

NATIONAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY



**Seminar for Principal District & Session Judges and Additional District
Judges on Psychological Adjustments and Stress Management**

[P-1239] (*Online Mode*)

(30th & 31st January, 2021)

PROGRAMME REPORT

PREPARED BY

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Overview of the Seminar

The National Judicial Academy organised a two-day online seminar for Principal District and Sessions Judges and Additional District Judges on Psychosocial Adjustments and Stress Management on 30th & 31st January 2021. The programme was intended to provide a forum for judges to share experiences, skills and best practices with a panel of distinguished resource persons from the judicial branch and other relevant domains. A brief snapshot of the scheme of the workshop spread over the duration of 2 days was as follows:

Day-1

Session 1 - Understanding Litigant Behaviour in Diverse Litigation

Session 2 - Attitudinal Changes and Biases

Day-2

Session 3 - Developing Communication Strategies

Session 4 - Midlife Crisis and Life Beyond the Dias

Presentation by E-Committee of the Supreme Court on eCourt Services

The inaugural session of the seminar was taken by R. Arulmozhiselvi on the initiatives of e-Committee of the Supreme Court. The speaker explained various services offered by the e-Court project including automated Email services and SMS services for communication with advocates and litigants. The speaker then discussed E-Seva Kendras which serve as e-Reception Centre in every court to facilitate e-filing. National Judicial Data Grid and its various uses were explained by the speaker. The speaker focused on method of using the data on the NJDG to monitor the progress of cases in courts, for instance, the query builder format was explained where the causes of delay of cases in courts can be known. The speaker also explained the use of justIS App which can be used by judges for maintaining data of their courts.

Session 1

Understanding Litigant Behaviour in Diverse Litigation

Speakers: Justice S. G. Gokani, Justice Sujoy Paul, Dr. Harish Shetty and Dr. Samindara Sawant

The panelists began the discussion by stating that theme is psychosocial in nature and hence posed the following questions to participants:

How does the court evaluate a litigant who is aware of his/her rights?

Is the regular presence of a litigant disturbing particularly in criminal matters?

Complainant's insistence to engage a lawyer in support of prosecution?

Litigant seeking information under Right to Information Act, 2005?

Is Public Interest Litigation misused by opportunists?

The participants's responses helped in identifying the behavioral patterns of litigants across the various states and best practices were shared. Thereafter, the panelists deliberated in detail 'jurimetrics'- the application of quantitative methods, probability and statistics to law and its significance in reducing gap between judging and justicing.

Session 2

Attitudinal Changes and Biases

Speakers: Justice S.G. Gokani, Dr. Harish Shetty and Dr. Samindara Sawant

The speaker initiated the deliberation by showing certain images to participants and sought responses. The responses helped in gauging the biases, pre-conceived notions and mental conditioning of participant judges. It was opined by the speaker that no individual is free from biases including judges, however, the quest to render adjudications free from biases must always continue. Thereafter, the speaker discussed at length the different types of biases including explicit and implicit bias. Further, the dichotomy of perception and reality was discussed, participant judges were advised not to form oversimplified opinions on persons and refrain from comprehending everything in black or white.

Session 3

Developing Communication Strategies

Speakers: Justice Ram Mohan Reddy and Dr. Harish Shetty

The theme of the session was set by the Director by drawing distinction between hearing and listening. It was stated that hearing is mere reception of the sound waves whereas listening is the absorption of the transmitted content. It was stressed that every communication of a judge should have some strategy i.e, some underlying basis of effecting a communication. It was stressed that a judge should learn the art of strategic communication in order to enhance public confidence in the judicial system. Thereafter, the speaker highlighted through hypothetical situations the importance of different emotions and the strategies to use them for one's advantage. The speaker on being asked by the participants about the emotion of anger responded that anger is a normal emotion and it was advised that a judge should not hold anger for long as it gets converted into resentment and further into hostility thereby causing change in personality. Thereafter, the panelists drew distinction between hearing and listening and stated that hearing is reception of sound or the ability to perceive sound waves whereas listening is the absorption of the transmitted content. Hence, a judge should be a good listener.

Session 4

Midlife Crisis and Life Beyond the Dias

Speakers: Justice Ram Mohan Reddy and Dr. Harish Shetty

The speaker initiated the deliberation by stating that life has three phases i.e, morning (teenage), evening (midlife) and night (old age). Midlife is a preparatory role in transition to old age and requires adjustments to new challenges. It becomes a crisis when one fails to balance multiple roles and challenges posed during midlife, for instance, balancing between professional growth and family obligations. The speaker highlighted that midlife is generally construed negatively, however, the brighter side of midlife is a sense of contentment, life experiences, financial stability and spiritual awareness. Thereafter, the speaker dwelt in detail about mental health by discussing confidence vs complex, contentment vs criticism, courage vs. conformity and compassion vs

cruelty. The discourse helped in identifying different facets of depression and the ways to overcome it.