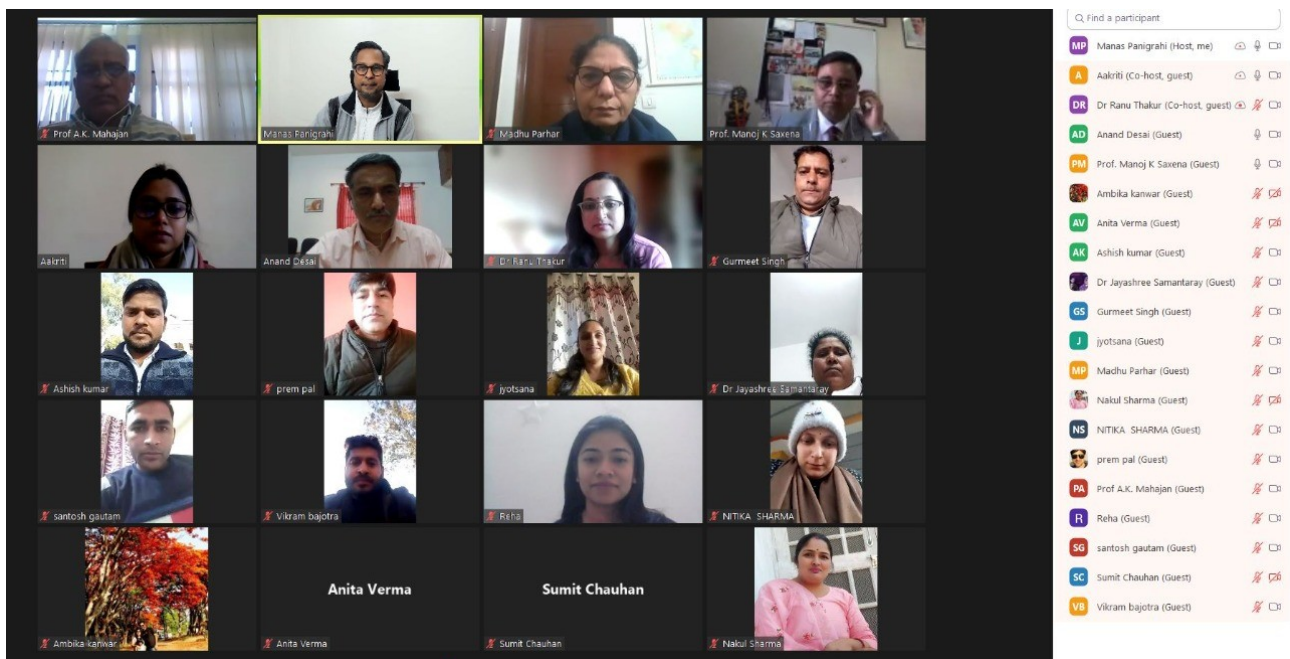




Capacity building of Teacher Educators to Implement Blended Learning in Teacher Education



Report IT for Change Bengaluru

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Background

The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2010, (NCFTE) emphasizes the need to structure continuous professional development (CPD) that builds on the professional identities and lived experiences of teachers. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the need in schools and educational institutions, for digital technologies has dramatically increased. Given this background, IT for Change (ITfC) and Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi collaborated to design and conduct an online course on “Capacity Building of Teacher Educators to Implement Blended Learning in Teacher Education” for teacher educators of Himachal Pradesh. This course was organized by the Central University of Himachal Pradesh. The online course was conducted from 16-Nov-2001 to 31-Jan-2021.

Course objectives

The following were the main objectives of the course:

1. Introducing the teachers and teacher educators to Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) and Open Educational Resources (OER).
2. Exploring OER repositories to access resources and understanding the role of OER in teaching-learning.
3. To support the teachers and teacher educators in the creation of context-specific resources (Open Educational Resources) for their classrooms.
4. To create a community of teachers and teacher educators experienced in ICT integration in teaching learning.
5. Introducing teachers and teacher educators to different tools for self-learning, collaborative learning and resource creation.
6. Introducing participants to FOSS webinar platform and Learning Management System (LMS).

