Netaji Subhas Open University

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'NSOU LMS SENSITIZATION FOR TRIBAL STUDENTS'

&

One Day Focus Group Discussion
On

'Impact of ICT Support on the Tribal Learners of NSOU'

[Under the NSOU funded Research Project]

Organized by

Department of Education
School of Education

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25th March 2023, Saturday
Nari Siksha Samity 'Vidyasagar Bani Bhawan'
Jhargram, West Bengal

Report Prepared by

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

Programme Report

Programme File:

Date: 25th March 2023, Saturday; 10:30 am-5pm

Venue: Nari Siksha Samity, Study Centre of NSOU, Jhargram, West Bengal

Mode: Face to Face

Participants: Around 63; 48 students from the tribal community (Male - 13, Female - 35), Academic Counsellors, LSC staffs and University Representatives.

Nature of Participations: 48 enrolled tribal Students in various academic sessions of Vocational 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 **Second Focus Group Discussion** that was held in NSOU Learner Support Centre (LSC), Nari Siksha Samity, Jhargram, West Bengal.

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 6 groups were formed consisting of 8 students in each group (namely A, B, C, D, E & F). Responses were collected from various stakeholders of this programme such as Centre coordinator, ICT Support Providers, Counsellors of NSOU etc. through Open-ended Questionnaires and Group-Discussion.

Brief Description of the 2nd FGD:

Registration:

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

Inaugural Session:

Smt. Rita Banerjee, the Co-ordinator of the LSC, Nari Siksha Samity, 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. 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, Shantanu Saha, Ph.D. Student of SoE, NSOU to conduct this FGD session. Mr Sankar Bairagi conveyed the formal vote of thanks at the end of the session.

Pic – 1: Welcome address by Smt. Rita Banerjee, Co-ordinator of the Learner Support Centre (LSC), Nari Siksha Samity.

Technical Session:

Dr Parimal Sarkar conducted the whole session and he with Shantanu Saha presented tools and techniques of FGD to the discussants divided into 6 groups. Group activities are elucidated 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

Discussants List

1	SANGHAMITRA SAREN	FEMALE	
2	SRIMOTI SOREN	FEMALE	
3	SUPARNA SAREN	FEMALE	
4	SONALI MURMU	FEMALE	**Group - A**
5	SONALI BASKEY	FEMALE	
6	MONIKA HANSDA	FEMALE	
7	BUJEN HANSDA	MALE	
8	KHANDERAM BESRA	MALE	
9	SUKLAL SOREN	MALE	**Group - B**
10	ANIMA TUDU	FEMALE	

11	SABITRI MANDI	FEMALE	
12	SUBHRA MURMU	FEMALE	
13	RAJIB HANSDA	MALE	
14	SUBRATA HANSDA	MALE	
15	GANESH CHANDRA HANSDA	MALE	
16	GURU CHARAN MURMU	MALE	
17	MANOTOSH HANSDA	MALE	**Group - C**
18	BIRENDRANATH BASKEY	MALE	
19	ANNAPURNA HANSDA	FEMALE	
20	SUJATA MANDI	FEMALE	
21	MANU SING	FEMALE	
22	CHANCHALA HANSDA	FEMALE	
23	MAMONI HEMBRAM	FEMALE	
24	DULI MURMU	FEMALE	
25	RIMJHIM MURMU	FEMALE	**Group - D**
26	SOMBARI MURMU	FEMALE	
27	KAJAL HANSDA	FEMALE	
28	MUKTA KISKU	FEMALE	
29	SAGARIKA SAREN	FEMALE	
30	SARATHI MANDI	FEMALE	
31	MITRI SAREN	FEMALE	
32	SAROJINI MANDI	FEMALE	
33	SONALI KISKU	FEMALE	**Group - E**
34	SARADA KISKU	FEMALE	
35	PURNIMA MURMU	FEMALE	
36	NAMITA HANSDA	FEMALE	
37	MOUSUMI MURMU	FEMALE	
38	KALPANA TUDU	FEMALE	
39	BAHAMANI HEMBRAM	FEMALE	
40	PURNIMA BESRA	FEMALE	
41	SABITRI MURMU	FEMALE	**Group - F**
42	BITHIKA SAREN	FEMALE	
43	BUDHU MURMU	MALE	
44	GURUBANI MURMU	FEMALE	
45	INDRANI BASKEY	FEMALE	
46	KOUSHIK MANDI	MALE	
47	SOUMEN MURMU	MALE	
48	SUKUMAR BASKEY	MALE	

