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FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO LOW CONVICTION RATE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: A CRITICAL STUDY OF POLICE INVESTIGATION PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

The concept explored in this paper is why the criminal justice system in Pakistan has a low conviction rate that can be explained as a result of application of the procedures in the police investigation. The research method is quantitative, in which, structured survey is done to gather data about significant stakeholders of the criminal justice system and among them, police investigators, and the prosecutor and attorneys, prosecution and judges. These findings reveal that poor police investigations, absence of evidence, ineffective and poor prosecution, delays during the judicial processes, corruption and intimidation to witnesses are the major reasons that contributed to low conviction rate. Lack of contemporary investigation techniques and lack of proper training of the law enforcers who are identified as a big impediment to investigation. Besides, the study lays a lot of focus on the implications of lack of judicial efficiency, politicking, and corruption in processing prosecution and judicial cases. These results show that with police training improvements, reinforcements to stronger police prosecutor resources and tighter witness protection programs and solutions to a systemic level of corruption in place, a major positive change could be witnessed in the rate of the Pakistani convictions. This study will lead to enhancing the changes in the policy and help to create a more effective and transparent legal framework in Pakistan since the systematic problems of the criminal justice system are systematically investigated.

Keywords: *Low conviction rate, criminal justice system, police investigation, corruption, judicial delays, prosecutorial inefficiency, witness protection, forensic techniques, Pakistan, systemic reform*

INTRODUCTION

The issue of conviction in the criminal justice system in Pakistan has always been the point of concern with most studies showing that the rate remains very low in the country. The issue of inefficiencies and procedural barriers are more difficult to address in the criminal justice system that foster the service of justice, whereas high reforms and struggle with crimes have been observed. The rate of conviction in Pakistan is minimal and this is extremely crucial in the matters that involve serious crime including the murder, rape, and corruption and this is a very disreputable concern regarding performance of the law enforcement cycle in Pakistan and execution law and enforcement system. This study received its origin by the analysis of the various causes that lead to this low conviction rate with an intense look to the problem of policing investigation.

Under criminal justice escents, the rate of conviction is one of the most imperative elements of examination regarding the proficiency of criminal justice reimburse its approval. The reason given for the low conviction rate in Pakistan has involved

numerous systemic issues which have culminated to predictable failure in prosecution procedure protocols, lack of prompt evidence, failure to complete the investigation processes and lack of current day forensic aids. This has resulted in the fact that criminals largely get away without serving to instill confidence to the justice system. The focus of the entire process is occupied by the police where their work involves to gather the evidence, conduct investigations and deliver the cases to the prosecutors. However, through several phenomena, internal inadequacy (absence of training, corruption, political pressure, and insufficient resources) causes the police not to keep up with the norms that have to be adhered to to achieve success in prosecutions (Abbas, 2011; Mateen et al., 2019).

Among the key causes of low conviction rate is poor training of the law enforcers. The fraud tends to employ incompetent police detectives in Pakistan who do not perform any effective and efficient investigations particularly on complex cases that entail the application of scientific principles of evidence collection. Research has also shown that the bias application of the contemporary investigation approach leads to mistakes in the process of the evidence processing, which, in turn, destroys the case that is eventually brought to the court (Shabbir et al., 2018). Bigger of all, this low success rate of prosecutions implies procedural shortcomings to the investigation, such as miscarriage of the evidence or breaking the due process of law (Reid, 2018). Not only do these vices victimize the police in solving cases, but also contribute to the innocent personality of majority of the criminals.

The ineffectiveness of the courts is the other reason why conviction has been low. The number of cases before the court is large in most cases in Pakistan, thus making it time consuming to preside over the case. Case presentation in the courtroom is one of the most influential problems, particular owing to the fact that the appearance moment might lead to evidence destruction or witness intimidation or the loss of important facts on a case (Tariq, 2020). These lags make one believe that the justice system is ineffective hence reducing the trust of people in the rule of law. Studies have found out one of the biggest obstacles to achieving a high conviction is judicial inefficiency despite receiving many cases, and its cases are tossed due to procedural inefficiencies (Patterson and Graham, 2018a).

Furthermore the criminal justice system is also corrupt and this is a very crucial element of convicting low scores. The politics and associated corruption undercuts the objectivity in an inquiry, with military officers and the unit of law becoming compromised by outside influences of dismissing cases or effusively punishing crimes by criminals (Abbas, 2011). Such corruption is not only concentrated in justice seeking, but the cycle of impunity as well where criminals take pride in their deeds because they are aware that they will go scot-free. As the World Justice Project has stated (2020), Pakistan scores low in the corruption within the criminal justice system dimension where law enforcers and the judiciary are rather vulnerable to the elements of political and financial influence.

Witness protection is another factor that makes conviction rates low. The majority of witnesses also fear serving consequences of their testimony; hence, in the vast majority of cases, they refuse to take part in the testimony or produce unreliable statements (Lopez and Pasko, 2021). This all is due to the fact that the prosecution case remains inadequate considering that there cannot be a powerful witness protection program in effect in Pakistan to protect the witness against intimidation and even violence. Since researchers have shown, the lack of degree of protection of witnesses leads to nullification of the case or acquittal of those imprisoned and accused due to a false test (Kantorowicz-Reznichenko and Faure, 2021).

Even the legal construct plays a great role in low conviction rates. The sources on which the legal system is based be it the Islamic law jurisprudence or the common law principles is systematically criticised being neither efficient nor efficient in its outdated procedures. The working of the legal provisions within it also complicates criminal justice by being in dissimilarity with the existing investigative process or even the international process (Sharma et al., 2018). The cross diffusion of law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and judges contributes further to the absence of coordination in the administration of criminal justice system in the sense that it is difficult to persuade a court to convict a person based on a complicated case.

Additionally, criminal crimes remain unaddressed once the problem of the unwillingness of the population to report crime and cooperate with police is disclosed. The underlying factor which contributes to the underreporting of crimes is the impacts of the socio-cultural factors that encompass the fear of punishment, the social stigma, distrust towards the system. This reluctance does not enable the police to gather each piece of evidence to come up with strong cases (Gawrylowicz & Bartlett, 2021). The overall mood of the society that the criminal justice system is a systematically corrupted system that does not perform its duties also leads to the deterioration of persons to address the issues of inquiries or any kind of assistance available to them.

The issue of low conviction rate in Pakistan is a complicated one that has deep rooted their system errors in the police investigation system, their judicial system, police corruption and their attempt to intimidate the witnesses and cultural aspects. This research would likely dissect these factors in a, shall we state, all-encompassing manner however than it must look the process of the police investigation with a specific perspective in trying to suggest solutions to the issues of improving the criminal justice system. The current research study seeks to address the gaps that exist in the law enforcement and the punitive system by offering a dent of forming a more efficient and explicit criminal justice framework in Pakistan, which subsequently will serve to positively consider the rate of conviction and trust with regard to the system.

Literature Review

Painful experience has existed over a lengthy time of fly-by-wall walking its criminal justice into a low conviction rate and rendering it less efficient and less committed to believe in its potentials to withhold justice to the Pakistani people. A critical review of the literature available demonstrates that numerous factors such as the inadequacies in the procedural matters to social and cultural obstacles are significant determinants of the criminal trial outcome. This literature review comments on the key reasons that controlled the conviction rate in Pakistan, especially, the police procedure of investigation, juristical ineffectiveness and other obstacles present in the system. The second reason is observed in the review and that is the region the reforms can positively contribute towards raising the conviction rate and protest against criminal justice system.

Investigative Police and Investigative Practices.

