

ABSTRACTS ON

Gold Medals for Innovations in Open and Distance Learning

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INNOVATIONS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2006 was conferred to Dr. Rakesh Chander Sharma, and his team comprising of Dr. Sanjay Jasola and Mr. Virender Chikkara, in the 17th Convocation of the University for their Innovation in integrating systems at all the remote classrooms and made the EDUSAT network fully functional. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

In year 2004 a satellite called EDUSAT was sent into space to exclusively serve the educational needs of the nation. The satellite was designed keeping in view the need of "interactivity" essential to imparting education particularly in the distance mode. IGNOU took initiative to launch pilot project by establishing a Teaching End (Studio) at EMPC and 134 receiving centres (Classroom ends) at it's Regional Centres, Study Centres and other Open Universities across the country. The network was to operate through a HUB established at ISRO, Ahmedabad. Each classroom end was installed with a "Satellite Interactive Terminals" (SIT) with the help of ISRO Ahmedabad. The Satellite Interactive Terminal establishes a link with the Teaching End through the satellite. The SIT in turn connects to a computer system for receiving video, audio, data etc. and also interacting with the teacher delivering lecture at the Teaching End. In order to keep the project cost low, IGNOU decided to use the existing computer systems available with these remote centres but, for various reasons, the computer systems could not be integrated with the SIT at the time of Installation. Due to non-availability of trained technical manpower at these remote centres, later it was realized that the network is still not operable unless system integration is done. By the time, the installation of the SITs was complete already one year had passed with an unutilized satellite in the space. At that time IGNOU did not have the technical know-how of the new technology being introduced and the task of system integration at remote centres by sending technical teams through private agencies would have been quite expensive and time consuming.

IGNOU had an operational broadcast television channel called "GyanDarshan" being uplinked from EMPC therefore it was decided to learn the new technology and conduct special training sessions using GyanDarshan TV network to orient the non-technical human resource available at individual remote classroom ends and get the systems integrated. In a record time of about three months, Dr. Rakesh Chander Sharma, E-in-C, EMPC and his team comprising of Dr. Sanjay Jasola, Deputy Director, Computer Division and Mr. Virender Chikkara, STA, EMPC, successfully got the systems integrated at all the remote classrooms and made the EDUSAT network fully functional without incurring huge expenditure. The distance learners started reaping early benefits of the new interactive technology. The special efforts made for quickly learning the new technology and the innovative approach of the team in operationalizing an interactive communication network in a time saving manner were recognized by IGNOU and the team members were felicitated in year 2006 with Gold Medals for their Innovation in Distance Education.

ABOUT THE INNOVATORS



CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME IN CRAFT AND DESIGN (POTTERY)

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2007 was conferred to Prof. Ajit Kumar in the 18th Convocation of the University for his Innovation in Instructional Design of Certificate in Craft and Design. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

The instructional design to offer the Certificate in Craft and Design was unique and different from the traditional system of instruction in ODL System. It included Interaction Workshops with the experts and awarded artisans for extensive discussion (and video shooting) on their work, opportunities, difficulties, processes and challenges for preparation of syllabus and courseware. A unique approach was followed for transaction of technical, conceptual procedural and artistic content to address multilingual and highly diverse educational levels (functionally literate artisans and educated urban youth).

The print materials used for transaction of the instructions included theory books, practical guide and work book having innovative features like use of pictures, photographs, sketches; simple language, small steps and stepwise explanation; Use of access devices and interactive dialogues and stories.

Similarly, the non-print media used in this system also had certain innovative features like live demonstrations, slide presentations, discussions on tele/radio counselling and video films, etc.

The materials have been quite successful in transmitting the knowledge and skills to the learners. The materials were found useful even to the artisans of other language because of the extensive use of graphics, film, demonstrations, etc.

This instructional design had components of Practical and Projects also. The innovative aspects of the practical component included the Lab Practical on Wheel, Drying, Firing and Decoration; Home Practical in Design and Hand Built Pottery; Field Practical on Preparation of Clay at site and Field Projects on Marketing.

