

2026 'Best Companies for Women in India' Study Launched at Leadership Summit in Gurugram

Category: Business

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Avtar Group, India's leading workplace culture and inclusion consulting firm, launched the Avtar & Seramount '**Best Companies for Women in India**' (BCWI) 2026 study at a Leadership Summit held at the Leela Ambience in Gurugram. BCWI, an annual benchmarking study conducted by Avtar and Seramount, is among India's largest and most rigorous inclusion-focused studies, with over 400 participating organizations and growing each year. Introduced in 2016, BCWI marked its tenth anniversary last year, completing a decade of shaping inclusive workplaces across India.



Dr Saundarya Rajesh, Managing Director, Avtar Career Creators, launching the BCWI 2026 in Gurgaon

Speaking at the leadership summit, **Dr Saundarya Rajesh, Managing Director of Avtar**, said, *“Workplaces will continue to evolve, and organizations will always debate what to*

prioritize. But there is one non-negotiable truth: Strong performance and stability come only when employees are engaged and customers believe in the organization. Neither is possible without inclusion & belonging. Gender inclusion, in particular, is a decisive performance lever. And today, women's participation is also a global and national priority. With the Global Gender Parity Sprint accelerating action towards 2030, and India's 2047 goal of 70% women's participation promising a \$14 trillion economic upside, inclusion is a macro-economic imperative. This is where BCWI plays a critical role. BCWI offers a rigorous, data-backed benchmark that helps organizations build inclusion that lasts, anchored in leadership ownership, pay equity, safe workplaces, flexibility, and fair career progression. I encourage organizations of every size to benchmark with BCWI, learn from corporate India's most effective practices and be recognized among the country's most inclusive employers."

Dr Saundarya Rajesh also unveiled a new benchmark – the Avtar & Seramount 'Best Places for Workplace Wellness', recognizing the growing importance of well-being in today's workplaces. The study will evaluate organizations across areas such as built-in work flexibility, comprehensive wellness benefits, inclusive and equitable practices, data-led decision-making and a strong focus on continuous improvement.

The event convened senior leaders and decision-makers from benchmark-setting companies including CBRE, EY India, IBM, IHG Hotels & Resorts, R1 RCM, Sun Life Global Solutions, Teleperformance and Wipro for high-impact conversations on what sets leading organizations apart, the future of inclusion, and the business outcomes of building equitable, high-trust workplaces. This pivotal leadership summit also featured a path-breaking 'Solutions Clinic' that explored the

tangible advantages of rigorous benchmarking, along with a key segment that spotlighted the principle-led articulation of the BCWI framework.

Over the last decade, BCWI has documented measurable progress in women's workplace outcomes across participating organisations. Women's representation in the workforce among the 'Best' companies has grown from 25% in 2016 to 35.7% in 2025, reflecting sustained efforts to strengthen hiring, retention, and advancement. At the leadership level, the benchmark recorded a rise in women's C-suite representation to 20%, up from 13% in 2016, reinforcing the increasing emphasis on building stronger, more equitable leadership pathways.

Participation in the Avtar & Seramount benchmarking studies is free. Register here:

www.avtarcc.com/enrich/best-companies-for-women-in-india-bcwi/

About Avtar

Avtar Career Creators, founded in 2000 by Dr Saundarya Rajesh, is one of India's leading workplace culture consulting firms, supporting hundreds of companies in creating diverse and supportive workplaces. Avtar is also the country's largest provider of second career opportunities for women.

An ISO 20700 certified firm, Avtar's biggest research projects are its annual benchmarking studies – the Best Companies for Women in India (BCWI) and the Most Inclusive Companies Index (MICI). Done in partnership with Seramount, BCWI and MICI are India's largest workplace inclusion benchmarking studies, which have paved the way for the employment of more women and

other underrepresented groups. Avtar also promotes inclusive hiring through MyAvtar, India's first job portal for underrepresented professionals.

A snapshot of Avtar's work in the last 25 years:

- Provided advisory services in inclusive practices to 800+ organizations
- Conducted 5000+ workshops and training programs in companies of different sizes, spanning industries and locations
- Facilitated the re-entry of 1,00,000 second-career women into the workforce through MyAvtar.com
- Engaged with 200,000+ women through career enablement programs
- Offered unique skilling programs such as DigiPivot (a prestigious course in digital marketing, conducted in partnership with Google, HUL, and ISB) to hundreds of women
- Provided career intentionality training, employment guidance, and access to industry leaders every year to 10,000+ girls from underprivileged backgrounds through Project Puthri, an initiative of the Avtar Human Capital Trust (AHCT)
- Impacted 4000+ schoolboys through MITR (Men Impacting Trust and Respect), an initiative by AHCT that mentors boys to be advocates for women

For its transformational impact in the realm of DEI, Avtar Group was listed in the prestigious Steward Leadership 25

Listing by Straits Times & INSEAD in Singapore in 2022. In 2025, Avtar won the Times Business Awards and was recognized as the 'Leading Women's Employment Organization'.

To know more, visit www.avtarcc.com | www.myavtar.com.

