

**'JACK OF
ALL
TRADES,
MASTER
OF ALL'**

-A Pensive Pursuit of Passions!

‘Jack of all trades, Master of all’- A Pensive Pursuit of Passions!

My professor of Comparative politics was distributing our term papers, and he announced in the class that one of the papers was the best out of the crowd. Breaking the ice, he finally told my name out loud, and everyone applauded me for the feat. Usually, I would have gone head over heels because I am always frenzied about getting good grades on a tough paper. But that day, I was lost. My professor noticed my bland poker face and asked if I was doing okay. I told him enigmatically that I had to close and say no to a door to follow another. He seemed flummoxed, and to calm me down; he forwarded me a WhatsApp text of 'What is the true meaning of peace.'

A long time ago, a king commissioned his kingdom's painters to create the best painting of peace. Two of the artworks were chosen by the king. The first painting depicted a tranquil lake with waters reflecting serene mountains. It was the epitome of peace. However, the other painting was rugged, and the sky was dark and filled with black clouds. The image was anything from peaceful. But something in the picture struck the king's eye—a carefully hung bird's nest. A mother bird and her young lived in the middle of all that rubble. King chose the second one, and all were baffled about how dark clouds could ever convey peace. "Because tranquillity does not refer to a place without noise, trouble, or hard work," the king explained. "Peace" means "being calm in the middle of all of those things." ⁱ After reading this, my professor asked me to stay calm in all that potpourri and decide on which road to take for my future.

We were three college kids trying our side hustle to test the waters of our entrepreneurial skills. We wanted to sell customized T-shirts and goodies for the students from different departments and specialized for events and conferences. We spent nights bingeing shows of TVF Pitchers and Schoopwoop's Baked¹ that inspired us to jump on the journey of pursuing our passion. But neither did I want to lag on my academics like in Pitchers, where the protagonist puts everything that he has at risk to build his dream start-up, nor was I interested in traipsing around the roads of my university in the night to sell food in disguise. So now was the time to walk the extra mile for my passion and breathe life into the words of Peter Drucker- *'Time is the scarcest resource, and unless it is managed, nothing else can be managed.'* ⁱⁱ

Moving forward from being an exemption to an exemplar- As postulated by Drucker

I didn't want to focus on one thing as my Professor insinuated me to do and leave the rest to fate. I did not want to be a Master of one and definitely not a jack of all trades for nothing in return. So I decided to take a plunge and take the risk of managing everything that came my way. Soon we were successful in making hundreds of apparel for fests, government rallies and events, Marathon runs of NGOs and many more. We could even put a stall of our goodies during the IPL match² of 2017 for Sunrisers Hyderabad. All of these were time-consuming and difficult to handle alongside the academics, with copious amounts of reading and learning. So I always pondered on how does one follow a passion in all the chaos? How to find peace while

ⁱ TVF (The Viral Fever) and Schoopwhoop are the Over-the-top streaming platforms and digital media company in India.

ⁱⁱ IPL is the India Premier League- a professional Twenty20 cricket league in India

you're chasing what you like and not settling for that one door that everyone keeps pushing you into? And finally, is it really possible to get the returns out of our passionate pursuits?!

Peter Drucker posited:

To be sure, people who need certainty are unlikely to make good entrepreneurs.... In all such pursuits decisions have to be made, and the essence of any decision is uncertainty. But everyone who can face up to decision making can learn to be an entrepreneur and to behave entrepreneurially. Entrepreneurship, then, is behaviour rather than personality trait. And its foundation lies in concept and theory rather than intuition.

Thus, diving in is the ultimate risk factor that Peter Drucker discussed in length. He said it could not be predicted, but it has to be given a shot. If we are afraid to pull the trigger or take a leap of faith, an amazing opportunity will slip through our hands. So before it was too late, I had to test all the doors in front of me. I was not going to just sit calm amongst the dark clouds, but this time I was ready to fly above them.

Passion Economy in the veins- did not go in vain!

I was interested in Politics, so I pursued my Masters in Political Science with a major in gender politics. I am good at painting, upcycling (making reusable things out of waste), Reading, Reviewing Books and Movies on weekends, Creative writing, Poetry, and to my respite, I still keep adding things to my list. I still am on the journey of excelling in each of my passions. In Peter Drucker's words, leadership is "the lifting of a man's vision to higher sights, the raising of a man's performance to a higher standard, the building of a man's personality beyond its normal limitations".ⁱⁱⁱ Quite appropriately, this beyond one's limitations aim of being an all in one package seemed a little overreach, but this is what I choose to be: Jack of all trades and Master of all!

