National level Seminar on “QUALITY SUSTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOL EDUCATION”

The Internal Quality Assurance Cell of M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women conducted a one-day seminar titled ‘Quality Sustenance and Development in School Education’ on Aug. 22, 2015. The seminar was designed to establish a quality continuum between school and college education in order to create enlightened and empowered youth for the nation.

75 delegates from 26 top schools including principals, vice-principals, senior school teachers and members of school management attended the seminar to discuss issues pertaining to quality in school education. The topics of the seminar were: Quality Initiatives In School Education – A Key To Garner India’s Demographic Dividend, Accentuating Basics and Concepts – Rote Learning or Activity Based Learning, Developing Higher Order Thinking Skills In The Learner Through Pedagogical Initiatives, 21st Century Learning Needs, and Accessibility to Education.

Speakers included Dr. Lata Shenava, independent mental health professional, trainer and life coach; Prof M.J. Xavier, executive director, VIT University; Mr. V. Rajesh, author, "Out of Syllabus" and "Break Free"; Dr. Vasanthi Vasudev, educationist; and Dr. Mariazeena Johnson, managing director, Sathyabama University.

Inaugural session: Dr. Lata Shenava, Independent Health Professional & EI-certified Therapist

Quality Initiatives in School Education - A Key to Garner India's Demographic Dividend

Dr. Lata Shenava, in her inaugural address, stressed on the importance of reclaiming our cultural heritage in education and other aspects of life. She rued the decline in emotional intelligence and critical inquiry among children today and emphasized the importance of "bringing back play" for children for their holistic development.

Session 1: Mr. V. Rajesh, author and management expert

Developing High Order Thinking Skills

Mr. V. Rajesh emphasized that the objective of education should be the pursuit of knowledge rather than a focus on memorizing for marks or a degree. "Employers want people who think and not people who memorize," he said. Teaching must be such that one teaches students "what to learn" rather than "how it can be learnt". Citing movies like 3 Idiots and Dhoni, he said, "We all love talking about how the education system is so bad. Why is that we don't do anything about it?" He encouraged the faculty to look beyond textbooks and develop the capability to analyze, evaluate and be creative in their approach. Teaching students in the manner they are most comfortable with, perhaps by tapping technology or using examples from movies, can help them...
acquire more knowledge. Sticking to the traditional methods of textbooks will not give them the ability to think, he said. He concluded with the caution, "If this does not change, and change immediately, education will lose its relevance."

**Session 2:** Mr. Ramamurthy Krishna, Chief Learning Officer, Potential Genesis HR Services LLP

*Teaching and Learning with the Brain in Mind*

Mr. Ramamurthy Krishna spoke on the importance of strengthening the pre frontal cortex (PFC) which is the only part of the brain that differentiates humans from monkeys. He explained that PFC helps in understanding, deciding, memorizing and recalling. Teaching and learning strengthens the PFC, he said, adding, "If you do not develop the PFC, success in life is going to be less successful than expected." He concluded by suggesting the use of SCARF (Status Certainty Autonomy Relatedness Fairness) model of managing social threats and maximizing rewards as an effective way to motivate children to reach higher realms in life.

**Session 3:** Dr. Vasanthi Vasudev, Director of Osmosys learning, Products and services

*21st century learning needs*

Dr. Vasanthi Vasudev spoke on redefining 21st century learning needs as the world is evolving and old things are becoming obsolete. She proposed the model 'One On One, Teach Anything, Learn Anything, Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime'. This emphasized the fact that distance and time are no longer a barrier for learning, thanks to web-enabled curriculum. She also stressed that the globalization of curriculum and the standards of educational system are very important. "If you want to prepare students for the world, prepare them with global standard curriculum. Brains are designed for learning and not for formal education," she said. Any student can be molded into a genius, if the proper input is given, she said, adding that students have to be shaped to become critical, creative and communicative.

**Valedictory ceremony:** Chief guest Dr. Mariazeena Johnson, Managing Director, Sathyabama University

*Accessibility to education*

Dr. Mariazeena Johnson concentrated on the importance of right to education. She spoke on classroom management, student-teacher interaction, methodology of teaching, gaps in the education system and cited a few recommendations for improving the education system of our country. "Education is important not only for development of one's personality, but also for the sustained growth of the nation. Students have to be trained in language, and the creative, physical, social, and intellectual areas," she said. She highlighted problem-based learning (PBL) methodology, where multiple problems and puzzles are given to students and they are made to learn through solving them. She concluded by saying that the youth of the nation have to be taught how to think and not what to think.

The discussions and deliberations of the various sessions promise to go a long way in fostering a culture of quality education among premier institutions.