Course design

The course design was based on the NCERT National ICT curriculum themes - Connecting and learning (accessing OER resources, participating in virtual learning communities) and Creating and learning (creating resources for teaching-learning using digital tools). The course covered different FOSS tools to access and create OER for their teaching-learning process.

A separate course was created in the Moodle Learning Management System (LMS) and all the course resources, reading materials, video tutorials etc... were uploaded to the course page in Moodle. All the participants were given User IDs to login to the course in Moodle and access all

the contents including the session resources and additional reading materials and video tutorials. This course page in Moodle was updated with all the content and was shared with the CUHP participants before the commencement of the course to enable them to read and come prepared. A WhatsApp group was created before the course started for faculty to interact with the participants and for communication during the course.

Course content

The course agenda was as follows:

Session Title	Session details
Connecting with the World Use Webinar Platform Use LMS platform	1. Use “BigBlueButton” FOSS webinar platform to interact in virtual classroom. 2. Use “Moodle” FOSS Learning Management System – an Overview
Introduction to ICT in Education	1. Why use ICT in Education 2. Introduction to FOSS
Connecting with the World Accessing and Downloading Resources	1. Understanding and accessing OER 2. Downloading OER resources – Text, Image, Video and Audio
Creating with ICT Concept mapping	1. What is concept mapping? 2. Creating concept map using FOSS tool “Freeplane” 3. Creating a PDL on the selected topic
Creating with ICT Text resources (slide presentation)	1. Create presentation on the selected topic using FOSS tool “LibreOffice Impress”
Creating with ICT Creation of video resources	1. Create video on the selected topic, using “Vokoscreen” FOSS screen-casting tool
Participant Presentations PDL presentation Way Forward	1. Participant presentation of PDL (select participants) 2. Participant feedback on the workshop and their plans for taking the learning forward.

Course transaction

More than 100 teachers and teacher educators registered for the online course. Since the number was very high, we divided them into two cohorts (of 50+ each) and conducted the course in two batches. Mid-way through the course, it was observed that the attendance and participation was a challenge due to the other commitments of the participants. Hence, we discussed with the participants as well as the organizers (Central University of Himachal Pradesh and CEMCA) and decided to combine the two cohorts and conduct the course in a single batch on Sundays so that everyone could participate.

The cohorts were heterogeneous, with varying age and subject specialization. Participants included experienced and novice members in technology. Each session was interactive, giving participants enough opportunities to understand and to practise OER creation. Participants were able to practise on individual systems. The course faculty encouraged the participants to share their views/experiences/ideas thereby enabling a peer-learning environment.

Many participants showed great enthusiasm in learning new things. All participants selected one topic (from the subject they teach) on which they were expected to access and create resources. All the participants created their own PDL (resource folder) on their chosen topic. On the last day of the course some participants presented their resources created during the workshop.

