

## **Report on 'International Conference on Demographic Dividend: Skill development challenges in India'**

A one day International Seminar on **Demographic Dividend: Skill development challenges in India** was organized by the Department of Vocational Studies on 23rd March *in association with* Cochin University of Science and Technology DDU KAUSHAL Kendra. The Conference started at 9.30 a.m. on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 with the inaugural ceremony. Conference Chairman and Principal, MES College, Marampally, Dr. A. Biju welcomed the gathering, followed by the presidential address of Jb. M. A. Mohammed, Chairman, MES College Managing Committee. The conference was officially inaugurated by Dr. P. K. Abdul Aziz, former Vice Chancellor, Cochin University of Science and Technology. Inaugural speech by him addressed the key impressions on the conference topic: India is growing tremendously with producing most competitive graduates for the world. But India has the biggest challenge is that inequality in the economic status of the people. Though we are self-reliant in so many fields like food production we need to focus on making the graduates skilled and employable.

In the Keynote address, Cochin University of Science and Technology, DDU KAUSHAL Kendra Director Prof. (Dr.) K. A. Zakkariya states some significant elements on the topic Demographic Dividend: Skill Development Challenges in India. According to his viewpoints, India's biggest challenge is Incredible India. Though the opportunities for the more than 50% of our younger population are huge, we need the skilling process by the Government should be properly implemented.

Dr. Manzur Ali P. P., Coordinator, IQAC and Head of the Department of Biosciences delivered a thought provoking felicitation address. The inaugural session was ended with the thank you note by Conference Coordinator Smt. MeeraPrathapan

Dr. Alvin J Williams, Professor and chair, Mitchell College of Business, University of South Alabama, USA, Dr. Mohamed Ali Bin Hajha Mydin, CEO, Penang Skill Development Centre, Malaysia, Dr. Mathew J Manimala, Retd Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, Prof.(Dr) P S Sreejith, Dean Faculty of Engineering CUSAT, Sonia B Aguilar, Assistant Professor, Fort Hays State University, USA lead various sessions in the conference.

### **First Session**

Mr. Mohamed Ali Bin Hajha Mydin, CEO, Penang Skill Development Centre, Malaysia has emphasized some crucial questions and challenges regarding the conference discussion focus in his lecture. He imparted some notions regarding skill education implemented in Malaysia and suggested methods can be implemented in Indian context. Mr. Mohammed has talked about the transformation of manpower according to the technological advancements. Convergence of skills, technology, manpower should be the primary focus in the future education.

Session was chaired by Dr. George Joseph, Assistant Professor at Cochin University of Science & Technology DDU KAUSHAL Kendra

### **Technical session I**

The first technical session was graced with the presence of two eminent speakers: Prof. (Dr.) Mathew J. Manimala, Retired Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore and Ms. Sonia B. Aguliar, Assistant Professor, Fort Hays State University, USA. The session on 'Emerging Employment Scenario in India and Challenges in Skill

Education' was chaired by Mrs. Smarty Mukundan, Assistant Professor at Cochin University of Science & Technology DDU KAUSHAL Kendra. The first session communicated the subjects like skill education should be started from the very basic schooling. The main stream education and skilling should be synchronized. Soft skills should be implemented from the very beginning of education.

### **Technical session II**

The second technical session was mesmerizing with three speakers, Dr. Alvin J. Williams, Professor & Chair, Mitchell College of Business, University of South Alabama, USA, and Prof. (Dr.) P. S. Sreejith, Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Cochin University of Science and Technology. With the charisma and contributions of the speakers, the session has turned out to be a discussion platform for the areas like need for India to enhance human capital development for technology led economy as it is the fundamental resource we have. India has to reinforce value adding potential of higher education and need to initiate economic growth through technology, creativity and human capital development. It is important to combine human resources for India and especially Kerala. Quality in Technological education is an essential to level up the standards of education in India. System of screening in higher education choice is also necessary

This session was chaired by Dr. Renjini D., Associate Professor, Cochin University of Science and Technology, DDU KAUSHAL Kendra.

This International conference on "Demographic Dividend: Skill Development Challenges in India" discussed over the topics:

- Skill educational and Vocational training should be implemented from the primary education itself and it should be synchronized with main stream academics.

- Convergence of future technology, skills of younger generation and educators is necessary in the successful rendering of the skill education in India.
- Quality and Value based education is necessary for India for national development.

The event provided a valuable opportunity for exchanging national and international experiences on the main area of discussion and talk over the future developments in the field. Major conclusions from the conference are:

- Collaboration of efforts from Government, Educators and younger generation is needed in the proper implementation of Skill development in India.
- Special emphasis was given in many presentations to “soft skills” needed in standardization, such as the capability for cooperation, negotiation, communication, courage to approach people directly and the capability to quickly absorb knowledge and integrate different pieces and approaches into common frameworks

Around 70 participants from different countries and different states of India, including professors, research scholars, students and other academics together with industry representatives had participated in this conference.

Delegates had proposed some opinions on the discussed ideas,

- Implementation of soft skills should be implemented from the basic level of education
- Psychology of Indian parents should be changed according to the timely employment requirements of the country.

The conference had created a strong impact on the delegates regarding the soft skill challenges in India. Let’s hope this initiative will be a foundation for many serious and objected oriented studies in this field and that will contribute to the developmental activities of our country.