More than 80% candidates appeared in the first cycle of examination had scored 'A' Grade (> 80%) in the theory and practical examination.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME IN MOTORCYCLE SERVICE AND REPAIR (CMSR)

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2008 was conferred to Prof. Manoj Kulshrestha in the 19th Convocation of the University for his Innovation in Certificate Programme in Motorcycle Service and Repair (CMSR). A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

The IGNOU-HHML Motorcycle Technicians Competency development Project (IH- MTCDP) is a collaborative initiative of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Honda Motors Ltd. (HHML), World's No 1 Motor Cycle Manufacturing Company, towards the competency based skill development training for the motorcycle technicians of the country. Under the project, a Certificate Programme in Motorcycle Service and Repair (CMSR) is on offer since April, 2006. The innovative programme design of the CMSR Programme includes firstly, the theoretical and demonstrative training of learners at PSCs and then attaching them to actual work place to practice what is learnt. In fact, it is a perfect example of education-work linkage in vocational education where industry is participating shoulder-to-shoulder in terms of arranging the hands-on job training of the learners in the actual work place. Here, the learners are exposed to real world situations and the challenges of the field. Under innovative evaluation mechanism, the learners are continuously evaluated by their trainer during the hands-on training session apart from participating in Trade Test at the end of the programme.

A number of learners have already been trained and certified under this programme.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Prof. Manoj Kulshrestha, PhD from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, New Delhi is presently working as Pro Vice Chancellor in Chhattisgarh Swamy Vivekanand Technical University (CSVTU), Bilai (CG). CSVTU is a State Technical University of Chhattisgarh state affiliating more than 100 technical institutions of the state. He has his substantive position as Professor of Civil Engineering in School of Engineering & Technology (SOET) at Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, where he teaches Value Management and Construction Project Management. He is out on EOL from IGNOU to join CSVTU, Bilai.

He has designed and implemented several innovative training projects in engineering, such as the IGNOU-CIDC Construction Education and Training Project and the IGNOU-HERO Motorcycle Technicians Vocational Qualification Project. He has published over 30 research and technical papers in various International and National journals and conferences. He is member of Society of American Value Engineers (SAVE), ASSOCHAM's Council of Construction Skill Development Council of India (CSDCI) and Indian Society for Technical Education (ISTE). He was awarded Scroll of Commendation by Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC) and World Education Award 2011 and World Educational Leadership Award 2011 for his innovative vocational education initiatives.

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CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION ENABLING INCLUSION (CEREBRAL PALSY)

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2009 was conferred to Prof. Rekha Sharma Sen in the 21st Convocation of the University for his Innovation in Reaching Children with Disabilities through ODL : Innovating through the Certificate Programme in Early Childhood Special Education Enabling Inclusion (Cerebral Palsy). A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

The Certificate Programme in Early Childhood Special Education Enabling Inclusion (Cerebral Palsy) is a national level programme in disability area which is first of its kind that was developed at the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) for training personnel to provide education and intervention to children with cerebral palsy. This innovative programme in the sector of disability was developed by the Faculty of Child Development in the School of Continuing Education at IGNOU in collaboration with the Rehabilitation Council of India. The innovation in the Certificate Programme was in terms of programme concept, instructional design, programme content (curriculum and self-learning materials), eligibility requirements and the target group addressed.

For example, the instructional design has laid equal stress on the theory and hands-on training. Various other innovative interventions/strategies in the self learning material included transacting and explaining difficult academic concepts to the learners with 10th pass level, including real life situations in the text, extensive use of art work and pictures to indicate exact positioning needs and posture, and adaptations for a child with cerebral palsy, project manuals were also created which was a unique intervention in context to the study material. In terms of programme delivery, high quality academic support to the learners at the time they begin their study is ensured by identifying RCI recognized Institutions as programme Study Centres for programme delivery.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Professor Rekha Sen Sharma is a PhD in Child Development, with double Masters in Child Development and Elementary Education. Formerly, Chair Professor at Centre for Early Childhood Development and Research, Jamia Millia Islamia, she is presently Professor, Faculty of Child Development in the School of Continuing Education, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, India. Her areas of teaching and research include Child Development, Early Childhood Education, Disability, Early Language and Literacy, and the Psychology of Creativity

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CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME IN COMPETENCY IN POWER DISTRIBUTION (FOR ELECTRICAL TECHNICIANS)

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2010 was conferred to Dr. Rakhi Sharma in the 21st Convocation of the University for his Innovation in Certificate in Competency in Power Distribution for Electrical Technicians under IGNOU-Ministry of Power (MoP) Project. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

This unique and innovative programme was planned and developed by Dr. Rakhi Sharma in collaboration with Ministry of Power in most unique way, with maximum use of present available resources and best technology available. This programme aims at addressing the grass root problem of proper training of technicians, simultaneously it also helps in reducing huge transmission and distribution losses, minimizing casualties among technicians while working on power lines. Aligned to generate employment/entrepreneurship it's a new successful experiment done in ODL system through convergence and conversion of subsystem. This programme has been developed and implemented for competency based skill and knowledge development for technicians, which is providing better Industrial-Educational linkage while collaborating with professional bodies.