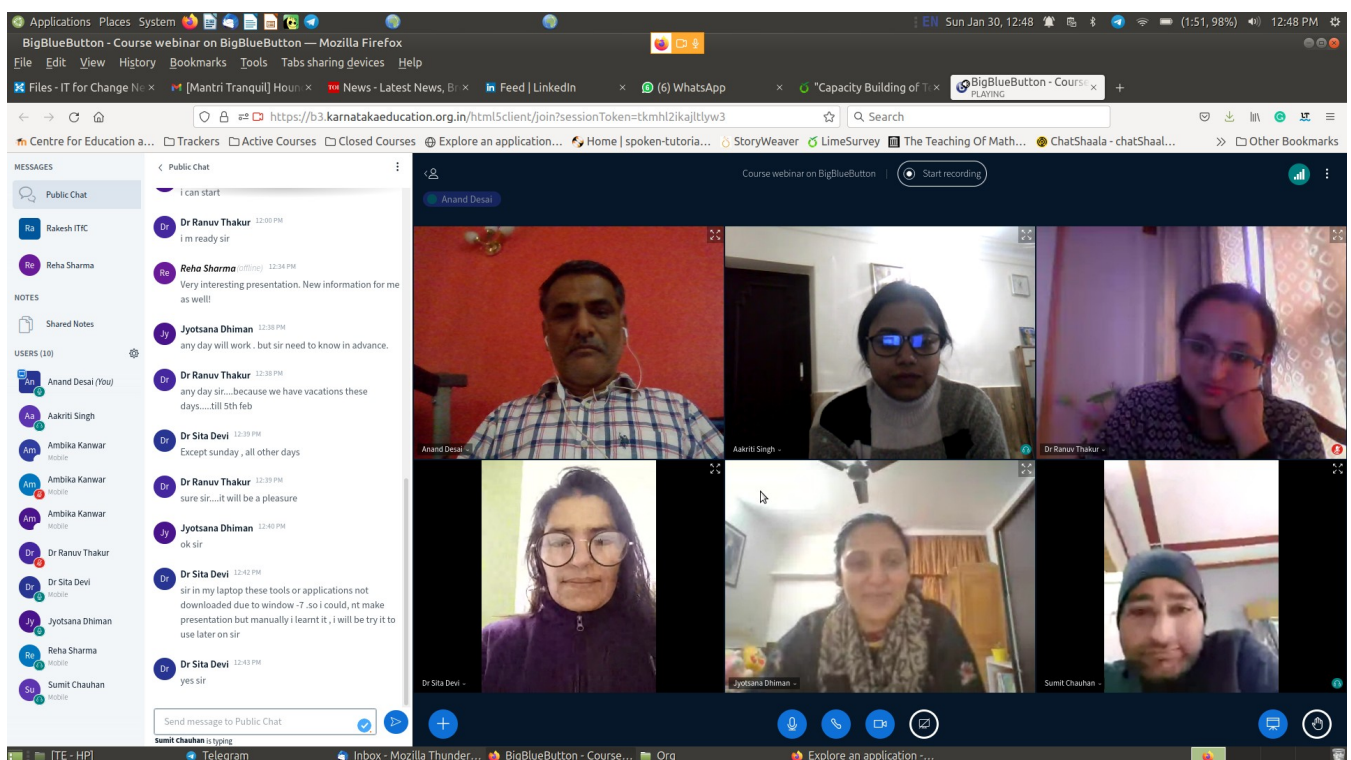
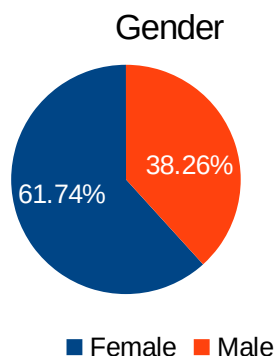


Figure 1: Online Session In Progress

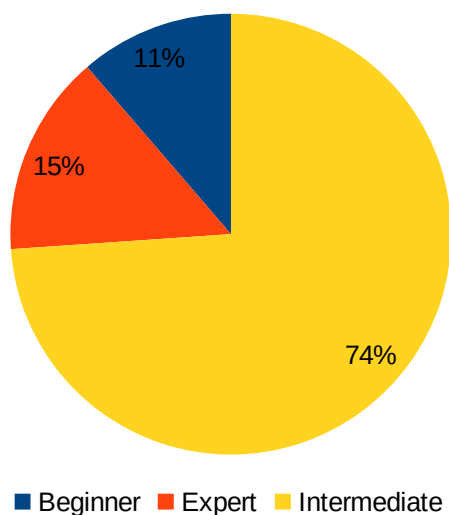
Participant Profile

The course attracted a large number of registration. The following are the details of the people who registered for the course.

- Total no. of registrations : 115
 - No. of male registrations : 44
 - No. of female registrations : 71



- The participants had different levels of computer proficiency and were from multiple districts in Himachal Pradesh



District	# Participants
Bilaspur	18
Chamba	1
Dharamshala	17
Ghuwarmin	1
Hamirpur	13
Kangra	31
Kinnaur	1
Kullu	1
Mandi	12
Nadaun	1
Shimla	5
Sirmour	2
Solan	3
Una	9
Total	115

- Among all these participants,
 - No. of participants who successfully completed the course : 15 (11 Female, 4 Male)
 - No. of participants who attended the course : 31 (17 Female, 14 Male)

All of them will be given the certificates.

