

# Population First

VOLUME 5: JULY 2022

## TANA BANA

Newsletter of Population First

### From the Editor's Desk

July marked a month of hectic activities and recognitions. Our Founder, Mr. Bobby Sista was recognised as a Gender Warrior at the IAA: Voice of Change amongst an august gathering of the advertising fraternity, community leaders, filmmakers, corporate leaders, and changemakers. The details are captured in the Happenings section.

Population First was tasked with assessing textbooks for school-going children from Andhra Pradesh, from a gender perspective across all subjects. The proceedings and findings are encapsulated in the first New Initiatives section.

Presented in the Spotlight is the quarterly gender analysis of Telegu Media by the noted journalist, C.Vanaja. The initiative falls under our mandate to make Indian media more gender-sensitive. It is supported by UNFPA and The Royal Norwegian Embassy, India.

The Reports and Trends, section presents key highlights for India, from The State of World Population Report 2022, an annual initiative of UNFPA that looks at global trends.

Reel world takes a peek into the universe of Jayeshbhai Jordaar to see if his fight was truly notable. Book Corner explores the nuances of Women in Concert and delves into the women-centric writing in Bengali literature.

Happy reading!

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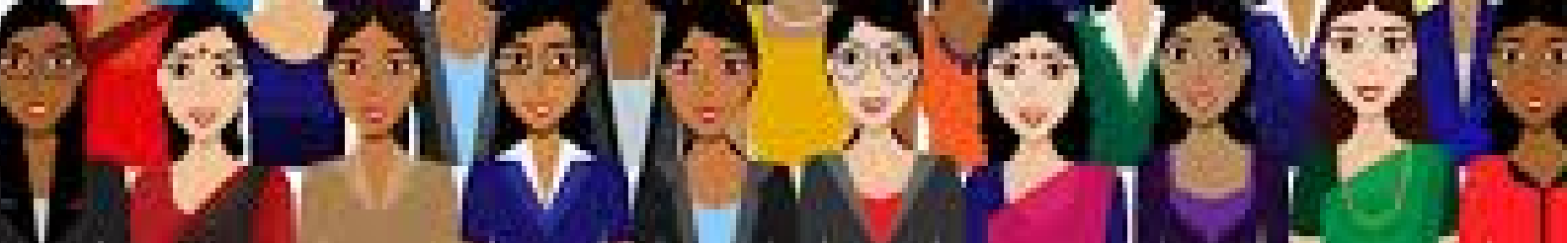
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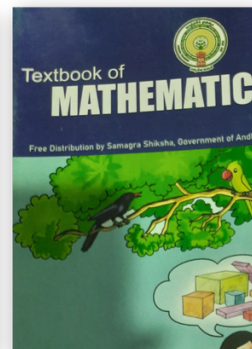
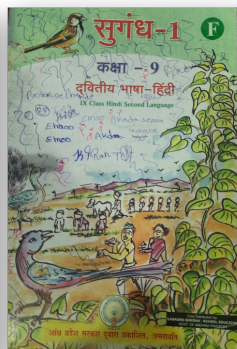
## New Initiatives

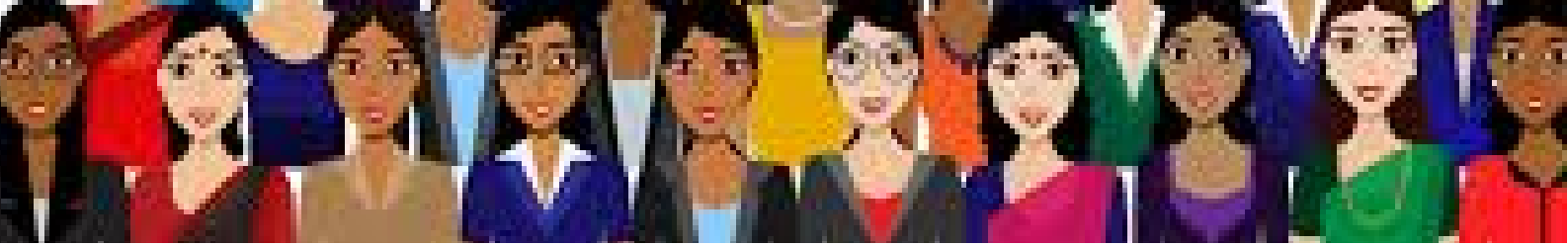
# Gender Guidelines For Reviewing Textbooks