Police contribute to the success of the prosecutions through playing one of the most important roles of participating in criminal investigations. However, it has been found that during investigations where the efficiencies and corruption are involved in large scale where the corrupted are of significant concern as they directly influence the rate of conviction. Tariq (2020) has demonstrated that police investigators in Pakistan lack essential gadgets and resources needed to expound the investigation. This translates to misdiagnosis of gathering evidences, processing of crime scenes and inability to address suspects in the right way, which are all contributive to weak cases that go to courts. The absence of current forensic tools and a scarcity of use of scientific evidence in the realization of the investigation only aggravate the issue (Sharma et al., 2018).

Investigative poor is sometimes also caused by systemic deficiencies in the form of corruption and a partaking of political factors. Analyzing one case filed in Pakistan, Haque (2017) found that, police officers in the country have had no chance to make unbiased investigation because they are either tributary to a political leader, or a criminal syndicate. The issue of other interferences like political which is normally followed by nepotism and bribes diminishes the trust of the police force and the effectiveness of the criminal investigation. Therefore, most cases are either poorly handled or left due to the insufficiency of evidence, and this leads to the rise in the number of acquittals (Abbas et al., 2016).

Court waste and Judicial slack.

In Pakistan, one of the main factors will make the high number get convicted due to judicial delays. Research conducted by Ghafoor and Aziz (2021) references the fact that the country courts have been overwhelmed regarding case hearings, taking up a lengthy amount of time on a trial. Not only are such delays often damaging and costly in terms of evidence etc. but loss of witness accounts and eventual exoneration of a criminal is also a possibility. The study assumes not only is judgicial inefficiency and conviction rate, but also that it is jeopardizing the

human trust in the legal running of the system. These comprise sluggish cases and lack of an immediate decision and even of this is enhanced by overcrowded jails and unavailable judges and results in slower delivery of justice (Mishra, 2019).

The problem is also with judicial delays which are related to the legal inefficiency of the procedure. Most likely, the frequency of adjournments in a case is also a factor causing frustration to the victims, their families, excessive stress on the participants in the proceedings, who are law enforcing officers and prosecutors (Bajwa et al., 2017). The cases pending hearings at the courts have also led to a scenario where even a case deserving prosecution is not getting the same hearing that can make it better like the prosecutor is weak and his chances of convictions are minimal. World Justice Project (2020) reports that not only do these delays reduce the efficiency of the court system, but also make the spirit of impunity that would guarantee criminals that they are unlikely to face immediate justice on the promises of their actions.

Corruption and Political Influence in the Legal System

It has been also agreed commonly among many that corruption in the criminal justice has been very influential as being the major factor leading to low conviction rates in Pakistan. The authors Gawrylowicz and Bartlett (2021) assume that the soundness of the investigation and prosecution procedure undermines the occurrence of a corrupt police system and the judicial system, contributing in the case of corruption. It is also possible that law administration officers and judicial individuals are bribed to overlook evidence or even to establish how an outcome of a case will be. Thus, not many cases are brought to justice and the legal system is compromised by the external forces.

Corruption is not prostitution, as well as the problem of evidence manipulation and victimizing the witnesses. It is further exacerbated by the fact that the criminal syndicates and political leaders who are well within the justice system are involved in that they use their influence to acquit their allies or give them minimal sentencing terms (Javed, 2020). It is a form of organizational-wide corruption that contributes to the lack of trust towards the justice system and the lack of cooperation in citizenship and the further deterioration of the law enforcing process (Khan and Khan, 2020).

Insufficiency of Evidence and Prosecution Copyrights.

The other glaring problem which makes use of low conviction rate in Pakistan is lack in evidence. The main factors that contributed to the dismissal of the case or implementation of the acquittal according to the research by Ahmed et al. (2018) is the impossibility to collect and maintain evidence. At the same time, the law enforcement agencies often fail to collect evidence regarding the crime locations and even provided the forensic analysis and did not provide or did not provide the best evidence due to the outdated practices. The scientific ambiguity in question sequentially serves to weaken the case put across by the accused and make the prosecution to gain convictions.

Another role that the prosecutor plays is very vital because he/she takes to court the case but very many challenges are experienced by many prosecutors in Pakistan. Jamil and Shahid (2019) cite that prosecutors know that certain cases they are charged with are overloaded, and the necessary resources are not available to conduct a proper investigation and evidence presentation. This low level of resources and the effects of failure to carry out the laws as required that face training translates to unproductive prosecution of the crimes. As a result of this, in case of an adequate amount of evidences, more frequently, the presentation of the case in the court is not arduous, thus, reducing the risk of a conviction.

Witness Protection and Reliability.

Witness testifying may help ensure that there is a conviction when intimidation and retribution by the witness is extensive issues of the criminal justice system in Pakistan. As the research performed by Kantorowicz-Reznichenko and Faure (2021) claims, the fact that the witnesses do not want to testify is caused by the fear that they may become victims of the defendant or their associates. This is further unfairly governed by the fact the witness protection in Pakistan is much worn and thus the witnesses are in the exposed position and in most cases pressurized

into recanting their statements or refusing to testify whatsoever.

Another complication that makes the convictions complex is due to the unreliability of witnesses. The witnesses are also capable of providing evolutional or incomplete information perhaps due to certain fear or inability to recall important information. In a study carried out by Lopez (2018), the researcher identified that witnesses fail to appear in court or contradicting some of their provisions in most cases weakening the case pursued by the prosecution. It is particularly prevalent in the circumstances that presuppose the involvement of organized crime or the political aspect since the witnesses in the majority of the cases are coerced into amending their answers (Lopez & Pasko, 2021).

Socio-Cultural Obstacles and outlook of the society.

Another significant factor that affects the development of the Pakistani criminal justice process is the socio-cultural factors. Some of the cultural norms mentioned in the case discussed by Khan (2020), such as the unwillingness to report crimes or putting your trust in the justice system discourage the victims and witnesses and would not stimulate them to find a solution in the court, as some case studies suggested. This lack of cooperation by the citizens just causes extra trouble to the investigation of the police and the chances of obtaining a conviction are decreased.

The political discourse and the media also contribute to creating the criminal justice image that is being shaped into the thought processes of the population. People do not feel active enough and choose to lose their faith in the system of justice once the media introduces it in form of being inactive or biased (Reid, 2018). The reason behind this is the absence of trust that ultimately results in a cycle of non-cooperation between the victims and witnesses and thus a poor conviction sentence.

Low conviction rate in Pakistan is a compounded issue which is brought about by numerous factors which encompass inefficiency in the police investigations, obstructing Ford through justice, corruption, as well as social and cultural reasons. Combined with all these, the criminal justice system is sabotaged and prevents effective delivery of justice. A complex solution allowing them to address the challenges will include training of police officers and solving the corruption problems, approaches to law and order, and judicial process leanness. It is important to note that Pakistan can only change its conviction rate substantially by initiating a series of major reforms that would enable the citizens to restore the trust in the criminal justice system.

Methodology

The methodology section explains the approach, strategy and data collection which will be employed in analysing the factors that resulted into low conviction rate within the Pakistani criminal justice system with special references to likes of police investigations carried out by the police investigators. The very systematic collection and processing of data used in this work is presupposed by the qualitative research methodology as the core variables are determined that impact the final results of convictions. The research strategy and design are as follows hence at this point the data collection in participation in the research with regard to the data collection mode will be outlined along with the sampling approach and the manner in which the data is analysed within the research will be detailed.