Course outcomes

The following were the outcomes from the course:

1. Participants became familiar with accessing and downloading OER.
2. Participants understood the role of OER and FOSS in teaching-learning and material making.
3. Participants created OER resources using different FOSS tools.
 1. Concept mapping - Freeplane
 2. Slide presentation - LibreOffice Impress
 3. Videos - Vokoscreen
4. Participants became familiar with Moodle FOSS Learning Management System and BigBlueButton webinar platform to conduct online courses.

Participants selected a topic from their subject area, to create OER using the tools taught in the course. During the course, participants accessed and downloaded OER from the web, and created concept maps, slide presentations and videos on their topic.

Participants volunteered to present their resource library on the last day, so that all could get an idea of the possibilities of accessing and creating OER using FOSS tools.

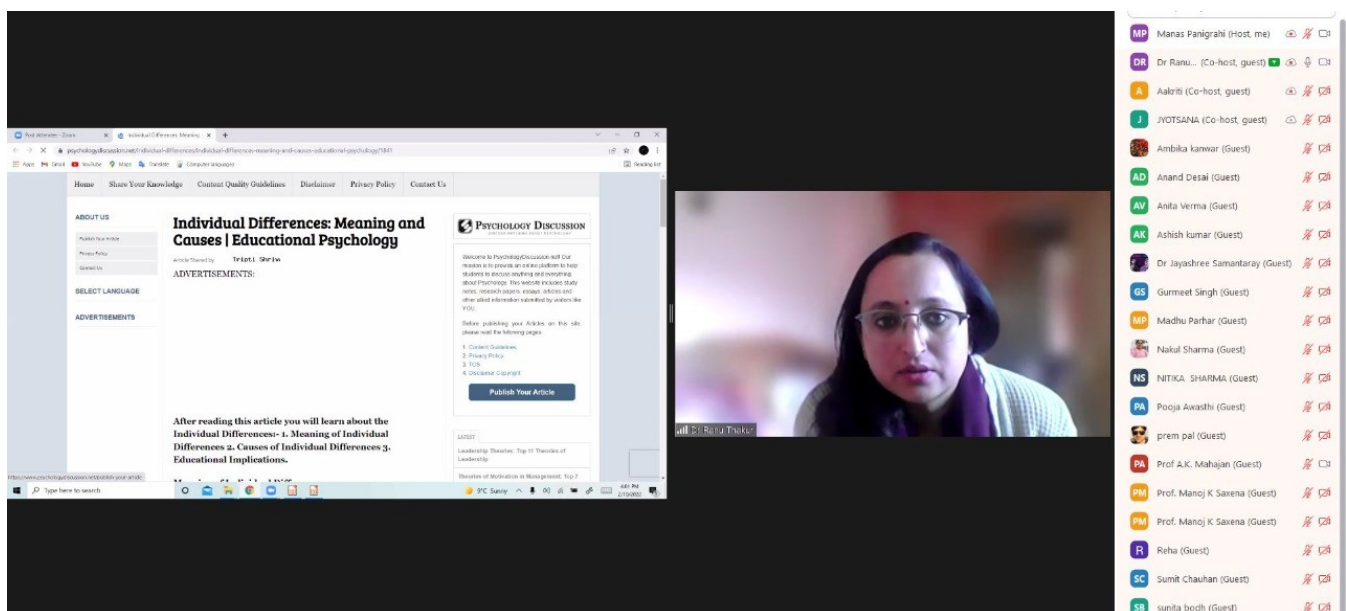
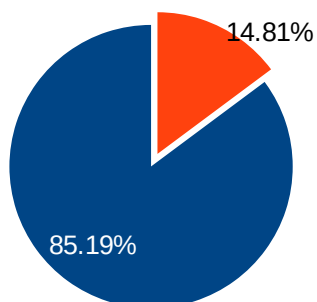


Figure 2: Participant presenting OER created by her

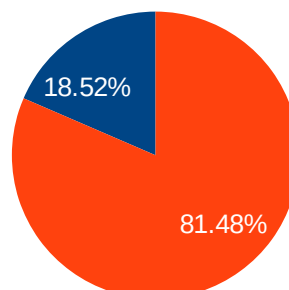
Participants feedback

The feedback collected from participants is provided below in graphical format.