Phronesis is a Greek word that signifies "practical wisdom." This helps in effective decision-making, which Drucker has dealt with in detail in the article 'The Effective Decision.' Here, he highlights that the hardest is not deciding but making it work^{iv} and following our phronesis, and to make it all work, we needed to Drucker it in every possible way. We three musketeers used to travel and explain the unique selling proposition of the T-shirts and Hoodies to the potential buyers and customers around the city. We used to paste posters and flyers everywhere to spread the word and take orders out of the contacts from friends and family. It was all hard work and sweat with little in return. But today, as I am living my dreams, the internet is constantly influencing culture and changing how we work.

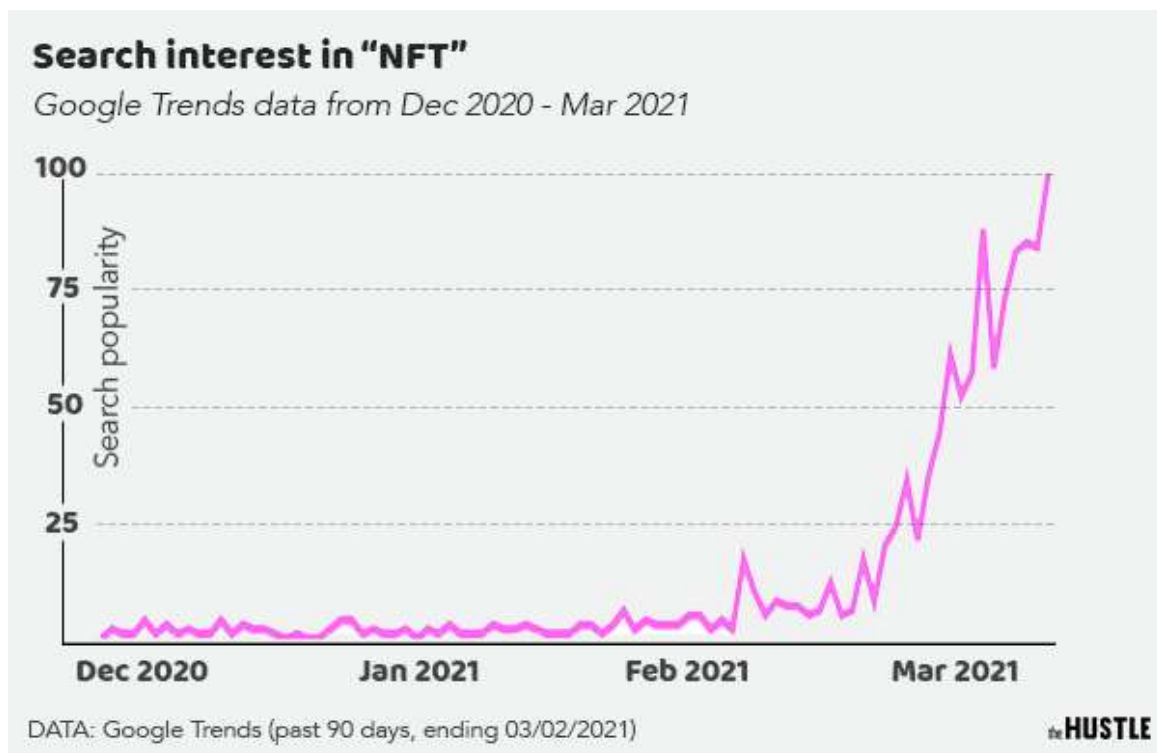
Gen Z creators, influencers, and investors are pursuing careers distinct from those pursued by their parents. What they study, how they learn, and how they earn have changed subtly. They do not regard creativity and productivity as two different things. Both are part of the new creative stack emerging in the internet's third age, also known as Web 3.0, a distributed and decentralized internet.^v Today, I can post the entire catalog of my designs online, reach a broader customer base through creative posts on Instagram, and even open an online store to sell all of my merchandise.

Can Passion and Money go hand in hand? - When it became my cup of tea!

