

HAPPY WOMEN'S DAY

Engage | Encourage | Empower!

Journey at Triniti

Continuing to Engage, Encourage, and Empower within Triniti and Beyond

From 1 to 62 in 28 years

At the time of its inception in 1997, TASL had 1 female employee. And now, there are 62, that account for 25% of full-time employees.

International Women's Day 2025 Campaign Theme - #AccelerateAction

"At the current rate of progress, it will take until 2158, which is roughly five generations from now, to reach full gender parity, according to data from the World Economic Forum. Focusing on the need to Accelerate Action emphasizes the importance of taking swift and decisive steps to achieve gender equality. It calls for increased momentum and urgency in addressing the systemic barriers and biases that women face, both in personal and professional spheres. So, together, let's Accelerate Action to speed up the rate of progress worldwide." – International Women's Day 2025

Dear Triniti,

Wish you all a very Happy Women's Day and Congratulations to TASL on moving into the new office at Hitech City. With most of you working from home, Women's Day celebrations will be combined with the TASL anniversary celebration later this month. Thank you in advance to the organizing committee. I trust that every day is Woman's Day at Triniti, where respect is earned and given.

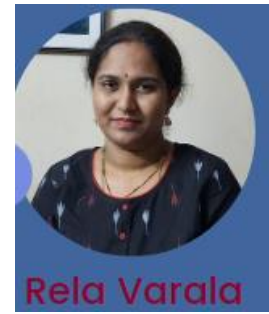
Last year, we discussed inclusion and ensuring that the person in the seat has a say and is heard. I have stressed the need for women to communicate effectively and encouraged you to write. But, like the IWD theme this year(#AccelerateAction), there is an urgency to push for improvement in this direction. To this end, I would like to announce a Speaker Series for Women at Triniti that will provide a dedicated platform/avenue and the tools to do so. Stay tuned for details to come! This edition includes a write-up about my teacher, who had a profound impact on me growing up. I hope you find it inspiring.



Tholubommatalata artform from Andhra Pradesh - By Rela Varala



“Happy womens' day. I am glad to present to you all my artwork of Shri Hanuman ji. Painted with Indian inks on a 3*4 feet goat leather in the Tholubommatalata artform from Andhra Pradesh. Here I have depicted a very elegantly dressed Hanuman who is carrying the Dronagiri mountain to bring the life saving sanjeevani herb to save Lakshmana.



Tholubommatalata is a shadow puppetry theatre artform from the village of Nimmalakunta in Andhra Pradesh. It is also similar to Togalu Gombeyatta from Karnataka. Artisans collect the discarded goat skin from the butcher's and process it to remove the hair and turn it into a clean leather sheet. (In a way they reuse the waste and save the environment.) They then use the natural colors and paint mythological characters on it. These characters are then used as puppets and are used for story telling along with beautiful live songs and music. With my interest in Indian folk arts I learnt Tholubommatalata painting. This is my second huge puppet, apart from a few other paintings in the same style.”

My Mentor, Vinod Kumar, Yoga & Meditation Teacher – By Chitra Ananth



“My teacher and mentor Mr.Vinod Kumar who gave me confidence and has been a guiding light in my life. He entrusted me with responsibilities which I could never imagine doing like organizing an event with few hundreds of people and gave me space for my mistakes and allowed me to learn by myself. He always has been there to listen and give time which I learnt from him . He inspired me in life to stretch my hand out first to others .He also saw talent and ability in me of which I wasn't aware of myself and helped bring it out .

I met him in 2005 at a time when I thought life was stagnant and my second phase of life began with enthusiasm and dynamism when I turned 40 and met Vinodji . He is a trainer with the art of living . I call him the " Mind Doctor " - he teaches how to deal with our mind, our thoughts, emotions, and to be a better version of ourselves , not only for our own self , but to be a guiding light to others as well. A true hallmark of a mentor, a teacher, who prepares others to be mentors and teachers!. Empowering women in the truest sense ..”