While India has enacted many laws and launched many programmes to address gender discrimination and inequality in its society, there is a need to address it in our school education system, particularly in the content of school textbooks. To this effect, the Government of Andhra Pradesh through its autonomous wing SCERT (State Council of Educational Research and Training) in partnership with UNICEF has commissioned a Gender Sensitization programme in all Government High Schools of Andhra Pradesh.

One of the key components of this programme is to review all the textbooks of classes 6th to 10th from a gender lens. The aim is to develop a framework that can be used across all classes and subjects to identify gender stereotyping and biases in textbooks. Additionally, it is also expected to provide a context for content developers to create gender-sensitive and nuanced content that would empower girls and boys to work towards a more gender-just society. As part of this effort, SCERT and UNICEF have commissioned Population First, to develop the 'Gender Guidelines For Reviewing Textbooks' with the support of key experts on gender issues.

To develop a Gender Analysis Framework to review the school textbooks, it is imperative to have a thorough understanding of the content of the current textbooks, how gender-sensitive they currently are, and where the content needs to change. To enable this, a panel of seven experts (five external, two from Population First) was constituted to go through the textbooks to broadly identify stereotyping, misrepresentation, and the overall content selection, design, and presentation of the school textbooks with regard to gender. They also were tasked to examine women's representation in editorial boards, content planning, content development, and designing.





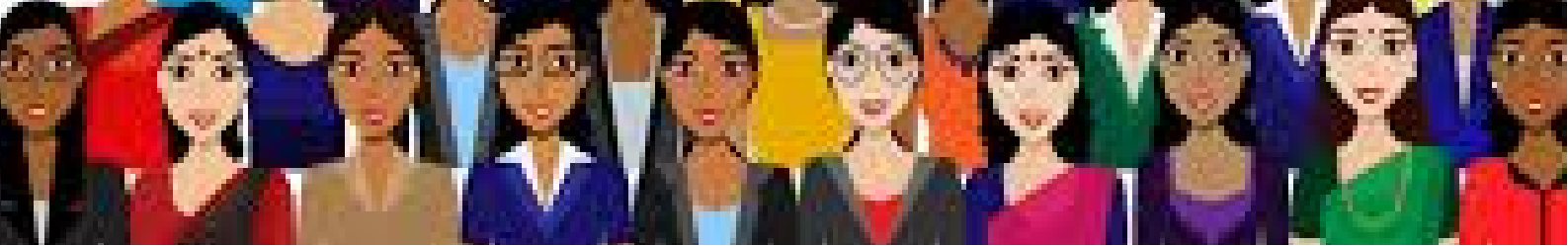
## New Initiatives

# Gender Guidelines For Reviewing Textbooks

1. **The Gender Sensitivity Framework:** Identifying the various stereotypes regarding gender qualities, roles, entitlements, and power equations. With a broad perspective on some of the most common stereotypes and gender biases pertaining to the above. Additionally, it also provides guidelines as to what needs to be done to bring in greater sensitivity.
1. **Case Studies:** Case studies help the reviewers in gaining an insight into what is objectionable and why is it so.
1. **Gender Sensitivity Checklist:** A detailed checklist for reviewing the cover pages, language, lesson content, design, pictures, and poem. The checklist helps assess the sensitivity of the content and recommends the following: retention of the content, modification of content, or removal of the content.

These guidelines were discussed with representatives from SCERT and UNICEF along with the reviewers who used these guidelines at a 4-day workshop in Vijayawada from 19th to 22nd July, wherein further feedback was incorporated. Additionally, mapping a way forward for critically analyzing textbook content from often overlooked perspectives was undertaken.





## Spotlight

# Media and Gender- A Quarterly Review

C.Vanaja, journalist, TV presenter, and filmmaker



Being a journalist for about 30 years and a witness to and a part of how gender question was taken up by Telugu media, this study gave me mixed feelings but more towards disappointment. The study was conducted for a period between April 1 and June 30, 2022.

