

CHAPTER III

PROMOTION OF FEMALE EDUCATION

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General awakening among the Jain community was at rather slow pace. Still slower was the promotion of female education, as the promoters had to cross a number of obstacles right from the elimination of the deep-rooted social evils such as child-marriage to raising the funds for providing the educational facilities. Efforts were made in all possible directions for promotion of female education by individuals, by institutions, by the government. Major role was also played by the Jain press as it carried the cultural thoughts and ideas of Jain intellectual social workers to the common Jains - educating them, informing them and also encouraging them. The publications such as 'Jain bodhak', 'Pragati Ani Jinvijay', etc., contributed to the promotion of the female education in a substantial manner.

Seth Hirachand Nemchand Doshi, the famous Jain social worker from Bombay, regularly participated in the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha. As such, he was closely related to the promotion of women's education in Kolhapur region. He started a periodical at Solapur, 'Jain Bodhak' in 1885.¹ Articles on female education were regularly published in its issues. The thoughts of scholars and studious persons regarding the women education were publicized. The methods to promote female education were discussed at length. The efforts were also made to inspire the women to take education. The 'Jain Bodhak' had regular readers among Jains in Kolhapur. The effect of such articles on Jain women may be gained from

the following incidents, e.g. in the issue of November 1986, Adiraj Devendra Upadhye wrote a studious article on women education. An anonymous Jain woman was so moved by it that she wrote a letter to the editor giving vent to her suppressed feelings, common to hundreds of Jain women, in the following words:

Who cares for the daughters as they are to be sent to other homes. If a husband tries to educate his wife, he is criticized. This woman has prayed at the end of the article that we should educate our girls and sisters. So, the scholarships and prizes should be given to the girls.²

Similarly, Manikchand Malukchand Kaluskar of Phaltan on having read the said letter offered voluntarily a monthly scholarship of Rs.5/- to Jain women. Krishnabai and four other women at Kolhapur took the benefit of this scholarship.³

Thus, the anonymous Jain woman writer not only prayed that their daughters and sisters were to be educated but also hinted at a way of promotion of education through prizes and scholarships to girls.

The 'Jain Bodhak' always came up with thought-provoking articles on female education, e.g. one of its issues of 1933 carried these valuable thoughts, underlying the aims and the nature of education:

The spiritual and mental development of men and women is only possible because of education. The real meaning of education is not limited to the reading of letters, chits or some books. The real education is that they should know their duties,

purity of marital relations, virtuous behaviour, food, home management, etc. The women have equal rights of taking education. But, it is essential to think that what type of education should and for what ?⁴

It is already seen that such and similar articles published in the 'Jain Bodhak' had a positive effect on young Jain men and women of Kolhapur area.

The 'Jainmitra', like the 'Jain Bodhak' was also published outside Kolhapur city, in Bombay. However, its publisher, Manikchand Hirachand Javeri, like the publisher of 'Jain Bodhak' was also very closely associated with the working of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha. He was a champion of the cause of female education. He was interested in the promotion of education among Jain women in Kolhapur. He started a periodical, 'Jainmitra' in January 1900.⁵ It contained a number of articles by scholars on the spread of female education in its various issues. For instance, Seth Hirachand Amichand Shah of Solapur wrote a very interesting article on female education in one of the issues of 1911. It read:

Our women are backward in the sphere of education. To know its extent, it is enough to know the ratio of education. In the northern part, the educated women are four percent, in the southern part, it is nil. This will make clear how far we are educationally backward. So we have to work on a larger scale to remove this backwardness. Shrivakashram should be started at every place. The help should be given to the women residing in the already established Shrivakashrams for education. Lady teachers

are not available easily. So, we should be effective to fill up this job.⁶

Thus, the contributor, Shah in fact, had suggested some of the methods of promotion of female education. In fact, the promotion of female education was effected in this region through some of the methods mentioned in the said article. Like the 'Jain Bodhak', the 'Jainmitra' also had a number of subscribers in Kolhapur.

The Jain community in Kolhapur had its first publication in 'Pragati Ani Jinvijay', a fortnightly started under the editorship of Mr. Latthe in 1902⁷ as a mouthpiece of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha. A number of articles on the Jain women education were published in it from time to time.

