

# **Popular Talk Series**

## ***An Innovative to Generate New Ideas***

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### **Background**

NCIDE has been taking initiatives to generate new ideas and convert them into the workable solutions. In this direction, a series of popular talk, on innovations and developments in open and distance education was organized by NCIDE as part of the silver jubilee celebrations. The talk series provided an opportunity to deliberate and reflect on the various aspects related to the innovations and developments in general, and emerging trends in the open and distance education in particular. The talk series was aimed at facilitating the exchange of innovative ideas and experiences in the field of distance education. The emphasis was on fostering a spirit of innovation among the faculty and students by sharing the experiences of technology leaders for development of innovative learning solutions for distance education.

### **Need of the Innovation**

There is a need for developing a culture of continued search for new and innovative solutions to the issues and problems on the way of university's mission. The academic culture can be nurtured and strengthened with the exchange of new ideas and experiences. There are instances where the faculty and staff members come out with innovative applications or learning solutions in distance education which could be of benefit to ODL community at large. What was required was to have a mechanism for discussing and sharing it with others. The popular talks provided a platform for sharing of ideas, analysis and reflection on new developments in the field of distance education.

### **Description of the Innovation**

The popular talk series was conceptualized in a faculty meeting in 2009. The idea was developed and formulated by the faculty members of NCIDE including Dr. Jyotsna Dikshit, Dr. O. P. Sharma, and Dr. Moumita Das. The popular talk series was taken up as an ongoing activity of the centre. It was decided to organize a talk every month by inviting an expert in the area of open and distance education to deliver the talk. Various experts in the areas of ICT and distance education from within and outside IGNOU were invited in this talk series. The talks were so designed to facilitate an interactive discussion with the participants which included the faculty and the students of IGNOU.

### **Innovative Features**

The topics of the talks included case studies, projects and programmes on innovations in the open and distance learning system, application of ICT for providing effective learning solutions in the ODL system. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has provided tremendous opportunities to the educators to reach the unreached. Most of the talks highlighted the innovative use of technology while some reflect on innovation in programme design and delivery, the focus always being on Indian innovators.

The popular talk series were broad based and also held in teleconferencing mode to provide access to all the Regional Centres of IGNOU, spread across the country. The programme was made available through the Gyan Darshan and the EDUSAT network at all the RCs and other nodes wherever we have reception facility. The programme was also webcast.

## **Achievements**

The popular talk series was initiated in 2009 and continued up to 2012 on monthly basis.

Various experts in the field of ICT, distance education, management from within IGNOU and varied organizations from all over the country were invited in this talk series. The talk series included talks by esteemed speakers such as Prof. Anil Gupta, IIM, Ahmedabad; Dr. Brij Kothari, IIM, Ahmedabad; Mr. Anuj Sinha, Former Head, National Council for Science and Technology Communication, Department of Science and Technology; Prof. A K Bakshi, Former Director of the Institute of Lifelong Learning (ILL), University of Delhi; Dr. R. Sreedher, Director, CEMCA; Dr. Shankar Venkatagiri, IIM Bangalore; and Dr. Ashok Jain, Vice President, EMPI Business School and, Former Dir., NISTADS.

At the end of the year, a publication named "Creative Sparks of Innovation" was brought out on the basis of the various talks delivered by the experts for the benefit of the ODL fraternity.

## **Applications and Uses of the Innovation**

Popular Talks were aimed at exploring the possible avenues to facilitate innovative ICT enabled solutions for the ODL system. The series was meant to pave the way for application of the innovative learning solutions in open and distance learning.

The benefits of such a popular talk series can be drawn optimally by ensuring wider participation of all the faculty members and also distance learners. The interactive nature can be exploited to gain maximum benefit out of it. These challenges were met by conducting the popular talk series in teleconferencing mode, thus ensuring reach to all the RCs and other nodes wherever reception facility is available. The programme was also webcast and thus made accessible to distance learners across the country through internet.

## **Way Forward**

Such events and programs provide a useful medium of interaction and exchange of innovative ideas, experiences and initiatives taken up in the ODL system. These interactions were widely appreciated by the faculty and the staff at Regional Centres. The wide reach and the interactive nature goes a long way in building a culture of exploration towards new and innovative solutions to issues and problems on the way of University's mission to offer seamless education across the various levels, achieve cost efficiency in its operations and provide borderless access to quality education and training.

## **Coordinator and Innovator**

**Dr. Sujata Santosh**

**Period : 2009-2012**