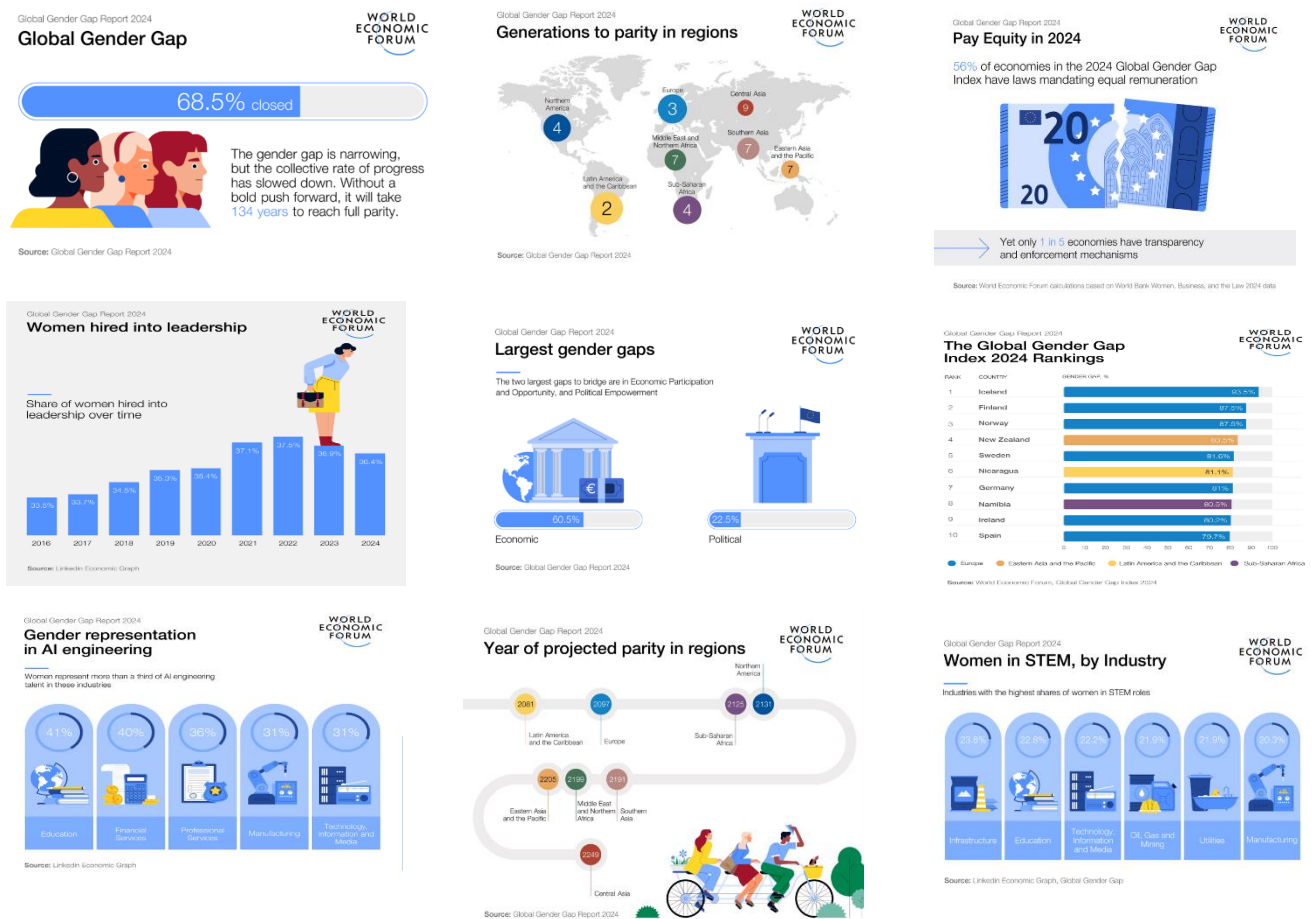
No Reports from World Bank – Women, Business, and Law in 2025

In the past several years, this newsletter has relied on World Bank Findings Report – Women, Business and the Law to provide insights into the state of progress. However, Women, Business, and the Law Team will not publish a report in 2025 as the team is working to enhance its strategic direction and ensure quality, scope and impact of its publication. The next data update and report is expected to be published in March 2026.

