

TRAINING PROGRAMME
REPORTS
**RESEARCH
METHODOLOGY &
PUBLIC POLICY
ANALYSIS**

19th – 20th October 2017



Centre for Economy Development and Law



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Research Methodology is required as a basic tool for systematically approaching academic as well as non-academic research. It enhances efficiency and expands scope of research. Public Policy Analysis has its specific data collection, organisation and interpretation techniques.

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REPORT

RAPPORTEUR

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RESOURCE PERSONS

Mr. NITHIN RAMAKRISHNAN (Asst. Prof. of Law, Chinmaya University of Sanskrit and Indic Traditions, Ernakulam)

Dr. MARTIN PATRICK (Chief Economist, CPPR Kochi)

Mr. ANTONY DAWSON D'SILVA (Asst. Prof. of Political Science, Maharaja's College, Ernakulam)

Mr. RAHUL V KUMAR (Asst. Prof. of Economics, NSS College, Ottapalam)

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REPORT OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME ON RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS

Centre for Economy, Development and Law (CED&L) organised a training programme on the basic concepts of research and policy analysis. The training was primarily intended to equip the part-term interns of the Centre; however, it witnessed the active participation of several other interested candidates as well.

Mr. Soman P Mamkoottathil, Principal (full additional charge), Government Law College, Thrissur, formally inaugurated the programme at 9.30 am on October 19th. He sent his generous well wishes to the participants as well as the Centre for all its academic activities.

Mr. Abhilash Gopinath, Coordinator of CED&L, welcomed the gathering with motivating words. He pondered over the rationale for a training in research methodology: a knowledge of the methodology is essential for higher studies and also any independent research; apart from that, the skill acquisition differentiates a profile from that of other competing candidates, which will further expand one's horizon of scopes.

Mr. Nithin Ramakrishan, resource person for the first session, furthered the discussion with the question "Why are you here?". Mr. Nithin Ramakrishan is currently Assistant Professor of Law at Chinmaya University of Sanskrit and Indic Traditions, Ernakulam, and moreover, a Fellow of the Centre and the person behind the conceptualisation of the internship and training programmes. The session consisted of two parts: first, an orientation to the programme and second, an introduction to the technical aspects of policy research. Research can begin from one's immediate experiences. He tried to engage the participants in critical questioning of the replacement of BA LLB course with BBA LLB course in Government Law College, Thrissur. He also described what is expected from the interns of the Centre, in the process and as an output of the internship programme.

Dr. Martin Patrick, Chief Economist at the Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR), Kochi, handled the session on Introduction to Research Methodology. Beginning from the elements of motivation for research, the three main phases of research, and criteria for selection of topic, He discussed the requirements, approach and process of research right

from the elements of motivation, the three main phases and criteria for selection of topic. He introduced different stages of an academic research through several examples of research projects conducted by himself and others. Then the participants were given the activity to prepare a model of research proposal including title, literature review, problem definition, objectives and so on. The participants worked for the time of one hour in groups of 5-6 members. The activity bridged the gap between the theory of methodology and the actual practice of research. The participants tasted a bit of actual research through the activity. After the given time each group presented their proposal and the proposals underwent constructive criticism from the gathering.

Mr. Nithin Ramakrishnan concluded the day's programme by assigning an activity to the participants to enquire about improvements to be made to the present system of legal education in the state.

The training programme started at 9.30 am on October 20th. Mr. Nithin Ramakrishnan carried forward the discussions of the previous day in the introductory session. Stages of literature review and formulation of research question were discussed in detail. The notion of inclusion-exclusion strategy was mentioned which triggered thoughts on perspective of a research.

Mr. Antony Dawson D'silva, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Maharaja's College, Ernakulam, led the session on Writing a Research Paper. 'How to write an academic paper' is a point where we require clear idea and orientation from the beginning itself, he opined. He discussed various stages and types of research. The extensive process of writing an academic paper from the selection of area to literature review and listing of resources was presented in simple terms. He then discussed about internationally recognised standards for paper and presentation assessment criteria, which can be guidelines to systematise the academic activities of every student. Mr. Antony Dawson D'silva further invited the discussion into data mining. Verifiability is an important concern while collecting data for research; researcher has to avoid the pitfalls of misinformation and disinformation. He propounded the use of different search engines other than the conventionally used ones, academic databases, open source documents, international think-tanks, digital libraries and archives.

The session presented with the extensive sources for data collection. Now arises the question of documenting it. Mr. Sreenath Namboodiri, Fellow of CED&L, introduced bibliography software that can enhance ease and efficiency of organising and referencing resources.

The final session in the training programme focused on Public Policy Analysis. Mr. Rahul V Kumar, Assistant Professor of Economics at NSS College, Ottapalam, began his discussion from “think-tanks”. He exemplified that every policy has multiple stages of impact, through considering social, political and economic repercussions of recent policy developments. Accessibility of academic research and actual policy have points of divergence between them. He invited a deeper look into the definition of ‘public policy’. The process of policy analysis is extensive. Mr. Rahul V Kumar explained how to effectively create, use and assess data, especially numbers which are key to a policy research. Statistics can weave stories and hence their use is consequential. A peripheral study may lead to misinterpretations, and hence disaggregated data is mooted for. Not only policy research, formulation and implementation, but monitoring also is significant, he concluded.

The programme concluded by 4.30 pm with a note of thanks by Mr. Abhilash Gopinath. The training received very good response from the participants for most of whom it has been the initiation into methodical research. The activity-oriented and interactive nature of the programme provided practical know-how with the guidance of subject experts.