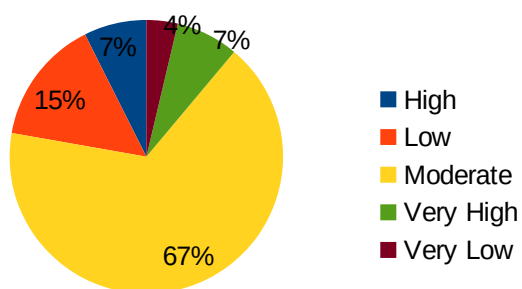
Did the course meet your expectations

■ Completely ■ Somewhat



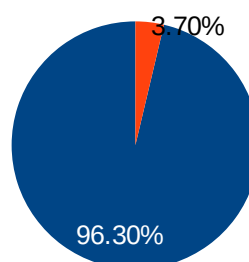
Your Overall Opinion about the Course

■ Good ■ Very Good



Level of Difficulty

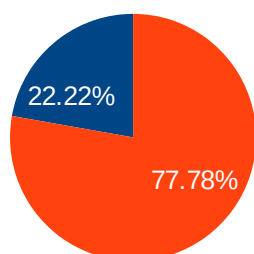
■ High
 ■ Low
 ■ Moderate
 ■ Very High
 ■ Very Low



Pace of the Course

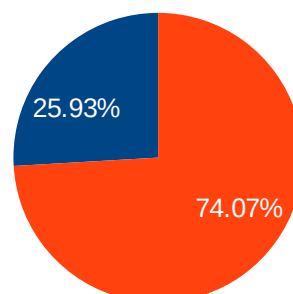
■ Optimum
 ■ Slow

How effective was the responsiveness of the course faculty?



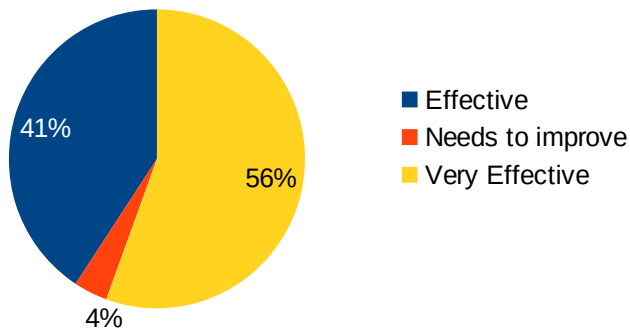
■ Effective ■ Very Effective

To what extent the course was useful in learning to create Concept Maps

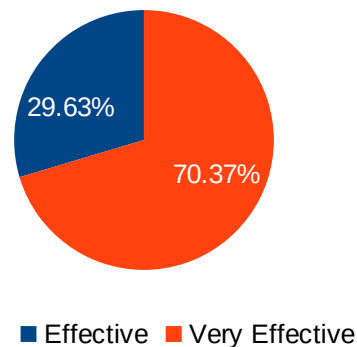


■ Effective ■ Very Effective

How effective was the course on use of LMS



How effective was the session on creating Presentations?



Select participant's feedback is provided below:

- ✓ Flexibility in terms of time schedule and learn at our own pace was the best part of the course. The experts are quite patient to hear every query and solve that. Highly qualified and talented experts.
- **Dr Ranuv Thakur (Department of Education, HP College of Education, Shimla)**

- ✓ Overall all activities i.e. hand on experience was very effective to learn new things. Thanks to all mentors, coordinator and other people who are associated with this organization. It's practical part is the main focus that I like in the course.
- **Sumit Chauhan (Research Scholar, Central University, Dharmashala, Himachal Pradesh)**

- ✓ I have learnt lots of new things regarding technology like concept map, effective use of slide presentation, how we can create videos etc. This course was really very fruitful for me being a teacher educator. Thank you organisers for organising such informative course on a very good theme i. e. blended learning, which is need of the hour in this digital era.
- **Dr Sita Devi (Abhilashi College of Education, Mandi, HP)**

- ✓ We learnt many new things through this course. Earlier, we have just heard or read about software and its features, now we can use software and its various tools in a better way. From my point of view, the course is already knowledgeable, interesting and provides us a lot of

knowledge about new concepts. We are waiting for many such kind of programmes in near future. Thank you.

