

CONTRIBUTION OF THE DEV SAMAJ TOWARDS THE WOMEN EDUCATION IN THE COLONIAL PUNJAB

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Abstract: This paper aims to discuss the contribution of the Dev Samaj towards the women education in the colonial Punjab. Pandit Shiv Narayan Agnihotri, the founder of the Dev Samaj Movement, was the supporter of the women education. He believed that the social and economic progress of the country was dependent on the progress of the women of the country. Like the Arya Samaj, the Dev Samaj also established a number of schools and colleges in the colonial Punjab especially for the women. Education imparted to the women should be rational and independent of the religious dogmas, and should inculcate qualities like obedience, reverence, gratitude, loyalty to the government, sympathy, charity, self-help, self-respect, social service and cleanliness. Moral education was given to the women so that they could become good wives and mothers. Physical training was the part of the curriculum. Dev Samaj tried to impart an education based on the western lines.

Index Terms: Education, Change, Socio-religious Reform Movements, Higher Education.

Section I

The colonial rule in the Punjab as elsewhere in the country brought with it a new administrative system, a new kind of education, a new legal system, new means of communication and transportation, and the printing press. The Punjab came to witness an unprecedented social mobility and the social change marked chiefly by the emergence of a new kind of middle class due to proliferation of the government departments which needed a literate and an educated personnel, diversification of occupations, new professions of law, medicine, engineering, education and journalism. Middle classes response to the colonial situation led to a widespread cultural resurgence among all the major religious communities like Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of the Punjab.¹

Immediately after the annexation, Lord Dalhousie established a Board of Administration for the newly acquired territories. He chose Henry Lawrence as the President, John Lawrence and Charles Mansel as the members and they, in turn, brought in men of their choice to staff the new provincial government. Dalhousie directly supervised the provincial administration of the Punjab and created an efficient and economic system of the government.² In 1853, the Board was abolished, its powers and functions being vested in a Chief Commissioner, assisted by the two Commissioners, respectively for the judicial and the financial matters. In 1859, the administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies was placed under a Lieutenant Governor, who was the head of the three branches of the provincial government: executive, judicial and revenue. This administrative structure continued up to 1919 when the Lieutenant Governor was replaced by the Governor.³

The colonial government developed the new means of transport and communication in the Punjab.⁴ Various cities and towns of the Punjab like Lahore, Multan, Sialkot, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Ambala, Panipat, Rohtak were connected with the railways as well as roads. The development of the railways in the province was an integral part of the colonial project. It was due to the introduction of railways that the rural areas were connected to the urbanized towns. The new means of communication in the Punjab like the Post and Telegraph Department and the printing press were introduced by the British rulers. Although the printing press had already been in use in the Punjab since 1830s, but the religio-literary use of the printing press was developed in the 1860s only. The total number of newspapers and periodicals published in the Punjab at the end of the century exceeded 400. The members of the new elites- lawyers, teachers, journalists and the rural gentry gained proficiency in the mechanics of the print culture and appropriated these channels of the communications.⁵

Education was an important branch in which the British administrators and missionaries were involved directly or indirectly. Soon after the annexation, the Christian missions started establishing the schools in the Punjab. In 1849, the first school in the Punjab was established at Lahore. The Educational Dispatch of 1854 diverted the efforts of the government from the education of the upper classes, to turn them to the wider diffusion of education among all the classes of the people. The Educational Department of the Punjab was organized in 1854. It controlled the high schools of every district. Anglo-vernacular, vernacular middle schools and the primary schools were managed by the district boards. The Government Schools in the Punjab aimed at imparting the certain basic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic and sought beyond that to disseminate the civilization of the West. Urdu was introduced as the medium of education in government schools up to the matriculation level and Urdu literature as a subject of study, though Punjabi was the dominant language of the province. In 1901, there were 2,883 primary schools, 351 secondary schools and 15 colleges in the province.⁶

