CONCLUSION

The present research explored the ways in which women are depicted in children’s literature in India. The study focused on the re-reading of children’s literature in India considering the representation of women in the titles, themes, central roles, characterization and illustrations of the selected children’s books in India. The present study sought to answer the following questions:

1. In what manner women are depicted in children’s literature in India? and
2. Whether the depiction of women has changed in recent years in the literature for children in India?

Thus, the aim of this research was to determine the ways in which children’s literature captures the images of women and girls in India.

Children’s books for the present study were selected based on a set of specific criteria considering the large corpus of children’s literature available in India. The classification of the children’s books was done on the basis of two guidelines — that is children’s books based on the genre (Picture books, Chapter books—traditional and contemporary— and Young Adult fiction); and those of based on the age of the reader (3-6, 7-12, 13-16). The literary texts, including all genres of children’s literature read by all age categories were selected on the criteria of women’s representation in them for the present research.
The methodology of research adopted was content analysis as the guiding method for the study. In order to find out whether the depiction of women in children’s literature has changed in recent years, the research was done primarily through data collection of the story books published or reprinted during the period 2010 to 2015 by some of the major publishers of children’s literature in India, like the National Book Trust (NBT), Children’s Book Trust (CBT), Tulika, Katha, Pratham, Young Zubaan, Penguin and a few others. Close reading of the selected books was done for the evaluation of depiction of women characters in them. The texts under study were analysed, focusing on the four recurrent themes: character analysis examining the stereotypical portrayal of women in the texts, patriarchal influence on the theme and characterization, gender bias against women, gender inequality considering under-representation of women characters in titles, themes, central roles, characterization and illustrations.

The present research was divided into five chapters. Each chapter started with the background of the study defining the concept of genre of the book, reviewed the similar study done in the past, explained the issues that the study hoped to address and covered a brief overview of the content analysis method used by the researcher. Each chapter concluded with the analysis and the findings considering the depiction of women in the selected story books for children. The lists of the selected books as well as the code sheets of—frequency counts of masculine/ feminine gendered or neutral or equal representations of characters in the titles, themes, central roles, characterization and illustrations— created for content analysis were placed at the end in the form of appendices.

In the Introduction, various definitions of children’s literature were explored. The categorization of children’s literature based on the genre and the age of the reader was
discussed. The history and present scenario with the contribution of various publishers of children’s literature in India, as well as various critical approaches towards the study of children’s literature were reviewed. The research methodology adopted for present research was explained. Prominent issues related to the depiction of women in children’s literature in India were listed down and explained in the beginning chapter.

Chapter One examined the depiction of women as well as girls in the selected picture books for children in India. Picture books are those books in which story is told predominantly through illustrations with a few lines of supporting text. Picture books are usually intended to be read aloud by adults to the children aged three to six years of age. The research focused on three types of picture books that are value books, wordless books and picture story books to analyse the depiction of women in them.

The sample of picture books for content analysis of masculine/feminine gendered or neutral character oriented titles, themes and central characters included two hundred and six picture books as well as six collections of value teaching picture books. According to the data collected, it was clearly visible that Indian picture books have less women representation comparing to masculine gendered characters in titles, themes, central roles, characterization and illustrations. The under-representation of women characters in children’s books and the consequences that it leads to has been discussed by Weitzman, et al. as: “Children scanning in the list of titles of what have been designated as the very best children’s books are bound to receive the impression that girls are not very important because no one bothered to write about them” (MacArthur and Paulin).
Moreover, there were certain objectionable undercurrents regarding the stereotypical depiction of girls and women in many of these books. The boys were shown more active, creative and intelligent while the girls appeared as passive followers and confined to indoor activities.

There were stories with strong patriarchal influence where a women’s place is supposed to be in the house. Women were shown working either in the kitchen as Mala’s mother and grandmother in *Mala’s Silver Anklet* by Annie Beasant (2011) or as a teacher in the school, as in *School is Cool* by Sowmya Rajendran (2011). In all the value teaching books, only mother was shown advising and taking care of the kids as in *Pepper Learns Good Habits* by Sterling publications (2010).

