



Netaji Subhas Open University

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One Day Focus Group Discussion

on

‘Impact of ICT Support on the Tribal Learners of NSOU’

[Under the NSOU funded Research Project - ‘Impact of ICT Support on the Tribal Learners of NSOU’]

Organized by

Department of Education
School of Education



19th March 2023, Sunday

Banwarilal Bhalotia College,

Ushagram, Asansol, Pin – 713303, West Bengal,

Report Prepared by

Dr. Parimal Sarkar, Assistant Professor, SoE, NSOU & (P.I)

Programme Report

Programme File:

Date: 19th March 2023, Sunday; 10:30 am-5pm

Venue: Banwarilal Bhalotia College, Study Centre of NSOU, Asansol, West Bengal

Mode: Face to Face

Participants: Around 50; 39 students from the tribal community (Male - 17, Female - 22), Academic Counsellors, LSC staff and University Representatives.

Nature of Participations: 39 students enrolled in different disciplines and various academic sessions of PG & UG Programmes of NSOU joined the Focus Group Discussion.

The Rationale of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD):

The NSOU-funded Research project entitled, 'Impact of ICT Support on the Tribal Learners of NSOU' is permitted to Dr. Parimal Sarkar as Principal Investigator (P.I). For accomplishing some of the objectives of the study, a mixed-method approach was imperative for a better picture and to understand the technical know-hows *vis a vis* impact of ICT on tribal learners. 'Focus Group Discussion' technique was chosen for capturing qualitative data and analysis thereof. In spite of introducing different amendments, the desired progress of tribal students is not achieved till now. Economic constraints hamper their studies and sometimes compel them to withdraw from the education only to secure two meals per day. During the Pandemic, their economic situations got worse day by day, their financial crisis touched the sky, and they were out of the premises of higher education. In this critical situation ICT services that are provided by NSOU were a blessing to continue with their aspirations. To grasp the idea of how far ICT leaves its impact on NSOU learners, Focus Group Discussion was initiated. This is the First Focus Group Discussion that was held in NSOU Learner Support Centre (LSC), Banwarilal Bhalotia College, Asansol.

Objectives of the FGD:

Tribal students lag behind other communities in different aspects. As they are in open education platform, self-motivation is the maximum need. Apart from that, NSOU is also concerned about providing assistance through ICT to stand beside those self-motivated learners in varied ways. Again ICT can provide pivotal support to physically challenged, and mentally challenged children who come to the LSC as hard to carry on learning. Even

sometimes, social liabilities and gender discrimination endorse hazards in the process of learning. Besides that, when a learner knows about getting a helping hand always beside himself, his motivation level, aspiration level and self-confidence get an impetus and boost. In order to explore this perception of the impact of ICT, the following objectives are considered:

1. To assess the opportunities of ICT Support for the Tribal Learners of NSOU.
2. To recommend measures for improvement regarding ICT Support for the Tribal Learners of NSOU.

Methodology:

FGD principles were followed to conduct this face-to-face session. Students were made accustomed to different benefits of ICT that are provided to the Learners from NSOU end. Then 5 groups were formed consisting of 8 students in each group (namely A, B, C, D, & E). Responses were also collected from various stakeholders of this programme such as Centre coordinators, ICT Support Providers, Counsellors of NSOU etc. Responses were collected through an Open-ended Questionnaire and Group-Discussion.

Brief Description of the FGD:

Registration:

At the beginning of the session, registration of every discussant was done and they were welcomed by honouring with a pen and a flower to build warmth and rapport.

Inaugural Session:

Dr. Chanchal Kumar Biswas, the Co-ordinator of the LSC, Banwarilal Bhalotia College inaugurated the session in a heartfelt way that made the rhythm of the whole session in a single tune. The Principal Investigator, Dr. Parimal Sarkar (Assistant Professor, SoE, NSOU) provided the necessary information about this focus group discussion session and asserted the importance of this discussion. He also briefly focussed on the reasons to organise this discussion session. Dr. Jagabondhu Nandi (Senior Academic Counsellor of NSOU & Former Coordinator of Burdwan Raj College, NSOU Study Centre) asserted about the importance of ICT in the present teaching-learning scenario and congratulated Dr. Parimal Sarkar for conducting the project in this topic. After that, a special address to ICT services and a brainstorming demonstration on the ICT services of NSOU were conducted by two Resource

Persons of Team Lease, NSOU in an appreciating way. Then, necessary bits of help were provided at the end by Sankar Bairagi, Project Assistant, SoE, NSOU, Subhasree Pal, Research Scholar & Academic Counsellor of SoE, NSOU and Santu Biswas, (Academic Counsellor of NSOU & SACT-I of Krishnagar DL College) to conduct this FDP session. Mr Sankar Bairagi conveyed the formal vote of thanks at the end of the session.