Research Strategy

The study design applied to the situation under discussion is quantum because the studies project aims at the detection of the statistical relationship of various variables and conviction rate in Pakistan. The procedure is particularly appropriate in identification of patterns, correlation and cause monitoring of data in numeric formulation. The quantitative study will facilitate the systematic compilation of information and the statistical equations will assist the researcher to infer the insight behind the low conviction. The research will also obtain evidence, through systematically, of the most significant stakeholders in the criminal justice process of police, investigators, prosecutors, defense counsel, and judges to establish how their practices respond to the rate of convictions.

Research Design

The type of design is descriptive and correlational in nature because it will attempt to comprehend the underlying factors that contributed to the conviction rates. A descriptivistic research design approach

would enable this observation and recognition of trends and patterns on the current information whereas a correlational study would enable demonstration of the relationship between various factors and the dependent variable- conviction rates. The synthesis of the two research designs can facilitate the acquisition of an in-depth insight into the problem with the help of the quantification method of the relation between the police investigation practices, judicial inefficiencies, corruption, and the rate of conviction. Right emphasis on correlation provides the opportunity to realize what facts play the most significant role in the results of conviction and can extol it weighing the effect on the result within a statistical framework.

Data Collection Methods

Primary data shall be collected using the structured questionnaires by undergoing them to key actors within the criminal justice system. The data was to be secured on the questionnaire graced to the understanding of the perceptions and experiences of the police officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges on factors leading to low conviction rates. The questionnaire is closed-ended, Likert scale, and is structured to determine how the respondents considered various issues that relate to the criminal investigations, prosecution procedures and even the court proceedings. This will help one to make a solid analysis of his/her perceptions and provide resourceful information regarding the reasons of low conviction rate.

Together with primary data, secondary data was also collected using information on official legal databases, case files as well as state publications to obtain greater information on the crime rate, cases result and trends inernship rates in Pakistan. These secondary sources will provide a larger frame of the research and allow one to compare them to the primary sources that will be obtained through the survey members. Secondly it helps in the authentification of the outcome of the primary information and provides a broader perspective of the issue.

Sampling Method

The use of structured random sampling technique provided an assurance to a representative sample of the entire population that were described as participants to criminal justice operations. The sampling method divides the population into particular segments, the strata, based on variables such as occupation i.e. police investigators, prosecutors, defense lawyers and judges and experience. A random sample has been selected in each stratum by attempting to ensure that all the sub groups are represented in the study. This is particularly important in dealing with the circumstance regarding the need to accommodate that the sample embodies the heterogeneity of the opinions in the criminal justice system accordingly.

The target population of the research study will include 100 police investigators (25), then there will be the public prosecutors (25), defense attorneys (25), and then there will be the judges (25), Totaling 100 denizens in the district of Sahiwal. Stratified approach will ensure that all these important players will be adequately represented throughout the study period as well as provide the possibility to subtly analyze the role that they played in the conviction process. The researcher will employ vendor subjects whose professional backgrounds are diverse to obtain as many divergent opinions on the aspects surrounding the divergent conviction rates.

Sample Size

The understandings on the sample used in this study were determined based on the requirements to have a high-confidence level and accuracy of findings. The survey population shall include the professionals on criminal justice system directly prescribed to the Sahiwal location. The amount of respondents was considered sufficient (100 respondents will be selected, 25 respondents will reflect each of the categories) to ensure that the views will be presented on a large scale and the findings of the study will be statistically significant. The sample size formulas were applied to establish the size of the sample against the level of confidence (95%) that needed to be obtained and also divide-up by margin (5) error.

Data Analysis Techniques

The received data were interpreted by using the SPSS and CAL excel statistical programs to establish the patterns, and relationship of factors influencing the rate of conviction. This was achieved through

descriptive statistics by summarizing the answers to the questionnaires which included the reliability (frequency distributions), central tendency (average, median and mode) and percentages. These statistics provided a broad outlook of the statistics; however, it helped identify trends as well as general trends of the responses.

The correlation between this independent variable and dependent variable was then established using inferential statistics between the independent variables (police efficacy, judicial sloth, corruption and reliability of the witness), and the dependent variable (conviction rate). The correlation coefficient was the measure of the strength and direction of the relation between the variables (which is recommended by Pearson), and the multiple regression analysis was used to measure the comparative effect of each of the variables on the conviction rate. The regression analysis assisted in interpreting the elements that have the most significant influence on the conviction results with regards to which certain insights into the key factors affecting low conviction numbers in Pakistan were obtained.

Ethical Considerations

The research procedure implicates the principle of ethics, regardless of the fields of research concerned, particularly where human subjects are concerned. Informed consent was given to all the participants, they were briefed of what the study seeks to accomplish and what his/her rights would be as a respondent prior to conducting the survey. The respondents were also assured that their responses would be confidential and anonymous so that no one could see who they are. The study was conducted in respect of ethical requirements in conducting research involving human subjects as required by the institutional review boards and research ethic committees. Besides, the information was also satisfied and presented in a manner that no one would contest the research process and the minimum level of bias and manipulation would be observable.

Limitations of the Study

Even this research may be deemed as the source of valuable information concerning the causes of low conviction rates, it possesses multiple limitations the researcher should mention. Firstly, the study object is a specific district, Sahiwal that may not be the real representation of the criminal justice system in the whole segment of the country. Thus, they may not be entirely relevant to the outcome in other parts of Pakistan. Second, the study relies on the self-report related data that is acquired during the surveys and it may be affected particularly by the social desirability bias as a respondent may be providing an answer that he/she believes will be socially approved rather than providing his own opinion on the question. Lastly, the study has its disadvantages with regard to the availability of secondary data since certain crime statistics and legal reports will not be complete and fully accessible and this will affect the completeness of the research.

Connection to the Research Objectives.

That kind of approach is quite consistent with the purposes of the present study (not merely to establish what factors achieve low conviction rates in Pakistan but also to ascertain the effect of police investigation inefficiencies on the conviction of the criminals). Quantitative techniques allow determining effective variables, and findings provide a solid empirical foundation of the recommendations of the policy to improve a criminal justice system. The research plans to contribution knowledge that already exists about the topic of criminal justice reform in Pakistan and provides realistic implications to the policymakers and the police force, by utilizing a sound research design, and comprehensive approaches of data analysis.

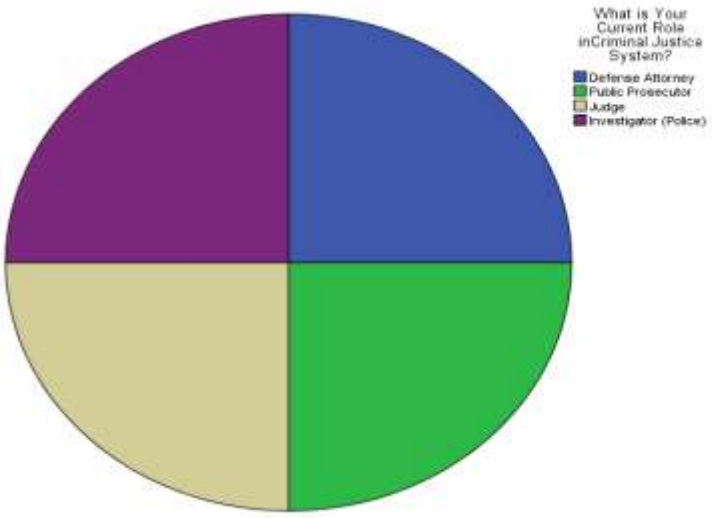
Results

The presence and nature of the perceived factors necessitating the demands on the data collected in this study provides an insight to one of the viewed factors that are critical in the low conviction rates in the criminal justice in Pakistan. This section involves the discussion of the results of the statistical data by which the findings of the central research in the Sahiwal district were also discussed. It is through the assistance of varied figures and tables that the key variables could be identified as they demonstrate the police investigation activities, judicial stalling, and corruption and their effect on a conviction outcome.

