Cameras in the courtroom

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**Introduction**

The courtroom is a place where important judicial decisions are taken. The atmosphere of the courtroom has long been the same, as it is has been for decades. With the advancing time and changing trends, an interesting debate has been in the limelight whether cameras should be allowed in the courtrooms or not. Different perspectives have been given by various researchers, laws experts and scholars. Some people claim that installation of cameras in courtrooms would be beneficial, but on the contrary, many claim that it is not a good idea to install cameras in such a sensitive place, where decisions are being made about the future of defendants and criminals. Sometimes, authorities who have to make a decision are distracted by the cameras.

**Discussion**

Taking a look at the last fifty years, it has been noticed that people argue that living in an electronic age incorporates a curiosity in the audience to view legal proceedings. Scholars, media representatives, concerned citizens and other people who are involved in the criminal justice systems give arguments in favor and against (Hatfield,et,al,2018). It won’t be wrong to say that the issue of televising the courtroom has both supporters as well as detractors. Cameras capture all the good and bad things that may hurt someone who may be proven innocent at the end.

Those who support this idea of televising the courtroom argue that living in a democratic country, everyone has the right to view the judicial sessions. Supporters argue that it is the right of every citizen to witness legal proceedings. Cameras in the courtroom would encourage transparency. Citizens would reflect over whether the courts fails in providing justice to people. Secondly, they claim cameras in the courtroom would develop a healthy relationship between people and the judiciary. People could be educated about the judicial system and they could know more how courtrooms deal with the defendants and cases. Some supporters also claim that cameras on courtrooms would be very helping for the law student (Lepofsky,et,al,2017). They would have practical examples of how to monitor critical cases and how to support a point with proper evidence.

Veritably, supporters have given many valid points, but on the other hand, the opponents also proposed many logical points. Cameras in the courtroom would have negative impacts for both those who proceed the court sessions and those who are there for the trail. Situations could be embarrassing for the defendants, so ethically it would be wrong to put defendants in such situations. One of the most important points that have been raised by the opponents is that only allegations do not prove one the faulty party. Unless one is being charged with a crime after having proper evidence, it would be wrong to present a defendant in front of people. The third claim proposed by the opponents who are against the idea of a camera in courtrooms is that it is important to protect the identities of defendants who are there for the trails in courts.

If cameras would be installed in courtrooms identity of victims and convict could not be protected. Both (victims and convicts) would be facing accusatory judgments of society. Maybe they would be criticized by society as well that would harm their personal life. Another major claim that came from the side of opponents is that there is a general perception that anyone who is being dragged into court has done something wrong, but it is not the reality (Richter,et,al,2019). In many cases, it has been noticed that people who are being alleged with a charge proves to be innocent at the end so doing the negative publicity of people about whom judges have not given a final verdict would be totally wrong.

An uneasy relationship has been observed between cameras and courtrooms since long back. In the mid of the 1930s cameras were blamed for disrupting the trials so the American bar association (ABA) decided its removal. According to the 35 canons that were passed in 1937, cameras should not be permitted in the courtrooms. Supreme Court of U.S in 1981 proposed rules under some special conditions that permit the cameras in the courtrooms. As far as federal trial courts are concerned, cameras are not allowed. Recently some changes are being implemented and according to these changes, Judicial Conference in September 2010 announced a pilot project for allowing the cameras in some of the district courtroom proceedings.

**Conclusion**

Keeping in consideration all the discussion and arguments of both parties, (supporters and opponents) it could be said that cameras in the courtroom have both negative as well as positive impacts on the legal proceedings and the people involved in them. So, as a whole by keeping in considerations the present age, it could be said that for reducing the frustration and chaos among the public, cameras should not be permitted in the courtrooms. It is ethically and legally wrong to make a wrong perception about someone without having strong proofs and evidence. It has been seen that experts claim that the installation of cameras in the courtroom should depend on the severity of the case. If it is a high profile and sensitive case then it should not be cameras should not be allowed. If the idea of the cameras in the courtroom is supported then people should be educated that they should not make any perception about people who are being brought to the courtroom unless a final verdict is given by the legally authorized persons (judges).

References

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