Pic – 1: Welcome address by the NSOU Co-ordinator of B.B College.



Pic – 2: Special Address by the Dr. Jagabondhu Nandi (Senior Academic Counsellor of NSOU & Former Co-ordinator of NSOU Study Centre, Burdwan Raj College)

Technical Session:

Dr. Parimal Sarkar conducted the whole session and he with Subhasree Pal presented the tool and techniques of FDG to the discussants of 5 groups. Groups' activities were elaborated below:

- Group Activity I: Provide the answer to the Open-ended Questionnaire
- Group Activity II: Open Forum Discussion and recording of Discussion by the group leaders

The Focus Groups (Discussants List)

S.L No	NAME	GENDER	GROUP
1.	MALLIKA KORA	FEMALE	GROUP – A
2.	RIYA TIRKI	FEMALE	
3.	SUPRIYA KORA	FEMALE	
4.	MADHUMITA KORA	FEMALE	
5.	CHHABI MARANDI	FEMALE	
6.	PRADIP MURMU	MALE	
7.	MANGAL MAJHI	MALE	
8.	MANDIRA TUDU	FEMALE	
9.	SARMISTA DHANGAR	FEMALE	GROUP – B
10.	SUKUNATH HEMBRAM	MALE	
11.	BABON SOM	MALE	
12.	SACHIN KORA	MALE	
13.	BAPI ORANG	MALE	
14.	PURNIMA HANSDA	FEMALE	
15.	KAJAL BESRA	FEMALE	
16.	SAWAN MURMU	MALE	
17.	RAJEN MURMU	MALE	GROUP – C
18.	SANJANA BASKI	FEMALE	
19.	PINKI KORA	FEMALE	
20.	RAJMONI HEMBRAM	FEMALE	
21.	PRIYA MURMU	FEMALE	
22.	JABA KORA	FEMALE	
23.	BABITA MARANDI	FEMALE	
24.	SUJATA MEJHAM	FEMALE	GROUP – D
25.	ANITA HEMBRAM	FEMALE	
26.	SANJIT MURMU	MALE	

27.	SUDIP MADDI	MALE	GROUP – E
28.	LAKHIRAM MAJHI	MALE	
29.	MANGAL HEMBROM	MALE	
30.	SANJOY BESRA	MALE	
31.	BHADRBATI MUDI	FEMALE	
32.	HIRACHAND MAJHI	MALE	
33.	MALLIKA TUDU	FEMALE	
34.	BASANTI KORA	FEMALE	
35.	KANIKA MANDI	FEMALE	
36.	PRATIMA KORA	FEMALE	
37.	BAPI MURMU	MALE	
38.	PRADIP HEMBROM	MALE	
39.	SURAJ HANSDA	MALE	



Pic – 3



Pic – 4

(Pic-3 & 4: Discussants with the Principal Investigator (PI), Organising Team members and Resource Persons)



(Pic – 5: LMS Sensitization by Resource Persons, Team Lease EdTech Pvt Ltd, ICT support unit of NSOU.)



(Pic – 6 : Closing Ceremony)

Closure:

The nutshell of the whole day was summarized by Dr. Parimal Sarkar. He encouraged every discussant to actively participate in the programme. A feedback form containing three questions was given to them on their personal WhatsApp number to fill up the feedback through Google forms. A hard copy of the participation certificate was given to every discussant at the end. The whole session was successfully moderated by Dr. Parimal Sarkar.

Analysis and Interpretation of Feedback:

Feedback forms from 30 discussants were received which contained 75% of the total response. Among discussants, 90% (27), enumerated this discussion as excellent and helpful.

Figure 1 depicted that picture.

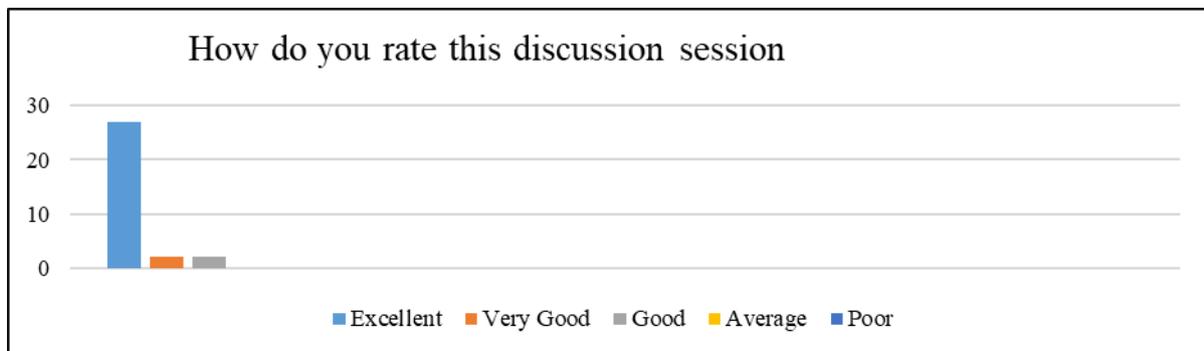


Fig 1: Source Author (Google form analysis)