Some of the Innovative Learning and Programme Delivery Solution are :

- collaboration with potential programme study centres for effective implementation, seriousness in conduction of technical lab practical/skill development training/technical theory sessions and Learner Support, and
- this programme we have involved Electrical power industries and their power training institutes are identified as IGNOU's programme study centres (PSC), This facilitate learning (i) By conduction of theory and practical sessions at same work place.

Customized study material (for theory and practical manual/work book) with well designed structured, coloured simplified format with lots of illustrations. The programme also include Tele-counselling, interactive radio counselling, pictures and multimedia enabled Computer Based Tutorials (CBT), etc. showing virtual working of machines, etc.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Presently, Dr. Rakhi Sharma is Director, School of Engineering and Technology (SOET), IGNOU, New Delhi and Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering discipline. Dr. Rakhi Sharma holds doctoral degree, PhD from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, India and Post Graduation, Master of Technology (M. Tech.) with Distinction from Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal.

She has been associated with designing and development of different distance learning technical Programme/Courses as Coordinator. At present, she is Project and Programme Coordinator for the Development of Distant E-learning Solar Energy Application Programmes which are being developed in association with International Solar Alliance (ISA).

She has been awarded University Gold Medal in 2014 for the best Research Paper award at New Delhi.

ANGANWARI WORKERS TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR THE MADHYA PRADESH STATE WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2011 was conferred to Dr. Harkirat Bains in the 22nd Convocation of the University for her Innovation in Anganwari Workers Training Programme for the Madhya Pradesh State Women and Child Development Department. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

The Anganwari Workers Training Programme is an innovative intervention in preparing skilled personnel who would help the Government to lower its Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), in the State of Madhya Pradesh. The innovator conceived, designed, developed and conducted the training programme. The training modules for the Anganwari Workers of the State Women and Child Development Department were prepared and training of 1014 workers in Vidisha District completed in collaboration with UNICEF. In addition components like Immunization, Nutrition, Sanitation, Growth monitoring, identification of severely malnourished children were included in this programme.

The objective of conducting this programme was not limited to adding a qualification to the academic profile of Anganwari Workers, but to build capacity in a manner that distinctly improved their existing skill levels. The average score of the group of 1014 workers in pre evaluation was 31.23 which increased to 61.12 after the training. This increase of about 30 points clearly indicates that the programme made a substantial impact. This value addition could be achieved only because the programme was tailored according to the responsibilities of and expectations from an Anganwari Worker.

This programme known as "Vidisha Model" has been adopted by the Government of Madhya Pradesh for the training of about 80,000 Anganwari Workers in the entire state. The training module was also adopted for the Training of Trainers (ToT) by the Women & Child Development Department, Government of Chhatisgarh.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Dr. Harkirat Bains completed her Post-Graduation, securing 2nd position in Punjab University in 1986. She did her Bachelor's in Education from the same University the subsequent year and cleared NET in 1999. She did her Doctorate in Food and Nutrition and also successfully completed her D.Sc from Barkatullah University, Madhya Pradesh.

She was working on UNICEF projects and she has been the Vice President of 'Childs Rights Observatory' of Madhya Pradesh and is a Resource Person for various organizations.

She has designed and developed innovative programmes in the field of Dietetics, Physiotherapy and Therapeutic Nutrition.

She has a passion for gardening which has won her numerous state-level awards. Her collection of poems, 'The Last Autumn Leaf' was first published in 2002.

POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY (PGDAC) USING VEDYADHARA TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED OPEN LEARNING SYSTEM CREATED BY ACIIL, IGNOU

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2011 was conferred to Dr. Lalita Kumar and Dr. Sanjiv Kumar in the 23rd Convocation of the University for their Innovation in Application of ICT in Delivery Mechanism. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

The work pertains to the quality assured delivery of a highly skill based capacity building program, Post Graduate Diploma in Analytical Chemistry (PGDAC) using Vedyadhara-Technology Enhanced Open Learning System created by ACIIL, IGNOU. The innovative features of the ICT Enabled Delivery Mechanism of the PDGAC are described below in brief.

It has a powerful open e-learning framework supported by disciplined social networking that empowers the learner with the freedom of learning at the convenience of time and space and yet be connected with the teacher/instructor and the peers alike. The ICT intervention in the programme delivery provides a quality assured learning support to the learners that alleviates their fear of isolation and paves way for moving from the passive ODL system to active learner and learning centric education.