World Economic Forum – Global Gender Gap 2024 (Published Each year in June)

Here are the key findings from the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (The full report can be [viewed on their website](#))

The World Economic Forum predicts that at the current rate of progress, full gender parity will not be reached before 2158. This somber reality highlighted the urgent need to #AccelerateAction by IWD



Key Findings

- Among the 146 economies covered in the 2024 index, the Health and Survival gender gap has closed by 96%, the Educational Attainment gap by 94.9%, the Economic Participation and Opportunity gap by 60.5%, and the Political Empowerment gap by 22.5%
- European economies occupy seven spots out of the global top 10.
- Iceland (93.5%) is again ranked 1st and has been leading the index for a decade and a half. It also continues to be the only economy to have closed over 90% of its gender gap. Out of the remaining nine economies in the top 10, eight have closed over 80% of their gap
- With the evolving pace of each individual subindex affecting their respective timelines to parity, results from this year have extended the wait for parity in Educational Attainment to 20 years (+4 years from 2023) and Political Empowerment to 169 years (+7 years from 2023) yet brought forth the timeline for Economic Participation and Opportunity to 152 years (-17 years from 2023). The time to close the Health and Survival gender gap remains undefined
- Health and Survival is the only subindex where there has been a moderate decline from 2006 (-0.2 points).

A Journey of Inspiration: The Unfolding Story of Mrs. Nalini Karunguzhi

By Kalpana Alamela

It was unusual to be sitting in the school classroom when the skies were dark, and the lights were on. We should have been home long ago. We rarely used the lights, but the classroom was lit in artificial light that evening while a storm raged outside. Those who lived far from the school were made to wait for the rain to abate and transportation to become available. It is one of the most vivid memories of my school. Our English teacher, Ms. K. Nalini, read a story with enough intonation. While I don't remember the story, I vividly remember being engrossed and feeling safe and calm. It was as though nothing could harm us!

Fast forward a couple of years, as she headed home (a five-minute walk away), she asked me, "What are you doing here alone after school?". I said, "I didn't think I could go home and come back in time for the annual day function. So I decided to stay back." Before I knew it, my nervousness transferred from being alone to now going to my teacher's house! We returned rested and I had a chance to meet her husband, who now became "Sundaram Uncle"!

When my best friend was diagnosed with cancer, Ms. Nalini's empathy shone through. She stayed informed about her condition and regularly checked in to see if I had visited her. When my friend passed away, Ms. Nalini was the only teacher who reached out to me during that difficult time, long before talking about emotional and mental well-being became common. Her understanding and care made a world of difference.

These are just a few anecdotes; I've barely scratched the surface. I recently spoke with my school friend Jyotsna, who said how shy and introverted she once was. Ms. Nalini, by making her the spokesperson and in charge of the book club, helped instill confidence and self-worth in her. When you multiply 24 years of teaching with around 200 students each year, you can imagine a great teacher's profound impact.

I owe not only my English skills but also the values, courage, compassion, and resilience that I imbibed from Ms. Nalini Ma'am, as we called her in our senior years. Her mentorship was instrumental in shaping my character and guiding me through the challenges of my formative years.



The image of Ms. Nalini in kanchivaram sarees with kohled eyes, supporting us in our fight for girls' rights at school, stayed with me for years. I thought she'd be a distant memory until I ran into her at a retirement community in Bangalore, where my father had moved. Both she and Sundaram Uncle were sharp as ever, recalling school memories. Our conversations have continued since that New Year's Eve in 2018, and getting to know her in retirement has been just as inspirational. Read on to find out why.

In 12th grade, during recess, a group of us girls would sneak into Ms. Nalini's office to chat. We were amused and impressed when she said, "My condition for marriage was that he had to be more educated and smarter than me!" She briefly walked down memory lane and then recounted her marriage to Lt. Gen (Dr) VJ Sundaram.