"I start early, and I stay late, day after day, year after year. It took me 17 years and 114 days to become an overnight success." – Messi

In Drucker's own words – Innovation is not a flash of genius.³ He believed in thinking profoundly and applying one's mind with passion and creativity. Drucker's advice was greatly needed during Covid-19 with everything that was going around in our lives. Locked at home during the pandemic, many tried their hands at creating content on social media. A report by an influencer marketing firm in the late 2020s highlighted that 60% of content creators and influencers were pursuing the business of content creation as a full-time career.^{vi}

Like many, even I resorted to writing and creating content online and opened a blog of mine on the Blogger. I listed my blog as an NFT (Non-Fungible Token)^{vii} on the WazirX NFT platform and made money out of selling memes and digital art. I gathered all the information on NFTs to monetize my creations. Passion and money can go hand-in-hand, and the key is staying RELEVANT. Drucker once said that balancing change and continuity requires continuous work on information,^{viii} and it is true for success in today's information and technology-driven Passion Economy.



I also got a chance to participate in a poetry contest by Writersgram publications and got selected to publish my collection of poems. They have published my book Untold Embers under the December Diary writing challenge. The Challenge was hosted in December 2020

³ <https://hbr.org/2002/08/the-discipline-of-innovation>

and received the phenomenal participation of various writers and poets. My book Untold Embers is about mindfulness and self-introspection weaved in various poems. As a part of the Writergram team, I am currently working with them to curate anthologies of the upcoming writers and publish books in multiple genres. Combining my passion for writing and watching films, I started reviewing various movies and documentaries (Indie and unique celluloid experiences). I shipped the portfolio of my writings for months to many media houses, and as paying off my efforts, today, I contribute to articles on the website called Feminism in India (FII)⁴ about the representation of women in Indian Cinema.

Therefore, I left no stone unturned in learning the traits of an entrepreneur that Drucker envisioned about. That it is someone who acts according to his theories by first observing what society needs and then tailoring our systems in order to meet that need in the best possible way.

Passionpreneurs of the hills- Revolutionizing the economy!

Drucker knew how to bring the best out of individuals:

Drucker's philosophy was about knowing your values, and using your strengths in order to make the best contribution possible. In "Managing Oneself" he says "One cannot build performance on weaknesses, let alone something one cannot do at all", and this probably explains why successful entrepreneurs today are surprisingly not particularly great inventors.^{ix}

Now, after years of relentless learning, I carefully crafted myself to be the Jack of many traits, but it was time to be the Master of the ring. To build on my strengths and follow the paths of Drucker, I took on an opportunity to work on a project with the handicrafts workers of Arunachal Pradesh, who have been involved in the local artworks for generations. This project allowed me to be creative as well as unleash my potential as a problem-solver. Working on improving the Handicrafts, promoting the rich artistic culture of North-East India through my writings, and Managing people- was a great way to master all my trades.

As a part of linking their products to the current market needs, we collaborated with interior designing houses in several metropolitan cities. Their passion for creating traditional crafts is now a part of the contemporary architecture and designing arena. All thanks to the social media outreach and designer houses engaged in creating a new world of architecture. Through impactful storytelling gestures, the traditional artifacts and crafts of North-East India can create a unique spatial experience.^x

These handcrafted products are environmentally friendly and sustainable, preserving the particular Indian style of interior design that can be easily blended with modern buildings and interiors. Our relentless efforts are making the creative artifacts by these Passionpreneurs⁵ of the hills to reach various cities. Unique, niche, differentiated products, and customized services are rewarded in this passion economy. Thus, the success story of these Passionpreneurs lies in Drucker's philosophy about putting the customer first. It is the customer that we want to make a difference to, which dictates our actions more than ever.

⁴ FII- Feminism In India is an award-winning digital intersectional feminist media organisation.

⁵ Passionpreneur is a term coined by The National on Passionpreneur Publishing platform.

My mother and her mid-life crisis: Women can carve their way in now!

As a woman, I have always aspired to be more and achieve more despite being pinned down because of societal impediments. It was always essential to make the right decision, especially for a woman with limited choices. On the importance of decisions-making skills, Drucker emphasized a lot on the essence of choosing the right path in his book *Effective Executives*:

Effective executives, finally, make effective decisions. They know that this is, above all, a matter of system—of the right steps in the right sequence.....they know that to make many decisions fast means to make the wrong decisions.