Whether it was a picture book for preschoolers or a value teaching picture book, it was clearly visible that women characters were highly under-represented and stereotyped in their depiction. Traditionally, the stereotypical role of women in Indian children’s literature is that of a mother, grandmother, wife or sister. She is expected to put her family’s welfare before her own as in *Ma! Hurry Up* by Rukmini Banerjee (2013); be loving, compassionate, caring, nurturing and sympathetic; be submissive and unquestioning wife as Bhikubhai’s wife in *All Free* by Mamta Pandya (2010). Although being a nurturer or caring person are strongly positive traits of women, their insignificant appearance in supporting roles or having just passive existence in the story is highly objectionable.

Chapter Two focused on the depiction of women in early reader books and Chapter books for children in India. A chapter book is a children's story book which is long enough to be split into short chapters, yet not long enough to be recognized as a novel. Chapter
books are intended for intermediate readers as transitional books between early reader books (intended for children of seven to nine years) and easy reader chapter books (intended for children of nine to twelve years). These books are often illustrated, but not as much as picture books.

In order to find out the depiction of women in the chapter books, the stories were divided into two types: traditional stories and stories with contemporary themes. The sample of traditional stories for content analysis included mythical and legendary stories of gods and goddesses from *Puranas* as well as fables and folktales popular with Indian children like *Panchatantra*. There were a large number of children’s books available with traditional tales, however, the sample for the present study included storybooks published by the NBT, CBT, Puffin, Amar Chitra Katha, Wilco and Rupa Publishing House. Another sample of chapter books with contemporary stories for content analysis included selected stories published for early readers by major publishers like the NBT, CBT, Katha, Tulika, Young Zubaan, Puffin and a few others.

Traditional literature is an umbrella term that contains all the stories that originated from the oral tradition. Although these traditional stories were not primarily written for children, they were simplified, adopted and retold to children in many ways since ages. Children’s mythological books in India included numerous stories of gods and goddesses from *Vedas* and *Puranas*. Some of the popular stories from the *Puranas* selected for close analysis of women’s depiction in them were: story of creation of women, stories about Trimurti — Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh and their consorts Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati; story of injustice done to Ahalya, Ansuya, objectification of Apsaras and other few stories
of women from myths in *Puranas* were examined with a focus on the depiction of women in them.

Apart from traditional mythological stories, legends and folk tales also have a prominent place in children’s literature scenario in India. The term legend today is applied to the hero tales; stories about humans with superhuman powers, like Hanuman and Bheem known for great physical strength, or heroes with great mental abilities like Birbal, Tenali Raman, Vikramaditya in Vikram and Vetal. Although women rarely occurred as a hero in the traditional Indian legends, they appear in supporting roles, for example, Sita in *Ramayana*, Draupadi in *Mahabharata*, Savitri in *Satyavan and Savitri*, Damayanti in *Nal and Damayanti*, Shakuntala in *Dushyant and Shakuntala*. The Indian myths and legends again and again have propagated that women should be obedient to their husbands, and should be chaste. If they violate this tradition, they will face the same problems these mythological goddesses and legendary women faced. Also, the illustrations of the goddesses and apsaras in the books published by *Amar Chitra Katha* and *Chandamama* were too sensuous to be presented to the children.

Like myths and legends, fables and folk tales contribute as a major part of children's literature in India. Most popular of them selected for present study were *Panchatantra*, *Jataka Tales*, *Katha Sarit Sagar* and *Hitopdesh*. The fables of *Panchatantra* were not written for children, but its stories are widely translated and read to the children all over the world. However, it was observed that the conversations between the animal characters made unnecessary comments about women. Also, no conversation ever took place between feminine gendered characters to demonstrate their knowledge. Similarly, *Jataka Tales*, stories from the various births of the Buddha, in both human and animal form, also aimed
at moral instruction and are often retold to children. Buddha was shown as a Bodhisattva in various forms in his previous birth; however, he was never being shown as a woman. Also, in many of the stories women characters did not appear at all or play a very insignificant role in the story.

*Hitopdesh* is another compilation of short stories used to teach children ‘good conduct’ like the *Panchatantra* and *Jataka Tales*. Along with the adaptation of stories, Narayan Pandit had reproduced the similar anti-women remarks in some of his stories. Such remarks present the male chauvinistic traits of the then social beliefs, which are handed over to children, unknowingly through such stories, generation after generation.

