The CSI effect

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**Introduction**

It has been a recent trend that people of America are getting more and more inclined towards the television series. People from every age gender, race, nationality and religion love watching popular TV series and also like to share them with their friends. Popular TV shows or series are recommended by friends, families, and peers to each other so that they can also watch and enjoy it. Keeping this trend in mind the producers and the makers of the series also work hard and try to put more and more content in the series, in order to make it more interesting. The serial makers do not pay heed to the fact that whether the events and procedures shown in the series are genuine or not. The general public starts believing on everything shown or portrayed in these series and takes it as an actual thing, which brings the problem.

Such a case is being observed in the circles of law and jurisdiction as well. A phenomenon with the name of "CSI Effect" has been found in the spheres of lawyers and judges, where the defendants have complained that the CSI effect is highly affecting the courtroom procedures. The CSI Effect is the effect on the public opinion or the phenomenon in which the public perception is influenced by watching the exaggerated portrayal of the forensic sciences in criminal and science fiction television shows especially in TV shows like CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Thomas, 2006). The following paper looks deep into the impacts of CSI effect on the procedures of the courtroom, what the lawyers and the judges think of this phenomenon and how it can be controlled.

**Description**

TV serials are significantly inspiring and affecting our daily lives. The American population is a big fan of TV series, and they love watching them in their spare time. No doubt TV series is a good way to kill time and get entertained, but this entertainment should not prove harmful for our daily lives and in general, for society. In recent days, it has been observed that the practices and procedures shown in these TV shows are becoming a common belief nowadays. One of such examples can be seen in the form of CSI Effect which is a recent phenomenon.

CSI Phenomenon is still a piece of fiction for some people whereas other people believe that it is a reality. CSI Effect, also known as CSI Syndrome is the influence on the overall perception of the general public, as a result of the overly exaggerated portrayal of scientific and forensic procedures. The term was first coined in an article published in the USA today in 2004. It has been a common observation that jurors now demand more forensic evidence in criminal trials, questioning the quality of and standards of the proofs provided by the prosecutors. It is a very legitimate concern as the legal professionals have claimed and even complained to come under pressure due to this sometimes unreasonable demand of the jurors. Sometimes there is not much evidence present in the case, or the crime scene is so contaminated that it becomes difficult to collect evidence, which is the reason that the quality of evidence is destroyed.

The legal professionals claim that the jurors expect unrealistic things and demand out of question proofs or evidence during a criminal trial. Sometimes the jurors also doubt the quality and validity of the available pieces of evidence. This behavior from the end of jurors affects the quality of the decision given by the juror in the conviction or may have a negative impact on the overall acquittal procedure. The misapprehension of the proof and the pointless examinations are an issue for all the areas of criminal investigation and the criminal justice system. The individuals who suffer most due to this issue are the investigation lab personnel and the attorneys.

The legal professionals and the attorneys have tried to resolve this issue and devise a possible solution to this problem. It is the need of the hour to properly educate the individuals working in the fields of criminal investigation, especially the jurors regarding the non-reality of the procedures shown in the TV shows (Alldredge, 2015). It should be properly communicated to the jurors that the evidence in real life has certain limitations and reel life criminal investigation stories are scripted. This education must be done in a clear and easy to follow method so that the jurors may be able to understand it properly and take steps for it.

Another possible solution may be an identification of the juror on the various scales that how much biased he or she is. The case should go on a pre-trial basis, and its verdict will show that which juror, pro-prosecution or pro-defense, will show biases in the actual trial and how much.

**Conclusion**

In short, it can be seen that the CSI effect or a CSI syndrome is a real phenomenon, unlike the beliefs of many who think that it is only an excuse or clever tactics to delay the verdict of the case. The jurors really consider the presented evidence in a biased light and may expect and even demand unrealistic things especially pieces of evidence from the attorneys, which is extremely difficult and most of the times, impossible. There is a need to properly educate the judges and the jurors regarding the difference and presentation of evidence in reel life and real life.

**References**

Alldredge, J. (2015). The" CSI Effect" and Its Potential Impact on Juror Decisions. *THEMIS: Research Journal of Justice Studies and Forensic Science*, *3*(1), 6.

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