came forward with second scheme of elementary education.\textsuperscript{55} He selected 19 members of the trust named as Guru Nanak Vidaya Bhandar Trust and got it registered. An educational sub-committee of three members of the Trust was founded. Sardar Shivdev Singh, B.A, LLB, Honourary Secretary, Educational Committee Amritsar; Professor Jodh Singh, Khalsa College, Amritsar and Professor Teja Singh, Khalsa College, Amritsar were members of the sub-committee. Sardar Shivdev Singh was made administrative incharge of schools.\textsuperscript{56}

The Trust started its 16 schools in the neighbouring villages of Amritsar in 1926. These schools were affiliated with Chief Khalsa Diwan and 4 to 5 more schools had submitted their affiliation forms for sanction in the same year.\textsuperscript{57} The Chief Khalsa Diwan provided special help to run the schools. The syllabus sanctioned by the District Board was taught in the schools therefore District Board also gave them grants. Medium of instructions was in Gurmukhi script. Along with religious and Gurmukhi learning, Urdu, Maths and Geography were taught. Sometimes the students got middle school scholarships. The teachers of these schools were rewarded by the trust. Religious education was emphasized. \textit{Shabdi jathas} were made in some schools.\textsuperscript{58}

Guru Nanak Vidya Bhandar Trust Delhi worked immensely for the cause of education. It ran about hundred schools, propagated education for low caste people and opened an industrial school at Delhi.\textsuperscript{59} Mostly these schools ran at village \textit{dharmshalas} and historical Gurdwaras. Buildings of these schools were better than the schools of District Board. Once an Assistant District Inspector of schools, \textit{tehsil} Jagraon, district Ludhiana wrote in the visitor book that the building of the school was well build and no building was equal to it in the Jagraon centre.\textsuperscript{60} Small scale libraries for staff, students as well as for local people were also established in the premises of the schools. The Bhandar Trust sent books on Sikh History, General knowledge,

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 6.
\textsuperscript{56} Guru Nanak Vidya Bhandar Trust \textit{de Schoolain Sambandi Senkhep Report}, 79.
\textsuperscript{57} Brief Report of Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan for the year of 1926 – 5-6, also see \textit{Khalsa Samachar}, May12, 1927, 2 and \textit{Karvai Educational Committee (Chief Khalsa Diwan) di}, Amritsar, October 10, 1926, n.p.
\textsuperscript{58} Guru Nanak Vidya Bhandar Trust \textit{de Schoolain Sambandi Senkhep Report}, 80-81.
\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Golden Jubilee Book}, 16.
\textsuperscript{60} Guru Nanak Vidya Bhandar Trust \textit{de Schoolain Sambandi Senkhep Report}, 81.
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periodicals on religion and education in such libraries. Bhandar Trust had made arrangements for the education of adults in Night schools. About sixty adults joined them to take lessons in their free time.\textsuperscript{61} The Trust also contributed to run Junior Vernacular class for teachers training in the Khalsa College by providing financial help.\textsuperscript{62}

There were 73 men and women teachers working in Bhandar schools. Mostly teachers were qualified with normal or gyani classes. Some untrained teachers also worked as preachers. Women teachers generally belonged to the families of male teaching staff. Local bodies encouraged the wives of the school masters to become literate and join the teaching profession. Untrained women teachers gave training of stitching and knitting to the girl students. The teachers were paid by the Bhandar Trust.\textsuperscript{63}

The number of these schools increased with the passage of time. The Guru Nanak Vidaya Bhandar Trust also started schools for untouchable children in many villages.\textsuperscript{64} One such school was running at Verka, district Amritsar where students were provided free stationary by the Trust.\textsuperscript{65} Special emphasis was given to the handicraft works. Some of these schools maintain gardens of their own also, looked after by the students every day. Special classes of dyeing and printing clothes were started at Delhi.\textsuperscript{66} Leather work was also taught there. All these handicraft items and fruits of the garden of Bhandar schools were exhibited at the Sikh Educational Conferences. At the Lahore Sikh Educational Conference the schools of Bhandar trust displayed their works of art and craft at large scale. District Inspector of schools, Amritsar reported in detail the exhibition of these schools in the following:

