

An In-Depth Investigation Into Police Operations And Their Impact On Delivering Speedy Justice In Criminal Proceedings: Efficiency, Challenges, And Legal Implications

^[1]Dr. Sakshi Vashisth ,^[2]Nidhi Singh ,^[3]Dr. Saurabh Dudi

^[1] Assistant professor, School of law, JECRC University, Jaipur.

^[2] Assistant professor, School of law, JECRC University, Jaipur.

^[3] Assistant professor, School of law, JECRC University, Jaipur.

^[1]sakshi.vashisth@jecrcu.edu.in

^[2]nidhi.singh@jecrcu.edu.in

^[3]saurabh.dudi@jecrcu.edu.in

How to cite this article: Sakshi Vashisth , Nidhi Singh ,Saurabh Dudi (2024) An In-Depth Investigation Into Police Operations And Their Impact On Delivering Speedy Justice In Criminal Proceedings: Efficiency, Challenges, And Legal Implications. *Library Progress International*, 44(3), 24434-24446

Abstract

This paper offers ideas to enhance police efficiency in expediting justice, concentrating on three pivotal areas: modernizing investigative tactics and adopting technology, fortifying legislative frameworks and accountability mechanisms, and boosting police training and capacity development. The contemporary criminal justice system necessitates the incorporation of sophisticated technology, like AI-driven analytics, digital forensics, and mobile data collection tools, to expedite investigative procedures and improve the precision of evidence collection. Furthermore, revising legal frameworks such as the BNS and BNSS, along with the implementation of explicit accountability systems, guarantees that police actions conform to procedural norms and timetables. The document underscores the necessity for stringent oversight systems to enhance transparency and accountability within law enforcement. Moreover, augmenting police training via ongoing professional development, emphasizing contemporary investigative methodologies and leadership competencies, is crucial for strengthening overall efficacy. Collectively, these ideas offer a holistic strategy to rectify the inefficiencies in police operations that lead to judicial delays, with the ultimate goal of expediting the administration of justice in India's dynamic legal framework.

KEYWORDS :Police, Investigation, Justice, Court, Evidence.

INTRODUCTION

The administration of justice is a vital cornerstone of a functioning democracy, and the provision of timely justice is essential for safeguarding individual rights within the legal framework. The CPA, 2023, the Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 2023, and the BNS, 2023, 2023, have implemented substantial reforms to modernize the Indian legal framework, primarily emphasizing the acceleration of the judicial process. These improvements, especially in law enforcement operations and investigative protocols, signify a transforming legal framework that emphasizes efficiency while protecting constitutional rights. The new laws signify a substantial change in the conduct, oversight, and resolution of police investigations, profoundly affecting the efficiency of justice delivery in criminal cases.

The criminal justice system relies heavily on police activities, which provide the foundation for gathering evidence, apprehending individuals, and filing lawsuits¹. The new criminal laws prioritize the optimization of operations to mitigate delays and inefficiencies that have historically afflicted the system. The BNS, 2023, imposes more stringent deadlines for the conclusion of investigations and the submission of charge sheets. This transition corresponds with the overarching objective of the new legislation, which is to diminish case backlogs and facilitate expedited justice delivery. The measures seek to eradicate a primary source of delays in criminal cases by ensuring police accountability in meeting these timelines.

The integration of technology and forensic innovations into police investigations is a significant aspect

¹ Logan WA and Ferguson AG, 'Policing Criminal Justice Data' (2016) 101 Minnesota Law Review 541

of the new legislation. The CPA, 2023, broadens the parameters of biometric data acquisition, encompassing fingerprints, retina scans, and DNA samples, which might be essential in expediting investigations. The utilization of these technology facilitates expedited suspect identification, more dependable evidence gathering, and improved collaboration among law enforcement authorities². The 2020 Hathras case demonstrated that digital evidence, including phone records and CCTV footage, significantly expedited the inquiry. Under the new legislation, such activities are expected to proliferate, mitigating delays associated with conventional investigative techniques.

The new legislation propose measures to enhance police efficiency; nonetheless, implementation obstacles persist, especially in areas plagued by systemic concerns including corruption, understaffing, and insufficient training. The BNS, 2023, aims to tackle these concerns by reinforcing legislative measures against corruption and the misuse of authority among police forces³. It also implements steps to enhance police accountability, including frequent performance evaluations and disciplinary consequences for officers who do to comply with procedural timelines. The implementation of these safeguards addresses instances such as the Vyapam scandal in Madhya Pradesh, when extensive delays caused by political intervention and corruption significantly obstructed the inquiry. The new legal framework implements tighter accountability measures to reduce delays and guarantee that investigations are carried out efficiently and impartially.

