

Technology, youth and career: a paradigm shift*

The aim of the seminar was to provide a platform to young scientists to share their views and ideas on the latest advancement of technology and its cumulative impact on recent education system showing development and opportunity in their career forming. The event witnessed a good number of participants from various reputed universities, colleges and educational institutions from different parts of India from various fields of studies. Several ideas were discussed mainly on how this technological advancement transformed our lives, how it affected and influenced human living, what will be the future of this technology, its positive or negative impacts, etc.

Shikhar Kumar Sarma (Cotton College State University) emphasized on how paradigm shift has led the young generation of the world to use latest technology. He said, 'To be very much specific is what the approach should be today'. There are also enough sources of information ready to provide any kind of knowledge we are searching for. The challenge today is not to have access to information, but how to grab that information, choose the correct one and use it for further use. An individual should have knowledge, information and some skill to be able to benefit any organization. He said that the fundamental approach for any youth to reach the topmost point in career is not to imitate others, but be unique and be happy in every step of life and keep striving to achieve more.

Bharat Bhushan (DEB-UGC, New Delhi) delivered the keynote address on 'Information and communication technology in distance education'. He spoke on the theme of the seminar saying India has abundant resources in the form of youth and it becomes the responsibility of the nation to give proper education and training to this generation. As far as the use of technology is concerned, the most conducive system of education

which can make the best use is distance education. Use of Information and Communication Technology is expanding rapidly in developing countries like India and thus offers excellent opportunities for delivery of materials in open and distance learning system. He ended his talk saying it is a challenge for the education system in India both for conventional and distance education, but can be accomplished if the knowledge of using modern tools reaches even the remote areas.

There were four technical sessions. B. G. Unni (Assam Down Town University) was invited to talk on the theme for Technical Session 'A' which was on 'Recent advancements in technology' and was chaired by H. Goswami (Department of Management). Unni initiated the deliberations with the topic 'Technological evolution and its impact on the society: an overview'. He emphasized the importance of usage of technology and mentioned that it depends on the users on how they can draw benefits from the facilities provided. He said that technology has brought about revolutionary changes in the field of science and medicine, economy, environment, personal lives of human kind, education and so on. He summarized saying 'Technology has changed and will continue changing the entire structure of education and simulations are the models of real-world activities'. In the new global economy, knowledge is the greatest asset and technology has a tremendous impact on education.

Technical Session 'B' on 'Tools in modern education system' started with the keynote address by Anjana Kakoti Mahanta (Department of Computer Science, Gauhati University). This session was chaired by U. C. Kalita (AdtU). Mahanta's talk was on 'Plagiarism, its practice and detection methods'. She spoke about the literal and intelligent plagiarism and extensively discussed about intrinsic and extrinsic approaches of plagiarism. She conveyed information about the techniques of detecting plagiarism in any content.

Session 'C' on 'New trends in education for youth' was chaired by B. K. Dey (Down Town Group of Institutions, Guwahati).

Manohar Lal (SOCIS, IGNOU) in his talk 'Challenging technological problems

for better future' brought to notice certain points like clean energy production and harmful consequences of various technologies. Furthermore, he broadly discussed on the status and impact of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in women empowerment. Environmental degradation due to advancements in technology was another area covered by the speaker. For that he suggested that the makers of technology should maintain certain environmental ethics to make the world a better place to live in.

Technical Session 'D' on 'Career and academic challenges' was again initiated by Manohar Lal. This session was chaired by Arup J. D. Sarma (Department of Physics, AdtU). Lal delivered a talk on the topic 'Role of academicians in minimizing the potential harm to humanity in period of ever-increasing pace of technological advancement'. He broadly discussed the intended and unintended effects of technology on humanity. The role of academicians, he said, is to figure out what changes can technology bring in the future of a learner. He pointed out that the worst challenge in the field of education is rationality. Scholars are challenged with new philosophical questions and hence are required to analyse deeper in their attempt to teach something.

The topics broadly covered technological aspects in the field of education and how ICT has changed the scenario of teaching today. Also many of the presenters talked about women's empowerment in education through technological advancement.

Sangeeta Kakoty and Yamin Hassan presented the summary of the presentations at the concluding session. Each session witnessed interactive question and answer round which also ended with a healthy discussion between the presenters and resource persons.

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*A report on the two-day national seminar 'Technology, Youth and Career: A Paradigm Shift' organized by the School of Distance Education (SDE), Assam Down Town University, Guwahati on 24–25 March 2017. The seminar was jointly convened by Sangeeta Kakoty and Yamin Hassan. The seminar was coordinated by Haina Narzary and Nayana Adhikari.