50 Visionaries
Leading Icons in Education

Meet the Visionaries and influencers shaping the country's future
Prajodh Rajan
Co-Founder & Group CEO, EuroKids

Prajodh Rajan has spent over 15 years in the education sector as an edupreneur, and he is highly passionate and committed to the cause of reinventing education in the pre-school and K-12 education space in the country. He is a management graduate from the University of Madras and the co-founder of EuroKids International. A first-generation entrepreneur with deep interests in education and technology, Mr. Rajan is passionate about learning and spreading the joy of learning to young children.

Q. When did you start your journey as an educator and how many years have you dedicated to this industry?

I would like to think of myself as an education entrepreneur and it was in 2001 that we commenced our journey in the education services segment when we set up our first EuroKids pre-school in Mumbai. From 2 pre-schools in Mumbai in 2001, today we have spread our network to more than 1000+ pre-schools across 3 countries, 350+ cities, having nurtured over 300,000 children. In the year 2009, we commenced our K-12 initiative - EuroSchool which today is spread across 10 schools and 6 cities.

We have been focused at redefining early childhood education for over 15 years by providing a fun based learning environment. Our aim is to provide contemporary education to children that will help them develop holistically and imbibe essential life-skills.

Q. What was your vision & motivation behind starting your educational institute?

The idea was to provide young children an educational experience that would help them be ready for the challenges of a dynamic world and be future-ready, today. Our aim is to touch the lives of young students across the pre-school and K-12 environment by 'Reinventing Education'.

The EuroKids journey started in 2001 with the idea of bringing the 'Joy of Learning' to young children by making learning fun at the pre-school. Our Child-First Ideology emphasized on meeting the development and security needs of the child, whilst creating a hygienic and nurturing environment for children, in close coordination with the parents. All of these experiences when synergised made EuroKids the Child's Second Home!

With the introduction of EuroSchool in 2009 we wanted to extend the 'Joy of Learning' to primary & secondary school students by providing them a balanced schooling experience. The focus was on imparting '21st Century skills' that would mould them into global citizens of tomorrow.

Q. How would you describe your journey as an educator and a visionary?

We started with the purpose of creating a fun experience for young learners with our 'Child First' philosophy, but also soon realized that a pre-school is after all, the child's first experience away from the home. It's a huge leap for both the parents as well as for the child. Therefore, it
was essential to create a nurturing home-like environment for the child wherein this transition between home and pre-school is made comfortable.

The inception of EuroSchool was a great learning curve for us in our journey as educationists. Children today require a contemporary learning experience which brings out the best in them. Hence our approach of ‘Balanced Schooling’ which gives equal importance to the academic and non-academic learnings became critical to develop the child holistically. We established our schools in 6 cities - Bangalore, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad & Surat and received a tremendous response from parents. We have as on date positively impacted over 20,000 students through EuroSchool.

Q. Who has been your inspiration during this journey?

I come from a family of educationists and there have been many people who have inspired me but one name that stands out is my maternal grandfather, K.M Mammen. He was a social worker and he along with few friends founded an orphanage, school & vocational training centre in Kerala and the institution till today serves as a beacon of hope for many young children who without the care, security and help would have been otherwise severely disadvantaged. His dedication towards his cause has always been an inspiration for me.

Q. What are the greatest challenges you faced during your journey? How did you overcome these obstacles?

I think our journey has been full of learning and unlearning. At each stage in setting up and managing operations, we have faced challenges. Some instances come to mind from the pre-schooling space, where one of the most significant challenges we faced was at the onset, to create a sense of awareness for the benefits of a structured pre-schooling experience for the child and to showcase to parents how child-centric all our efforts are.

Back in the day, most parents were comfortable sending their child to the nearest pre-school. However, as we spread our network of pre-schools. Most parents started to realize the benefits of pre-schooling at EuroKids i.e. the safety and security norms adopted at our pre-schools, the high levels of hygiene and cleanliness, structured curriculum, experienced teachers and many such stand-out aspects that made us the preferred choice of many parents.

Operationally, we still do face challenges with finding adequately trained teaching resources. To combat this challenge we initiated EuroVarsity an online teacher training and certification program for women who would like to pursue a pre-school teaching career. This ensures that we have a steady mechanism to fulfill our teaching requirements at our pre-schools. To ensure that our existing teachers periodically update their skills sets, we have developed ETAT (EuroKids Teacher Assessment Tool) an online teacher assessment and training tool, that ensures that teachers at our pre-schools comply with specific uniform standards and that their skill sets are continuously upgraded so that they remain the best in the business.

Q. How would you encourage developing leadership capacity in your students?

Our education experience, tells us that young children must be allowed to play, learn and grow and enjoy their years of learning between the ages of 1.8–4.5 years. They must be allowed to explore and experience their surroundings and our teachers guide them through the pre-schooling years and make them ready for the demands of the schools.

At our schools, to mould young children into leaders of tomorrow, our emphasis is on the ‘learning ability’ rather than merely the ‘learnt’. We strengthen and reinforce the learning ability and the various aptitudes of the child so that they become ‘learners’ rather than a repository of the ‘learnt’.

This approach cultivates curiosity in the child’s mind and enhanced reasoning and logical thinking, which adds dimensions to the child’s personality thus enhancing his/her leadership skills. Through other initiatives like workshops, seminars, and global exchange programs we give the children a platform to demonstrate their leadership skills and broaden their horizons.
Q. Describe one instance that led you to step into the education sector.

There are actually several reasons that got us into the education space. Back in 2001, organized pre-schooling did not exist as it does today. The need for quality pre-schooling has arisen out of our demographics itself which was showing trends of a high number of nuclear families and dual working parents. Over a period with smaller family size and lesser family time, the demand for a quality pre-school of international standards, with structured curriculum became critical and hence EuroKids pre-schools started its journey.

In a short period of time, we established our network of pre-schools across the country and expanded through a franchise network. Having had an exposure of a stable and successful pre-school network, many parents demanded that our pre-schooling expertise must also be translated to a K-12 schooling environment and from this encouragement was born EuroSchool, which today is spread across 10 campuses in 6 cities.

Q. What are your expectations from the teachers in your school and how do you help them work towards achieving the organization's vision?

The most important resource in our network is the human resource. We realized very early in our journey that while content is important it is the delivery of the content in the hands of trained resources that matter the most. Hence most of our energies have been spent in first identifying the right talent, training them and bringing them up to speed with the best practices around the world. We use our indigenously developed online assessment tool ETAT and our online platform EuroVarsity to enable our objectives. We also provide a conducive working environment with benefits of health care, subsidized tuition for staff children & ample opportunities for growth to all our staff members so that they may flourish in their roles.

Q. What are the values you wish to inculcate in your students?

At our schools, we allow the child to experience a safe-learning environment where our educators mentor young children so that they become compassionate, broad-minded, socially aware, responsible citizens, ready for taking on the challenges of tomorrow.

These values are imbibed into young children through our learning programs which includes initiatives towards social development and community programs, wherein students contribute towards the greater good of society and develop a sense of social responsibility.

International learning and exchange programs help to expose children to different cultures and gives them a broad perspective. Workshops, seminars and assignments which bring out student opinions and thoughts on matters of economic and social importance, make them aware and conscious of the world outside.