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Name of Scholar- Mansoor Shoukat Khan

Supervisor's Name- Prof. (Dr). Ghulam Yazdani

Name of Faculty- Faculty of Law

Name of Topic- Protection of Witness for Effective Administration of Criminal Justice in India: An Empirical Study of District Courts of Delhi.

Findings

Witnesses have a significant impact on the criminal justice system as a whole and in court proceedings. As opposed to other topics like rape, domestic abuse, terrorism, socio-economic offences etc., witness protection is not as widely discussed in India, which is completely unfair and incorrect, since witnesses are very important for overall criminal justice administration. Both parties to the dispute, prosecution and defence counsel, are aware that a single witness has the power to sway the court in one party's favour; as a result, witnesses are frequently blackmailed emotionally and psychologically or offered money or rewards to change their testimony or sometime witnesses are forced to remain silent. It frequently happens in these situations that witnesses who are minors or have additional issues become the victim.

As an essential element in the pursuit of justice, witnesses play a significant and important role in the criminal justice system and criminal jurisprudence. Hence their role cannot be undermined at any cost or under any circumstances. Assuring that every accused is given a fair trial and that justice is carried out; witnesses offer first-hand experiences and evidence that aid in finding and establishing the truth in criminal cases. The present research study has examined the numerous facets of a witness's role, importance and function within the criminal justice system as well as the significance of witnesses in criminal law.

Witnesses provide evidence in a court of law in the criminal justice system to aid in the discovery and establishment of the truth. But as highlighted in this research study, there are number of issues with witnesses in the Indian criminal justice system that make it difficult to administer justice effectively and, as a result, undermine the goals of criminal justice system.

The determination of guilt or innocence, the impartial administration of justice, and the preservation of the public's confidence in the legal system are all significantly impacted by

witnesses and play a critical role in the criminal justice system. In order to build a solid case against someone, witnesses are crucial since they can describe incidents and conditions directly. They provide testimony that can be vital in establishing the truth, chronology, and order of events-information that is crucial to both the prosecution and defences. Due to their ability to support or refute other witnesses and evidence, witnesses are important in establishing the case's credibility and overall criminal proceeding.

Witnesses can aid and help in the earliest phase of a criminal investigation by sharing information, pointing out potential suspects, and assisting law enforcement with the collection of evidence and information which is very helpful during trial. The victims themselves might testify in circumstances where there are victims. The impact of the crime on their life can be revealed through their testimony, assisting in ensuring that the judicial system takes their needs and experiences into consideration.

In order to make sure that perpetrators are made to answer for their acts, witnesses are essential. As a result of their evidence, criminal offenders may be apprehended, brought to justice, and found guilty. Also helpful in proving a defendant's innocence is the exculpatory evidence that witnesses can offer. Their testimony may reveal that the accused was not present at the scene of the crime or that there is reasonable doubt about his/ her guilt.

The sentencing portion of a trial may be affected by witness testimony. For instance, victim impact statements can be used to assist courts in deciding on suitable penalties based on the harm brought on by the crime. The adversarial aspect of the criminal justice system, in which both the prosecution and the defense present evidence and arguments, is facilitated by witnesses. This procedure tries to make sure that the court takes into account all pertinent evidences.

The public's confidence in the criminal justice system is boosted through witness evidence. It improves the legitimacy of the legal system when witnesses are believed to be truthful and have their rights upheld. Participating as a witness in the criminal justice process sends a message that illegal activity will be found and dealt with, which can serve as a deterrent to further criminal activity.

In order to promote their cooperation, witnesses must also benefit from specific legal protections, such as immunity from intimidation and reprisal. It's crucial to understand, though, that obstacles like intimidation, threats, and fear of retaliation may confront witnesses and affect their motivation to come forward. To ensure that witnesses can fulfil their position as witnesses successfully, the criminal justice system must address these concerns.