Pic – 2 & 3: Discussants with the Principal Investigator (PI), Organising Team members and Resource Persons)

(Pic – 4: LMS Sensitization by Resource Persons, Team Lease EdTech Pvt. Ltd., ICT support unit of NSOU)

(Pic – 5: Closing Session)

Closing Session:

Dr. Parimal Sarkar, Assistant Professor of Education at NSOU, successfully moderated the entire session. During the programme, he encouraged every discussant to actively participate. At the end of the day, he summarized the key points of the discussion. Participants were also requested to share their valuable feedback by responding to three questions, which would be sent to them through a Google Form on their personal WhatsApp number. Finally, every discussant received a hard copy of their participatory certificate for active involvement in the day-long session.

Analysis and Interpretation of Feedback:

Feedback forms from 39 discussants were received which contained 81% of the total responses. Out of which, 92% (36), enumerated this discussion as excellent and helpful (Fig-1).
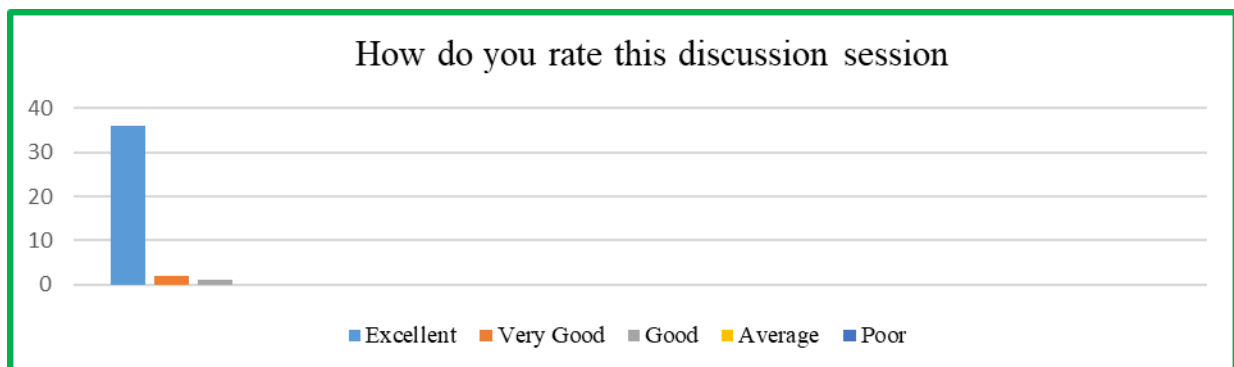
Figure 1.

Fig 1: Source Author

84% (33) discussants believed that ICT excellently plays the role of boon in their teaching-learning process through open distance learning mode. (Fig 2)