Christian missionaries had an honorable connection with the educational history of the Punjab. They were closely connected with the British administrators of the province. In 1834, the American Presbyterian Mission came to Ludhiana and took charge of the schools. In the same year, John C. Lowrie arrived in Ludhiana to establish a missionary and educational centre. In 1835, the printing press was established, and soon it published tracts, pamphlets and journals in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Persian and Kashmiri.⁷ Soon after the annexation in 1849, John Newton and C.W. Forman, arrived in Lahore with a staff of six missionaries.⁸ New centres were established at Sialkot, Rawalpindi and Peshawar in 1856. After 1858, the missions expanded, founded new churches, hospitals and orphanages, as well as the schools and colleges in the cities and towns all over the Punjab.⁹ The primary aim of these institutions was to convert a large number of people in the Punjab. By 1891, the total number of Christian converts was about 20,000 and their number increased to 163,994 by 1911. The mass conversion by the Christian missionaries gave a jolt to the social reformers of the province and provoked them to take an action.¹⁰

The Punjab came to have a very large number of movements for the socio-religious reforms among the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. It witnessed the several indigenous movements in the sphere of religion, remaining open to the outside influences at the same time. The indigenous movements were the Nirankari and the Namdhari as well as the Singh Sabha movement among the Sikhs, the Ahmadiya movement among the Muslims, and the Dev Samaj, Sanatana Dharma movement among the Hindus. The outside influences were those of the Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj and the movement of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.¹¹ Among the Hindus, the Brahma Samaj was the earliest to find a foothold in Lahore, the provincial capital. They were the first to set up the schools and a press for propagation of their ideas. The Dev Samaj, an offshoot of the Brahma Samaj, proved to be relatively more lasting in the Punjab. Apart from these two, the Arya Samaj came to the Punjab in 1877 with its founder Swami Dayanand Saraswati. Another movement

appeared in the early 1860s by Pandit Sharda Ram Phillauri who preached the Vaishnava Hinduism and denounced Christianity. He organized a Hindu Sabha in 1867-8 to sustain the Sanatana Dharma.¹²

The Dev Samaj Movement was founded on 16th February 1887 in Lahore by Pandit Shiv Narayan Agnihotri (1850-1929).¹³ Initially, he was attracted to the Brahmo Samaj¹⁴ through the influence of his *guru*, Shiv Dayal Singh and of Munshi Kanhyalal Alakhdar.¹⁵ By 1873, he became a major figure in that organization. He was a dramatic speaker, prolific writer, and a successful journalist. He started two journals, one in Urdu called *Bradar-i-Hind* and the other in Hindi, *Hindu Bandhav*, devoting their columns to propagating the ideal of the female education and advocating the abolition of the child marriage and enforced widowhood. In 1875, Agnihotri became an honorary missionary of the Samaj. In 1876, he was elected as a member of the Managing Committee of the Lahore Brahmo Samaj and the Secretary of the society for the diffusion of theism: propagation of the Brahma Dharma. Later on, a friction developed within the Brahmo Samaj¹⁶ and doubts in the Pandit's own mind so that in 1886, he seceded from the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, taking with him a fair number of followers.¹⁷ On 16 February 1887, Agnihotri founded the Dev Samaj (Divine Society) in the Punjab defined his beliefs and set up an organization to propagate them. At first this organization was considered an extension of the Brahmo Samaj, but it soon began to deviate from their doctrines. In 1892, he initiated the dual worship of himself and God. On the sixth anniversary of the Dev Samaj, he declared himself to be as a Dev Guru Bhagwan and in 1895, he denied the existence of God and proclaimed himself to be a Devatma, the first and the only true worshipful being as the sole point of attention for the members of the Samaj. He was known as Bhagwan Dev Atma.¹⁸

