

# Women Power

## In The Preschool Industry

- Prasanna Kumar B G  
Founder, School Ventures



The changes in the social and economic structure of India have intensified the need for universal early childcare education. Traditionally young children received formative education within the joint family structure. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousin's and neighbours formed an important part of the societal set up aiding overall development of the child. Today the parents living in nuclear families are unable to provide the same environment which was a part of early childhood education. This is where the preschool industry came in, to bridge the gap of learning and knowledge among kids in the age group of 1.5 years to 6 years. Preschools focus on providing structured curriculum, child friendly and interactive environment for overall development of a child.

In addition to this, the increased standard of living and increased income levels have also contributed significantly for parents enrolling their kids in preschools. Parents today have realised the importance of early childcare education and its impact on the overall learning process of their children. Over 90% of the brain development takes place before the child reaches 6 years of age, which highlights the importance of preschool education.

It's been observed that, women from different walks of life are entering into the preschool industry in India. Preschool industry has created a golden opportunity for women entrepreneurs, who wanted to kick start their career after taking a break from their professional life due to various reasons. Being a part of the preschool setup gives these women a chance to have a less hectic pace of life.

Globalisation has opened the windows of opportunities in various fields and women are also actively making use of the same. Parents today who have travelled across the world are exposed to various international methodologies of early childcare education. Such parents look for the same while choosing the right preschool at their respective cities and towns in India. As most of the women preschool owners are parents themselves, they have a fair understanding of parents' expectations with respect to their kids development. Early child care education is a female dominated profession. It is believed that the success attained by these women in the preschool industry can be attributed to the fact that mothers find it easy to hand over their kids in the hands of another women as "One mother would know the pulse of another mother".

One of the major reasons women prefer the preschool industry to kick start their career as an entrepreneur is that it requires a significantly lower initial investment than the formal K-12 schools. Running a preschool gives women entrepreneurs, an opportunity to pursue their passion and also earn high returns on their investment. This allows for a smooth transition from a house wife to business women through exposure across various verticals like finance, operations, legal, manpower, marketing, curriculum and training, in a relatively stress-free manner as compared to a mainstream school.

Generally there are two kinds of preschool set up existing in the market. Firstly the Franchisee model preschools and secondly standalone or own brand preschools. Standalone preschools have a greater share in the Indian preschool market as compared to the franchise chain of preschools.

In the current Indian scenario, more than 80% of the preschools owners are WOMEN.

Women are the torch bearers of strength, both in the domestic and professional sphere. Women are emotionally strong, are able to multi task and take risks and initiatives. Preschool industry has not only opened a window of opportunities for women entrepreneurs, it has also provided opportunities for women to work as teachers, co-ordinators, child psychologists, admission counsellors, helping staff, etc.

Teachers are the hardest working professionals across the globe, who have a major responsibility on their shoulders towards shaping the future generation for a better and healthy world.

These passionate women don't stop themselves to just the business aspect of the early child care industry. They regularly update themselves with respect to new learnings and techniques of parent psychology, social psychology, child psychology, etc. Many of them are certified counsellors in early child care education and NTT trained teachers.

For a child, a preschool should act as a second home with colourful child friendly ambience, caring staff, safety, hygiene and good infrastructure. Women entrepreneurs have taken up the challenge of creating a homely and secure environment for the children of the society. Their passion and dedication has helped young working parents to find an easily accessible home away from home for their children.