



## **A Brief Report on National Webinar on 'Gender and Society in the Pandemic'**

**Organized by**

**Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA)  
NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY (NSOU), Kolkata**

**On 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020, 3 –5 PM**

***Web Platform: Google MEET***

### **The Beginning:**

On behalf of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA), Netaji Subhas Open University, Dr. Papiya Upadhyay greeted distinguished speakers, officers, Directors, faculty members, staff members of NSOU and all esteemed participants that formed the august gathering of the One-Day National Webinar on 'Gender and Society in the Pandemic' hosted on Google-Meet web platform.

**Participants:** Around 170 participants logged in for the virtual event.

The event flow progressed through three sessions:

### **Inaugural session: 3-3:15 PM**

Smt. Ananya Mitra, Deputy Registrar (Admin), NSOU & Presiding Officer, ICC was invited to deliver the Welcome Address. She extended a deep welcome to one and all in particular and extended a warm welcome to the learned gathering. Prof. Anirban Ghosh, Director, CIQA, NSOU delivered the thematic Introduction of the webinar in a premeditated way.

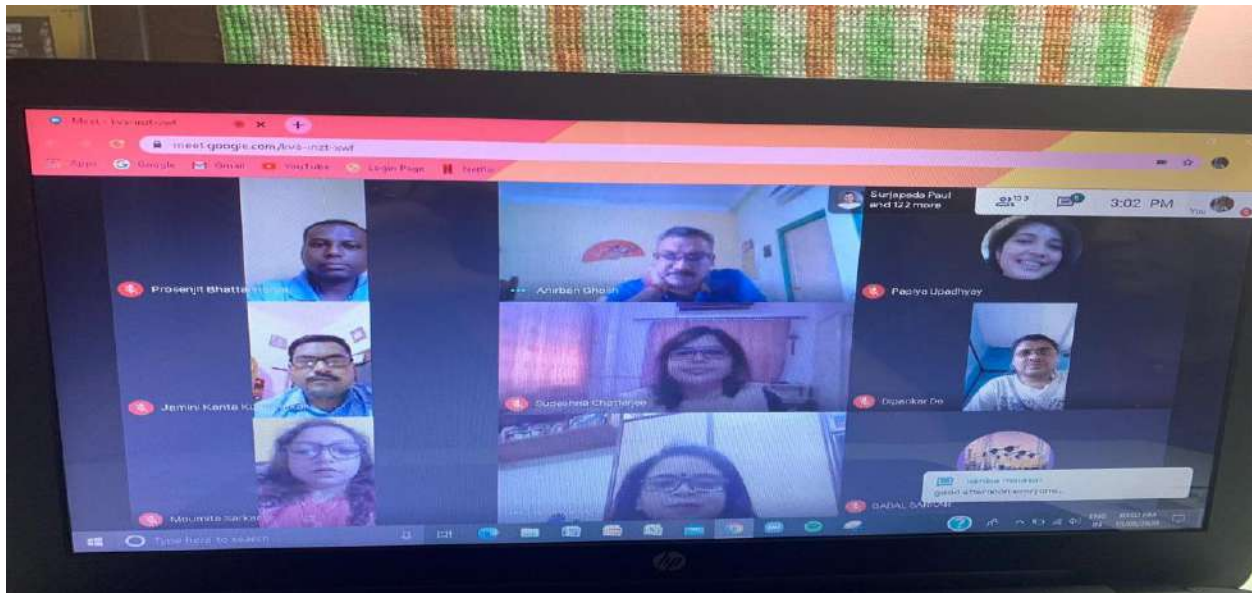
### **Plenary Session: 3:20-4:20PM**

The theme set the pace to discuss on the gender related issues that took an exception in this time of panic and ordeal. The issues of physical distancing due to lockdown & pandemic influenced the gender biasness of a society. To reflect upon such pertinent context, the webinar attained its required tempo through resourceful deliberations from the speakers.

The first speaker of the plenary session, Dr. Sohini Chakraborty was introduced by the moderator. She is an Asoka fellow, sociologist, dance activist, and dance movement therapist. She is the founder/director of Kolkata Sanved. A pioneer of Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) in India and South Asia. She introduced DMT as a tool for psycho-social rehabilitation to provide a fresh approach both in DMT and social development sector.

The title of her deliberation was 'Increase of Violence during pandemic and its impact on mental health'. She articulated on Gender equality as an equal opportunity for all. Women make up a little more than half the world's population but represent only 40 percent of the global labour force. She stressed upon "all individuals should have equal opportunities". But there lay huge challenges to achieving equality. Dr. Chakraborty categorically put into record society's expectations for girls and women can limit their opportunities across social, economic and political life. Across the

globe, women and girls still have lower status, fewer opportunities and lower income, less control over resources, and less power than men and boys. She further added, ‘If we want to envision a gender equal society, we need to begin breaking gender stereotypes in personal life and practice gender equality daily’. It was also established through her deliberation that everyone must believe in women’s rights issues, gender equality and need to internalise the process. This in return can only ensure respect for women and move towards creating that equal space. It was a very enlightening and inspiring session. The bold propositions by Dr. Chakraborty instilled a ray of true hope among all to seek for equity and gender in everyday life.



