

## **Empowering Learners in the Contemporary Society**

To help the teachers to understand their role in meeting the demands of contemporary education, a two day National Level Seminar on ‘Empowering Learners in the Contemporary Society’ was organized at PCER–Panvel on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2011.

The Key note address was delivered by DR. Ramesh G. Kothari, Prof. of Education, Dept. of Education (CASE), faculty of Education and Psychology, M. S. University, Vadodara. He enlightened the participants by expounding on two thought provoking questions: Is the need of 21st century different than earlier ones? Are the problems of 21<sup>st</sup> century different? He said that to meet the challenges of the contemporary society teachers must have 5 C’s- cognition, care, concern, commitment and communication.

The resource person for session –1 on Global Awareness was Prof. Bino Paul, Associate Prof. School of Management & Labour Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He illuminated the need of education and added that learning systems need to integrate the knowledge rather than dissecting it to conventional categories like arts and science. The world over, argumentative–discourse based democratic governances such as India, continue to witness how the media and interconnected–shared texts and data contribute to changes in norms and laws, turning out to be a path of social innovation. He said that we need to give a rational thought to global issues from international, national and local point of view.

Prof. DR. Avinash Kohli, Faculty for Political Science at Ruparel College, Mumbai, was the resource person for session–2 on the sub–theme ‘Civic Literacy’. He said that the concept of literacy is changing. A literate of one field may be an illiterate in another field. He explained the concept of civic literacy from three dimensions viz., participation, tolerance and duty. He urged every individual to participate in the functioning of the state byeffectively exercising their fundamental duties and rights. He brought forth the qualities required to be a good politician in a participatory democracy.He provoked the participants to understand the local and global implications of civic decisions and how it is important for everyone to act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind.

Session–3 was based on Entrepreneurial Literacy and the expert invited was Prof. Ganapathy, Faculty for Organizational Behaviour, Human Resource Management, Learning and Development in various prestigious Management institutes like TISS. He brought out to the

audience the difference between an entrepreneur and a non-entrepreneur with the trait approach. He shared real life experiences and also carried out an activity with the participants. He said that an entrepreneur in his pursuit demonstrates certain traits that could have an impact on his enterprise. Through his interactive session he brought to limelight the essential assets of becoming a successful entrepreneur.

After the expert talk in every session there were paper presentations by the participants from various colleges. Overall 19 papers were accepted for presentation. Six papers were based on global awareness, seven papers on civic literacy and six papers on entrepreneurial literacy. Seven minutes were allotted for each presentation. The valedictory session included the participant reactions and the reading of the overview of all the sessions. All participants were awarded certificates after the valedictory session. Dr. Karuna Gupta, HOD- M. Ed., expressed her gratitude to everyone for making the seminar a grand success.

This seminar had enabled every participant to become aware of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to understand and address global issues, to explore entrepreneurial skills required to enhance workplace productivity and also to develop an attitude of participating effectively in civic life.