The Dev Samaj held regular services consisting of hymns, a sermon, and readings from the Deva Shastra. Shiv Narayan Agnihotri's idol or portrait replaced the traditional idol. The worship of various types were performed, including an idol worship. The Dev Samajists were forbidden to lie, steal, cheat, accept bribes or gamble. They should not take liquor, drugs and were expected to be strict vegetarians. Adultery, polygamy and unnatural crimes were outlawed, and each member was expected to follow a useful life – that is, to work and live as a householder. The Dev Samaj was against the caste system and demanded that its members abandon all the caste restraints, practice the inter caste dining and the inter caste marriage. Pandit Agnihotri also wished to restructure the role of the women. He was against the child marriage and took steps to eliminate it. He fixed the age of marriage for the boys, twenty and sixteen for the girls. He was against the dowry, the seclusion of the women and the traditional mourning rites. He was in favour of the widow remarriage. He himself married a widow after the death of his first wife. The Dev Samaj encouraged the education of women. They opened many schools and colleges for the women in their main centres at Ferozepore as well as Lahore. Among the members of the Dev Samaj contained a large percentage of the literate women.¹⁹

Unlike the Arya Samaj, the Dev Samaj movement has not received serious or sustained attention of the scholars. The Dev Samaj Movement in the Punjab figures indirectly in a number of books. With regard to the women education, only few lines have been given by the scholars. The earliest writer to show interest in the movement was J.N. Farquhar, who mentions in his work *Modern Religious Movements in India*. He gives information that the Dev Samaj gave attention to the female education. They successfully run a boarding school for girls at Ferozepore up to the Matriculation standard.²⁰ Charles H. Heimsath in his work *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* refers to the Dev Samaj movement in the colonial Punjab in a footnote. He mentions that Shiv Narayan Agnihotri founded several schools and gave primary attention to the education of girls.²¹ *Social and Religious Reform Movements in the 19th and 20th centuries*, edited by S.P. Sen also mentions that the education of the women was the chief plank of the Dev Samaj Movement. The Dev Samaj Girls High School at Ferozepore, started in 1901, was the first Hindu girl's high school in the Punjab. This school gave the first lady M.B.B.S. and the first woman B.A., B.T., to the province.²² *The*

Singh Sabha and Other Socio-Religious Movements in the Punjab (1850-1925) edited by Ganda Singh mentions that the future of the women lay in education. Education alone could open for women opportunities for enlightenment and independence, professional and public life. Dev Samaj's services in women's education came to be publicly appreciated and acknowledged for it. The Dev Samaj institutions not only provided the high standard of education, but also inculcated the moral culture of the highest quality to turn the women to be the good daughters, devoted and self-sacrificing wives and the responsible mothers. Dev Samaj College was established at Ferozepore for post graduate and training, which produced hundreds of graduates and thousands of teachers for schools of the Punjab. At the close of 1920, the Dev Samaj was running 27 educational institutions from which most of them were for the women.²³ Kenneth W Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in the 19th century Punjab* gives indirect references to the Dev Samaj Movement in the colonial Punjab, while giving detail about the Arya Samaj. He mentions that the Dev Samaj encouraged the education of women and opened a school in Moga in the district Ferozepore on 29th October 1899.²⁴

Section II

Education of the women was the main concern of the Dev Samaj movement. They established a number of educational institutions in the colonial Punjab. The earliest effort in this direction was seen in 1900, a primary school for girls was established at Chunian in the Lahore district. Next year, the Dev Samaj Balika Vidyalaya, a high school for girls was started at Ferozepore by Pandit Shiv Narayan Agnihotri. In 1904, Bhai Attar Singh Dev Samaj Girls Primary School was opened at Guruharsahai in the Ferozepore district.²⁵ Sardar Harnam Singh Dev Samaj Girls Primary School was opened in Rampura Phul in the Bhatinda District in 1909.²⁶ Next year, Harnam Singh established another girl's primary school and a boarding house at Poohla in Ferozepore district. It was also known by the name, Aided Dev Samaj Girls School. Dharam Piari, member of the Dev Samaj was deputed by the Dev Samaj Council to teach in this institution.²⁷ In 1914, Dev Samaj Girls Primary School and a boarding house was set up at Ferozeshehr in Ferozepore district.²⁸ In the same year, Dev Samaj Girls Middle School was set up at Rawalpindi.²⁹ In 1917 Dharam Piari set up a Dev Samaj Girls Primary School at Palwal in the Gurgaon District.³⁰ In the same year, Dev Samaj Girls Primary School was set up at Badhni Klan in the Ferozepore District.³¹ In 1921, primary school one each for the girls was set up at Talwandi and Chand Nawan in the Ferozepore district.³²