I would like to briefly go into how gender-sensitive journalism has started in Telugu media. Our first introduction to feminism was through a weekly page called “Stree Shakthi” run by journalist G V Satyavathi. That was the beginning of feminist thought in journalism in the united Telugu state. Writings of the first-generation feminists like Volga and Vasanth Kannabiran used to be published and there would be discussions. A couple of years later another weekly page “Maanavi” edited by journalist Vasantha Laxmi, was started by another daily called Udayam. Both pages were discontinued by the 90s.

The mid-90s saw the return of women-focused daily special pages by all three major dailies, Eenadu, Andhra Jyothi, and Vaartha. However, the look and feel of these pages were completely different.

It was the advent of feel-good journalism replete with success stories, profiles, and interviews of successful women and women activists, beauty, and food.

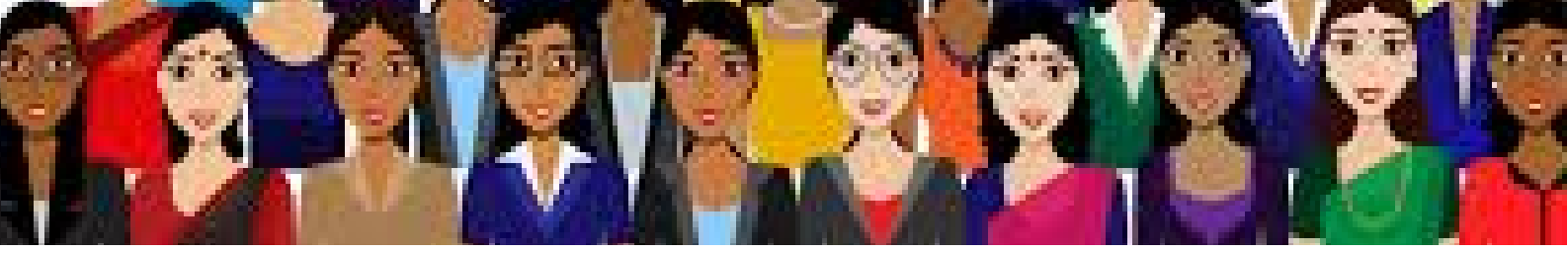
One could find a few stories from a gender angle- how women's reservation was being used or how certain women's bills were introduced etc. But slowly they were weaned off with more focus on feel-good content. This three months study has further confirmed the continuing trend.

Even though it pioneered feminist content, Andhra Jyothi has completely given it up and has confined its page “Navya” to success stories, profiles, and interviews.

The same is true for Eenadu. It has confined its women's page “Vasundhara” to some success stories and profiles of activists and celebrities only. Food, beauty, and health are the other important content in the pages dedicated to women and family. However, there are a couple of edit page articles that analyze women's issues written by men.

Sakshi which does not have a special women's page but a daily soft features page “Family” has more stories from a gender angle than success stories, profiles, and interviews. Clearly, it is the winner!

Another interesting point here is Sakshi is managed by a woman while Andhra Jyothi women's page is run by a man.



## Spotlight

### Media and Gender- A Quarterly Review

With this introduction, I would like to present the five selected gender-sensitive stories here.

1. అందరి తీర్పు ఆమె ఉద్యోగం పైనే ( andari teerpu aame udyogam paine - Everyone judges her job)

By Vaka Manjula Reddy, Family page 17 April 2022, Sakshi

This story examines how a woman's job is being judged by everyone including her family and colleagues, as not important. She is the one who is expected to sacrifice and take care of the children or in-laws or any crisis.

<https://epaper.sakshi.com/3446065/Hyderabad-Main/17-04-2022#page/10/2>

2. నొప్పిలోనూ చిన్న చూపా? (noppilonoo chinnachoopaa - Even the pain is looked down upon?)

By Nirmala Reddy, Family page 22 May 2022, Sakshi

The story elaborated on a research study on how women's health conditions are perceived to be emotional while men's are considered real. None of the doctors interviewed supported what the research had proven.