The next speaker Dr. Barnana Guha Thakurta (Banerjee), was next introduced to the august gathering. She is the Head and an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science, School of Social Sciences, Netaji Subhas Open University and Member, ICC. She has edited a number of volumes and has authored several articles in various national and international publications. Her area of interest includes Gender Studies, Political Theory and Communist Movement. It was an academic privilege to listen to Dr Barnana Guha Thakurta Banerjee who deepened all with her topic of deliberation on ‘Covid and Coexistence: Rising Violence against Women in India’

She fervently touched upon how both pandemic and domestic violence questions the principle of coexistence in human domain. The issues have affected globally and became a serious concern for our existence. The recent experience of increasing number of violence against women has gradually become a topic of popular media and academic interest. She supplemented how Indian domestic violence against women can be analysed only when they are placed into a greater context of a culture. Her speech ardently took the multidimensional aspect of violence against women in India and argued how it requires the combined effort of the state, judiciary and society to combat it.

Dr. Papiya Upadhyay, Member, ICC & Assistant Professor, School of Education, NSOU moderated the entire session very effectively. She summed up the two enliven deliberations. The

talks addressed that ‘Gendered Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic in India’ is a need to recognize the extent to which this pandemic affects women and men differently in order to understand how physical and mental health affects different individuals and society at large. Myriad forms of gendered responses to the pandemic are escalating. The already stigmatized women’s role in the public sphere is aggravated by the epidemic. Post Covid-19 situation may bring more and more behavioral and mental changes among women with huge post-traumatic stress. Policy decisions need to articulate gendered concerns during public health emergencies because gender-sensitive pandemic planning may substantially mitigate these concerns.

### **Special Address:**

Smt. Rahima Khatun, Secretary, Nari-o-Sishu Kalyan Kendra, Bauria, Howrah and Member, ICC, NSOU was invited to say few words on the ground reality of women facing these days. Smt Khatun is working in the field for more than a decade and has hands-on experience on the grassroot causes and ways and means to cope and recoup with it. Her short speech was motivating and empowering to all attendees as she talked on some bare truths prevailing and plaguing the society, exceedingly in this despondency.

### **Interactive session: 4:25-5:00 PM**

The plenary session was followed by the interactive session. Numerous questions/ observations were raised and aptly addressed by the eminent speakers and audience/ participants one at a time. It was a vibrant session lauded with relatable discussion and appreciation. The resource speakers had ice breaking deliberations & threadbare discussions on emerging issues on gender and society in the pandemic. Prof. Anirban Ghosh, Director, CIQA coordinated the whole session very efficiently.

Sri. Prosenjit Bhattacharya, Dy Director, RC, NSOU & Convener, ICC proposed the Vote of thanks.

Smt. Ananya Mitra, Deputy Registrar (Admin), NSOU & Presiding Officer, ICC came up with post webinar announcements. Feedback link was given in the chat box to all the participants for due fill in and submission. Certificate dispatch was assured to be emailed to all the registered participants within fifteen days from the completion of the event.

### **Closing: 5:15 PM**

Prof. Anirban Ghosh, Director, CIQA formally closed the event with best wishes and hopes of meeting in such academic gathering in the days to come.

### **Programme Schedule:**



**Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)  
and  
Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA),  
Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU)**

Presents

**A National Webinar on 'Gender and Society in the Pandemic'**  
On 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020, 3-5 PM

**Programme Highlights**

**Join the Link  
from 2:45 PM**

**Inaugural Session: 3-3:15 PM**

**Welcome Address:** Smt. Ananya Mitra, Deputy Registrar (Admin)  
& Presiding Officer, ICC, NSOU  
**Introducing the Theme:** Dr. Anirban Ghosh, Director, CIQA, SPS, SVS  
Coordinator CLL, SWAYAM, NSOU

**Plenary Session: 3:20-4:20 PM**

**Moderator:** Dr. Papiya Upadhyay, Member, ICC & Assistant Professor,  
School of Education, NSOU  
**Speakers:** Dr. Sohini Chakraborty, Founder Director, Kolkata Sanved  
Dr. Barnana Guha Thakurta Banerjee, Associate Professor  
of Political Science, School of Social Sciences &  
Member, ICC, NSOU

**Interactive Session: 4.25-4.50 PM**

**Vote of Thanks:** Sri. Prosenjit Bhattacharya, Dy Director, RC &  
Convener, ICC, NSOU

**Join us through Google-Meet**

Please register here: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc--YLu\\_2u1WqYKkaoDrdFwI02VprnRaZLNmotVg-XP-p7BSg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc--YLu_2u1WqYKkaoDrdFwI02VprnRaZLNmotVg-XP-p7BSg/viewform)

E-Certificate will be provided to all active registered participants after submitting the feedback