Furthermore, the legal stipulations in the new legislation underscore the necessity for more proficient police officers who are knowledgeable in contemporary investigating methodologies. The delays in the administration of justice often stem from insufficient training of police officers, especially in rural regions with little resources. The revised criminal statutes recognize this concern and implement measures for the ongoing training and enhancement of law enforcement professionals. This is especially pertinent in situations necessitating specialist expertise, such as cybercrime investigations or the management of forensic evidence. The 2017 *Ryan International School*⁴ murder case was impeded by delays in forensic processing and insufficient expertise among local police officers, underscoring the necessity for adequately educated law enforcement personnel. The 2023 legislation seeks to rectify this by requiring periodic training seminars for police officers nationwide.

The revised legal framework also tackles procedural delays by implementing reforms to enhance inter-agency coordination. The criminal investigations frequently necessitate collaboration among several law enforcement entities, including local police, state police, and central investigative organizations such as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or the National Investigation Agency (NIA). The BNS, 2023, implements initiatives to enhance cooperation among various agencies, encompassing increased data exchange and streamlined communication protocols. This change is essential for averting jurisdictional conflicts and delays stemming from bureaucratic inefficiencies, which were particularly apparent during the 2008 *Mumbai terror*⁵ attacks. The disarray among multiple agencies during the preliminary inquiry caused delays in prosecuting the accused, so extending the judicial proceedings. The new legislation seek to enhance inter-agency communication to avert delays and facilitate the smooth progression of investigations.

A significant advancement under the new legislation is the augmented role of court monitoring in law enforcement activities. The BNS, 2023, authorizes courts to assume a more proactive role in overseeing the advancement of investigations, especially in instances when delays may arise. The judicial bodies now possess the power to instruct law enforcement to accelerate inquiries and submit periodic status updates. The Allahabad High Court intervened many times in the Aarushi Talwar murder case to ensure the probe was conducted efficiently. Under the revised legal framework, court oversight is expected to become more prevalent, serving as an extra safeguard on police operations and ensuring that investigations adhere to established timetables.

The 2023 changes additionally prioritize human rights and accountability in law enforcement activities. This is especially pertinent regarding custodial violence and fatalities, which have historically been a sensitive topic in India. The recent detention killings of *P. Jayaraj and Bennix in Tamil Nadu*⁶ in 2020 underscore the pressing necessity for enhanced accountability in police practices. The BNS, 2023, contains measures aimed at preventing custodial violence and mandates that police conduct investigations in a manner that upholds the constitutional rights of the accused. These measures are anticipated to enhance public confidence in law enforcement, as transparency and accountability are essential for mitigating delays resulting from wrongdoing or procedural errors⁷.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

² Przeszlowski K, Guerette RT and Sudderth LK, 'The Role and Impact of the Use of Information Technologies by Police in Response to Violence against Women' (2023) 20 International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health 6125

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Barun Chandra Thakur vs. Master Bholu 2022 SCC OnLine SC 870

⁵ Mohd. Ajmal Amir Kasab v. State of Maharashtra, (2012) 9 SCC 1

⁶ Re: Custodial Death of Jayaraj and Bennix, Suo Motu W.P. (MD) No. 7042 of 2020

⁷ Harmon RA, 'Promoting Civil Rights through Proactive Policing Reform' (2009) 62 SLR 1

This research aims to tackle the ongoing inefficiency in police operations and its direct effect on the prompt administration of justice in criminal cases, notwithstanding recent legislative reforms such as the CPA, 2023, and the BNS, 2023. Although these regulations provide more stringent timetables and enhanced investigation instruments to accelerate police operations, substantial deficiencies persist in their practical execution. The police force, frequently underfunded and overwhelmed, persists in facing issues like as understaffing, corruption, and insufficient training, which lead to delays in investigations and the submission of charge sheets.

Moreover, the judicial system, already burdened by backlogs, depends significantly on the efficacy of police investigations to forward cases. The prolonged delays in this fundamental phase of the criminal justice process intensify court backlogs and result in extended imprisonment for the accused, undermining their rights and diminishing public confidence in the system. Incidents such as the *Hathras*⁸ and *Vyapam*⁹ scandals illustrate how investigative delays, either by political pressures or procedural ineptitude, can result in prolonged trials spanning several years.