Role-based Data Sample Distribution.

Figure 4.1 represents a circular chart, of how the respondents are spread in four diffuse groups that are involved in criminal justice system of Pakistan. These types of groups include defense attorneys, state prosecutors, and judicial investigators and police. All the groups of participants are represented equally on the chart, which implies that every opinion will deserve an equal place in the analysis. The blue section is the defensive of the lawyers, the green section is section of prosecutors who are part of masses, the ash white is of judges and purple is section of the police investigators. It is this even distribution of the causes that causes the low conviction rates of the different functions of the criminal justice system that ensures equal evaluation of the same.

Fig 4.1



The respondents who are professional experience.

Figure 4.2 pointed into a bar chart that shows the number of years of experience the respondents have been working within the years across the professions. The results have shown that between 6 and 10 years there are a large number of defense counselors, police detectives and even judges with 60 percent of the defense counselors, 80 percent of prosecutors in the office and 40 percent of judges belonging to this group. The information may show that the most experienced respondents in terms of their professional experience can possibly provide valuable information about the systematic design of the issues of the conviction rates. In experience dispersion, experience is needed in gain entry into the investigations of the amount of knowledge and usability skills represented in the responses of surveys.

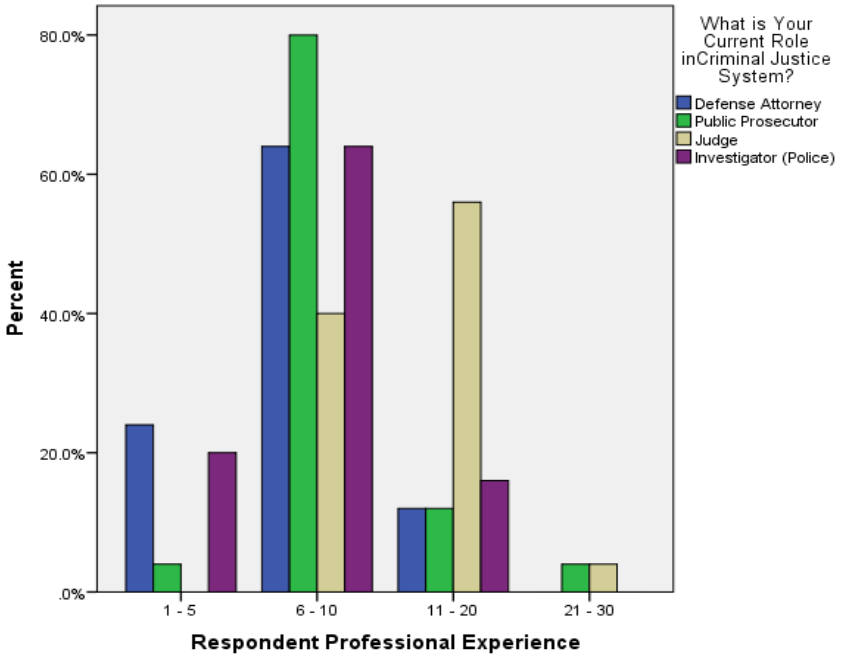


Fig 4.2

Conviction Rate Assessment

According to the bar chart at Figure 4.3, the people perception towards the conviction rate in Sahiwal is as most of the defense attorneys (55) perceived convention rate as mediocre, 44 percent of the defense judges and police investigators indicated that convention rate was very low. This disclosure indicates high concern among the proliferation of the law professionals on the phenomenon of unsuccessful convictions. Low conviction rate influences the trust which the people have on the criminal justice system that may also be seen on the broader social implications of the situation in the form of the loss of trust that people sing to the law enforcement and the courts.

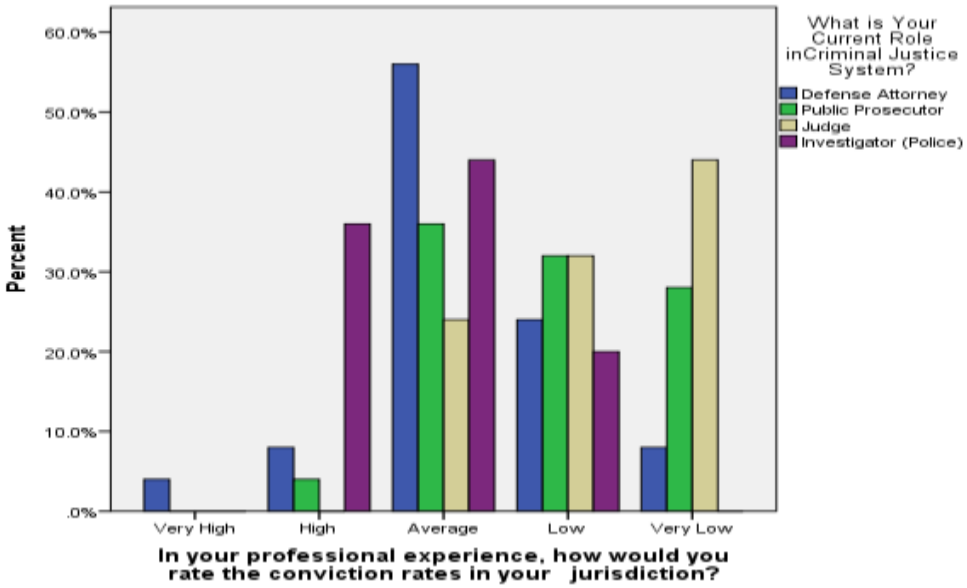
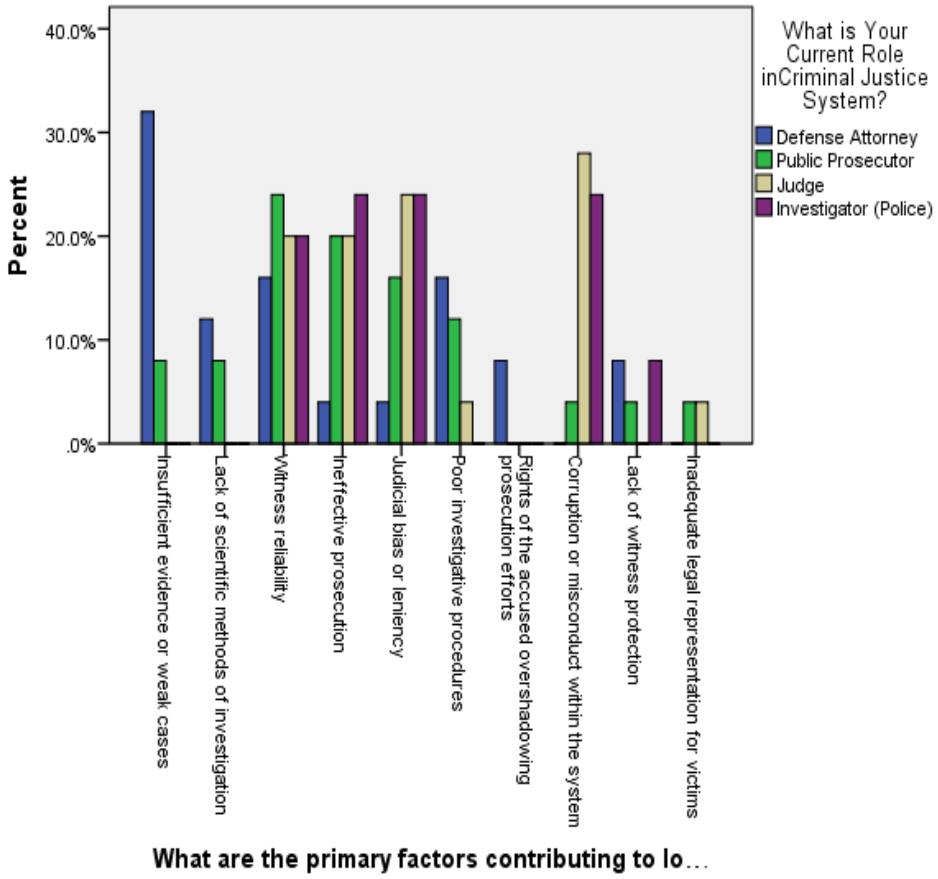