Impact of ICT on NSOU Learners in their Teaching Learning

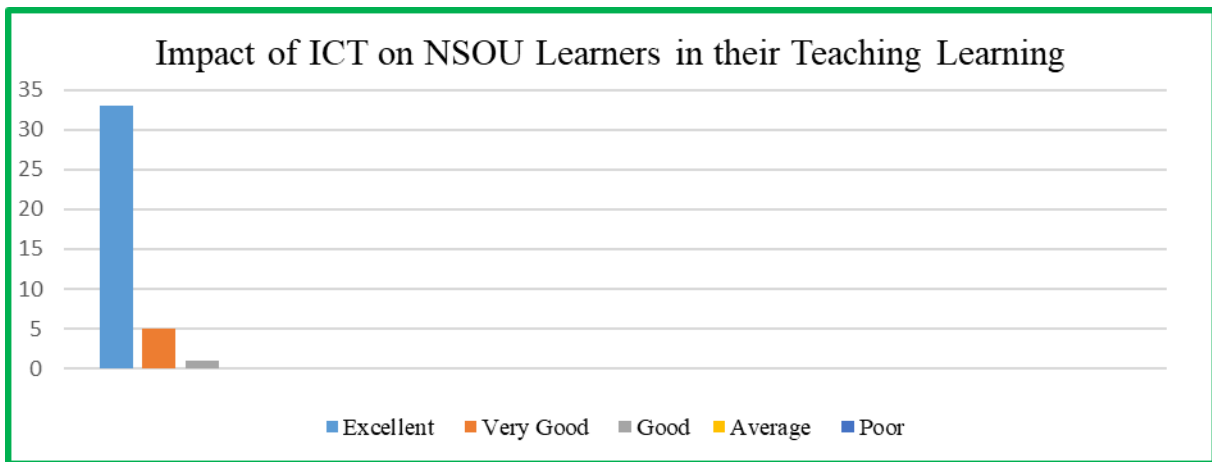■ Excellent ■ Very Good ■ Good ■ Average ■ Poor

Fig 2: Source Author

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)

Rate the FDP Discussion

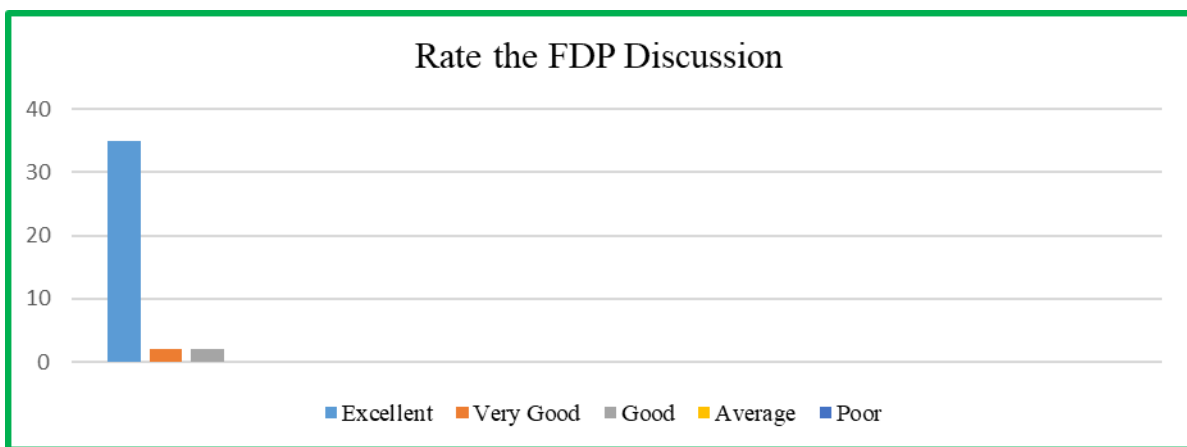■ Excellent ■ Very Good ■ Good ■ Average ■ Poor

Fig 3: Source: Author

Recommendations:

- An instruction brochure on ICT must be provided at the beginning of each academic session.
- A demonstration video playing on ICT usage in induction sessions will be a great help.

- Free Wi-Fi at the Learner Support 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.

- Features such as screen readers, captions, and transcripts may be included with online study materials for better accessibility.

- Regular training sessions can be organized for students to help them improve their ICT skills.

- Provide online collaboration tools, such as video conferencing and instant messaging, to encourage peer-to-peer interaction and collaborative learning.

- Use of social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, to provide students with instant updates on course material, assignments, and other relevant information.

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