



TRAINING REPORT

Legal capacity building of lawyers in clearing examination of Assistant Public Prosecutor conducted by Gujarat Public Service Commission.



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Introduction

Centre for Social Justice has been an expert in building legal capacity of the paralegals and the lawyer and other vulnerable groups who are deprived of access to justice. Moving towards the same objective of building legal capacity, in 2016 CSJ supported 110 lawyers in clearing examination of Assistant Public Prosecutor under Judicial Magistrate First Class conducted by Gujarat Public Service Commission.

The training was held in four batches. In the first batch, there were 50 students, in the second one there were 110 students, in the third batch there were 100 students and in the fourth one there were 170 students who attended the training. This initiative was taken in 2014 and went on for two years till 2016. The written examination was held in the year 2014, the result was declared in the year 2015. In 2015 almost 250 students were registered who cleared the examination and came only for the preparation of cracking interview.

Additionally, one get together meeting was held where all selected candidates which was approximately 110 came and shared their experience of being a part of the training process organized by the CSJ.

This examination was conducted by the Gujarat State Commission. The participants approached us through some advertisements where CSJ mentioned about the purpose and objective of the training in the local newspaper. The participants came from various parts of the Gujarat state and they were mostly from the rural background. Most of the lawyers who participated in the training belong to the Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes and some of them were from Other Backward class (OBC). They were not financially so well off to pay the full cost of the interview, so the organization had charged some minimal amount for the training which was Rs500 per participant per day which was very less in comparison to the total cost incurred in the training process.

This training strengthened the belief and trust that people have in the organization mission and vision. Out of all domains where CSJ works, linking local people with the local government bodies and institutions is one of the important roles. As a matter of fact, a considerable number of lawyers are not able to crack these examinations conducted by the state service commission because of the poor education system of India. One of the core reasons is that the various law colleges fail to provide students the kind of education that a law graduate should have. The situation is more dismal in the rural parts of the country.

Acknowledging the gap in understanding of the laws and acquiring basic skills of a public prosecutor, CSJ took this initiative and supported approximately 110 people in which 40 percent were women and rest 60 percent were men in not only for developing the general understanding of law but also helped them in ensuring their career as an assistant public prosecutor in the state of Gujarat.

The preparation happened in two stages, where first stage involves preparing the lawyers for cracking the written examination and the second stage was the interview stage. Interestingly, the strength of the candidates increased in the interview stage in comparison to the written

examination. The candidates were highly satisfied with the training process and especially the interview preparation.

Preparation for written examination:

The participation of lawyers for written examination was very low. It included only some of the lawyers who were informed through the local newspaper advertisement and CSJ's own network. But gradually when candidates were informed about an organization which has experience of working in this area of building legal capacity since a long time, the number of candidates appeared for the training increased significantly.

Initially, the fundamental rights and directive principles of the state policy was discussed with the lawyers. The bare acts were discussed, the trainers used both the languages Hindi and Gujarat but since most of the lawyers were more comfortable with the Gujarati language so the training mostly continued in Gujarati. The preparation for written examination was held in two batches, three for each batch. The sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Code of Criminal Procedure (CRPC) were discussed by the trainers. The trainers included the CSJ's lawyers, paralegals and public prosecutors who have a clear understanding and learning experience of the procedural laws.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes atrocity acts were also explained by the lawyers. The relevant stakeholders which should be held responsible in the case of atrocity and relevant procedures were discussed. The focus was also given on identifying and understanding any of the human rights violations.

Preparation for the interview:

Evidently, the interview session proved to be most useful for the candidates. The feedback from the lawyers was very positive, some of them were highly satisfied with the interview preparation. They received the proper guidance on tackling questions which were likely to be asked in the interview. Of all the candidates appeared for the training, some of them were lawyers practicing for 3 years to some of them practicing for more than 10 years. The experience of practicing varied significantly but all of them had faced same problems like lack of guidance and training where they could develop their skills of handling and answering legal questions. Some of the trainers from local governing bodies and law colleges were also called, who had an expertise in specific skills like enhancing interview skills and so on.

The interview sessions also helped the lawyers in learning methods to deal with the procedural questions, evidence based questions which are essential to practicing laws. The emphasis was given on making lawyers learn procedural law and be vocal about it. Additionally, already practicing public prosecutors helped and supported in making the event a successful one. These sessions in the interview event was designed in a way so that the lawyers can handle any kind of question which can possibly be asked during the interview. The interview preparation also

focused on overcome with the inhibitions with the interviews or dealing with any formal set up of any institution. A handbook was also distributed to each of the lawyer who appeared for the interview stage. The handbook included some basic guidelines and procedural laws. The linkages with various state institutions also helped them learning the methods.

Interview sessions helped everyone to develop those skills. The lack of education and basic economic facilities make the lawyers deprived of gaining the skills which they should have. The law colleges, specifically the ones which are situated in the rural parts of the county failed to provide lawyers with the necessary skills which lead to the inefficient lawyers in the court. There are very few institutions who have acknowledged the gap and work towards bridging the same.

For the interview stage, the sessions on quiz was conducted on the questions involving general knowledge like current affairs including politics, laws and so on.

In addition to this, criminal trial sessions were also designed which included proceeding in JMFC like chief examination, cross examination, evidence act, medico legal science were covered in these sessions.

This training has also helped in creating awareness among the people about the work and mission that the organization upholds. CSJ also contributed and responsible in linking these lawyers with the State legal services authorities.

Unfortunately, there is a serious lack of awareness about laws and procedures, it's a crisis that the country has been facing from past so many years. Identifying the needs of oneself and converting those needs into rights is a much-needed thing. Working on this objective of developing paralegals and building capacity of the lawyers has been a challenging task for the organization where organization is trying to reach out to the people so that they can have an access to justice. In midst of the work that organization is been doing, this achievement has certainly strengthened the work and the objective which CSJ has been continuously trying to achieve in so many years.