<https://epaper.sakshi.com/m5/3482683/Telangana/22-05-2022#sample/10/1>



3. ఇప్పుడు కాకపోతే ఇంకెప్పుడు (ippudu kaakapote inkeppudu - If not now, when?) (the title changed to "Is taking period leave a weakness?" when republished on the webpage)

By Aravinda Nyayapathi, Funday cover story 29 May 2022, Sakshi

This is a very bold story on menstrual issues in the wake of period leave.

<https://www.sakshi.com/telugu-news/family/funday-cover-story-period-leave-how-women-face-discrimination-1459899>

4. సానుభూతి కాదు... గౌరవం కావాలి. ( saanubhoothi kaadu... gauravam kavaali - We don't need sympathy, we need respect)

By K Venkatesh, Navya women's page, Andhra Jyothi

An interview of a sex worker named Devi, raises an interesting point- a woman who doesn't want sympathy but respect. She wants rights similar to the unorganized sector.

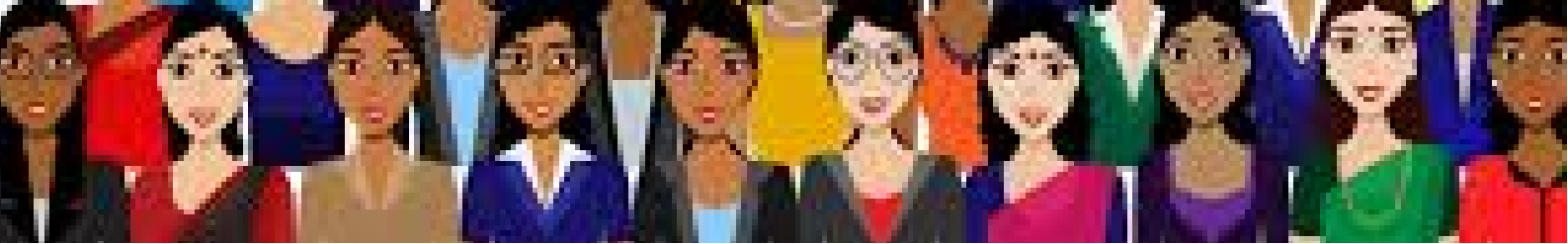
<https://www.andhrajyothy.com/telugunews/not-sympathy-need-respect-ngts-navya-1822061502144195>

5. ఆమెపై ఆగని హింసాకాండ (aamepai aagani himsaakanda - Continued violence on women)

By P V Rao, Edit page, 14 May 2022, Eenadu

This article details the violence against women in India and how the violence is on the rise, and its consequences on the woman and the economy.

<https://www.eenadu.net/telugu-news/vyakyanam/general/1301/122094872>



## Reports and Trends

### The UNFPA State of World Population Report 2022

Seeing the Unseen: The Case for Action in the Neglected Crisis of Unintended Pregnancy

#### Key Trends

Piyasa Mal, Researcher  
Dr.Usha Ram, Professor & Head IIPS

*The recently launched **The State of World Population Report 2022** by UNFPA suggests that India will overtake China as the world's most populous country by 2023. We present key trends.*

As India's population is aging fast, there is a need for special attention for the future program to lay greater emphasis on the economic and social security of its greying population. Although India has succeeded in reducing its maternal and childhood mortality remarkably especially in the past decade, thanks to the national health mission which geared the system in full force. Nevertheless, India is lagging behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). We as a nation have more to do. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused an increase in death. So, there is a need to strengthen access to healthcare services by increasing the availability of human and material resources and improving the technical skills and efficiency of the healthcare services. Universal institutionalization of birth, full immunization, adherence to standard and recommended feeding practices, hygiene, reduction in adolescent fertility and child marriage, routine health check-ups, and, more precisely, strengthening the economy would help in achieving better health outcomes.

