

How women entrepreneurs are transforming the Startup landscape for gender equality



Amid the global surge in the startup ecosystem, India stands out as a burgeoning economic force, witnessing an unparalleled boom in the sector. The country is currently in the throes of a transformative era, and in this evolution, women entrepreneurs are playing a pivotal role in reshaping the narrative.

India's startup ecosystem, the third largest in the world, is experiencing unprecedented growth, and women entrepreneurs are at the forefront of this revolution. Overcoming barriers, challenging stereotypes, and capitalising on opportunities, these women are not only navigating the entrepreneurial landscape but also instigating profound changes. Their unwavering spirit, resilience, and groundbreaking initiatives are steering the startup system toward a new frontier of inclusivity.

THE RISE OF EQUALITY

According to the recent Women in India's Startup Ecosystem Report or WISER, women-led startups have risen to 18 per cent in India in the past five years. In 2017, India had around 6,000 startups, with a mere 10% being spearheaded by female

founders. Fast-forward to 2022, the startup landscape underwent a staggering expansion, reaching 80,000, with the proportion of women-led startups experiencing a significant surge.

According to another study, by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, India's female entrepreneurship has surged by 50% since 2014, driven by increased educated women, capital-raising opportunities, and government policies, largely due to increased understanding and acceptance of women's business potential.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY

Recent years have seen women entrepreneurs like Falguni Nayar and Kiran Mazumdar Shaw significantly contribute to the startup ecosystem, highlighting the immense potential and opportunities available for women.

Amongst the many transformations brought about by women entrepreneurs, the major ones are:

ECONOMIC GROWTH

In an era dominated by high-end competition and a fluctuating economic scenario on the global front, women entrepreneurs are

creating new job opportunities through their ventures by employing 27 million individuals in the country.

According to a recent study by Bain and Co, there are 15.7 million women-run enterprises in India, and they represent 22 per cent of the overall pie in the country. With proactive measures from the government and other entities to bolster support for women in business in the upcoming years, there exists the possibility of elevating this number to 30 million.

CATALYST FOR INNOVATION AND DIVERSITY

Women are reservoirs of talent that can drive innovation by introducing fresh perspectives and problem-solving approaches, fostering a dynamic and diverse business environment. Teams, led by women, are highly adept at creating innovative solutions.

MORE INCLUSIVE WORK SPACES

Women entrepreneurs are also willing to engage in networking and providing mentorship for emerging women leaders. This has led to the formation of more inclusive communities and environments that embrace women in entrepreneurship.

Women are now prominent as business executives in practically all industries. They have made important contributions in fields ranging from technology to economics and continue to pave the way for future generations of female leaders.

In the top three D2C sectors in India —personal and home care, food and beverage, and fashion, there are 3644 women-led enterprises, or 52% of all companies in these sectors, as of May 2023, according to data from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

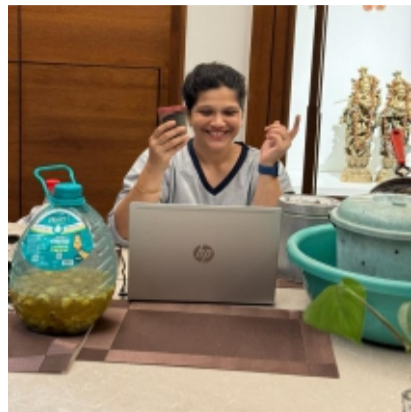
From 130 in 2017 to 3644 in May 2023, the number of women-led businesses in these significant D2C sectors has grown by more than 2700% in only a single year.

NAVIGATING THE ROAD BLOCKS

Despite astounding progress, Indian women entrepreneurs encounter hurdles such as biased perceptions, limited access to funding and networks, and balancing family responsibilities while venturing into entrepreneurship. WISER reveals that the advancement of women in terms of seniority and tenure also does not progress at the same pace as men.



Planting Seeds of Change: Dr. Aarati Bhandare's Visionary Journey to a Sustainable Tomorrow



Dr. Aarati Bhandare, a dentist by qualification, has taken up the social responsibility to speak, create, and spread awareness about water conservation, ill effects of plastic, and many more. Aarati, who has been almost single-handedly championing the cause by addressing students at institutions and people at various social organizations, speaks to children in a way that they can understand and always says, if one soul can follow what she says, it will be a better world for the next generation.

"Amulya Boondh," formerly known as "save water save life," was started as a mere community page on Facebook in the year 2015, to create awareness among the general public. It was the year when drought struck the ever water-abundant Belgaum.