My mother, at the dawn of her mid-life crisis during the pandemic lockdown, wanted to start a new business. To deal with a crisis like this, Drucker had ideated the best possible course to sail through the sea of challenges. He said there is one prerequisite for managing the second half of your life; you must begin doing so long before you enter it.

So, owing to a passion and teaching experience of 20 years, she opened an online teaching platform called Zon Academy. International students from various countries take classes of their requirements in feasible time slots. The charges for the services are normally high for these students for the knowledge that is shared and the efforts of human resources. The decision to change the course of her work and accommodate herself to the changing world of Passion Economy was the right decision for my mother. This reiterated the philosophy of Drucker that- *Decision making is not desirable but is inevitable*.⁶

This is true for all the women like my mother who are looking for self-employment, going beyond their comforts, and following their passions and unique skills. The passion economy today has changed the norms of work culture in society, especially for the women who want to be a part of the workforce. During the lockdown, many have come forward to open cloud kitchens, online fashion stores on websites like Shopify, work in music productions, and become world-class digital artists. It is true across the gender, but for women, the passion economy has revolutionized the chances as well as choices of employment in the globalized era.^{xi}

“The Entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity.”

--Peter Drucker

These ideas of Drucker are true for millions of Indian women today who are running successful businesses tapping on the opportunities. Like the inspirational story of Sumedha Mahajan, a young woman from Amritsar.⁷ She is the founder of India's first women's sportswear firm specially curated for the needs and comfort of women. Sumedha is an endurance runner who learned first-hand about the issues women runners encounter with their kit while running a 1,500-kilometer marathon from Delhi to Mumbai. This prompted her to start Brakefree to prevent women from having to 'adapt' to men's sportswear.^{xii} Passion economy for women- is indeed a silver lining!

⁶ <https://hbr.org/1967/01/the-effective-decision>

⁷ Amritsar is a city in the Indian state of Punjab

‘World only spins forward’- The full circle

“A goal without a plan is just a wish.”
- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

The world appears to be spinning forward from the gig economy, in which the platform (such as Uber, DoorDash, or Swiggy) is at the center, and humans are simply the necessary hands who perform jobs for a minimal charge. Whereas now, the individual is at the center of the passion economy.^{xiii} Drucker was a firm believer in changing one’s ways in order to suit the circumstances while keeping our principles constant and the ingenuity of this approach is the need of the hour in the world of Passion Economy.

You can be a math teacher, a stand-up comedian, a writer, a bitcoin trader, or an entrepreneur if you can find a method to make a living out of it. Finding the convergence of what you enjoy doing, what you are good at, what the world needs, and what you can get compensated for is the difficulty or the trick. As Peter Drucker would put in his words- The ideas do not move mountains. But bulldozers move mountains; ideas show where the bulldozers should go to work. 'Ikigai,' or your cause for living, is a Japanese word following our passion. It is said to be the key to happiness and longevity, and it has been shown to be a valuable method of thinking about what to do in a world of many perplexing options. The Passion Economy is the modern manifestation of this age-old philosophy,^{xiv} and as Drucker asserts, one should apply the ideas to make our Ikigai come true.

In the end, to complete the circle, we now go back to the bird's story and how it took a calm shelter under the tree amongst the dark clouds and raging storms. It was a fascinating story but what I find more interesting is the story of another bird, the mighty eagle, who, instead of finding a shelter, tries to fly above the dark clouds to avoid the rain. It epitomizes the nature of going out of the comfort zone and reaching the zenith of opportunities. Since then, I have always used the pseudo-name called 'Los-atravesados' for all my creative writings and artworks. It is a Latin word for a person who can go beyond the confines of the ordinary. It took a lot of effort and diligent planning to follow my passions without missing out on important experiences in my life. As Drucker would say, and I quote, "Long-range planning does not deal with future decisions but with the future of present decisions." It's the planning and going ahead against all the odds that makes all the difference in this challenging world.

Thus, Passion Economy is constantly growing as the total size of the economy is estimated to be over 100 billion dollars today.^{xv} The proper utilization of technology and opportunities can bring about paradigm shifts in how we live and earn our living. It is a way forward for people who wants to take up their passion for a full-time commitment, and it definitely is a bright light in the tunnel for hustlers like me who want to be both the Jack and the Masters of their lives.

“You can’t use up creativity, the more you use the more you have.”
- Maya Angelou

DIGITAL ARTWORKS AND PUBLISHED BOOK-
MY SMALL WORLD OF PASSION ECONOMY



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