The questions of conveyance, *purdah*, suitable courses of study and the health of the girls were discussed by the Dev Samaj management.³³ The management of the schools for girls was an important concern of the Dev Samajists. The Secretary of the Dev Samaj Council stated that control of the girl's schools should be given to the District Boards and the Municipalities or the private societies that maintained them. The Advisory Committees of educated Indian women should be formed, and their advice and suggestions should be invited in the matters relating to the female education, but they should have no direct hand in the control of the schools.³⁴ The Dev Samaj Council highlighted that the moral instruction should be imparted to the girls. Education imparted should be rational and independent of the religious dogmas, and should inculcate qualities like obedience, reverence, gratitude, loyalty to the government, sympathy, charity, self-help, self-respect, social service and cleanliness. Physical training should be part of the curriculum for girls. Religious education was also to be given to the girls. Nursing, first aid, cooking, music (both vocal and instrumental), sewing, dress making and dress cutting should be taught to girls from the age of 5 to 12. Knowledge of the personal hygiene and domestic economy should also be imparted to the girls. The girls should attend five hours of school regularly for a minimum period of 3 years.³⁵ The Secretary of the Dev Samaj Council also favoured starting industrial classes in the schools for the widows and the poor that would enable them to earn their livelihood.³⁶

The Dev Samaj Girls Primary School in Chunian was an important institution. Initially, the school was started in a rented accommodation. In 1910, a new building was inaugurated by Pandit Har Narain Agnihotri and his sister Vikash Devi.³⁷ Bhagwan Devi was appointed as the teacher in the school.³⁸ In 1915, there were 64 students in the school and within a year the number increased to 81.³⁹ Moral Science was taught in the school. The students were trained in the needle work, especially embroidery (*jali* and *kashida* work).⁴⁰ In 1913, exhibition of needle work was organized in which the *jali* and *kashida* work of the girls was displayed and appreciated.⁴¹ Special lectures were organized for the students in the school on various themes like 'Moral Work and Intellectual Education in the Dev Samaj Schools', 'Social Reform Works of Dev Samaj', 'Scientific Teachings of Dev Samaj', 'What kind of Education is needed for Women', 'Higher Ideal of Female Education', 'The True Welfare of Women', 'Women's Part in Family Life', 'True Ideal of Female Education' and 'Education of Girls and Women.'⁴² The school celebrated anniversaries and the prize distribution functions in which *nagar kirtan* was organized every year.⁴³ In 1911, Nihal Singh was appointed as the manager of the school.⁴⁴ The District Board Lahore gave a building grant of Rs. 500 to this school in 1910.⁴⁵

Another important educational institution for girls was the Dev Samaj Balika Vidyalai in Ferozepore established in 1901 by Shiv Narayan Agnihotri. It was the first high school for the girls in the Punjab and was recognized by the Punjab Education Department.⁴⁶ Initially it was started in a small building but by 1906, it had its own building hall, eight classrooms, two dormitories and residential quarters for the manger and teachers.⁴⁷ The building was financed with the support of the Government grants and subscriptions. More than Rs. 12,300 was spent on the school and the boarding house out of which the government had given Rs. 6150.⁴⁸ Initially, Pandit Har Narayan Agnihotri was appointed as the Headmaster of the school and Dharm Piari, as the Superintendent of the boarding house.⁴⁹ In 1920, Lala Hari Das was appointed as the Headmaster of the school.⁵⁰ Some important teachers of the school were Balmokand Bali, Mukand Singh, Ganga Ram, Pandit Kirparam and Saraswati Khushiram Gurani.⁵¹ In 1920, there were 5 male and 6 female teachers in the school.⁵² In 1936, there were 300 students in the school and 105 students resided in the boarding house.⁵³ In 1905, the tuition fee charged from the school students was between 8 annas to Rs. 3 per month and 8 annas fee for the boarding house.⁵⁴

