



## REPORT

A State-level webinar on Digital Education was organized on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, as part of the Students' Week celebration organized by Higher Educational Institutions all over the state. It was a joint effort by the Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA) and the Centre for Online Education (CoEdn) of Netaji Subhas Open University.

The session was designed to accommodate one Keynote presentation and a few internal faculty presentations. Owing to time constraints, papers from faculty outside NSOU were not invited. Responding to our call, three papers were submitted by the members of faculty from NSOU. 268 participants including faculties and learners attended this State Level Webinar.



The webinar set off on the zoom platform at 7:05 PM. In his welcome address Prof. Anirban Ghosh, Director-CIQA stressed upon the imperative need for embracing Digital Education. Prof. Someswar Bhowmik, Officer-in-charge, Centre for Online Education, underscored the need for keeping pace with technological progress without losing sight of the humane aspect of education. The keynote presentation was delivered by Shantanu Rooj, the CEO of TeamLease Edtech Limited. He enlivened the proceedings by making an impassioned plea for embracing Digital Education sooner rather than later. Charting the history of technological evolutions since the Industrial Revolution, he not only highlighted the benefits that the humankind has derived from these, but also stressed upon the shrinking timelines of major paradigm shifts. He also said that besides its big achievements technology has managed pervade every sphere of human life. And education is no exception to this permeation process. Consequently, the definition of education has changed, in his opinion. Education no longer is confined to acquiring information,

knowledge and deployment methods focusing on a particular discipline or skill-set. The modern world is veering towards multi-tasking performers, who will constantly upskill and reskill themselves responding to the demands of changing time. In this reorientation process digital education will come handy, with its accessibility (with potential for worldwide delivery), flexibility (freedom from fetters of time), and above all democratic approach. The need of the hour is to formulate appropriate pedagogy and methodology with an open mind.



**DIFFERENT INSTRUCTION DELIVERY MODES**

Teaching Mode	In person	Online	Real Time
Face to face	✓	✗	✓
Online (Synchronous)	✗	✓	✓
Online (Asynchronous)	✗	✓	✗
Hybrid	✓	(Majority) ✓	(In pers (Online) ✓
Blended	✓	✓	(Simultaneous) ✓
Hybrid Flexible	✓	✓	(In Pers (Online) ✓

Faculty presentation began with Papiya Upadhyay, Ph.D. *Assistant Professor of Education, SoE*. In her paper, titled *Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) in the Pandemic: A Synoptic View*, she gave an overview of the various Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) strategies adopted by the teachers under the impact the Covid-19 pandemic without any planning and preparedness. She stressed upon the fact that the majority of teachers belonged to the group of digital immigrants and that they faced severe challenges during teaching remotely. Finally, she reviewed the relative role of different technologies used by the teachers as ERT devices—authoring tools, delivery tools (synchronous and asynchronous), assessment tools, and media of instructions. The inference also highlights the benefits of ERT and its future prospects.

Dr. Sumana Bandyopadhyay, Assistant Professor, English Language Teaching from the School of Humanities, in her paper, titled *Digital Education and English Language Teaching*, shared her experience of conducting a new course, Advance Diploma in English Language Teaching (ADELT) at the postgraduate level under the discipline of English Language Teaching. With the onset of pandemic protocol, the course was conducted on digital classrooms with engaging activities, interactive assessments, comprehensive lesson plans and hands on labs. She also did not fail to mention that participation of students on the digital platform was not 100% due to various reasons. The absentees depended on ICT tools and the e-materials from the Learning Management System.



The evening's final presentation was by Dr. Srabanti Choudhuri, Assistant Professor in Sociology under the School of Social Sciences. Her paper, titled *Accessing Digital education in Singabad Tilason, a border village of Habibpur Block of Malda district: The Challenges ahead*, centered on her case study in a remote village of West Bengal. The village has multiple levels of marginalization—geographical remoteness from the state's core areas, its location in the international border area, rampant poverty and mostly socially backward population. With digital education now a compelling element of the National Educational Policy, she was out studying the measures taken by the schools there to connect students to digital education, by wringing changes in curriculum and methodology. She also made some policy recommendations.

The four presentations covered a total time of one hour and ten minutes. From the extempore responses it was obvious that these presentations were very well received. The presentations were followed by a Q & A session for about half an hour. It was then that we realized that students from all parts of the state had joined the session.

Now that an encouraging beginning has been made, more such sessions on Digital / Online Education should be organized.

---Prepared by: Prof. (Dr.) Someswar Bhowmik  
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