*Katha Sarit Sagar* (*Ocean of Streams of Stories*), a famous eleventh century collection of folktales retold by Somdeva from Kashmir, included the most popular stories of *Vetal Pacchisi* (*Twenty-Five Stories of the Vampire*) and *Singhasan Battisi* (*Thirty-Two Stories of the Lion Throne*). Both these collections of stories were related to the legendary King Vikramaditya of Ujjain. As all the stories were about valour of King Vikramaditya, there was a little presentation of women. Wherever women characters appeared, they were portrayed in conventional roles of mother or wife, or seductive dancers or apsaras.

Along with the stories from traditional literature for early readers, the present study analysed sixty stories with contemporary themes published by the selected publishers with the focus on the appearance, position and importance of the role performed by women characters in the given story.

Considering the publication of early and easy reader chapter books for children, most of the publishers had come up with various contemporary themes along with the new
twists to folk and fairy tales. However, the treatment given to the women characters in those stories as well, is the same as the traditional stories, or not much of the change is observed in defining the role of women in them.

There were certain stories such as *Neha My Sister* by Madhu Joshi (2011) and *Tumpa and the Sparrows* by Swapnamoy Chakraborty (2014), which portrayed small girls in nurturer’s roles, giving the hidden message that even small girls should be prepared for the role of nurturers by assisting their mother since small age. Where there were stories about dominating and nagging wives as in *Alamelu’s Appetite* by Jaya Paramsivan (2012) and *Story of an Old Woman* by Margaret Bhatti (2012), there were also stories about girls who had to compromise for being poor girls as in *The Why Why Girl* by Mahashweta Devi (2013), *Ju’s Story* by Paul Zacharia (2011) and *Sabri’s Colours* by Rinchin (2009).

Patriarchal dominance was shown in the stories like *The Sun Fairies* by Swapna Dutta (2010), and *Janaki* by Sanjay Singh Rathod (2013), where the father took the decisions in the family and expected others to accept those decisions unquestioningly. Gender bias came to the front with Moyana’s frustration in *The Why Why Girl* when she was supposed to tend the goats, fetch the water, do the housework while the boys were only playing not doing any work; similar was the disturbing remark in *Janaki* when Janaki’s Uncle taunted her, “If a girl not get married at an early age, it’s her fault” (12).

Although such books represented men and women characters in stereotypical fashion, there was rather positive depiction of women in some of the books for easy readers. For example, *Munnni’s School* by Sushama Bhandari (2014) presented a story of a small town educated girl Sunita and her concern about providing education to a poor tea-vendor’s
small girl Munni. Another story of a spirited small town educated girl was Janaki, in which Janaki took efforts to make her family aware about the adversities of child marriage and the importance of girls’ education.

Whether it is early reader book or easy reading chapter book for children, it was clearly visible that women were depicted, especially in traditional tales, in a somehow stereotypical way, in secondary or submissive roles, while the stories with contemporary themes depicted women in rather liberal roles.

Chapter Three explored the depiction of women in young adult fiction in India. Young Adult Literature (YAL) refers to books written specifically for a teenage audience. Young adult fiction, whether in the form of novels or short stories, had distinct characteristics such as it involved a teenage protagonist and often reflected and interpreted their views. Themes and issues included the challenges which the protagonist as well as its readers were experiencing, such as gender identity, accepting the changes of adolescence, acquiring social skills, preparing for adulthood, peer pressure, social matters and subjects of general interests.

Regarding young adult literature in India, there were two different types of reading material available. The first category of Indian teenage fiction included the books which were centered on modern, urban children from metropolitan cities, and second category included the books which were set in the small-town or rural setting of such a vast country like India.

Books in the first category dealt with the issues faced by teenagers in the cities, where there is much more liberal attitude towards life and relationships, which was
reflected in the depiction of girls and modern adult women who were depicted as individual and careerist. Books in the other category, set in the non-urban background were more rooted in the Indian soil. Short stories in the collection of CBT, stories by Sudha Murthy were a good example of this category.

To determine in what manner women were represented in young adult fiction in India, thirty-five YA novels featuring girl protagonist were examined. The same criterion of recurrent themes and book selection based on the same publishers was followed.

Although YA fictions and short stories mostly revolved around modern girls, the themes of gender inequality and discrimination were prevalent in the treatment given to these modern girls. For example, a story *Whose Work is it?* by Devika Rangachari (2010) presented a clear difference in the treatment given to Ravi, a young spoiled brat and his sister Uma by their mother. Such stories reflect the deep-rooted gender bias against women in India.