Currently, as a licensed non-profit organization, they stress and emphasize on sustainable living. They evolve each day, exploring and using all the elements of the planet so as to benefit others and ourselves without harming nature.



Let's dive in to see what the Founder has to say:

"We don't inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."

This perception and understanding that the world we leave behind for our kids is being destroyed by us ourselves. Until no one stands up for it, our children will have to bear the bitter wrath of our wrongdoings.

Nature, the environment does not play any major role, but it is everything. On the contrary, the other beings play their roles. Sadly, human beings, known as the smartest, are hell-bent upon exploiting Nature.

When a seed is buried under the soil and watered, given a little attention, it grows into a majestic tree. Isn't that amusing itself? We do not see anyone working on that seed; we just watch it grow. Isn't it amusing that the life-saving oxygen that we breathe is emitted by Nature, her trees? This is enough reason to respect Nature and conserve her. The fact that Nature is "life-saving" is more than a reason for me to have that special place for her in my heart. Strangely, I was a topper in my dental school! I barely practiced for a couple of years before I started developing an interest in water conservation and overall sustainable living. I tried to manage both, but all my other interests such as traveling, shopping, partying started to die. As I learned more about the aspects of nature, I started to get pulled into it. I researched, read a lot, attended many training programs, and started working on living a chemical-free and natural life. I have spent all of my life till now in a small city called Belgaum, in Karnataka.

The climate crisis looks like a "made-up" topic of discussion, a reason to hold conferences and summits, and

an excuse for influencers to make content. But trust me when I say that it's a nightmare on its way to turning into a reality. Most of us have a basic idea about the deteriorating weather and climate; not many of us want to dig into it and work for it, as we have no time for Nature. The fact that the smallest things work and not necessarily a herculean task is something that's not quite getting into our brains.

To see a world where every living being, every human gets access to clean and pure water. To live in a world without wearing a mask. To witness the "dignity of labor" of the waste management workers and to have a clean and thoroughly green surrounding is my dream and vision. My message to the EARTHIANS is very simple: "live mindfully," consciously!

Choosing this path of creating awareness about the climate crisis among all classes and age groups of society, giving up a dental practice,

was something that was a need and not a choice. Although it felt difficult earlier, now I gather the strength to move ahead as I can see what the future looks like if people like me stop working. Clearly, the NGO that I run needs funds, but I get mockery, abuse, and hatred. I get doubted for asking donations too. But yes, in the end when I watch youngsters and kids, colleges and housing societies learn and implement what I teach, it gives me immense satisfaction. I learn to be selfless like Nature, not selfish. They say "neki kar dariya mein daal." That's precisely what I am doing.

More than turning into an eco-conscious woman, my work has made me realize the absolute importance of being grounded and humble, and how practicing gratitude is a must. It has also calmed me down as a person because I realized that I am smaller than a grain of sand against the hills, mountains, and the oceans that belong to Nature.



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Empowering Women: Palak Shah's Inspiring Journey from Finance to Entrepreneurship

entrepreneurship and instilling confidence in women. Recognized for her outstanding contributions, she has garnered numerous accolades from the companies she has been associated with, all applauding her commitment and hard work toward promoting women's empowerment.

Wearing multiple hats with finesse, she is not only a business leader but also a social entrepreneur and mentor. She has played a pivotal role in encouraging women's entrepreneurship in Surat, embodying the essence of a homemaker turned leader. Her journey reflects a commitment to nurturing the potential within women and guiding them toward financial independence.

Palak Shah's passion for empowering others is exemplified through her mentoring initiatives. Witnessing mentees achieve success in their lives brings her a sense of noble accomplishment. Through her

dedication, she has propelled her career toward the noble cause of empowering women to become financially independent and self-confident.

The challenges encountered in her professional journey have served as stepping stones, pushing her to deliver her best. Her unwavering commitment to personal growth has resulted in significant achievements in Tupperware retail. With six franchisees under her belt and more on the horizon, Palak Shah continues to break barriers and set new standards.

Beyond her corporate endeavors, Palak Shah actively contributes to society as a member of committees in non-governmental organizations such as Youth Nation and Love Sports India Foundation. Her engagement with these organizations showcases a commitment to broader social causes, reinforcing her status as a multifaceted leader.

Palak Shah's story inspires many,

proving that the pursuit of empowerment transcends professional boundaries. Her impact on the lives of housewives turned entrepreneurs is a testament to the transformative power of mentorship and dedication to a noble cause.