The student's learning experience and engagements are enriched through community wiki, discussion forums, LMS and other forms of open source supported interactions. The ICT based material consists of linkages with open resources, additional and supplementary material in addition to the approved course material.

Enriched Unit is a novel feature under the additional materials. It consists of the annotated approved course unit; the annotations providing the contextual linkages to relevant animations, simulations, video lectures, quizzes and presentations etc.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Associated with the design, development and maintenance of distance teaching-learning materials.



Associated with NCERT, SCERT and NIOS concerning teacher training, development of textual material and teaching aids for secondary and senior secondary level.

Associated with the design and development of distance teaching-learning materials.

POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN E-LEARNING (PGDEL) (ONLINE PROGRAMME)

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2013 was conferred to Prof. Santosh Panda and Dr. G. Mythili in the 26th Convocation of the University for their Innovation in Post Graduate Diploma in E-learning (PGDEL), an Online Programme. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

With the increasing use of web technologies in education, there is an increasing need for qualified human resources to design, develop, implement and manage effective e-learning programmes. Although a variety of online programmes are available, their quality remains an issue. Further, there was a felt need in this country to 'apply' the existing pedagogies in educational and training contexts, and implement **blended e-learning** which is developed through open sources and is based on OERs. It is in this context, the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has designed and developed a Post Graduate Diploma in E-Learning (PGDEL), to develop professional competencies designing, developing and implementing online educational and training programmes in the country. The Programme implemented blended learning with the combination of OERs, weekly virtual classes, personalized online student support, Moodle-based LMS and discussion forum, Google Group interaction, mobile support, F2F hands-on for learning the application of open source online tools, doing a project (on design, development, implementation, and evaluation of online education/ training on a Moodle LMS), and online assignments and examinations. This innovation is an example of practical pedagogy and simple instructional design for quality e-learning.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Prof. Santosh Panda, is Professor of Distance Education (and former Director) at the Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE), IGNOU. A former Senior Fulbright Scholar, Prof. Panda has been Founding Director of Inter-University Consortium (IUC-TEFED) at IGNOU; Director of Policy and Research the Association of Indian Universities; Director of Flexible Learning at the University of South Pacific; and Chairperson, National Council for Teacher Education, Government of India.. A trained expert on educational media/television from BBC/UK, he has published many books (including by Routledge, London & New York), book chapters, and articles and research papers nationally and internationally.

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Dr. G. Mythili is Deputy Director in Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE), IGNOU. She has contributed towards the development of human and training resources through academic workshops and by developing training materials in IGNOU. She has published articles in referred journals. She is an efficient resource person for training of various kinds with special reference to computer related training on basic computing, multimedia development and online, web-based training (Web 2.0).

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100% JOB PLACEMENT FOR IGNOU TRIBAL STUDENTS OF GADCHIROLI

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2014 was conferred to Dr. P. Sivaswaroop in the 27th Convocation of the University for his Innovation in 100% Job Placement for IGNOU Tribal Students of Gadchiroli. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

Tribal students are generally in interior places and are deprived of many minimum facilities, due for normal citizens. Education is one such facility, especially the Higher Education and the vocational Education, which can make them capable to earn and have a decent Life Style. Now a days employability of youth (even for B.Tech/MBAs) is a burning issue. The Government of India plans to give thrust to Vocational Education. In this context, assessing the skills provided by the University's Academic Programmes and matching them to the industry requirement is the key. It also involves approaching various employers and explaining them about the capabilities of the students who have passed out from the university.

Here is the case of 10th pass candidates from an interior, backward trouble torn district of Gadchiroli getting employment after studying an IGNOU 6 months certificate course. The Gadchiroli Tribal District has very low (26%) literacy rate with naxal problem and severe backwardness. This innovation involved in studying their conditions. Understanding their needs, providing them the job oriented vocational education, talking to employers for these students employment, keep students and Academic Counsellors sensitized towards Quality studies (both theory and practical) and finally arranging campus placement interviews at Gadchiroli. Thus the innovative strategy provided 100% Job Placement for IGNOU Tribal Students of Gadchiroli.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Dr. P. Sivaswaroop is presently the Regional Director of IGNOU Regional Centre at Nagpur. During this tenure as the Regional Director, his emphasis has been primarily on developing short term courses relevant to the local people. He has successfully established Special Study Centres at Jails so that prisoners can pursue their education in the course of their choice. He designed Special Vocational Skill Development Courses for the prisoners, which was also launched by the Honourable Vice Chancellor of IGNOU.