*Mostly Madly Mayil* by Nivedita Subramaniam and Sowmya Rajendran (2014), a book in a diary form, came up with a larger picture about what it means to be a girl in middle-class Indian family. The Paati’s (Grandma) disappointment at Mayil’s birth as she was expecting a grandson, Mayil’s dark skin, a teenage girl’s disgusting experiences of unwanted touches in a crowded bus or being abused by male relatives, all such grey moments were adequately touched upon in the book. Mayil’s diaries revolve around the fact about how girls are taken for granted in our society.

*Zubaan* publication’s *Gender Talk- Big Hero, Size Zero* written by Anushka Hariharan and Sowmya Rajendran (2015) and *Girls to the Rescue* by Sowmya Rajendran
(2015) which was the striking retelling of Princess Fairy tales, ridiculed the stereotypical depiction of women. Smitten by Ranjit Lal (2012) was a story that dared to talk about sexual abuse within the family. Faces in the Water by again Ranjit Lal (2010) talked about a young boy who was shocked to discover that girls born in his family had been killed as soon as they were born.

In this way, YAL used a wide array of themes in order to appeal to a wide variety of adolescent readers. It is a fact that a wide variety of young adult books are coming up projecting lives of confident, enterprising girls. However, the secondary or inferior treatment given to girls in the family and society is underlined with the struggle they go through to achieve their goals.

In order to determine the ration of the representation of women characters in the titles, themes, central characters, the research methodology adopted was content analysis through data collection. As mentioned earlier, the sample of picture books for content analysis of masculine/feminine gendered character oriented or neutral titles, themes and central characters included two hundred and six (206) picture books as well as six (6) collections of value teaching picture books. These titles were collected from the catalogues of picture books published by concerned publishers. The close examination of content analysis of eighty (80) selected picture books was done for exploring the representation of women in total number of characterization and illustrations in the concerned picture book. The study was confined to the picture books published or republished during 2010 to 2015 by renowned publishers of children’s literature in India, such as National Book Trust (NBT), Children’s Book Trust (CBT), Tulika, Pratham, Katha, Young Zubaan, Jyotsna Prakashan and a few others.
Sample for of chapter books for data analysis included total two hundred and fifty (250) chapter books published during 2010–2015. The collected data was recorded in two data sheets which were created to calculate the frequency counts of M/F/N/E gendered representation of characters in titles and central roles in the selected chapter books. These code sheets provided the framework to represent necessary information and analysis to find out the representation of women in both the early reader as well as easy reader chapter books. For the purpose of textual analysis, ninety stories with traditional themes, ten Western fairy tales and fifty stories with contemporary themes were scrutinized in order to find out in what manner women were depicted in them. Girl protagonists in the selected chapter books were analysed on the basis of the prevalence or absence of gender bias in their depiction.

The sample of YAL included thirty-five YA novels as well as two hundred and ten short stories from fifteen anthologies which were analysed in order to determine the depiction of women in them. The sample for the study included books published or reprinted during 2010-2015 by selected publishers like NBT, CBT, Rupa and Company, Tulika, Zubaan, Puffin/ Penguin, Scholastic, Duckbill and a few others. A list of the selected thirty-five novels for young adult readers in India — featuring girl protagonists— along with the code sheet of frequency count of M/F/N/E gendered titles and characters in them was recorded in the form of Appendix. Similarly, a list of the selected 210 short stories in fifteen short story collections for young adult readers in India, along with the code sheet of frequency count of M/F/N/E gendered titles and characters in them was also framed.
After recording the data in the form of code sheets, it was analysed statistically with the help of the experts in this field. A statistical test namely chi-square test was used for this purpose. The test is applied when there are two categorical variables available from a single population. It is used to determine whether there is a significant association between the two variables. In the present data gender of the characters (masculine/feminine/neutral/equal representation of both genders) and category of the books (picture books, chapter books and young adult short stories) were two variables. The aim was to check whether there is a dominance of any particular gender in each category of the book. The hypothesis was that masculine gendered, feminine gendered, neutral and equal characters have equal dominance lay in title of books against alternate hypothesis that a particular gender dominator over other genders. The statistical tests and their results were included in each chapter.

