BLOGS

In Conversation with Prachilekha Sahoo, Assistant Professor of Law at School of Law, Centurion University of Technology and Management

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In this conversation with CLATalogue, Prachilekha Sahoo talks about her venture into the domain of law, her law school experience and her journey as an Assistant Professor of Law.

Can you provide an overview of your educational background and professional experience?

Hello, I am Prachilekha Sahoo. I have done my B.A. LL.B.(Hons.) from University Law College, Utkal University. Then I pursued my LL.M. from National Law University Odisha.

Having qualified the UGC NET, I am pursuing my Ph.D. part-time from National Law University Odisha. I have worked in Amity Law School, Amity University Jharkhand as Assistant Professor following which I got an offer to join as a founding faculty member in School of Law, Centurion University of Technology and Management.

How did you start your journey in the domain of law? How were your initial years in law school?

My journey in the domain of law began with a deep desire to make a difference in society. Right from the start, I was driven by a strong aspiration to bring about positive changes and contribute to the legal landscape.

During my initial years in law school, I maintained a balance between my aspirations and the enjoyment of having fun with my friends. While I remained focused on my studies, I also cherished the camaraderie and shared memorable experiences with my peers. This combination of being aspirational and enjoying the company of my friends made my early years in law school both meaningful and enjoyable.

What led you to pursue a career in academia and become an Assistant Professor?

Initially, academia was not my first choice. However, during my LL.M. classes, I had the opportunity to deliver lectures. It was during this time that one of my professors recognized my potential and encouraged me to pursue a career in academia. Their belief in me instilled a new sense of vigour and confidence.

On reflecting, I realize that this pivotal moment made all the difference. It sparked a passion within me for teaching, research, and contributing to the academic community. With this newfound inspiration, I decided to embrace the path of an Assistant Professor, driven by the desire to impart knowledge, inspire students, and make a meaningful impact in the field of law.

Can you share some examples of innovative teaching methods or strategies you have used in your classes?

In my classes, I have employed various innovative teaching methods to foster an interactive and engaging learning environment. One particular approach I have utilized is encouraging students to actively participate by asking for their opinions on specific judgments or legal issues.

When students would ask for my opinion, I would redirect the focus back to them and inquire about their understanding of the topic thus far. Often, they would rely on quoting opinions rather than factual information. This presented an opportunity for me to explain the distinction between opinions and facts, guiding them on how to approach legal analysis and research.

By fostering an inquisitive and curious mindset, coupled with a focus on factual accuracy and critical thinking, I aimed to equip my students with the necessary skills and tact to navigate the complexities of the legal field.

How do you balance your teaching responsibilities with your research or other professional activities?

Balancing teaching responsibilities with research and other professional activities requires effective time management and prioritization. I allocate specific time slots for each task and create a schedule that allows me to dedicate focused periods to teaching, research, and other commitments.

Prioritizing tasks based on deadlines, importance, and impact helps me stay organized and efficient. By maintaining a structured approach, setting realistic goals, and maintaining open lines of communication, I believe that is the way to successfully manage teaching and professional activities.

What challenges have you faced as an Assistant Professor, and how have you addressed them?

As an Assistant Professor, I have encountered several challenges and have adopted various strategies to address them. One challenge is managing a heavy workload, including teaching, research, administrative duties, and mentoring students. To overcome this, I prioritize tasks, set realistic goals, and delegate responsibilities whenever possible. I also practice effective time management and seek support from colleagues and mentors.

Another challenge is staying updated with the latest research and advancements in my field. To tackle this, I regularly attend conferences, workshops, and seminars, and engage in collaborative research projects. Networking with experts in the field and participating in professional development opportunities have helped me stay informed and connected.

Overall, addressing these challenges requires adaptability, perseverance, and a proactive approach to professional development and collaboration.

Any advice you’d like to pass on to law school aspirants and law students?

Stay motivated, develop strong analytical and writing skills, manage your time effectively, network and seek internships, embrace collaboration, prioritize self-care, stay updated, and be

adaptable. Enjoy the journey and remember that your hard work and dedication will pave the way for a rewarding legal career.

This interview is a part of our series #MyCLATStory where we interview law students and legal professionals.

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