Although 84% of both male and female respondents said they were likely to vote when asked if they were likely to get involved in politics

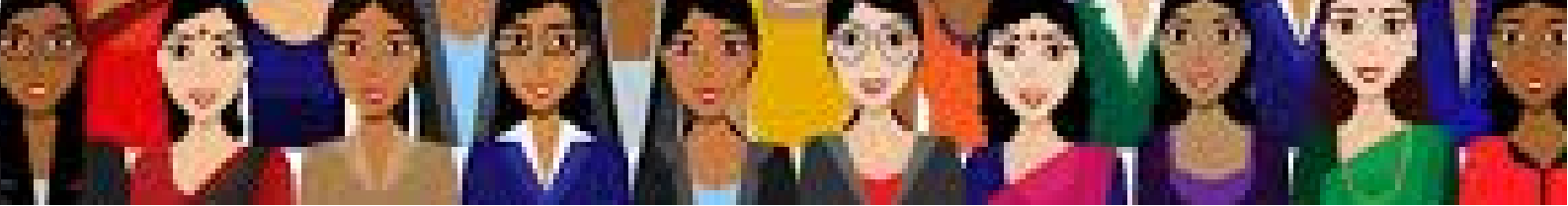
in the future, only 19 percent of young women expressed a high likelihood as compared to 32 percent of the young men.

#### About The State of World Population Report

The **State of World Population** report is UNFPA's annual flagship publication. It throws light on emerging issues in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights, bringing them into the mainstream and exploring the challenges and opportunities they present for international development.

The **UNFPA State of World Population report, Seeing the Unseen: The case for action in the neglected crisis of unintended pregnancy** may be accessed here: [www.unfpa.org/swp2022](http://www.unfpa.org/swp2022)





## Report and Trends

### SWP: Key Findings

- The results show that India's median age increased from 24 years in 2010 to 27.6 years in 2021.
- While the population aged 25-64 and 65+ years is estimated to grow over the next few decades, the younger population aged 0-14 and 15-24 years will further decline.
- India's annual population growth rate in 2021 is estimated at 0.68 percent compared to 1.8 percent in 2000.
- The number of total births decreased from about 24 million in 2018 to 23 million in 2021. The Total fertility rate (TFR) and Net Reproduction Rate (NRR) in India are 2.03 live births per woman and 0.93 surviving daughters per woman, respectively, suggesting that India has already reached a replacement fertility level where a population replaces itself from generation to generation.
- The mean age at childbearing has increased from 26.4 years in 2000 to 27.9 years in 2021. Further, the number of births among younger women aged 15-19 years also declined and was 11.8 lakhs in 2018 and 10.5 lakhs in 2021. Early pregnancy and motherhood have been found to have adverse health and social effects on both young mothers and their children. A later childbearing pattern (as reflected by the higher mean age of childbearing), slows down the population growth and reduces the size of the future population because of longer intergenerational times and fewer people being added annually. It also reflects the increasing female age at marriage as a result of the expansion of education, especially among females. The corresponding reduction in births per year will reduce the number of children vis-a-vis the working-age population, thereby creating more favorable conditions for economic development.
- The sex ratio at birth in India is currently 108

male births per 100 female births. The recent Covid 19 pandemic may further potentially influence the fertility levels in India in various ways. For example, postponement of childbearing in the face of uncertainty regarding the disease and its economic impacts, disruptions in marriage patterns and family formation, and disruptions in the availability and accessibility to reproductive health care services including family planning services.

- On the mortality front, the number of deaths in India has increased from a little over 9 million in 2019 to about 13 million in 2021. The male death (7 million) outnumber female deaths (6 million) in 2021 suggesting a higher mortality burden on males.
- Further, the crude death rate (CDR) has also increased from 6.7 in 2019 to 9.4 in 2021 per thousand population.
- Life expectancy at birth in India has slightly decreased from 70.9 in 2019 to 67.2 years in 2021, with female and male life expectancies at 68.6 and 65.8, respectively.
- Till 2019, India showed mortality reductions as a result of increased access to health care services and advances in medicine. However, the mortality in India increased after 2019, that is post onset of the pandemic.
- India observed more than 50 percent reductions in infant mortality levels over the last decade. In 2010, India contributed 12 lakhs infant deaths (death among children under age 1) to the global infant deaths with an infant mortality rate (IMR) of 45.2 infant deaths per 1000 live births. In 2021, India's total infant deaths were at nearly 6 lakhs with an IMR of 25.5 infant deaths per 1000 live births.
- The under-five mortality rate (death among children below 5 years of age) too has shown a remarkable reduction from 58 in 2010 to 31 per thousand live births in 2021.
- Migration is yet another major component of population change. India is the highest emigrant country in the world. The outflows were due to temporary labour movements. In 2021, the net flow was 302 thousand. The net migration rate was 0.2 per thousand population.