The Bangalore Club's Most Famous Unpaid Bill! - Ms. Nalini reminisced about her adolescent years in Bangalore, where she lived in a grand house called "Dingle," centrally located near Cubbon Park and the historic Bangalore Club. The club, a fine example of British architecture, was her favorite destination, especially on birthdays. Her father, an admirer of Winston Churchill, was amused to learn that Churchill once owed the club Rs. 13.



From Bashas to Ballistics: A Soldier's Wife and India's Missile Triumph - Ms. Nalini, an idealist, married a young army captain, Sundaram. On their engagement day, he was absent - having left for the India-China border to build roads in Arunachal Pradesh. He returned for just three days to marry her before being posted to Jammu & Kashmir. She was unprepared for army life: With their five-month-old baby, she embarked on a 72-hour train journey from Madras to Pathankot, followed by a rain-soaked truck ride to Jammu, where Sundaram plugged a hole in the tarpaulin with his thumb. Arriving at their new home—Bashas she mistook for cowsheds—she wept. That night, she recoiled in horror upon touching a rat in bed, questioning her



choices. These were the early challenges that tested her resilience and determination. Years later, her sacrifices found purpose. In 1983, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam launched the Integrated Missile Program. Sundaram was chosen to lead the Prithvi Missile Design Team he received her full support. The missile's successful launch in 1988 marked India's rise in missile technology. Lt. Gen Sundaram earned top military honors, including the PVSM, AVSM, and VSM. Looking back,

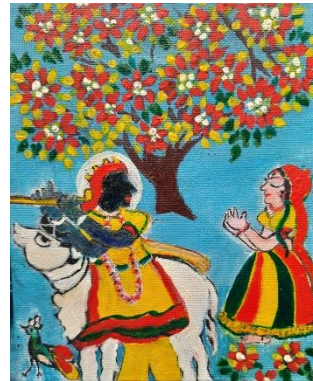
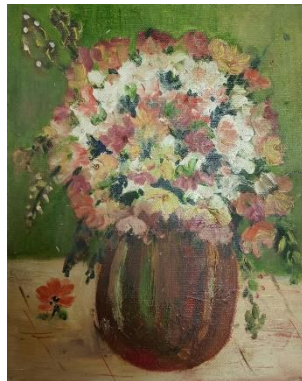
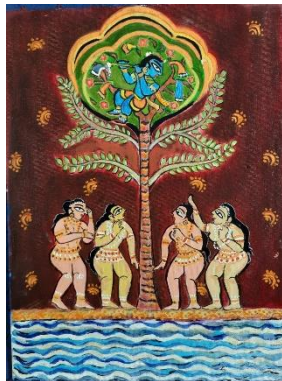
Nalini knew the challenges had been worth it. She remains proud to have stood by an army man who dedicated his life to the nation.

From Homemaker to Headliner: Forging a Path—Ms. Nalini never dreamed of a career, as four generations of women on her mother's side were content as housewives. They were all very skilled and talented, though. Her great-great-grandmother helped run her husband's company, her grandmother, a bridge player, was a violinist, and her mother, a veena player, was an artist who held five solo painting shows.

However, when Ms. Nalini married and interacted with her mother-in-law, Dr. Padma Sundaram, she was inspired to do more. A graduate of Madras Medical College in 1929, Dr. Padma was a pioneering gynecologist and obstetrician who trained at Johns Hopkins Hospital in the USA. She went on to lead Cheluvana Hospital in Mysore and Vani Viss Hospital in Bangalore. Determined to prove she could contribute to society, despite being a mother of three, Ms. Nalini completed her B.Ed. (Gold Medalist) from St. Ann's College of Education, Secunderabad.

Lessons Beyond the Classroom: A Guardian Angel and Ms. Nalini's Triumph - 1970 wasn't the ideal time for Ms. Nalini to join St. Ann's College of Education in Hyderabad, with the Telangana Movement in full swing. Passionate about teaching, she enrolled in the B.Ed. Program while her husband, an Army officer, was posted in Hyderabad and selected to pursue his ME at the Institute of Science in Bangalore. Balancing studies, domestic responsibilities, and three young children during the agitation was a constant struggle. Despite the challenges, Sister Pia, who had selected her for the program, noticed her struggles. When Ms. Nalini broke down in front of her, Sister Pia reassured her, saying, "Have faith in God and yourself. Things will work out." With her guidance, Ms. Nalini completed the course.