To make the cause of Jain female education more effective, a special section for women was introduced in the 'Pragati Ani Jinvijay' in 1933. It was run by Mrs. S.A. Bhokare, co-editor of the publication. She published special issues of the 'Pragati Ani Jinvijay' in the Deepavalis of 1935 and 1938 on Jain women.⁸ Many of the articles contained very bold thoughts. It is interesting to note a sharp change occurring in Jain women. Following words of one Indumati Ladage confirmed,

Swami Maharaj travels extensively to spread religion. It is not known if he ever advocated women education. He must be also knowing this, but why he is not doing this is not known. In fact, wherever he goes, he should advise and encourage Jain women to take education.⁹

Sou.Malatibai Datamjage of Kolhapur also wrote in a similar vein, emphasizing the role of religion and the religious-head in the promotion of women education,

As it is the responsibility of men and women of spreading the education, equally it is the responsibility of Munis and Swamis. Because the people are the followers of religion, so they fully rely on Munis and Swamis for good and bad. So, if they take the benefit of this situation and try to make women literate, then the progress is not far. So, these saints should take it upon themselves the promotion of women-education.¹⁰

On the other hand, one Tanibai Chougule of Belgaum, tagged the issue of promotion of education with that of the economic independence of women, in her letter published in the issue of 8th March, 1939.¹¹

P.Mayanbai, founder of 'All India Digambar Jain Mahila Parishad', started on 10th February 1910,¹² a fortnightly 'Jain Mahiladarsh' at Surat in 1922¹³ as a mouthpiece of the said organization. Thus, it was women's fortnightly devoted to women's career. The said Parishad organized meetings all over India from time to time. As such, the fortnightly was also associated with the promotion of female education in this region. It must be noted that the said fortnightly went a step further in the manner of promotion of education by instituting prizes for the best and thought-provoking articles on female education. It invited articles from educated Jain women.

Shri.Balasaheb Patil, a native of village Kothali, started 'Satyavadi', a fortnightly, in 1930. Later, it was converted into a weekly and finally, into a daily in the year 1945. Subsequently, a special section for women was introduced by Shri.Balasaheb Patil.¹⁴ In the said section, various aspects concerning Jain women were discussed. The aspects such as education, the nature of education, rights of women, etc. Satyavadi took bold stand in the cause of promotion of female education. Balasaheb Patil had shown courage to publish a banned speech made by Shrimati Shamabai Moruse at the 33rd Conference of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Mahila Parishad.¹⁵ 'Satyavadi' remained a popular publication and it exerted influence on the Jain community.

Thus, the publications such as 'Jain Bodhak', 'Jain-mitra', 'Pragati Ani Jinvijay', 'Satyavadi', etc., controlled and run by the members of the Jain community from and outside Kolhapur, specially took up the cause of promotion of Jain women education in this region and contributed to it directly and indirectly.

ATTITUDES OF CHHATRAPATIS.

In modern times, the government policy plays a very crucial role in the progress of any society in any given field. Directly and indirectly, it influences progress. The said influence can be positive and negative, contributive or obstructive. The Princely State of Kolhapur was ruled by Chhatrapati Shahu (1894 -1922), Chhatrapati Rajaram (1922-1940) and by Regent till its merger in 1949. Chhatrapati's policies went a long

way in promoting education, female education in particular, in the state.

A reference ahead is made to the social and educational significance of Shahu and his views on education in general in the last Chapter. His concern for female education is obvious from his letter to Bombay Montgomeris. The political agent of Bombay, in which he expressed his desire to make his daughter-in-law a doctor.¹⁶

He was not orthodox about female education. He was broad-minded to think in terms of education of all classes. He did not help directly in the education of Jain women, but indirectly, he did so, by supporting the work of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha.

Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj (1922-40), successor of Shahu, not only inherited Crown from his father, but also his liberal, progressive mind. He rightly understood and appreciated his father's policies, and therefore, continued and faithfully followed Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj's policies in social as well as educational fields. He associated himself with the non-Brahmin movement and the movement for the education of the masses. His benevolent activities were not confined only to his State, but also spread outside the State.¹⁷

So far Jain community was concerned, he had stated publically that he loved the Jains equally as he loved his community of Marathas.¹⁸ Concern of the royal house for female education is quite obvious from the following words of Tarabai,

the queen of Chhatrapati Rajaram.