To get an idea of the total data collection of children’s books under study for the present research, the frequency counts of masculine/feminine gendered character representation as well as neutral and equal representations of both the genders in titles, themes and central roles in all the three categories of children’s books were summarized in the following table:
The above table clearly shows the disparity between the ratio of appearance of men and women characters in the books for the children of all age groups. With exception of chapter books with contemporary stories, all the other types of books have more men in titles, themes and as central characters. The consistent under-representation of women characters in children’s literature cannot be considered a chance occurrence. Rather, it can be argued that such unbalanced gender ratios reflect a broader culture that continues to afford higher status of men than women. Books are a powerful vehicle of transmission of cultural values, whether this influence is intended or unintended; explicit or implicit. Bias in children’s books gives boys a sense of entitlement to privilege and decreases girls’ self-esteem and preferences (Marie 13).

To change this scenario, there is an ardent need for gender-neutral themes and character representations in children’s literature. For example, one of the exceptional stories which can be a role model for gender-neutral children’s story is Lois Gold’s short story *The Story of X: A Fabulous Child* (1978). The story was first published in a magazine called MS in 1972, and then was converted in an illustrated book in 1978. It is a story of a child X, who is a part of a secret “Xperiment”, where no one except the parents know the sexual identity of the baby X. The experiment is about raising the child as an X rather than a boy or a girl. The parents are provided with a manual about how to raise baby X without following any gender norms or roles. When the parents acknowledge their baby as X—not a boy or a girl—various issues are raised. Relatives are embarrassed, neighbours shut their shade to the parents of baby X, there is uncertainty about the kind of toys and clothes to choose for baby X. Real issues emerge when baby X starts going to school, as teachers and other children are confused how to deal with baby X. However, soon other children realize
that X can be whatever it likes and enjoy being X rather than anybody else. X is exceptionally talented in outdoor sports as well as cooking and weaving baskets and enjoys doing whatever it does. Very soon other children start following baby X and enjoy the freedom of being on their own which seems problematic to their parents. They accuse baby X as not being normal and demand an examination of baby X, however, the expert examiners are overwhelmed with baby X’s responses and conclude that X is “least mixed-up” child they have ever come across with and has no identity problem at all. Though the story of X presents a kind of utopian concept of “genderless baby”, which challenges the construction of gender (Mickenbers and Nell), it is certainly a guiding model of the gender-neutral depiction of characters in children’s literature.

Along with such gender-neutral characters, there is a need of positive depictions of women and girls in children’s books. Linda Artel and Susan Wengraf have suggested certain characteristics about the positive portrayal of women in their article “Positive Images: A Guide to Non-Sexist Films for Young People” published in 1978. According to them, there is a need of media:

- which presents girls and women, boys and men with non-stereotyped behavior and attitudes; independent, intelligent women; adventurous girls; men who are nurturing; boys who are not afraid to show their vulnerability,
- which presents both sexes in non-traditional work or leisure activities: men doing housework, women flying planes,
- that questions values and behavior of traditional male/female role division; shows women’s achievements and contributions throughout history (35).
Such positive images of women can be seen in recent Disney Princess movies which are based on the classic fairy tales and are most popular with the children all over the world. For example, earlier in Disney Princess movies, the Princesses like Snow White in *Snow-White and Seven Dwarfs* (1937), Cinderella in *Cinderella* (1950), Aurora (Rose) in *The Sleeping Beauty* (1959) were portrayed stereotypically as domestic, relying on the Prince to rescue them, however, there is a positive change in the portrayal of the Princesses like Jasmine in *Aladdin* (1992) is a free-spirited girl, Belle in *Beauty and The Beast* (1991) is an independent, intelligent and booklover girl, Pocahontas in *Pocahontas* (1995) is also an independent and brave girl, Mulan in *Mulan* (1998) — a Chinese warrior princess is presented as adventure-seeking, brave, strong and fighter girl, Tiana in *Princess and The Frog* (2009) is determined and live more realistic life, Rapunzel in *Tangled* (2010) breaks most of the stereotypes—she is independent, driven and saves the man in her life. Merida in *Brave* (2012) has proven that girls can be different and it is acceptable. The more recent Princess movie *Frozen* (2013) presents the brave, independent, determined Princesses Elsa and Anna. Thus, throughout these years, Disney Princess movies have gone through a radical change from men saving the women to the women saving the man. On one hand, negatively stereotyped portrayal of Disney Princess can damage the young girls’ image of self, whereas, such positive portrayals can enhance their confidence in being a woman.