As the movement escalated, educational institutions were shut down, and exams were postponed. Ms. Nalini moved to Bangalore with her husband. In April 1971, Sister Pia sent a letter urging her to return to Hyderabad and take her exams, adding, "The more obstacles God puts in your way, the better, for he is testing you." Ms. Nalini topped Osmania University in B.Ed., winning the Lady Hydari Gold Medal and a scholarship for M.Ed. She credits her success entirely to Sister Pia's kindness, understanding, and constant encouragement, considering her a guardian angel.



A collection of artwork by Ms. Nalini in different mediums

Letters, Love, and Lesson Plans: The Making of a Teacher - After completing her B.Ed., Ms. Nalini applied for a teaching job at Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan. During the interview, the Assistant Commissioner asked, "Why do you want to be a teacher?" Ms. Nalini replied, "I want to help children, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, achieve their goals." She was then asked about her BA exams, as she had won the Sir Akbar Hydan Gold Medal in B.Ed. But she had not done well in her BA. Ms. Nalini explained, "I was engaged to an Army officer who was building Indo-China border roads during my BA. I was busy writing letters to him and did not focus on my studies. I did not mention love letters." The interview panel smiled knowingly. The Assistant Commissioner exclaimed that she had entered Hyderabad in all three slots for location preferences! Ms. Nalini explained, "My husband is working on an important defense project, and as his wife, I need to be in the city to support him."

A month later, Ms. Nalini received her appointment letter for Kendriya Vidyalaya Picket in Secunderabad, 20 kilometers from her home. Her first job taught her that honesty, sincerity, hard work, passion, and empathy for others are the keys to a successful career. For the next two decades, Ms Nalini taught English at KV Picket and Kanchanbagh

Jhansi Ki Rani—In 1996, after a rigorous interview, Ms. Nalini became the Principal of KV Ambernath in Thane, a position fraught with challenges, including widespread corruption. One employee's husband, a notorious Bombay underworld don, even threatened her and followed her home. This stress led to a hospital visit for chest pain. Still, her

teachers and union leaders from The Machine Tools Prototype & Ordnance Factory assured her of their support. With their backing, she restored order at the school. At a Principals' meeting in Powai, the Assistant Commissioner remarked, "Who is this WOMAN from Hyderabad causing all this trouble?" Her children urged her to resign and return to Hyderabad but she decided to stay and fix the wrongdoings and succeeded with the help of parents and union leaders.

When her eldest daughter was due to give birth to her fourth child, Ms. Nalini requested 8 weeks of leave, which was denied. She responded by retiring voluntarily. At her farewell, her teachers cheered, "Jhansi Ki Rani!" She handed over her duties, boarded a plane, and arrived in Pittsburgh in time to hold her baby grandson.

When One Door Closed, Writing Opened a New Chapter - Ms. Nalini completed a "Communicative Approach" course in Plymouth, UK, after being selected through an All-India interview by The British Council and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan. She signed a one-year contract with the British Council. She traveled to Jalandhar, Bhopal, Cochin, and Hyderabad, conducting 11-day courses for English teachers. When she returned to India after assisting her daughter with her newborn, she felt lost without a job. Just then, she received an unexpected offer from Google to join a Comprehensive Creative Writing Course at The Writers Bureau in London. The offer was part of a prize she had won in the "Word Power" competition conducted by Google in India. Thrilled, Ms. Nalini embarked on her writing journey.

Guided and Inspired to Write: A Teacher's Mentor — Ms. Nalini's writing tutor, Ms. Nicole, guided her to success by introducing various writing techniques, including article writing, short stories, radio plays, stage scripts, interviews, and even novel writing. She reviewed Ms. Nalini's assignments, offered constructive feedback, and pushed her beyond her comfort zone with encouragement. After retiring, Ms. Nalini began her career in writing, publishing 50 articles and short stories, with an additional 35 articles in print. Creative writing has been an incredibly rewarding and stimulating pursuit for her, and she owes her success to her mentor, Ms. Nicole.