- Vikram Bajotra (Research Scholar, Central University, Dharmashala, Himachal Pradesh)

- ✓ All the teaching faculty members were awesome. They all demonstrated with authentic information. My overall experience was awesome. I think it was organised, executed and managed very effectively.

- Dr. Prem Pal (HIE College, Himachal Pradesh)

- ✓ Practice part was the best. Enough time was given to the participants to create and make use of the learnt feature. I think this workshop should take place at a stretch or 1 day gap was enough to practice the learnt feature and simultaneously also we were learning. That was I feel the biggest hurdle other than that you guys did a great job. I got to learn a lot from your expertise and knowledge. Thank you.

- Ritu Bala (Research Scholar, Central University, Dharmashala, Himachal Pradesh)

- ✓ It was well planned and resource persons have excellent command over the content. They have given individual attention to the participants. The course was conducted in systematic manner.

- Anita Verma (Dronacharya College of Education, Rait, Himachal Pradesh)

- ✓ OER से संबंधित इस पाठ्यक्रम में काफी विषय वस्तु ऐसे थे जिससे मैं पहले अनभिज्ञ था। उन विषय वस्तु के बारे में गहराई से समझा, जो मेरे पढ़ने पढ़ाने की प्रक्रिया में सहायक के रूप में बेहतरीन उपयोग कर पाऊंगा। मेरे तरफ से इस पाठ्यक्रम के लिए पाठ्यक्रम सामग्री एवं पाठ्यक्रम डिलीवरी method बिल्कुल सही है। अगर यह पाठ्यक्रम face to face होगा तो मेरे हिसाब से और effective हो सकता है।

- Neeraj Kumar Mani (Research Scholar, Central University, Dharmashala, Himachal Pradesh)

IT for Change insights

The registration count was very high, however the number of actual participants was less. An ICT workshop has a significant component of hands-on practice which requires high level of attention to be paid to individual participants. A number of 30 is ideal for enabling good participation and the two cohorts had around that number. Since quite a few participants had other commitments and could not attend the sessions as planned, it had to be rescheduled multiple times to accommodate their preferences. It was a challenging experience for ITfC team. In future, it would be good if the schedule agreed upfront is adhered to.

Some participants faced issues in network connectivity (due to multiple reasons including the bad weather and power cut) and hence could not participate in the sessions fully. Given the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, some participants also were not well at different points and hence they could not attend all the sessions. The heterogeneity was high, with some participants complete novices to ICT and some quite savvy in use of ICT. The ITfC team managed this heterogeneity by providing greater one-on-one support to the novices. However, this impacted the overall flow of the course. Also, prior preparation by the participants would have helped them learn even more effectively. The gap between two sessions (there was only one session per week) was long which impacted continuity.

Overall, it was a good experience for all involved. The participants really liked the sessions and keenly learnt the topics covered and created some rich OER content.

Way forward

In his inaugural address, the Vice Chancellor stressed that participants should be capable of adapting to blended models of teaching. Developing and creating OER for supporting specific classes/courses would be a relevant way forward for the teacher educators in Himachal Pradesh, to integrate digital technologies to support its objective.

It was felt by many of the participants that the course would have been more effective if conducted in an offline face-to-face mode. The ITfC team also concurs with this view. CEMCA should seriously consider this option wherein the entire course can be conducted as an offline 4-5 days workshop. The work has already started on this front in Karnataka, where ITfC recently conducted a workshop for Cluster Resource Persons / Block Resource Persons (CRP/BRP) in Bengaluru. The feedback was very encouraging and more such workshops will be conducted.