Fig 4.3

Primary Factors Contributing to Low Conviction Rates

Results of the observed key reasons that are believed to have led to low conviction rates in Sahiwal are shown in figure 4.4. The main reason shown mostly by the three-fifths of the defense counselors and one-Eighth of the public prosecutors was ruled out based on lack of evidence. Lack of scientific processes in the investigation was detected in 12% defence attorneys and 8% district attorneys. Another significant explanation was credibility of witnesses, where 16% as defense counsel, 24 would be as prosecuting counsellors, 20 would be as judicial counsel and 20 would be as police investigators indicate that it is a large factor behind the low

percentage of overall convictions. Respondents also reported other causes of the matter such as poor prosecution, judicial bias and ineffective investigations system which complicated the issue.



What are the primary factors contributing to low conviction rate?
Fig 4.4

collected by the Investigation Department officers.

In that regard, statistics in Figure 4.5 suggest that 88 per cent of judges, 85 per cent of investment officers, 60 per cent of prosecuting officers in the society and 44 per cent of the defence counselors driven by the opinion that the quality of evidence collected by the investment officers were poor and that the factors had contributed to the low rate of convictions. This alludes to the fact that there is a poor evidence collecting strategy of the criminal justice system. It will also increase acquittal and dismissal rates as at the time of poor quality evidence, a prosecutor will have led with no success, thus, unable to claim strong cases.

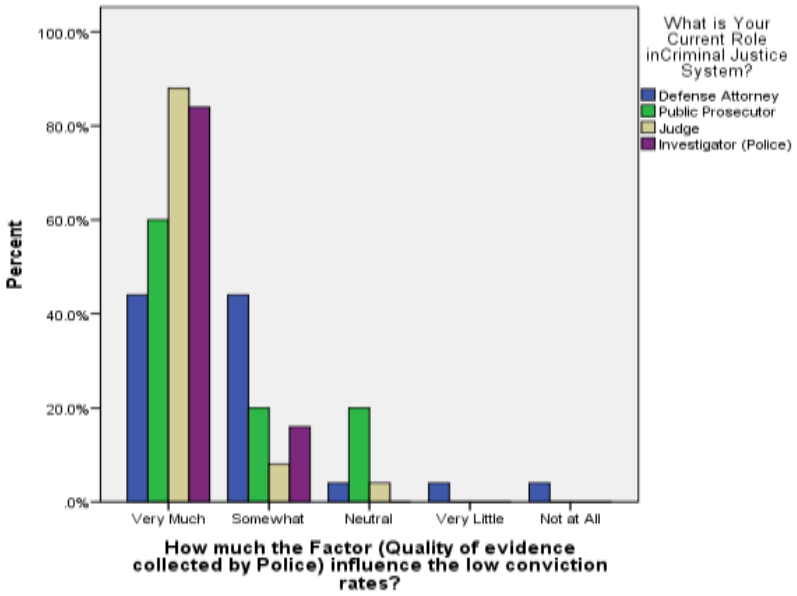


Fig 4.5

Performance and Strategy of Law Prosecution.

The data about the approach to the prosecutor and the success and rate of the success as well as impact on success rate on the prosecutor is given in figure 4.6. The chart shows that 84 percent of investigators officers and 64 percent of judges believe that the prosecutor policy and performances is not the major factor to refer in the low conviction rate. Even without looking at the prosecutor strategy, merely 10 percent of all prosecutors manning the office and 11 percent of defense attorneys admitted that it is a major factor to be considered. This means that issues such as the weaknesses of the prosecution department, such as lack of resources or lack of a strategic plan can not be considered the worst problem by individuals that are directly working with prosecution. However, it is evident that the increment in the quantity of the prosecutorial practice would contribute to the improvement in the conviction rates.

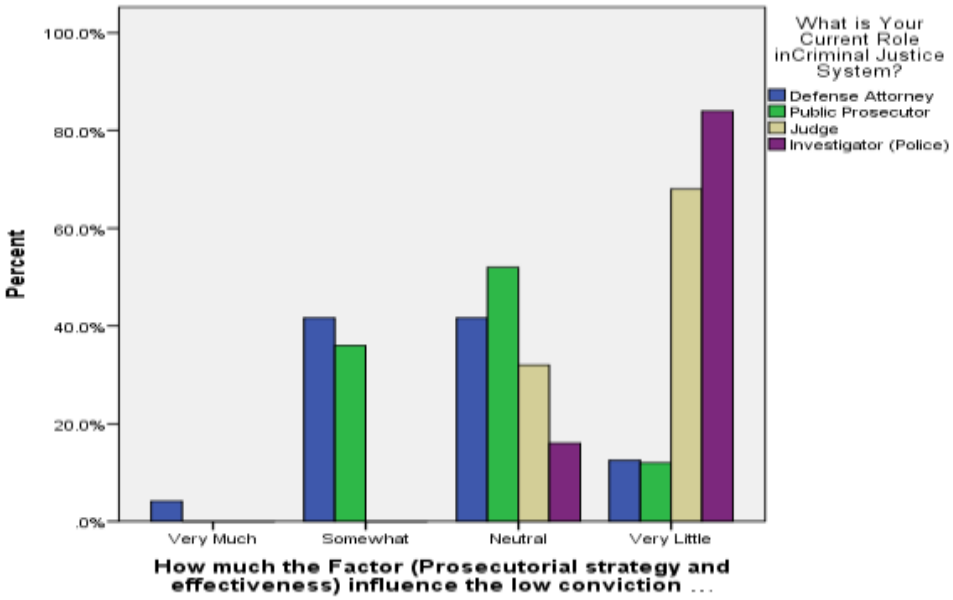


Fig 4.6

Investigative Thoroughness

The aspect of the thoroughness of the investigations is shown through the answer provided in the bar chart in Figure 4.7. On the facts revealed, 99 percent of the judging court, 80 percent of investigative officers, 44 percent of prosecutors of the mass and 22 percent of the defense lawyers were used in the consideration of the acts of investigation as being the principal factor of low acquisition in Sahiwal. The fact that most of the respondents nearly answered that there is need to improve on investigative practices to improve on the conviction rates restates the need to ensure that investigative practices are improved. Such feeble investigations do not culminate in an all and be it all investigation and therefore, it is difficult to prosecute most cases because of this fact.