Such positive images of women, though less in number, are definitely making their rightful place in children’s literature. Such books are listed down every year by the organizers of “The Amelia Bloomer Project” in the USA every year. The Project is a part of the feminist Task Force of the American Library Association’s “Social Responsibility Round Table,” which offers an annual list of feminist literature for children—divided into
fiction and non-fiction within three age categories: Picture books, Middle readers and Young Adults (Mitchell).

In Indian scenario of children’s literature also there is a ray of hope with increasing number of girl oriented books for children. There are certain books with strong women portrayals such as Bachendri Pal in Everest: My Journey to The Top, a successful struggle of an athlete Mathai Hola in Wings to Fly, adventure stories of the girls in the past in Girls to India Series as well as Adventure stories of Aditi by Suniti Namjoshi to name a few. As the present research has identified, there are more books featuring girl protagonists in contemporary chapter books as well as a variety of strong and positive images of girls presented in young adult books. However, there is a lack of books with gender-neutral themes and characters in children’s literature in India.

In the initial stages of the research, the researcher had conducted a survey in various schools in and around the researcher’s hometown, Pune, Maharashtra. The survey was done with a questionnaire related to the depiction of women in children’s literature in India. The researcher visited ten schools, conducted small talks with the teachers as well as librarians to brief the topic and got the questionnaire filled on the location. The questionnaire helped to generalise the viewpoint of the teachers about the ways women are depicted in children’s story books. The questionnaire revealed the fact that a very few teachers were aware about the negative depiction of women in children’s books, however, most of them agreed that women are underrepresented in the children’s books in India. The sample of the questionnaire and results are recorded in a code-sheet in Appendix 4: Record of the questionnaire.
On the concluding note, throughout this thesis the researcher had explained several important questions to explore the depiction of women in the selected children’s books in India regarding the under-representation of women characters and gender bias against women in the titles, themes, central roles, characterization and illustrations. Research methodology adopted was content analysis through data collection. The guidelines of the Western researches were used and modified in the Indian context for the present research. The researcher had scrutinized eighty picture books, sixty chapter books and thirty-five young adult fictions to determine the depiction of women in them. The data were confined to the selected books published during 2010 to 2015 by selected publishers of children’s books. The data has been included in the form of appendices at the end.

There were certain limitations faced by the researcher in the data collection as unfortunately, in India, there is no record of data collection related to children’s literature is available. Also, children’s literature is such a vast genre, including a wide range of nursery rhymes and other types of poetry; drama, comic books, magazines, graphic novels and even literature in textbooks that it is difficult to keep the record of each book published for the children. Children’s literature in Hindi and other regional languages is also available in abundance. The survey taken by the researcher in the schools reveals the fact that there is a very little awareness about the gender issues in children’s literature even in the teachers.

All of these studies have contributed valuable information on the content of children’s books, and they provide a basis for future research. There is a need for more information on the content of children’s books and on trends toward change in this content. There is a scope for further research in the field of the depiction of women in all the sub-genres of children’s literature in India. Such researches help the society, particularly
children to form the opinion about women, which they preserve throughout their life. A society which understands the role of both men and women in equal roles is a progressive society. Literature for the children plays a vital role to bring the change.

Although the data collected for the present research is not exhaustive as it is arranged according to the categorization based on the genre and the age of the reader, however, it can be helpful as a guiding database for future research in the field of children’s literature. The effort of the present research was to study the lacuna of past and present scenario in the depiction of women in children’s books in India. The study would help the publishers, aspiring authors as well as researchers to bring about the required change.

Stories may be simply told, but their themes are deep with the everlasting impression on young minds. Considering the impact that negative depiction of women in children’s books in India has on the self-esteem of children, as well as the role it plays in indicating the status of women more broadly it is essential that these books continue to be monitored for the equal representation of female and male characters (Narhara 6).

Gender stereotypes, frequency of visibility and title names were three key factors for analysing depiction of women in children’s literature in the present research. The researcher concludes with the hope that a more realistic approach to the depiction of women would be possible in the books for children if equal and unbiased gender representation with more positive images of women and equal representation in titles, themes and central role in children’s literature is achieved in India.