



NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Internal Complaints Committee

DD-26, SECTOR- I, SALT LAKE CITY, KOLKATA-700064

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Report of the Celebration

Of

International Women's Day 2023

Organised by

Internal Complaints Committee

NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY

Date: 29 March 2023

Venue: Seminar Hall, Netaji Subhas Open University,
DD-26, Salt Lake Sector -I, Kolkata - 700064

In commemoration of International Women's Day 2023, the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) of Netaji Subhas Open University has organised successfully a one-day deliberation on "Gender Equality in Digital Economy." on March 29, 2023 at the Seminar Hall of DD-26, Salt Lake Sector -I, Kolkata - 700064.

➤ **The major objective of the programme were:**

- To create an open academic space to discuss gender sensitization among the learners, scholars, faculties, and other individuals.
- To discuss the progress made towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.
- To analyse the status of gender equality in the digital economy.

- All the learners of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in all disciplines, research scholars, interested academicians, officers, faculties and dignitaries from other institutions grace the occasion.



Dr. Barnali Roy Choudhury

Dr. Barnali Roy Choudhury, Assistant Professor, Library and Information Science, NSOU and also member of ICC, set the ball rolling for the seminar on "Gender Equality in Digital Economy" first by delivering her introductory speech and then by introducing the speakers (Professor Sharmistha Chatterjee, Professor of English Language Teaching, NSOU and Dr. Srabanti Choudhuri, Assistant Professor in Sociology, School of Social Sciences, NSOU and.) to the audience.

➤ **Keynote Address:**



Professor Sharmistha Chatterjee

Professor Sharmistha Chatterjee, Professor of English Language Teaching NSOU, delivered her keynote address on the theme “Gender Equality in Digital Economy.” Prof. Chatterjee spoke on ‘Digital equality for better productivity in Higher Educational Institutions’

The keynote lecture began with the fact that women in India are indeed participating more in online education and that digitization has reached the remotest corners of rural India. Yet women remain underutilised and are forgotten as a workforce in the Pan-India scenario. The discussion went on to sketch the skewed picture and position of women in Higher Education too. While women continued to educate themselves, in the best of scientific education and digital practices, the growth of women faculties was slow and froze beyond their midcareer in HEIs. Dr Chatterjee tried to trace the causes and the context, of such a scenario. Possible solutions were mentioned, namely handholding of the late career women by early career women and vice versa. The need of networking and support was hinted at. Also the various facilities especially training for becoming digitally abled, was mentioned.

➤ **Technical Session:**



Dr. Srabanti Choudhury

Dr. Srabanti Choudhury, Assistant Professor in Sociology, School of Social Sciences, NSOU, delivered for her presentation for the technical session on “ICTs in education: Erasing Gender Gaps in Digital Bharat?”. Dr. Choudhury begin with the question- Are we prepared enough to adopt ICT Programmes at the primary and secondary levels without addressing the basic questions of diverse needs, social ecology and regressive mind sets that still question the need of a girl’s education?

According to the speaker, the policy bears no sign of evidence based research. It does not come up with a sound policy process that could have helped planners make better informed decisions. The policy is too far-fetched and seems divorced of the grass-root reality.

The ICT Policy of the state seemed dominated by an over-arching ideology which wants to see all sections in the society in order. This is too functional a policy which does not keep any room for contention or engagement. As if the objective of the policy is to show that it works immensely well. There have been allied regulatory bodies to provide a stock of data that is keen to show that everything is fine.

What the policy does not talk is about gender based online violence that ICT tools subsume. According to the speaker, the state must be careful while entering a new eco-system with its digital apparatus so that it may invoke an altogether new form of gender based violence that may affect a girl’s school attendance, well-being and learning.



Question-answer session

After the presentation, a brainstorming was organized in which several queries and suggestions from the participants evolved which were adequately addressed by the speaker to their satisfaction.

At the end of the session, Dr. Barnana Guha Thakurta (Banerjee) offered a vote of



Dr. Barnana Guha Thakurta
(Banerjee)

thanks to the speakers, the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, directors of different schools of studies, officers, faculties, research scholars, technical assistants, supporting staff, and all participants for making the event a success.

- The members of ICC Smt. Ananya Mitra, Jt. Registrar (Administration & Presiding Officer, ICC), NSOU, Prof. (Dr.) Kaushiki Dasgupta, Vice Chairman, West Bengal State Council of Higher Education, Dr. Barnana Guha Thakurta, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, NSOU, Dr. Barnali Roy Choudhury, Assistant Professor, Department of Library & Information Science,

NSOU, Smt. Roshni Mukherjee, Public Relation Officer, NSOU, Shri Rudra Kanta Biswas, Personal Assistant, Registrar Department, NSOU, Dr. Manoj Kumar Haldar, Assistant Professor of Political Science, NSOU looked forward to organise such sessions in future.