The subjects taught in the school were Hindi, Arithmetic, English and general knowledge up to middle and entrance standard. Physical education was also a part of school's curriculum. Moral Science was also a compulsory subject.⁵⁵ The girls were taught needle work, (ordinary and ornamental, *crucia* and *kashida* work, crochet work) and painting.⁵⁶ Music (vocal and instrumental) cooking, nursing, gardening, physiology and hygiene were also a part of the curriculum.⁵⁷ Fifty six girls of the school appeared in the Matriculation examination between 1911 and 1926. Significantly, the pass percentage of girls in matric was 80 in those years.⁵⁸ Similarly from 1909 to 1926, 149 girls had appeared in the Middle Board examination and the pass percentage was nearly 90. In 1915, a student got a scholarship of Rs. 20 from the Rani Sahiba of Kalsia.⁵⁹ In 1916, two girl students received a scholarship of Rs 6 each as they secured second and third position in the Punjab.⁶⁰ The school conducted an annual prize distribution functions to award the deserving students for academics, good manners, moral virtues, domestic and industrial skill and social service.⁶¹ The Silver Jubilee of this school was celebrated in 1926.⁶²

The Dev Samaj Managing Council appointed Dr. Paras Ram as the Manager and Gurmukh Singh as the Secretary of this school. The Infrastructural requirement and the funds for running the school were provided by the donations by the patrons and the government grants. The government gave the grant of Rs. 6150 to the school in 1906. Mr. W. Bell M.A., C.I.E and Miss Sime gave Rs. 500 for the furniture.⁶³ In 1919, Lala Nathu Mal and Budhwar Rais provided a water pump and the financial aid to the school and offered two medals for the highest score in English and Hindi. In the same year, the trustees of the Todar

Mal Charitable Trust announced a donation of Rs 2500 for the school. In 1921, Raja Narendra Nath provided the financial support.⁶⁴ Apart from this, the Dev Samaj organized public meetings, conferences and functions to collect funds. In 1906, Krishan Devi, the Superintendent of the school conducted a meeting at Bathinda and collected the funds.⁶⁵ In 1926, the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the school were held and Rs.5000 was collected.⁶⁶ Significantly, well known alumnae of the school were Dev Shobha Bali was the first Hindu lady graduate in the Punjab and Dev Priya Bali was first Hindu M.B.B.S. from the Punjab.

Higher education for the women was given importance by the Dev Samaj. Higher educational institutions of the Dev Samaj included the degree courses for the graduate as well as the post graduate. The Dev Samaj College for the women was set up at Ferozepore in 1934.⁶⁷ Initially, it was an Intermediate institution. The degree classes were started in 1936.⁶⁸ It was affiliated to the Punjab University in 1943. The college started M.A. classes for Philosophy the next year.⁶⁹ P.V. Kanal⁷⁰ was appointed as the Principal of the college in 1941 and served for over 15 years. He taught History and his son, S.P. Kanal taught Philosophy in the college.⁷¹ The college had its own building and a hostel. In 1947, 120 students resided in the hostel. The college had a central library as well as a reading room. The subjects taught in the Bachelor's degree were Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, English, Philosophy, Hindi, Punjabi, History, and Sociology. The Honors course was in the subjects of English, Philosophy, Hindi, Mathematics and Sociology. Master's Degree was available in the disciplines of Philosophy, English, History, Hindi and Punjabi.⁷² Physical Education and Moral Science was compulsory for all the students. The students were also trained in music, tailoring, arts, leather work, cooking and fruit preservation in the college. Music was compulsory for the B.A. first and third year. Leather work was compulsory for the B.A. third year. The cooking classes were compulsory for the B.A. second year, and Fruit Preservation classes were held twice a year. The girls were taught to prepare syrups and squashes, jams and jellies, sauces and marmalades.⁷³ Students were also trained in the Military Drill and the Rifle Training under the National Volunteer Corps. The first batch of the students who sat for the F.A. examination in 1936 gave a hundred percent result. In 1938, first batch was sent for B.A. examination to give a 100 percent result.⁷⁴ The first convocation of the college was held on 17th March 1946.⁷⁵