## Jayeshbhai Jordaar

Soumyani Ghoshal, Co-founder, Sol Solutions



Cramming a serious issue between slapstick comedy, peppered with abrupt song and dance sequences is not new to Bollywood. Jayeshbhai Jordaar is no exception. While debut director Divyang Thakkar has his heart in the right place with a film that aims to educate people about the social evil of Son Preference; the screenplay falls flat and leaves the audience sort of uninspired and confused at the end of it all.

Set in rural Gujarat, the film starts off with Jayesh Patel (Ranveer Singh) pretending to hit his pregnant wife behind closed doors on the orders of his orthodox parents (Boman Irani and Ratna Pathak Shah) as they enjoy the antics from outside the room. Jayesh is a man deeply in love with his wife Mudra (Shalini Pandey) and daughter Siddhi (Jia Vaidya) but never raises his voice against his regressive father, who is also the village sarpanch and is constantly seen forcing Jayesh to father a son. The first daughter was tolerated, but a second would be inexcusable.

So after illegal sex determination, female infanticide, and multiple abortions, when Mudra is set to deliver yet another baby girl – Jayesh concocts a sly plan to help his wife and daughter escape from the village. This is when the plot turns even more eccentric with serious issues being trivialised.

The scene changes to a fictitious village in Haryana – Ladhapur, where years of eliminating daughters had led to such a skewed sex ratio that all the men of the village are left being bachelors, bare branches as they are called, and are now all for the 'Beti Bachao' ideal– because female children should be allowed to survive only because men need mothers and wives, right? Sigh!

Jayeshbhai Jordaar is entirely focused on Jayesh, while the women leads are merely mute spectators who need their husbands and brothers to stand up for them. A film that focuses on so many social issues revolving around women never loses sight of its 'gentlemen saviours' throughout. Who, while tooting the horn of women empowerment, fail to do so spectacularly with their actions. Not unlike the film itself.

Jayesh's spirited sister (Deeksha Joshi) and feisty daughter are only briefly allowed the spotlight before it shines back on Jayesh himself– clearly emphasizing how allying men with the cause of progressing women empowerment is turned into disenfranchising them and depriving them of their voice.

With the narrative constantly oscillating between absurd comedy and over-the-top melodrama– it is almost as if the scriptwriter was at war with himself to choose which path to take.

Although Ranveer, the protagonist of this saga, and Boman Irani get the most screen-time—the closing credits give more gravitas to the actors playing his daughter, wife, and mother – Jia Vaidya, Shalini Pandey, and Ratna Pathak Shah, tokenism at its best in the name of equality.

Debutant writer-director Divyang Thakkar's attempt to use satire and humour to challenge misogyny and gender stereotype is a noble idea, but with a juvenile attempt where even stellar actors like Ranveer Singh, Boman Irani, and Rathna Pathak Shah cannot save the film.



## Women in Concert

Rakhshanda Jalil

She writes on issues of literature, culture, and community

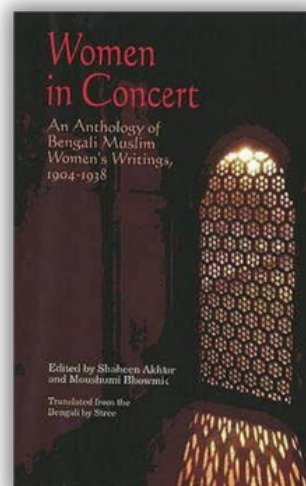
Despite having read and reviewed scores of collections of women's writings over the years, I approach every new collection with some mistrust. I like to believe that good writing is or should be androgynous; therefore, the very notion of women's writing as a separate entity is something I still grapple with. Most editors of such anthologies work on the premise that the authors they have selected somehow work under a double handicap – by virtue of being women, and women who write – and therefore deserve a special space, a reservation of sorts. Such an assumption, I feel, is unfailingly unfair to the writers whose cause they set out to espouse. Time and circumstance might compel women to dwell on certain issues, but certainly, women's writing need not be only about or for women alone. Rarely does one come across an anthology of women's writing that constructs women's literary history virtually from scratch and that too in a sphere so circumscribed by religious and linguistic differences as that occupied by Bengali Muslim women over a century ago