He received PhD in Chemistry from Andhra University with a 'Best Thesis Award', followed by the Post-Doctoral Work at the University of Hyderabad. He is a Fellow of the prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry (FRSC), London and Member of American Chemical Society. He has contributed several papers published in the International and National Journals on Chemistry, Education and Ethical Issues. He was appointed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh as an Expert in Chemistry for technical monitoring of cloud seeding experiments. He was honoured by several Agencies for his Socially Oriented Activities. Some of them are "Shiksha Maharshi, Vidarbha Bhushan, Krishi Gaurav' etc. He was also an esteemed Member of the Board of Management, Academic Council and Planning Board of IGNOU at the national level.

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INNOVATIVE PROGRAMME DESIGN FOR MA IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2015 was conferred to Dr. Nilima Srivastava in the 28th Convocation of the University for her Innovative Programme Design for MA in Women's and Gender Studies. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

MAWGS is a pioneer academic programme which addresses the concerns raised by the proponents of both Women's Studies and Gender Studies.

The programme aims at providing comprehensive knowledge with the help of concepts, theories and study of socio-cultural, politico-economic factors and psychoanalysis by questioning gender relations, their impact on women and men, thereby opening up vistas of cultural transformation in society. This programme weaves in international perspectives and contextualizes them to Indian scenario.

Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) is offered as a generic programme internationally, but to have a wider learner base and to offer learners the possibility of in-depth study, two specializations were created in 2nd year of MAWGS. Thus, offering specialization is another novel attempt which has not been found in the curricula of W&GS world over.

Another pioneering effort has been WGS Online Interactive Forum to provide additional web based support to the learners of the programme by creating of an interactive platform for direct interface with the faculty (Programme and course coordinators). This web based online forum addresses their queries and concerns, provide additional inputs, updates and allow peer learning, bridging barriers of distance, time and geography. For Programme Coordinators, it is a mechanism to assess efficacy of SLM, learners' understanding of the same and inculcate critiquing of factors/forces responsible for subordination and marginalization of women and men in society.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Dr. Nilima Srivastava is a trained social worker from Department of Social Work (1981). She has BEEN faculty at Department of Social Work, University of Delhi and Women's Studies and Development Centre, University of Delhi. Apart from teaching she was actively involved in other academic activities of the Department, viz. Rural Camps, Supportive Field Instruction Programme. Presently, she is Professor in the School of Gender Development Studies in IGNOU.

Her publications include two Books : 'Women on the Path of Progress (a Study of Decadal Change in role Conflict among Women Professionals); and 'Girl Child : Changing Perceptions' Volume I and II.

Several of her papers have appeared in National and International publications. She has been invited by various Institutions to take sessions on Gender Issues and conducts training programmes on gender sensitization.

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MOBILE APPLICATION AS A LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES

Gold Medal for Innovation in Open and Distance Learning for year 2016 was conferred to Dr. Binod Deka in the 30th Convocation of the University for his Innovation in Mobile Application as a Learner Support Service. A brief about this Innovation and the Innovator is given below.

ABOUT THE INNOVATION

In ODL system there is a lack of teacher-learner interaction, so this innovative intervention of Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU) helps to increase the teacher-learner interaction through a mobile app. This innovation helps in bridging the gap in every sphere in the field of distance education. Moreover, this app helps the learner to gather any kind of information in the cost effective manner. The mobile app is platform independent as it works for iOS, Android, Windows. With the help of this app a learner can avail the latest information including notices, routines, results, etc. and can download assignments, previous year questions papers, other important files, etc. They can read e-materials and listen to KKHSOU internet, radio, audio lectures etc. There is also a provision for watching video lectures from the application. Learner can directly contact the study centres by clicking on the specific link. They can also send mail or call to the respective department of KKHSOU which are automatically forwarded to the respective departments of KKHSOU. Google Analytics' is also integrated in the app which helps in detecting the real time usage of the application.

ABOUT THE INNOVATOR



Mr. Binod Deka is presently working as Systems Analyst & IT In-Charge at the Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU), Guwahati, Assam. He is an M. Tech. in Computer Science and Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati. He has a work experience of nine years in his field.

He has experience in Android Application Development, Web based Application Development and implemented various live projects at KKHSOU. In addition he has been invited to deliver talks about recent technology, development etc at various colleges/university & other reputed organizations.

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