The students participated in extra-curricular activities like the debates and declamations organized by the Literary Union of the college on the various moral, social or literary themes. The students also performed plays organized by the Jyoti Dramatic Club of the College on festive occasions such as Dussehra, Diwali and Lohri for an entertainment and charity. The students participated in the sports like hockey, net ball, throw ball, badminton and athletics.⁷⁶ In 1946, the women Net Ball team of the school won the Punjab University Net ball championship shield.⁷⁷ The social service society was named the Women's Centre for Social Service. Its members helped the needy, sick and the poor. The students collected funds and supplied food, clothing, shoes and the other necessary items to the District Flood Relief Fund in 1947. The college students also helped the sick and the displaced women during the partition of the country.⁷⁸

Another important institution for higher education for the women, set up in 1942, was the Dev Samaj College of Education at Ferozepore. The college had its own building, a playground, a central library as well as a reading room.⁷⁹ The pupil teacher ratio in the college was 1:10. The college offered regular courses for: B. Ed and M. Ed. Moral Science was taught to the students. Tailoring, knitting, cooking, dyeing and painting were also the part of the curriculum. Music, vocal as well as instrumental too were taught.⁸⁰ In 1943, the first batch of 24 girls sat for B.T. Test and 95 percent passed.⁸¹ There were a number of cultural and literary societies in the college. The students participated in sports too. The college also imparted the training in the National Service Scheme and National Cadet Corps.⁸² The college brought out an Annual Magazine titled, *Chatak*.⁸³ There was a Social Service Society in the college for the social, moral and the spiritual upliftment and for the promotion of the women's education.⁸⁴

Section III

The Arya Samaj has expanded rapidly in the Punjab in comparison to the Dev Samaj. The Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati at Bombay in 1875. He denounced orthodox Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism as false in comparison with the Vedic Dharma. He strongly believed in the Vedas and judge all the other scriptural texts based on the proper understanding of the Vedas and related texts. He rejected almost all aspects of the contemporary Hinduism: polytheism, idolatry, the role of Brahmin priests, pilgrimages, nearly all rituals and the ban on the widow marriage. The Arya Samaj created a wide variety of institutions, offered new forms of worship, and introduced proselytism, a conversion ritual and a simple statement of their fundamental creed. For the propagation of the samaj, the Lahore Arya Samaj was founded in June 1877 and was followed by the numerous samaj's all over the province before Dayanand's death at Ajmer on 30 October 1883.⁸⁵

Educating women was the main concern of the Arya Samaj. The need for the education for the women was felt by the Arya Samajists which led to an establishment of the various institutions from vidyalayas to maha vidyalayas. They were the first to take initiative for the women education. In 1880, a girl's school, Kanya Vidyalaya was established in Amritsar. By 1885, the Amritsar Arya Samaj opened the three girl's schools in Amritsar. In 1886, girl's school was opened at Jullundur by the Jullundur Arya Samaj. A resolution was passed in the Executive Committee of Jullundur Arya Samaj to open a zenana school. Its expenditure of one rupee per month was sanctioned by the Sabha. But the response to this school was very poor. The school had to be closed down for the want of teachers and the taught. Thus the first attempt at opening a girl's school by Jullundur Arya Samaj met with failures. In 1887, another Arya Kanya Pathshala was opened at Jullundur, with the efforts of Lala Dev Raj. By 1892, there was difference of opinion among the Arya Samajists regarding the establishment of the higher educational institutions for the women. It resulted in split into two factions: D.A.V. and Gurukul. Both the branches zealously worked for the women education in the Punjab. In 1923, Kanya Gurukul was established at Indraprastha which marked the beginning of a new trend in the women's education.⁸⁶ In 1936, Kanya Gurukul was founded at Sonipat by Bhakta Phool Singh.⁸⁷