I won't tolerate even one uneducated lady in my State. I wish to see that education should be seen in every family and in every person.¹⁹

A number of primary schools, secondary schools were opened in the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu and Chhatrapati Rajaram. Following Table covers the growth of the primary schools in Kolhapur State from 1901-22.²⁰

Year	Number of Primary Schools	Number of Secondary Schools
1901-02	159	16
1905-06	212	16
1909-10	295	24
1912-13	309	24
1915-16	318	24
1918-19	267	26
1921-22	496	24

Thus, it can be seen that there was a progressive rise in the number of primary and secondary schools in the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu.

In the reign of Chhatrapati Rajaram, the number of primary schools increased from 496 in 1922 to 841 in 1940.²¹ Similarly, the number of secondary schools increased from 24 in 1921-22 to 13 high schools and 30 Anglo-vernacular schools in 1940-41.²²

In the field of higher education, there was just one college, Rajaram College, in the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu.²³ Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj started a Law College in 1933, known as Syke's Law College.²⁴ Similarly, in 1934, he started a secondary training college named after Her Highness the Senior Maharani Tarabaisaheb.²⁵

So far the female education is concerned, the Girls' Schools were started. There were 25 girls' schools in 1901-02. In 1922, the year of commencement of Chhatrapati Rajaram's reign, the number of girls' schools rose to 33.²⁶ Chhatrapati Rajaram's reign witnessed tremendous growth in female schools. By the end of his reign, there were more than 150 girls' schools.²⁷

More than seventy per cent of High Schools, nearly hundred per cent secondary schools and all the colleges were located in Kolhapur district only.

Thus, the Chhatrapatis, by extending the educational facilities in the State, opened the doors of education to masses. The Jain boys and girls, like hundreds of others, passed out from these institutions.

FINANCIAL ASPECTS AND EFFORTS.

There was increasing awareness among Jains of importance of education, but translating that awareness into reality was not simple. Many hurdles were to be cleared out, such as mental block against female education, superstitions, deep-rooted evil practices. In order to remove them, the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha was established in 1899.²⁸ It provided a strong

motivation for education. A separate educational department came into existence under it.²⁹ Thus, the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha got closely associated with the promotion of education among Jain men and women. Its one aim was to provide the necessary facilities such as lodging and boarding so that the Jain boys and girls from the rural areas could come to Kolhapur and take education. However, to provide such facilities, funds were needed.

The Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha members tried to raise funds from various sources. A strong financial assistance came from Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. He once accidentally came across Seth Manikchand Hirachand Javeri, who had set up 'Seth Hirachand Gumanji Jain Boarding' in 1900 in Bombay. He was very much impressed and wished to start such type of boardings in Kolhapur. He utilized the money donated by Manikchand Javeri for the spread of education among Kolhapur Jains.³⁰ Subsequently, in the year 1905, the Jain Boarding was established at Kolhapur.³¹ Similarly, Mr.A.B.Latthe, Mr.A.F.Chougule, Seth Manikchand Javeri, Seth Hirachand Nemchand Doshi, etc., took special interest in the education of female members of their community.³² As a first concrete step, they decided to start a Shravikashram at Kolhapur.³³ Finance was the main hitch, as usual. Mr.Latthe, who was Superintendent of the Jain Boarding from 1905 to 1914, then took a lead in raising the necessary funds. Once again, to extend financial assistance was Chhatrapati Shahu. He made a grant of Rs.Three hundred per annum to the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha.³⁴ In 1908 Jain Shravikashram was started by the efforts of Mr.Latthe

and the other workers of the Sabha.³⁵ It was to be the first Ladies' Hostel in Kolhapur State. Ultimately, a part of that assistance was utilized for the Sharivikashram.

Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj also extended help. He also donated two blocks (70,72) in Laximpuri to Shrivikashram.³⁶ Chh.Rajaram Maharaj, in fact, paid more attention to female education. In his reign, the percentage of the amount spent on women education was raised from 7 per cent to 13 per cent.³⁷

Mr.Latthe would make appeals to rich members of his community to donate liberally for the cause of education. In 1908, with the help of others, he collected Rs.900/- and utilized it for the development of education.³⁸ Next year in 1909, Danvir Seth Manikchand Hirachand Javeri donated a substantial sum of Rs.10,000/- to the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha for the said noble cause.³⁹ He also offered Rs.10/- per month as a help for a year to the Shrivikashram. And he also promised to offer more help if the girls' education took a proper speed.⁴⁰ Shrivikashram was established at Kolhapur in 1908, Pandita Kunkubai decided to give Rs.5/- per month for this Ashram. She also sent a widow to take education in this Ashram.⁴¹

Pandita Maganbai, who was a moving force behind the establishment of Shrivikashram in Kolhapur, personally donated Rs.300/- to the Ashram.⁴² To her credit, it must be said that she always appealed to rich widows to donate generously for the cause of the female education. She believed that female education could be properly promoted through an institution,

such as Shrivakashram solely devoted for that cause. She had collected very substantial sum of Rs.91,933/- for the development of Shrivakashram in Bombay.⁴³

Similarly, Shrimati Shamabai Moruse, Shrimati Kokil and Altekar collected funds for the development of women education and Shrivakashram at a religious function at Kini near Kolhapur in 1909.⁴⁴

Shrimati Shamabai Moruse, Superintendent of Shrivakashram, collected donations from 20 donors as a building fund.⁴⁵ In addition, she had personally contributed two to three thousand Rupees of her own for the Ashram, when it moved into a new building in 1934.⁴⁶

Durbar extended free water supply facility to it. In addition, Municipality built a well in the compound of the Shrivakashram. One Shri.Bhupal Anna Jirge paid for light. A bathroom was built in 1944 with the help of the workers of the Sabha.⁴⁷

Though Mahila Parishads were organized by the Jain Sabha, only attention was paid to the educational and social development of Jain women but the financial position on which the whole development was dependent was not given much thought.

Financial assistance was extended to the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha, not only the Jains alone but the members of other communities also came forward to help the noble cause of education. In this connection, a reference may be made to

the Governor of Bombay, Sir George Clark, who donated Rs.150/- in 1908. Similarly, the king of Bhavnagar, Namdar Shri.Bhausinghji also donated Rs.125/-. Famous dramatist of Maharashtra, Shri.Govind Ballal Deval donated Rs.50/-.⁴⁸

INCENTIVES GIVEN TO STUDENTS.

Various types of facilities were essential for the promotion of education. It is already seen as to how such facilities were provided, how girls schools came into existence, how their number increased and how a girls' hostel for the Jain community was set up in Kolhapur. However, to provide such facilities was one thing and how to get the girls to make use of them was another thing. The so-called facilities were essential but not enough. Something more had to be done to attract the girls to come out of their homes to take education and as the social condition of the Indian society in general and of the Jain community in particular was unfavourable to the female education, it was not that easy to get female students. Not that the efforts were not made to lure them to school. And one way to do it was by offering incentives to them through scholarships.

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was one to show the way. Special scholarships were given by him to the deserving and meritorious girl students who became doctors, teachers, poetesses, writers, editors and social workers, etc. For instance, given below is a list of some of the students who had received scholarships from him.⁴⁹

1. Kumari Krishnabai Hujurpage (Sau.Narlikar),
2. Miss Manorama Khabade,
3. Miss Champabai Khabade,
4. Miss Sarojini Tophkhane (Sau.Dhavale),
5. Mrs.Malatibai Mule (Jain),
6. Miss Durga Kulkarni,
7. Miss Kumudini Kurane,
8. Miss Radhabai Kolase
9. Miss Shantabai Ghorpade,
10. Miss Janabai,
11. Miss Indirabai Chavan,
12. Miss Navgire,
13. Miss Indira Dixit (Sau.Sant)
14. Kum.Indumati Harollikar.

Mrs.Malatibai Mule, from the above list, completed the medical (LCP) course by staying at R.R.Shravikashram, Bombay, because of Chhatrapati Shahu's financial help.⁵⁰ She then started her medical practice at Kolhapur. She became an active member of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha. She worked for the Jain female education in Kolhapur State.

