

Rack your brain & think out of the box

Sumana Dutta Sarkar, Principal, Sachdeva Global School, Dwarka talks about the urgent need to shift from rote-learning methods to skill development ways as the students need an advanced education system for holistic development.

In an age where routine cognitive skills are being digitized or outsourced, the Indian education system with its focus on acquiring and evaluating knowledge is in an urgent need to be revamped and restructured. Despite all innovations in teaching-learning methods that have come up, our teaching is still far from interdisciplinary, students are still far from being encouraged to think out-of-the-box and evaluation systems are still based on rote-and-recall. Indian students are unable to fit the bill when the requirement is for effective communicators, motivated problem solvers, inspired thinkers and global leaders.

One of the major pitfalls of the current education pat-



tern is the lack of skill development and vocational education. This may not have been a critical factor until a few decades back when the demands of most of the professions were knowledge-centric. India has had a tradition of

skills being passed down through the family tree. A social division of labour also prevented a culture where diverse skills needed to be acquired as part of the education. But in today's scenario, where skill sets are the prime

decisive element in the employability of an individual, skill education becomes im-

Parents should foster dignity of labour amongst children. They shouldn't feel no taboo in taking up any vocation.

perative in the school system.

While most developed nations have successfully incorporated vocational education in high school curriculum, India is still reeling under the cultural mindset where vocational and technical training institutes are thought of as

second grade compared to university education. This attitudinal shift can only be achieved if skill building begins at the school level and has a close linkage with industry requirements. The school curriculum can be structured with primary education imparting the skills of communication, cooperation, collaboration, appreciation of the dignity of labour, sensibility and sensitivity; gradually paving way for more tangible skill sets in the middle and high school. The present system where certain skills are taken up at an elementary level in the form of hobby clubs needs to be more expensive to develop each student to a certain level of proficiency in at least one vocation. The role of parents as strategic partners

in this endeavour cannot be overlooked. Endeavours have to be made to make parents realize that skill development would add value and make school education relevant.

With almost 50 per cent of the country's population below 25 years of age and almost 10 per cent of them or 120 million being between the ages of 18 and 23, India can easily be a major global workforce. However, having a large number of educated youth with no skill sets and no employment is preventing this from becoming a reality. Skill training through school and college education, with proper support and mentorship by the industry will drive India's competitive and entrepreneurial spirit and transform it into a global power.