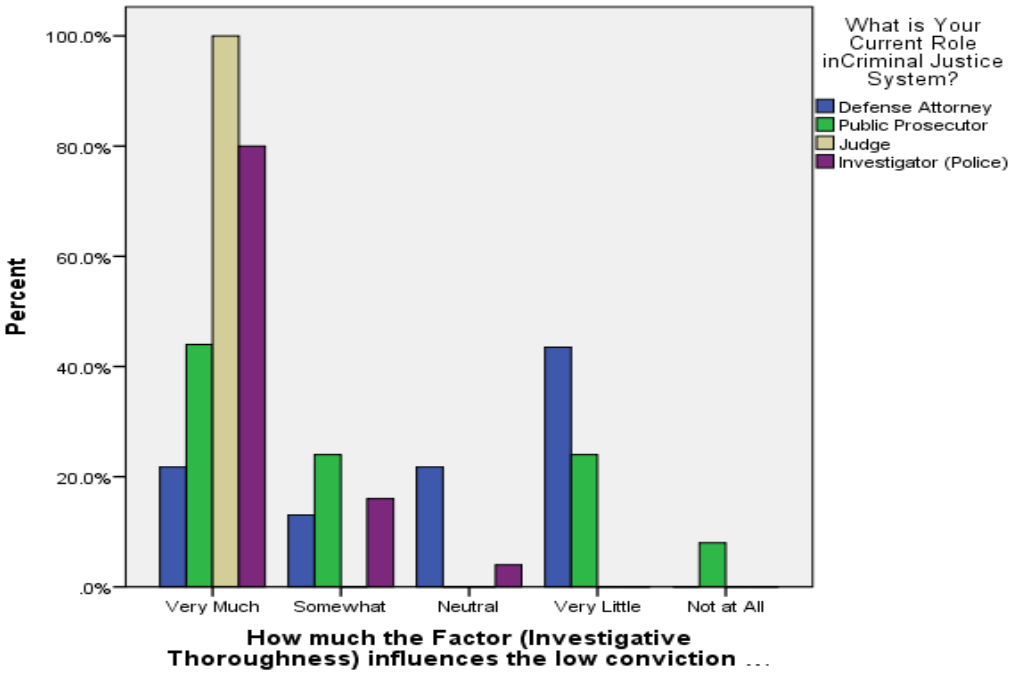


Fig 4.7

The role of legal loopholes or technicalities is presented in figure 4.8, which demonstrates that criminals are acquitted or the jury agrees with the presented verdict that has been delivered to Feminine Murders or Cop Kills. As seen in the chart, 90 percent of the judges, 80 percent of the investigating officers and 57 percent of the people in the prosecutorial side agreed that legal loopholes are also a significant factor that contributes to low conviction rate. The said information signifies that cases of legalities within the legal system may on a regular basis result in the case or an individual being thrown out, which might have a sufficient evidence that could have led to the conviction indicating a weakness in the legal system, or owing to a blemish in the procedures used in particular cases.

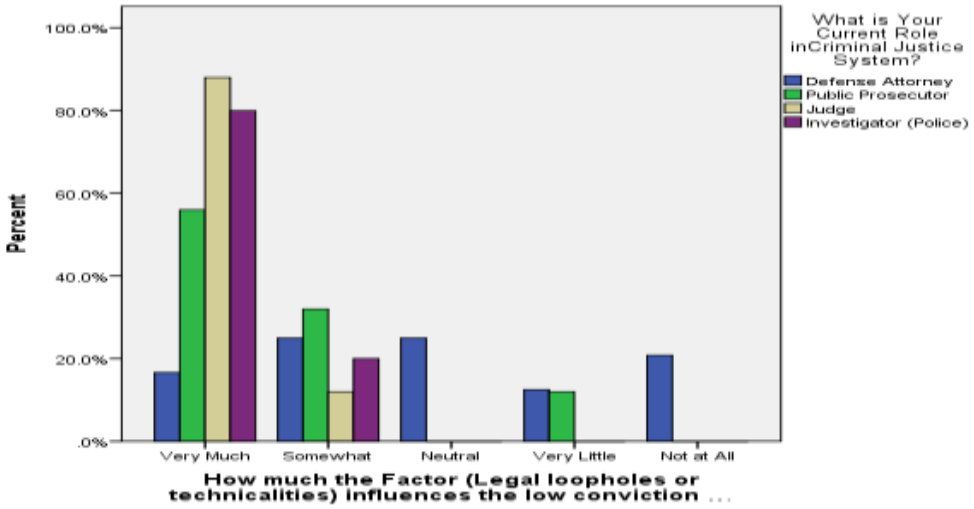


Fig 4.8

Public or Media Influence

The results in Figure 4.9 show that the degree of public or the media influence was critical in influencing the conviction rate. The chart has determined that, 50 percent of the defense lawyers, 50 percent of the investigation personnel, and a quarter of the state prosecutors feel that the publication or the media intrusion is a notable force behind the low conviction rates. On the other hand, it is only 56 percent of the judges, 30 per cent of the public prosecutors and 27 of the investigation officers who did not agree with this point of view. It can be concluded that although it is considered that the judicial process may be affected by the public opinion and the media coverage, it is viewed that the effect is lesser than that of other aspects that might be affecting the conviction rates such as low quality of investigation or the legal wiggles.

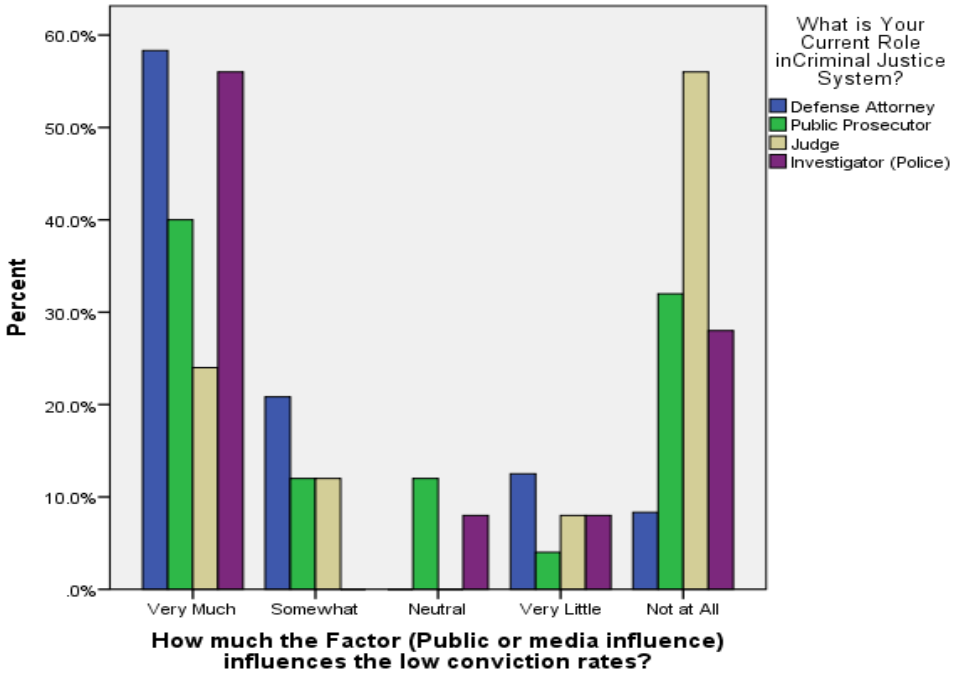


Fig 4.9

Self-Graphical -Instance Respondents of Unsecured Convictions.

Figure 4.10 provides the audience with a feeling of the actually personal issues of respondents on the occasions when they were sure that a conviction was issued, however, it was never done. The results indicate that two out of 3 judges, two out of 5 prosecutors, one out of 4 defense attorneys, two out of 22 investigators with the police have transacted in such cases at least once in their career. The discovery places a significant amount of lumbar to the situation that there exist contexts that may appear to be good, which under the support of intermingling of the factors such as weak evidence, procedural mistakes, etc. convictions are abdicated. This critical indication of the inefficiency of the system is such a belief of wrongful convictions.