The questions of suitable courses of study and the health of the girls were discussed by the Arya Samajists. The management of schools for the girls was an important concern of the Arya Samajists. Lala Dev Raj stated that the control of the girl's schools should be given to the specially constituted bodies of the ladies. Advisory committees or assisting board of the women should be formed and women should have given upper hand in the decision-making. Suggestions and advices of men in the matters related to the women education should be welcomed too.⁸⁸ The Arya Samajists had divergent views regarding the course of an education for the women. Lala Dev Raj, Arya Samajist stated that the chief aim should be to bring up the girls as good housewives and mothers. Domestic economy should be the core subject to be taught to the girls. Religious education especially Vedas were taught to the girls. Sewing, needle work, knitting, embroidery, cooking, nursing, first aid should be taught to the girls. Knowledge of the personal hygiene and the elementary rules of health should be imparted to the girls. The girls should attend six or seven years school regularly.⁸⁹

The Arya Kanya Pathshala in Jullundur was an important institution. In 1887 A.D., a proposal was made by Jullundur Arya Samaj to open school for girls. The classes of school were started at Lala Dev Raj's house and Kahan Devi, the mother of Lala Dev Raj took the responsibility of operating it. Mai Ladi, a mission school teacher, was appointed as its first teacher in the school. After sometime, Samaj stopped the one rupee funds. But Kahan Devi promised to give four chapattis in a day and one rupee per month wage to

the teachers of girl's school. But despite Kahan Devi's efforts the school could not survive and was closed for lack of funds.

Another important educational institution for women was Arya Kanya Pathshala set up at Jullundur in 1889. It was established with the efforts of Munshi Ram and Lala Dev Raj of the Jullundur Arya Samaj. Initially, it was set up in a rented place and soon it had its own building. Pandit Shri Pati was appointed as a teacher of this school on two rupees wage per month. A female teacher was appointed on monthly wage of four rupees. Dev Raj went from door to door and requested the parents to send their daughters to school. In a move to attract the girls to this school, he offered sweets and toys. Initially, the promoters of this school had to face many difficulties. It was a tough job to get pupils for school. If one day a girl came to school the very next day her relatives took her away. The school was opened with 11 students. Slowly the number of students at this school began to increase and the school became a success. Behind this success were the untiring efforts of Lala Dev Raj and his mother Kahan Devi. Lala Dev Raj was appointed as the manager of the school and two local Aryas, Master Heera Singh and Master Sant Ram took the position of the school inspectors. By the end of 1892 A.D., the number of students increased and reached to 55. The school started to enroll the widows as well as unmarried girls. Nominal fee was charged in the Arya schools which were quite affordable. Low fees encouraged even the poor people to send their children to schools.⁹⁰

Higher education for the women was also given an importance by the Arya Samaj. In 1896, a college known as Kanya Maha Vidyalaya was established in Jullundur. Initially, the effort in this direction was started by Lala Dev Raj in 1892. He proposed to establish an institution for women known as Kanya Maha Vidyalaya at an estimated cost of 25 thousand rupees. In 1893 A.D. he appealed for the donation for Maha Vidyalaya at the annual function of the occasion of the Amritsar Arya Samaj. But the D.A.V party was not in favor to establish this institution. This became a bone of contention between the D.A.V Party and the Gurukul party. But Lala Dev Raj was adamant and continued his efforts to establish Kanya Maha Vidyalaya at Jullundur. Lala Lajpat Rai though favored the primary education for girls had reservations regarding higher education for them. Lal Chand also agreed with Lala Lajpat Rai's opinion. Despite this the Kanya Maha Vidyalaya, a high school was founded in 1891 A.D. and began to make progress and later, became the one of the popular college of the Arya Samaj.⁹¹ In 1896 A.D. Kanya Maha Vidyalaya Managing Committee was registered which was known as Kanya Maha Vidyalaya Mukhya Sabha. The Management of this institution also opened a hostel for the girls, which was the first girl's hostel of the Punjab. Initially, curriculum at the school was devised by Lala Dev Raj which suited the day to day life of the girls. His booklet "*Hasi Khel Mein Shiksha*" covered the entire life of a child. Most of the books of Kanya Maha Vidyalaya were written by Lala Dev Raj. Those books were based on nationalism, religion and morality. The main subjects taught in this institution were Hindi, History, Geography, Sanskrit, Math, English and Music. Religious education was also given in the school. The medium of instruction was Hindi.⁹² By 1906, the Maha Vidyalaya enrolled 203 students in all grades and the hostel had 105 students. This institution had unmarried and married girls; and widows. The Kanya Maha Vidyalaya had its own monthly, *Panchal Pandita* to preach and propagate about the female education.⁹³