Canvas of Calm: Finding Peace in Paint - Ms. Nalini's mother, an artist, inspired her. Though she started painting in school, her 24-year long career and motherhood kept her from pursuing it. Inspired by her mother, Ms. Nalini took a one-year Art Appreciation course at Chitrakala Parishad. She began experimenting with oil and acrylic painting. Since moving to a retirement community, she has had ample time to paint. Painting brings her peace and freedom from worries or tensions, and completing a painting fills her with happiness and contentment.



Thoughts on Empowering Women - Ms. Nalini believes that while India has had many great women whose lives continue to inspire us—such as Rani Lakshmi Bai, Sarojini Naidu, and Kalpana Chawla—the status of women, 77 years after independence, remains concerning. Despite the Constitution granting equal rights, gender disparities persist due to poverty, cultural beliefs, and societal mindsets. Women continue to face discrimination in forms like unequal pay, sexual harassment, and lack of control over their own bodies. Ms. Nalini emphasizes that education is key to ending these injustices. To make progress, we must change outdated beliefs and recognize the value and power of women, ensuring they can pursue their dreams.

Embracing Change: Finding Creativity and Joy in New Beginnings - Mindful Meditation helped Ms. Nalini manage the emotional transition from her independent house in Bangalore to Serene Urbana, a retirement community. Buddhist meditation calmed her mind, reduced stress, and helped her appreciate life. Now, she embraces "Live, Love, and Laugh!" After 24 years in education, Ms. Nalini was uncertain about life at Serene Urbana but was pleasantly surprised. As a senior citizen, she engages in activities like dancing, singing, acting, writing, painting, and giving talks for CPC Instagram. She also plays cricket, table tennis, carrom, and rummy and entertains children, finding creative fulfillment in every way. ***Thank you, Nalini Ma'am, for shaping your students beyond words!***

Deficiencies in Safety and Childcare discourage women from entering the global workforce..

- When these Safety and Childcare indicators are taken into consideration, no country provides equal opportunity for women
- More than 90 percent of economies lack comprehensive legal provisions for safety, indicated by a low score for the Safety indicator of 36.3, leaving more than 3 billion women and girls unprotected and highlighting the urgent need for legislation to protect women from violence

Equal Rights, Unequal Realities: What you can do!

- In 50 economies, a woman does not enjoy an equal right to confer citizenship on her foreign spouse.
- In 62 economies, the age at which men and women can retire is not the same, with women retiring earlier
- In 81 economies, a woman's pension benefits do not account for periods of work absences related to childcare.
- Overall, 139 economies lack adequate legislation prohibiting child marriage, which typically quashes a girl's future educational and economic opportunities.
- More than 90 percent of economies lack comprehensive legal provisions for safety, indicated by a low score for the Safety indicator of 36.3, leaving more than 3 billion women and girls unprotected and highlighting the urgent need for legislation to protect women from violence

A perception of more rights is often the result of equal laws being passed. Ideally, the realities on the ground must be measured. And in the absence of such metrics, it is up to individuals and families to provide a safety net, so girls and women are not discouraged from pursuing their opportunities and dreams.

In addition to being mindful of ensuring their safety, please continue to challenge gender stereotypes and promote positive role models, so that girls can see that there are no limits to what they can achieve. If you ask your daughters why they are not home at a certain time or where they have been, do the same with your sons. Being fair in your daily lives can make a huge difference.

To counter the conundrum of equal rights and unequal realities, educate girls and women and **use education as a Catalyst for Change.**

Women at TASL and Triniti will learn more about the proposed Speaker Series, which will feature all of you as presenters. Please be on the lookout for an email regarding this.

As always, please remember to call your mother or maternal figures in your lives and thank them for being catalysts for your growth. Triniti is undoubtedly a better place because of you. Thank you!

With warm wishes to you and your families.

Yours Sincerely,



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