Women in Concert: An Anthology of Bengali Muslim Women's Writings, 1904-1938 is a translation of the Bengali original *Zenana Mehfil: Bangali Musalman Lekhikader Nirbachita Rachna*, published by STREE in 1998. What sets it apart from other collections of women's writings is precisely the time and circumstances of its contributors. It begins in the early 20th century when it was difficult for Muslim girls to get a secular education in the Bengali and English-medium system, and not only opens a window into lives seldom glimpsed through the screens of the *Zenana* but also documents the changes brought about in the social and cultural position of Muslim women over a few decades. For me, it was this change in the lives of women over a relatively short period of time that was as much, if not more interesting than the literary history unraveling through the extracts chosen by Shaheen Akhtar and Moushumi Bhowmik, the two editors from the two sides of

the West Bengal-Bangladesh border.

Bengali Muslim writers, all of whom happen to be women, writing in the early decades of the 20th century, negotiating with modernity and nationalism, speaking of radical feminist concerns often from behind the veil, making a call for freedom and equal opportunities having pulled themselves out of the mire of disadvantage, exhorting their sisters to wake up from long centuries of sleep, the writers included here do all this and more with guts and gumption. Writing in *dobhashi* Bengali, with its liberal sprinkling of Arabic and Persian, they reveal how linguistic, cultural and religious differences can mutate to produce hybrid writings that meet the needs of a cross-fertilized society.

First published in *Saugat* or *Nabanoor*, journals that promoted Muslim writers in Bengal, they had a secular nationalistic agenda. The women writers included here traversed a rough terrain, crisscrossed as it was by the sometimes conciliatory sometimes provocative discourses that ebbed and flowed all around them. Were they to listen to the call of Pan-Islamism that popular poets like Kazi Nazrul Islam voiced in paeans to Kemal Ataturk? Or were they to heed the growing Muslim Bengali intelligentsia who wrote vigorously in support of the nation-building process that was already underway across the breadth of undivided India? Were they to write only of and for a sisterhood of women and Bengali Muslim ones at that? Or were they to espouse concerns outside the home or the village? The editors of this anthology have showcased writers who listened to the many voices but interpreted them in their own unique way.



**Women in Concert: An Anthology of Bengali Muslim Women's Writings (1904-1938), edited by Shaheen Akhtar and Moushumi Bhowmik, Translated by STREE, Foreword by Firdous Azim, STREE, 2008, pp 395**



## Happenings

# IAA Celebrates Bobby Sista as Gender Warrior

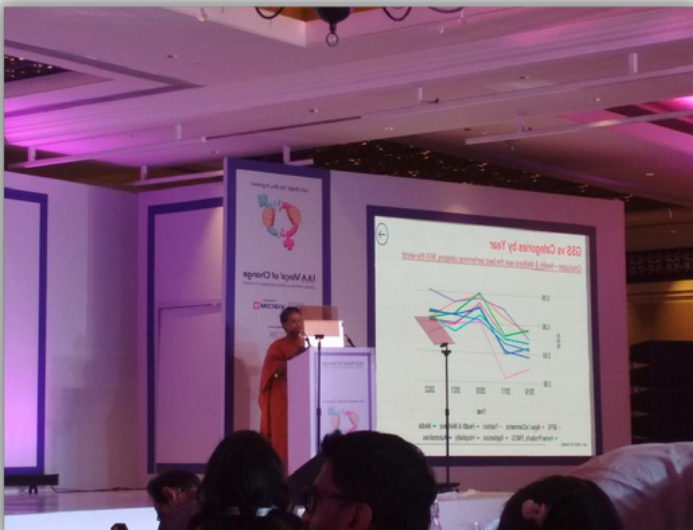
In a pioneering initiative the International Advertising Association (IAA) India Chapter, held a change summit titled Voice of Change: Gender Portrayal from 30 seconds to 3 hours, where the important conversation on gender parity, as seen in media, was brought forth in a day of discussions, debates, and research findings. The event saw a large number of distinguished luminaries in attendance from the realms of advertising, film, academia, and media.