80% (24) discussants believed that ICT excellently plays the role of boon in their teaching-learning process through open distance learning mode. (Fig 2)

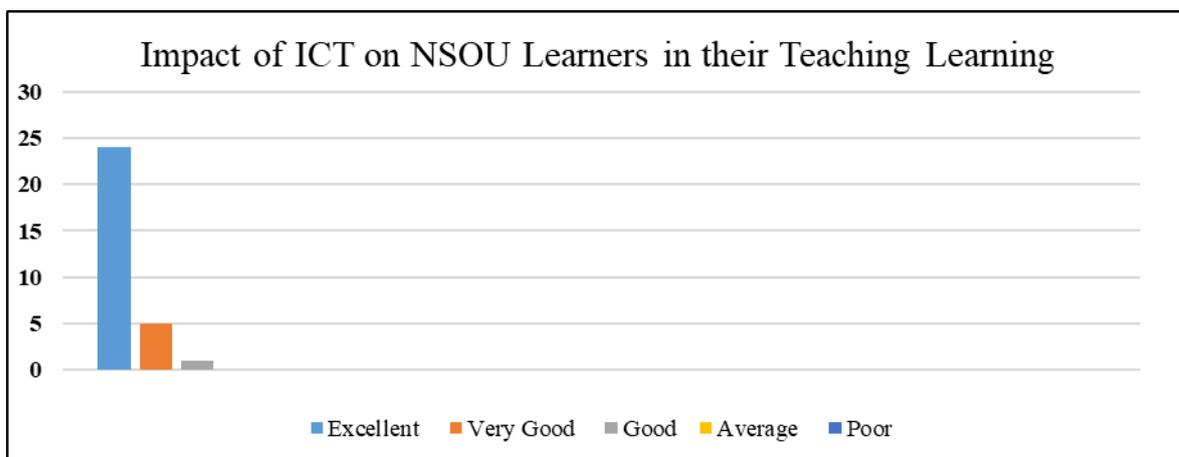


Fig 2: Source Author (Google form analysis)

All the discussants agreed to take part in this type of discussion in the near future as many new things were opportunities to learn through this discussion process. Few of them requested to initiate this type of discussion process at the beginning of the session, so they can know about the ICT services that are provided at NSOU end and from the beginning of every session, they can reap the utmost benefits from ICT services. (Fig 3)

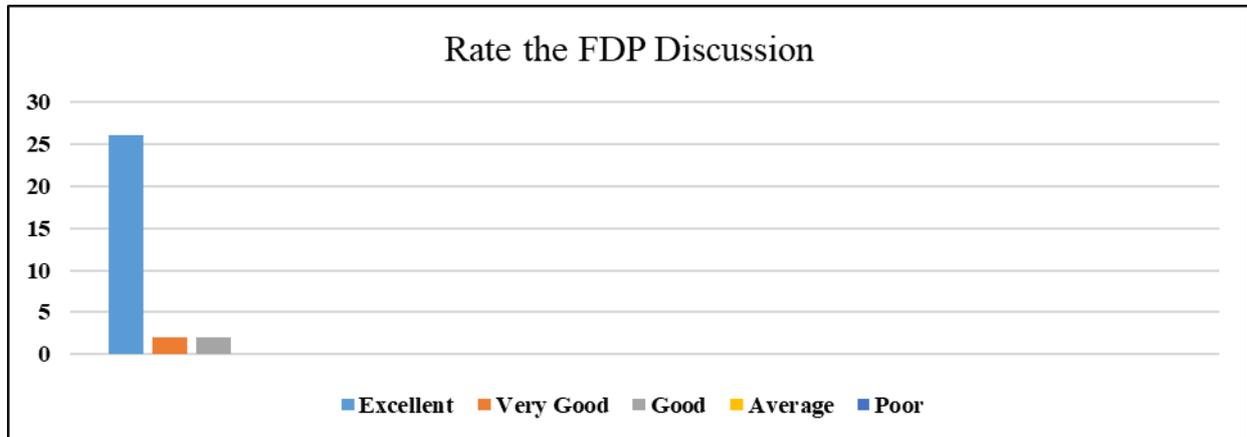


Fig 3: Source: Author (Google form analysis)

Recommendations:

- An instruction brochure on ICT must be provided at the beginning of each session
- A demonstration video playing on ICT usage in induction sessions will be a great help.
- Free Wi-Fi at the Study Centre will be enhanced the usages rate of ICT tools of tribal students
- One window workshop including all study centres on ICT should be initiated for practical experience of using different tools of ICT.
- Special scholarship should be provided to the tribal learners to purchase ICT gadgets.