In a remarkable career trajectory that began in 2010, Palak Shah, an MBA in finance, has emerged as a trailblazer for women's empowerment in the business world. Her journey took a significant turn in 2018 when she assumed the role of distributor for Tupperware India.

Palak Shah's story is not just about climbing the corporate ladder; it's a narrative of fostering

Inside Womanews: Founder's Perspective and Vision



space where women could showcase their skills and talents to the world. With a strong belief in the untapped potential of women, Parul set out to create a platform that not only nurtures skill development but also provides a stage for women to shine.

Vision for Womanews

Hailing from an orthodox background, Parul aspires to liberate women, offering them a space where they can grow and exhibit their business acumen freely. Womanews, according to Parul, is not just a platform; it's a medium through which she aims to express appreciation for the talents of women.

Parul's Interior Designing Journey

Parul's journey into the world of interior design commenced with a unique blend of art and craft. Having started as an art and craft teacher at Reliance School, Surat, she took a bold step in 2008 to combine her passion for art with interior design. Over the past 14 years, she has undertaken numerous residential and commercial projects, garnering accolades and awards for her outstanding work.

The Experience so Far

Parul reflects on her journey with contentment, acknowledging the inevitable ups and downs in dealing with clients. However, armed with her innate ability to persuade and

convince, she has successfully navigated challenges. Testimonials and positive customer reviews stand as a testament to the satisfaction of those who have availed her services.

Services Offered

Parul's expertise extends to a range of services, including carpentry, civil changes, flooring, and furniture. One unique aspect of her offerings is the provision of a 3D view/design of the entire project. Whether it's a new construction project or a renovation of an existing space, Parul is committed to delivering excellence.

Keeping Up with Trends

In an industry where trends evolve rapidly, Parul stays ahead by remaining vigilant about design updates and material changes. She ensures that her knowledge is current, allowing her to integrate the latest trends seamlessly into her projects.

Motto in Life

Parul's journey has been one of resilience and determination. Her ultimate goal is to foster unity among women and empower them to reach new heights. She envisions a world where every woman can achieve success, echoing her life's motto of creating unity and inspiring others to rise.

Parul Sosa's story is one of empowerment, dedication, and a commitment to uplifting women through Womanews. As she continues to evolve in her journey, Parul stands as a beacon of inspiration for those aspiring to make a difference in the lives of women. Womanews, under her leadership, emerges not just as a platform but as a transformative force empowering women to thrive.



For this month's edition, Womanews presents a captivating Talk Show featuring our Founder, Parul Sosa. In this enlightening conversation, she opens up about her life, her impactful work, and the visionary outlook for Womanews, and sheds light on how she masterfully manages her work-life balance. Join us for a truly insightful dialogue, and read along to discover Parul Sosa's remarkable journey in interior designing and the inspiring story of how Womanews came to be.

The Inception of Womanews

Womanews, a platform that came to life six months ago, was born out of a profound need. Parul Sosa recognized the need for a dedicated

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Thousand of women dance in sync to perform Maha Raas in Dwarka



Over 37,000 women in Gujarat danced in synchronization with music to express their devotion to lord Krishna in a two-day event organized by the Ahir community. More than 37,000 women immersed in lord Krishna's devotion danced in synchrony with the music in Dwarka, Gujarat on Sunday. Dressed in traditional red attire, women continued to dance in massive circles around lord Krishna's idol.

The Maha Raas was organised in Dwarka for two days on December 23-24. The two-day function was organised in memory of Raas by Usha, the daughter of Banasura and daughter-in-law of lord Krishna, according to a regional website, Desh Gujarat.

The event was organized by Akhil Bharatiya Yadav Samaj and Ahirani Mahila Mandal and was held at a large campus of ACC Cement company, known as the

Nanddham campus.

The grand function of the group dance was joined by 37,000 women of the Ahir community from all across the world. The event was joined by more than one and a half lakh Ahir Yadav community people.

Who is Usha, daughter-in-law of lord Krishna?

Usha, daughter of Banasura, founds mention in Bhagwat Purana. She is the daughter of Asura king Banasura. She married to Aniruddha, grandson of lord Krishna. The story of how she fell in love with lord Krishna's grandson and married him is beautifully described in the Bhagavata Purana.

Usha's father, Banasura was the ruler of the kingdom from the city of Sonitapura. He was a great devotee of Shiva and he was blessed with 1000 arms.