Room No. 7 “This room was engaged by Sardar Amar Singh Secretary of the Guru Nanak Vidaya Bhandar Sabha, which maintains a number of primary schools …………. One printed Gurmukhi copy slip was placed alongside a manuscript copy written by one of the boys of these schools and it was very hard to distinguish between two. These schools

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 81-82.
\textsuperscript{62} Khalsa Samachar, April 21, 1932, 3.
\textsuperscript{63} Guru Nanak Vidaya Bhandar Trust de Schoolain Sambandi Senkhep Report, 83-84.
\textsuperscript{64} Khalsa Samachar, April 21, 1932, 3.
\textsuperscript{65} Guru Nanak Vidaya Bhandar Trust de Schoolain Sambandi Senkhep Report, 83.
\textsuperscript{66} Khalsa Samachar, 21 April, 1932, 3.
have a system of co-education which has already proved a great success. Wooden and iron models teaching Gurmukhi letters had a very high educational value. Some of the exhibits included *kashida*, crochet, sewing and knitting work such as nice *phulkaries*, handkerchiefs, table clothes, pillow covers, mufflers, cushions, socks, boots and shirts etc. done by the girls and mistresses of these schools were highly appreciated. Fresh fruits, nice lemons, grapes and oranges were placed everyday in the room for display. Some specimens of carpentry works were also exhibited. The most interesting and fascinating exhibit was a specimen of the steamship prepared by the head teacher at Kirtangarh in the Amritsar District, which was kept, floating in a tub of water. This gave the spectators a general conception of a steamship."

The system of co-education of Bhandar schools proved a great success. In 1939 there were total 58 co-education schools of Bhandar Trust. 4 schools worked at U.P, one at Delhi and one at Guru Ki Kashi (Patiala State). 52 schools worked at the 9 districts of Punjab like Amritsar, Lahore, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur, Ambala, Hisar and Layalpur. The trust also worked for the adult education. Among 52 schools 8 were night schools where adults were given instructions. The total number of students of these schools was 3135. They were 1990 boys, 968 girls and 177 adults. The students admitted without any distinction of caste and creed. 2557 Sikhs, 205 Hindus, 320 Muslims and 53 untouchables were studying in these schools. The good point was that the schools carried on co-education system and solved a difficult problem of the girls’ education. About one thousand girls were studying in Bhandar schools. The Trust benefited the province both ways. It saved finance of the province as to establish separate schools for girls were heavy economic burden and also solved the problem of scarcity of women teachers for girls' schools.

Guru Nanak Vidya Bhandar Trust schools were appreciated by Education Department and newspapers of the time reflected this:

*Phulwari*, Lahore appreciated the contribution of the trust in imparting education in a number of districts of Punjab.  

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67 Guru Nanak Vidya Bhandar Trust de Schoolian Sambandi Senkeph Report, 82-83.
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Sacha Sajjan Akhbar, Amritsar noted the remarks of Commissioner of rural development on 8-3-1938 that trust schools were successfully run and these set an example for rural education. Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana who happened to visit the Bhandar School remarked that Bhandar Khalsa schools were continuing to do well in making co-education popular in the villages.70

The contribution of these individuals and organizations was immense. They faced many difficulties to deal the sensitive and responsible issue of girl’s education. They regarded initial difficulties not as an excuse for inertia but as an incentive to exertion. Result was positive. Though the number of institutions was not large yet the desire to educate daughters and women was kindled in the hearts of their parents. The realization was there that education of women was essential to the growth of the community and national progress. But the means to acquire it were limited. Financial stringency and lack of adequate staff has retarded the spread of women education. If there was apathy on the part of parents towards girls’ education, some educationalists on their part too appeared to be reluctant to impart higher and professional education to them. They considered only primary, homely and religious education as whole educational plank from them. Till 1947, 36 middle schools, 4 high schools and one Sikh girls’ college were established.