

Grey literature and the role of women pioneers in Qajar era (1910-1920)

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Abstract

Iranian society in the Qajar era, despite having an ancient civilization and culture, had a medieval society with national and religious prejudices. During this era, due to the society's view of women and the lack of importance to their prosperity, their education was not considered. After constitutional revolution, newspapers and magazines became more active and their number increased day by day. In this time, newspapers became very popular among the people, and their news covered not only political and social subjects, but also the news of women of other nations in the form of apparent values, duties and status in the family. This news and information and intellectual progress led women to cooperate with the press of that time; because they considered it is the perfect tool to express their thoughts with others and connecting abroad. In this regard, women started publishing magazines in order to awaken and increase the awareness of women in the society. The first magazine that was published by women was "Danesh".

In this research, the articles of women's journals, that were published between 1910-1920, studied in order to obtain an understanding of the information needs of women in that period. This study surveys the topics and the number of articles written or translated by women. The research population consisted of 116 issues from seven titles of the women journals and a total of 569 articles were reviewed.

A review of these journals shows that women initially tried to cover subjects such as childbearing, marriage, health, etc. in their own media. The purpose of these journals was to take women out of the space created by their dominant culture or society, to bring them into the community, and to make them aware of the right to equality with men, while preserving their dignity as mothers and females. These media were a window to address the most basic information needs of women, such as health and psychological topics. It was especially important to inform women about the health and protection of children at a time when infectious diseases such as smallpox were pandemic.

Keywords: Iranian women, Qajar era, grey literature