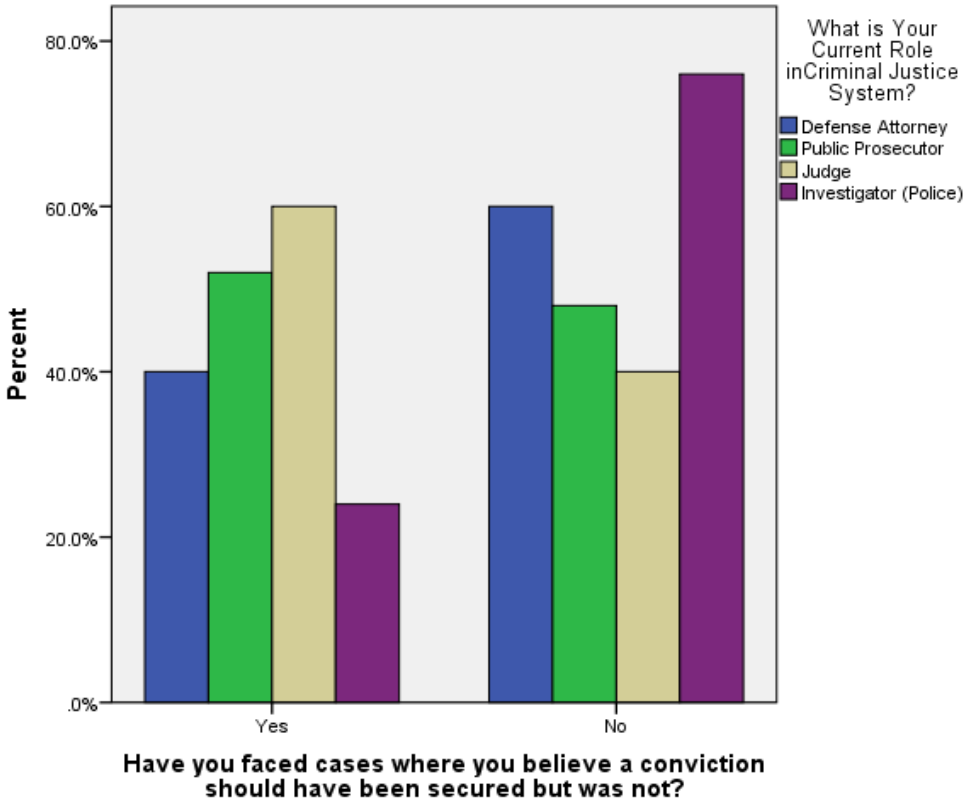


Fig 4.10

Trust in the Legal System.

Finally, the Figure 4.11 is an assessment of the confidence within which the respondents think of the current legal system and how effective it is to give honest and just findings. No more than 3 per cent of the defense attorney (no more than 6 per cent probed by a police officer) was certain that the current system of law is being properly executed. On the other hand, sixty-four percent of the police investigators, half of the judges, a third of the public prosecutor, and a quarter of the defense attorney thought under the framework of the circumstances the system was not overly working, or wholly functioning. The figures show that in addition to a certain level of trust to the legal system, nonetheless, there is a significant number of adults, who do not trust the efficacy and equity of the legal system, which drives the belief in formulating justice still lower.

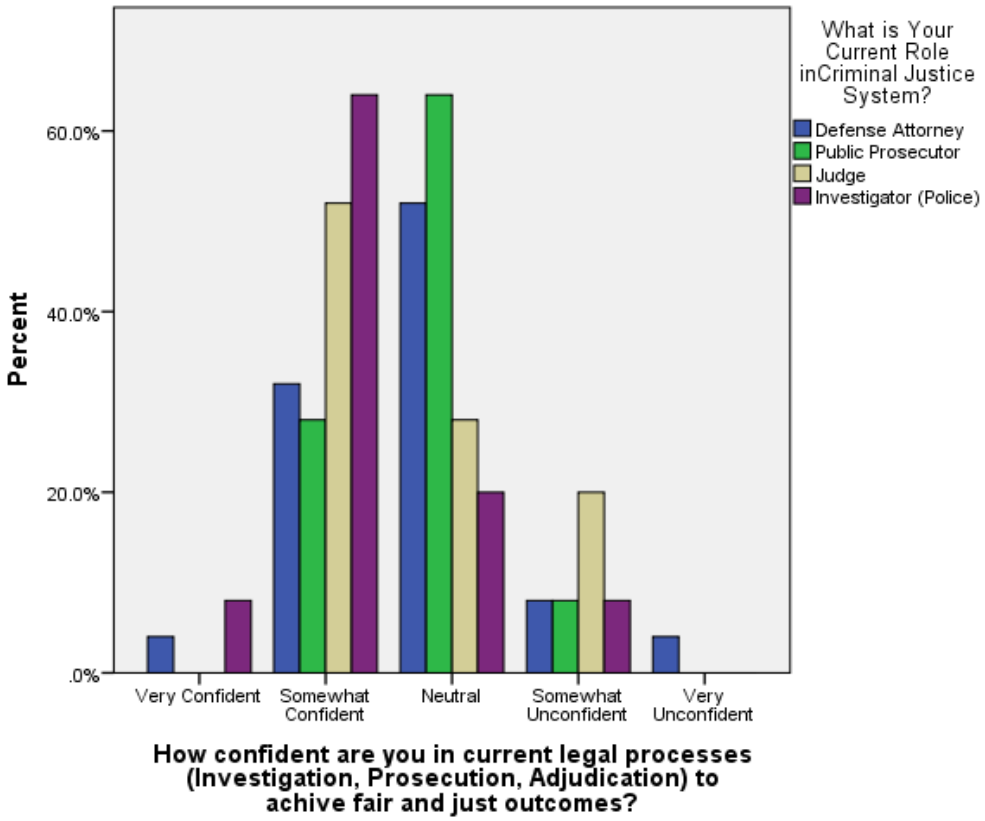


Fig 4.11

Results of this study have shown that department inefficiencies in the police investigation process, poor evidence gathering, law and system corruption is the greatest cause of low conviction rate in Sahiwal. Detective tenacity turned out to be the most desirable aspect with a massive majority of interviewees suggesting it as a major contributor in low conviction rates. Additionally, the study concluded that despite the role that defense attorney competence and judicial practices play, they are not perceived to be the key contributors to the fact that low plea scores are made. As per these findings, some of the critical actions in a rise in the conviction figure of thecriminal justice system in Pakistan are the management of the investigational failures, the quality of convincially acquired evidences, and reinvention of the legal proceedings.

Discussion

This piece made much sense in terms of understanding how the criminal justice system is structured in Pakistan to discourage a low conviction rate, particularly when one looks at the policing styles in terms of the investigation. The argumentation of the results of the survey data and information reported in the legal background suggests that one, which makes the issues complicated and causes the unfair operation of a legal system, is the absence of the effective process of prosecuting criminal cases. Critical discussion of the implications of findings provided is the current section since it will assist in offering a closer understanding of the barriers that are implied in the criminal justice system existing in Pakistan. During the discussion, great relevance is laid on the significance of investigational procedure, time wastage in the court, ineffective prosecution offices and brutality has been an essential factor in the low conviction rate.

Poor Police Evidence Gathering and Police Investigations.