Another higher educational institution was set up in Lahore in 1927 A.D. The D.A.V Party realized the importance of the women education and decided to open a girl's institution to equip girls with a knowledge and efficiency for facing the problems of everyday life. They opened a girl college at Lahore which prepared students for university examination. The girl students were imparted training in needle work, knitting, cooking and household duties. In 1939, this institution was upgraded to a degree level. All the subjects of arts and humanities were taught in this college including Hindi and Sanskrit. It aimed at developing a spirit of service and sacrifice among the students. The college according to the Hindu ideals of

life, acquainted the girl students with the ancient lore and ideals of India and developed in them a religious consciousness. The girls were asked to wear swadeshi clothes during the college hours.⁹⁴ The students also participated in the inter college debates and the national conferences.⁹⁵ It was noticed that the college made a tremendous progress in the terms of students on rolls, results, income and expenditure. After the death of Mahatma Hans Raj, this college got the name of Hansraj Mahila Maha Vidyalaya. This college was affiliated to the Panjab University. After partition in 1947 A.D., this college was shifted to Jullundur and was run by the D.A.V College Trust and Managing Committee, New Delhi.⁹⁶

The Arya Samaj and the Dev Samaj contributed tremendously for the growth and development of the women education in the colonial Punjab. With regard to the women education, there were certain similarities between them. They taught knitting, sewing, cooking, domestic economy, first aid, hygiene to the girls. The medium of instruction in their institutions were Hindi. Both were not in much favour of the co-education. The segregated educational institutions for girls and boys were set up. There were certain differences in their institutions too. The Dev Samaj institutions taught moral science to the girls which should be rational and independent. But, the Arya Samajists laid stress on religious education especially learning Vedic texts. The Dev Samajists taught subjects like Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics with other Arts and Humanities subjects in their institutions. But the Arya Samajists taught only Arts and Humanities subjects especially Hindi and Sanskrit. Physical training, Sports and Rifle training were the part of the curriculum of the Dev Samajists educational institutions, but not in the Arya Samajists educational institutions. Employment oriented professional courses were available for the women in the Dev Samajists educational institutions but, the Arya Samajists preferred the women's role as wives and mothers. The Arya Samaj leaders did not consider the women's employment outside homes as appropriate and necessary.

To sum up: The Dev Samajists were the supporters of the western education. But in their opinion the existing system of education needs an improvement. They wanted to establish the Dev Samajist educational institutions on the similar lines with some modifications to fulfill the needs of the educated community. It shows that they wanted their students to study in Indian institutions instead relying on western. They wanted to infuse the national spirit among the students and acquainted with their religion and culture. They wanted that an ideal education should produce individuals with the character and inculcate the higher moral values. They gave importance to the home education, spiritual education and also ethical training given in the schools. To do so, it is essential to admit them in the Dev Samajist institutions. Significantly the majority of the Dev Samajists educational institutions were for the women. Moral and religious education was given along with the other subjects. Nursing, first aid, cookery, music, sewing, hygiene, domestic economy, dress making was also taught in their institutions. Just like contemporary socio-religious organizations like the Arya Samaj, the educational programme for women was designed by the Dev Samaj to train them to be the suitable wives for well-educated men and mother for their children. They should be able to manage their homes ably and benefit the community as a whole.

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