

## Wsquare claims work spaces for women



Chennai: After marriage or the birth of a child, a woman is usually confined within the four walls of a house. Her education and talents remain unexplored.

But Wsquare - India's first co-working space for women, which provides a platform for women who are looking at getting back to work, conducted a summit where women - barring age, barriers and background - put up stalls exhibiting their creations.

Wsquare is co-founded by Jinal Patel and Vandhana Ramanathan who wanted such events to connect and create a network for like-minded women wanting to pursue something on their own. At the event today, a mobile app - Wconnect - was also launched.

Chief guest, managing director of Savera Group of Hotels, Nina Reddy, said, "Unlike before, more women are working today. Women are educated and career-oriented."

To ensure that they work without hassles, Nina said, "Other things have to evolve around them to make working more comfortable - like a support system of family, personal safety, staff and organisations."

She said, "A working woman is committed. There is no looking back for her. While her financial needs are met, she is also contributing to family finances and it boosts self-worth."

Nina supports women initiatives through The Duchess Club, 02 Fitness Studio and is the president for the National Association of the Blind.

"When I see these women putting up stalls, it takes me back to my earlier days. I was in my 20s and doing exhibitions like this," she says after purchasing a merchandise from a newbie entrepreneur.

From 22-year-old Kirthana Raj, a graduate from NIFT, who has displayed designer wear creations - cottons, khadis and jute innovative handmade canvas shoes with kalamkari work on it and a series of paintings.

Dressed in a knee-length jute dress, which she teamed with a kalamkari waist coat, Kirthana labelled her brand as 'Arodhi' which means fulfilling life through art.

Another entrepreneur, Sangeetha, who is re-defining tea with her various flavours like ginger and matcha (Japanese tea) to Anjula G, who prefers 'a quiet place for baking' from where she brings out loud and vibrant custom-designed cakes.

Other stalls had books, organic products and jewellery. "Keep doing something, learn new skills, now women are armed with gadgets and can always work from home. Make sure you are always updated. When you do business, you meet new people, life becomes richer," Nina concluded.