The overreliance on inconsistent police investigations must be listed among the most noticeable ways of this study as the factor contributing to the minimal number of

generalizations. Through the findings, it is noted that majority of the respondents, particularly the judges and police investigators have stated that one of the reasons why criminal cases fly is because of poor investigative practices. This phenomenon is in harmony with other studies that were carried out in the past to criticize the ineffectiveness of the law enforcement agencies in Pakistan in handling criminal investigations. According to Hameed (2021), the arresting officers are not well trained and make use of modern techniques of investigation inefficiently, which has been named among the main reasons why investigations in Pakistan have become ineffective. It is also worsened by the fact that forensic evidence, the scientific methods of investigation, such as the DNA evidence and ballistic testing are inaccessible (Singh et al., 2020).

Under-training and under equipping of the law enforcers is an issue and this can be seen to result in multiple cases being mishandled away without proper investigations and this translates to incomplete or incomplete evidence. This outcome is associated with the scenario discussed by Khan and Rahim (2019) as the insufficient training of criminal investigations results in the lack of effective evidence management and the influence of the prosecution in the court. In addition, the failure to seal crime scenes and collect a key piece of physical evidence, i.e., a fingerprint or sample DNA, will be another chance to decrease the probability of a successful conviction (Shah et al., 2018.). These loopholes in the procedure of law enforcement research are one of the most profound sources of low conviction rate whereby it must be declared that it is an unreflective barrier in the process of police investigation production to develop solid and evidence-based case.

Court stalling and Wasting Time.

The other interesting finding of this research is that judicial delays play an important role in causing low conviction rates. Considering judges and other public prosecutors, a big percentage of the respondents indicated that the rate of trial is a key obstacle in making sure that the convictions are arrived at. High amount of hearings and inability to qualify a case within the due time has been seen as a fundamental issue in Pakistan. The data provided by the researchers in their works by Latif and Hussain (2020) may be characterized as one of the primary reasons that caused the slowness in the performance of justice in Pakistan. The backlog does not give time to many cases to be opined and when the verdict is eventually delivered, there is a high amount of failure to keep evidences and witnesses testimony as a result of delay.

Moreover, delayed trials pose gravitous impacts on the involved individuals and their families since they may now be left with the sense of frustration and disappointments towards the justice department (Siddiqui et al., 2019). The disadvantage of judicial delays is that those who hold the perception of a fair justice system are the last to harass the case and, in addition to this, there is an overflowing effect of a potato chain of impunity in which the offenders get away lightly due to limitations existing in the justice system. This outcome authenticates per the findings of this subject that preceding research deplored the alteration of the court system to curb the duration of court cases and their occurrence of delays (Rehman, 2018).

Corruption and Frauds in politics.

The paper also brushes through the consideration of the fact that corruption and politicians are equally contributing to the high rate of poor conviction in Pakistan. The number of the respondents who were greatly influenced by the judges and police investigators who designated corruption as a considerable factor leading to the breakdown of criminal justice system. The issue of police corruption and judicial system is sufficiently covered in literature. According to Jamil and Shah (2017), corruption in the criminal justice system leads to affecting the investigation and the manipulation of evidence as well as influencing the court outcome in Pakistan through the interference of political or criminal forces. This type of systematic corruption is Instagraming the purity of the judicial procedure except that the proceedings at last tend to be dismissed or in rare situations there are acquittals even when the evidence is provided (Akhtar, 2020).

Furthermore, the other form of corruption, which affects the conviction rate, is the politicization of the law trials. Politicians, typically pressure the enforcement mechanisms of law and court system to place the cases in perspective of resulting in

favourable outcomes in a case, especially in high profile cases that involve individuals who are politically important to the nations. Such political response, as Ali et al. (2020) explain, brings up the establishment of the high conviction rate discourse, where more powerful members receive acquittal or a reduced sentence. These anxieties can be seen in the outcomes of the following paper, as the officials of various inhabitants of a criminal justice system are irritated by the pervasiveness of politics and corruption within their working environment.

Witness Reliability and Protection

The question of the reliability and security of witnesses also became a crucial could be identified as one of the reasons at the bottom of the conviction rates. Witnesses are threatened and intimidated and therefore give out unreliable evidence or in some instances are refused to give evidence. The analysis is that many respondents which include police investigator, public prosecutor and judges differed that witness intimidation was a significant limitation to conviction. The observation aligns with the study by Lopez and Pasko (2021), who note that the absence of an effective witness protection program in Pakistan is one of the factors that allow viewing a high number of witnesses as reasons to retract and fail to provide a solid testimony in court.

The sensibility of witness intimidation especially in cases related to organized crimes or other cases that fall under the political jurisdiction is very common in Pakistan. According to Tariq (2019), investors in these cases tend to be scared of being aimed at by the accused or his accomplices, which causes them to exit the case or give false or incomplete evidence. It is worsened by the fact that there is no effective witness protection program because witnesses are not confident in going ahead to give evidence that may result in a conviction (Khan & Rahim, 2020). To overcome this problem, more detailed and safe witness protection program should be introduced to guarantee the security and trustworthiness of witnesses.

Weak Prosecution and Law Network.

Another discovery related to this research is the fact that ineffective prosecution is one of the major contributors to the poor conviction rate in Pakistan. Many respondents even the defense attorneys and the judges found the shortcomings in the prosecution process as an agent of acquittals and dismissal of a case. A study of Siddiqui (2018) revealed that prosecutors working internationally on behalf of the Pakistani government do not always have resources and training to deliver effective cases in a court. Consequently, it has been seen that many cases are lost because of the poor legal arguments, incompetent presentation of evidence, and insufficient preparation of the cases.

The inadequacy of the prosecution to respond appropriately to cases is not helped with the inadequacy in coordinating the efforts of law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and the courts. Such coordination does not come by resulting in difficult investigations and unconvincing cases, both of which ultimately culminate in the acquittal. This study aligns its findings with previous studies which have expressed the need to allocate more resources in the prosecutorial system, ensure that the prosecutors are well trained, and coordinate the actions of various players in the criminal justice system (Ahmed et al., 2019).

Effect on Community Confidence and Delinquency.

The fact that the rate of conviction in Pakistan is low is highly significant in the context of the general inclination of people towards the criminal justice system. This study indicates in its findings that it is not possible to indicate that the failure of people to be confident in the capacity of legal system to facilitate justice without suggesting that there are primary failures within the system mentioned above. When no one who must face those who commit crime, Latif notes another problem with PC (2020), but it creates an image of impunity, and no one trusts law of rule. This too would demoralize the victims and witnesses to cooperate with the police, and this would in turn lead to the continued cycle of low rate of conviction.

There are also big implications on the crime rates in Pakistan due to the erosion of the public trust. According to studies by Raza (2021), crime continues to go on since defaulters will be emboldened because they have no consequence to face. By not punishing

criminals, the justice system sends the message that one can commit a crime without fear of being punished and this will increase crime as well as undermine the confidence of people in the court of law.

Conclusion

To summarize, the low conviction rate of Pakistan can be blamed on various problems which affect the system, such as poor quality of police investigations, inefficiency of the judicial system, corruption, intimidation of witnesses, and inability to prosecute. The results of the current study are consistent with the available literature as these difficulties have been recently pointed out as the pivotal obstacle to realizing justice in Pakistan. Resolution of these problems needs wholesome changes in all tiers of criminal justice system such as police training, judicial efficiency, prosecutorial resources and witness protection. Moreover, corruption and the political interference with the law delivery process should be prevented and curtailed to make the criminal justice system work under fair and unbiased conditions. These reforms will enable Pakistan to increase their conviction rate, gain public trust in the legal system, and the criminal justice system at large will perform its functions much better than before, in regards to delivering justice.

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