The highlight of the event was the recognition and felicitation, as a 'Gender Warrior', of Mr. S V Sista, founder of Population First, an advertising legend, popularly known as Bobby Sista, for his contribution to the cause of equality and fair representation through seminal work and a commitment to making the world a more equitable place. Along with Mr. S V Sista, the event also similarly recognized and felicitated Guneet Monga, a luminary from the world of filmmaking; and Ramesh Narayan, another decorated veteran of the advertising industry.

### The needle is moving- Slowly but Steadily

Dr. A L Sharada, Director of Population First addressed the gathering, presenting her report 'Moving the Needle: Gender Portrayal Over A Decade Of Advertising'. The report consolidated and analyzed the Gender Sensitivity Scoring (GSS) of 870 advertisements over a span of 5 years, from Dr. A L Sharada's 'Creative Critique' articles in leading advertising publication, Campaign India. The report further segmented the data into 10 industries and target groupings by age and gender. It offered insight into the best and worst-performing industries. As well as indicative trends on year-on-year changes in the GSS of the advertisements based on target grouping by age and gender.

The report also qualitatively analyzed various aspects of gender and highlighted top-performing advertising campaigns that moved the needle towards progress in each of these aspects. The data clearly indicated that there is a slow but steady change in advertisements towards greater gender sensitivity. The Health and Wellness industry lead the change followed by the Fashion and Jewelry industry with top brands like Anouk, Biba, Tanishq, and Titan coming up with gender transformative advertising targeted at young women. The review also highlighted that the men's fashion industry has a long way to go in terms of gender sensitivity, while the home appliances industry is showing a steady improvement.



## Happenings

### IAA Celebrates Bobby Sista as Gender Warrior

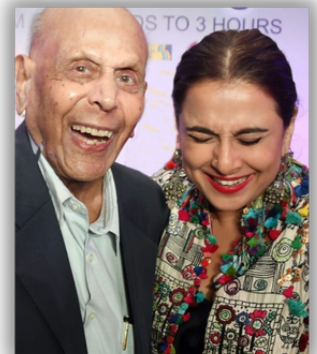
The summit featured addresses by eminent dignitaries including the honorable Chief Guest Smt. Poonam Mahajan, MP North Central Mumbai; Nina Elavia Jaipuria, Chairperson, IAA Women Empowerment Committee and Head – Hindi Mass Entertainment and Kids TV Network, Viacom18; Dr. Ranjana Kumari, Director, Center for Social Research; and Mr. Arjan De Wagt Officer in Charge – Deputy Representative Programmes – UNICEF India; to name a few.

It fostered a dialogue on the subject of gender sensitivity in media through two dedicated panel discussions with industry titans. The first focused on discussing the need for normalization of fair gender portrayals in advertising and highlighting the need for creators to move beyond standard tropes. The second delved into the balancing act between the economics of content vs the ethics of it. The summit included fireside chats with Vidya Balan, actor, and Unicef Celebrity Advocate, and with Zainab Patel, Chief Inclusion and Diversity Officer, Pernod Ricard who spoke about the inaccessibility of everyday opportunities and the unique stressors of trans life.

With thought-provoking perspectives and notable conversations, the event laid the context for what has been achieved and what more needs to be done for furthering the cause of gender equality, for a 30-second TVC or a 3-hour film or anything in between.

**Mr. S V Sista's Felicitation recognition and felicitation, as a 'Gender Warrior' can be viewed [here](#).**

**Dr. A L Sharada's report, 'Moving the Needle: Gender Portrayal Over A Decade Of Advertising' can be viewed [here](#).**



# Population First



Laadli

Celebrate Her Life

An Initiative by Population First

आमची  
AMCHI

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