

Report on Panel Discussion

The *Debate and Extramural Committee* of Kalimpong College, organised a panel discussion for the students of the college on the 21st of May 2022. The theme for the Panel Discussion was **“Education in the 21st Century”**. It had sub-themes for all the three semesters:

2nd semester *Online Education is the Future*

4th semester *Technology in Education: Boon or Curse*

6th semester *How inclusive is our Education System*

The students of the college enthusiastically participated in the discussion. The panel discussion was held in three sessions; one session for each semester. The faculty members of the college were moderators and judges and the performance of the students was assessed by a panel comprising of three judges in each panel. In each semester, three students were awarded for their performance, based on the assessment of the judges. The best speaker among all the three sessions was also awarded. The academic fraternity enjoyed the programme and vibrant discussion took place in all the three sessions.

Session 1, Second semester

Topic: *Online Education is the Future*

Moderator: Mr. Gopal Sharma

Judges: Dr. Amit Ruth, Ms. Palma Tamang and Ms. Arpita Chettri,

Participants : (6) Abhinay Rai, Sonam Gyelshen, Vashraj Rana, Chandra Kumar, Sukanya Rai, Mingma Ongmu Sherpa

Best Performers:

1st- Chandra Kumar

2nd- Abhinay Rai

Third- Sukanya Rai

In this session, the students deliberated upon the pros and cons of online education and if the future of education would be online. They had divergent views, while some argued that the online mode of education has increased the access to education in the remote areas and more students are able to access quality education through online mode, as it is cost effective; others argued that the poor network in the remote areas, was a hurdle and to access education as one had to rent a room in an urban area to have access to it so the cost effectiveness is reduced as they pay for course fee online, internet charges and rent which combine together is equal to the cost of education in the offline or campus mode.

There were interesting questions raised by the students who were the listeners to this discussion they openly expressed their views and comments on each speaker. For instance one speaker had mentioned one of the cons of online education as its negative effect on the eyes and more lens and spectacles among people. One student countered it and put forward his argument that even Gandhi had spectacles so there is not relation between online education and spectacles/ weak eyesight. There were similar vibrant discussions that took place in this session.

Session 2

Topic: *Technology in Education: Boon or Curse*

Moderator: Mr. Jigme Dorje Bhutia

Judges: Ms. Tanishtha Manna, Ms. Richa Ali and Mr. Niten Sharma

Participants: Sidhant Mothay Shrutu Jain, Bishal Shah, Manish Sharma, Diksha Gupta, Shrutu Prasad, Dristi Subba, Shreya Chatter

Best Performers:

1st- Shreya Chettri

2nd- Shrutu Jain

3rd- Dristi Subb

In this session, the use of technology in education was deliberated upon by all the panelist. Some favoured the use of technology in education, while others opposed and preferred the old system of education. In their opinion the old system of education facilitated learning as concentration was

higher, distractions were less and the bond between teacher and student was better as each understood each other and were able to respond to any queries immediately. The teacher could assess who was attentive and following him/her and those who were mentally absent. Those who favoured the use of technology highlighted the ease of access, balancing both work and studies as reasons for favouring the use of technology. As students were just out of the online education their focus was more on use of technology in online classes and they focussed more on that rather than highlighting other aspects of technology.

Session 3

Topic: *How inclusive is our Education System*

Moderator: Dr. Rekmani Sharma

Judges: Dr. Gouranga Das, Mr. Kamal Khanal, Mr Ashish Chhetri

Participants: Mingma Doma Sherpa, Lakpa Doma Sherpa, Priyanka Tirwa, PrayatnaChettri, Nilam Tamang, Solomi Narmit Lepcha, Yaman Ali Lugun, Shivam Chawrasia, Prawas Rai, Egnoy David and Christina Ghataney.

Best Performers:

1st-Egnoy David

2nd-Prawas Rai

Third-Christina Ghatani

In this session, students expressed their views on how women/ girls are deprived of education and equality which begins from their home itself. They also discussed about the problems faced by the differently abled and the infrastructure in educational institutions does to take care of the needs of them. A blind person does not have access to material in braille, no audiobooks are available etc. There was consensus among the panelist that our education system does not include all. However each highlighted a different aspect of exclusion. The odious too participated in the disunion and question were asked to both favouring and opposing the use of technology.

The best speaker of the panel discussion was Egnog David

All the students were given participation certificate and they were all happy to have participated in the panel discussion, express their views and interact with all.T