Chh.Rajaram Maharaj, like his father, founded a separate high school, Maharani Lakshmibai High School, where no fees were charged to lady students taking higher education. Similarly, he instituted several scholarships and prizes for the deserving and promising girl students taking education in the primary schools.⁵¹ Many Jain girls had benefitted from his policy and incentives. Here is a list of the Jain girls belonging

to Kolhapur district who had received scholarships.⁵²

1. Patil, Housabai Ramgounda (Chokak)
2. Kapale, Indu Raghoba (afterwards Mrs.Duge)
3. Patil, Akkatai (Kolhapur)
4. Mandape, Akka Balasaheb (Vadgaon),
5. Vazole, Kumudini
6. Ladage, Indu (Kolhapur)
7. Bagi, Akkatai (Kolhapur)
8. Vanakudre, Rajamati Shripad (Kolhapur),
9. Bagi, Shakuntala Gajanan (Kolhapur),
10. Vanakudre, Akka Mahadev (Kolhapur)
11. Kadre, Akka Dada,
12. Vanzole, Ratan Bala (Appachiwadi),
13. Patil, Vimal Adgonda (Kolhapur)
14. Kolhapure, Padmini Sukharam (Kolhapur),
15. Kasar, Shantabai Baburao (Kolhapur).

Of these students, Housabai Patil, later helped her sister, Akkatai in establishing Kanya Kumari School at Kolhapur.⁵³ Another lady student, Miss Indu Kapale, became a lady doctor.

The Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha, in its various meetings passed a resolution to the effect that the female literacy was essential for progress and development of the society, but the males had to take a lead and initiative in promoting the female literacy. More importantly, incentives were also offered to the girls to attract them to the educational institutions. Next to school and student, teacher was the vital element of the educational system, as it linked both, the school

and the teacher. The Jain social workers and thinkers would appeal to the Jain widows to come out of their shells and take to teaching, they knew that mere appeals would not solve their problems. Such and similar appeals should be backed up with incentive scheme so as to make them meaningful.

Accordingly, and with an aim to improve the pathetic progress of the primary education, the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha gave all rights to evolve out of such scheme. As a result, it was decided to give the prizes to the primary teachers in the villages, who were responsible for increasing the strength of the Jain girls in the schools.⁵⁴ In order to implement the said scheme, it was first necessary to select the eligible ladies, to train them as teachers and then such lady teachers were to serve the institution atleast five years, at any place decided by the Institution.⁵⁵

The annual report of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha of 1912 states that that year, the female educational promotion was mainly done by offering scholarships to females. One scholarship had been awarded to a female student at Bombay was taking education in English and three scholarships were awarded to Kolhapur, out of which two for Marathi medium female students and one for English medium student of the second standard.⁵⁶

It is true that allround efforts were made for promotion of female education by the Jain leaders and social workers such as Mr.Latthe, Seth Manikchand Hirachand, Pandita Kunkubai, Pandita Maganbai, etc. Members of other communities

also contributed directly. The fervent role represented by the policies of Chhatrapatis was sympathetic, contributive and very much favourable to the promotion of the Jain women, In spite of all these factors, certain lacunae may be spotted that reflect on the promotion of the female education in the Jain community in the first half of this century. One aspect that seriously handicapped the promotion was poor finance. All the possible sources were tapped within and without Jain community. Not many from the Jain community of Kolhapur region came forward to extend financial help for the promotion of the female education. Most of those who made financial contributions were from outside places such as Bombay and Solapur. Secondly, but unfortunately, organization problems also adversely affected the promotion of education. All kinds of financial help meant for the promotion of education were to be made in the name of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha and not to any particular wing run by it. So, it was Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha who collected all such funds and donations first and then transferred the necessary amounts to the concerned wings. Shrimati Shamabai Moruse of Kolhapur, who re-opened Shrivikashram in 1923 and became its Director, wanted to run it independent of the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha. This created a hitch between Shrivikashram and the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha, affecting the work of the former. Finally, the Dakshin Maharashtra Jain Sabha took over the management of it in 1946 and rented out the building of the Ashram to raise the money to run the Ashram. Many prominent members did not like such development, which adversely affected the promotion of the Jain women education.

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