

Gender experiences of [IT@School](#):

**A Case Study of Women Master Trainers
and School IT Coordinators**

About IT@School

- Launched in 2002 by Govt of Kerala
- Aims to remodel conventional teaching methodologies by harnessing ICT
- ICT is being taught in 2738 schools in Kerala
- Nearly 1.6 million students learn free software every year

Purpose of the study

- To explore the changes perceived by the women teachers in their professional and personal lives since the beginning of their association with the project.
- To identify the challenges they face in relations to their roles as IT educators

Methodology

- Interviews with 10 women Master Trainers
- Interviews with 30 School IT Coordinators
- Focus Group Discussions with both

Findings and Observations

- Women are in their mid thirties or above
- Some joined the project voluntarily; for some the entry was mandatory
- Started with IT skills that were low or nil
- With great apprehension about their capacity to learn and impart this new knowledge to students
- Negotiated with family

- Basic computer applications
- Operate the LAN and the Internet
- Customised softwares
- Trouble shooting for hardware and software problems

Positive outcomes

- At ease with technology
- Rethink their teaching methodologies
- Managerial capacities
- Self-esteem and self confidence
- Role models

Challenges

- No regular work hours
- Limitations on mobility
- Limited resource persons in FOSS increases their burden
- Fear of failing as caregivers at the cost of becoming good employees and vice versa
- Engaging in computer jobs that does not aid their creativity or ingenuity

Conclusion