The research centres on identifying the root causes of inefficiencies in police operations, notwithstanding substantial legal reforms, and analysing how these deficiencies hinder the prompt administration of justice. The study will examine the relationship among new legal provisions, police accountability, judicial oversight, and systemic challenges, with the objective of proposing solutions to bridge the gap between legal reform and practical enforcement, thus enhancing the timeliness and equity of criminal justice in India.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has the 2023 criminal legislation, including the BNS and CPA, 2022, affected police efficiency in delivering speedy justice?
2. What structural issues, such as understaffing, corruption, and training gaps, continue to hinder police investigations despite new reforms?
3. How do investigative delays worsen judicial backlogs and incarceration periods, and how can accountability and inter-agency cooperation help resolve these issues?

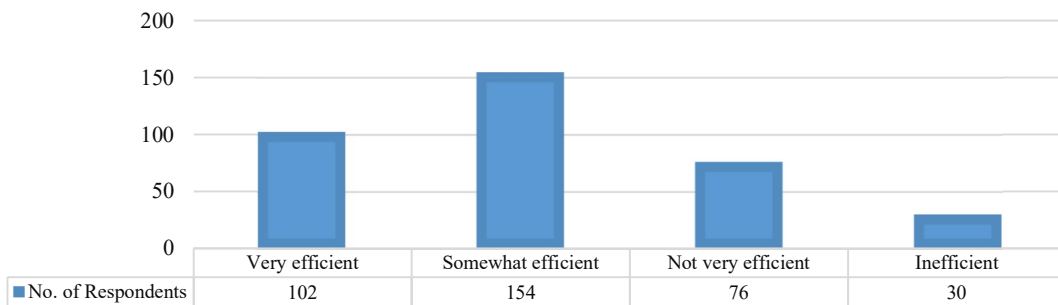
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a mixed-method research methodology, integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies to conduct a thorough investigation of police activities and their influence on the expeditious delivery of justice in criminal trials. A Google survey serves as the principal instrument for gathering quantitative data, aimed at a varied sample of participants from different socio-economic backgrounds, encompassing legal practitioners, law enforcement officials, scholars, and the general populace. This survey employs random sampling to guarantee diverse opinions are represented, hence reducing bias and improving the reliability of the results. The poll comprises structured questions with multiple-choice alternatives to provide quantifiable insights into the efficacy of police operations, the effects of recent legal reforms, and the perceived obstacles within the justice delivery system.

- **Survey Results & Understanding**

Question 1 was designed to gauge the respondents' perception of the overall efficiency of police operations in handling criminal investigations. A total of 362 responses were recorded for this question. The results are shown in Fig-1.

Fig. 1: Recorded Answers For Question - 1.



The figure illustrates that a significant proportion of respondents, 154 (42.5%), believe that police operations are somewhat efficient. Additionally, 102 respondents (28.2%) indicated that police operations are very efficient. On the other hand, 76 respondents (21%) felt that police operations are not very efficient, while only 30 respondents (8.3%) considered them to be inefficient. These results suggest that the majority of respondents hold a generally

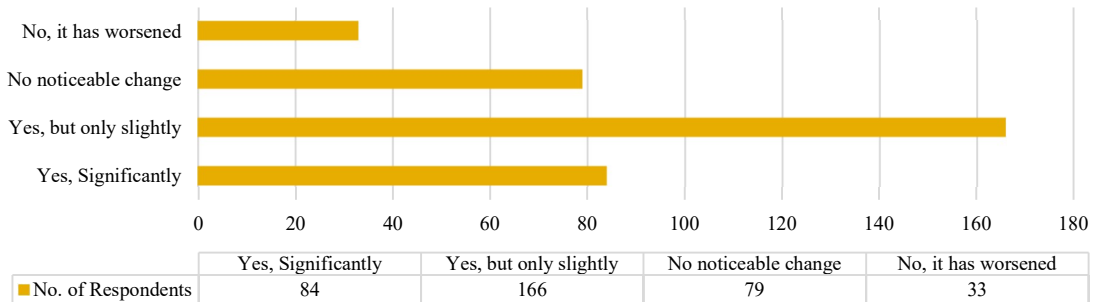
⁸ Ramji Singh @ Mujeeb Bhai vs. State of U.P. and Ors. (2009) 5 ALJ 376

⁹ CBI vs. Sanjeev Shilpakar & Ors., Cri. App. No. 86 of 2019

positive view of police efficiency, though room for improvement remains.

Question 2 was designed to assess the perceived impact of the 2023 criminal law reforms, including the BNS 2023 and the CPA, 2022, on the speed of justice delivery. A total of 362 responses were collected for this question. The recorded answers are shown in Fig-2.

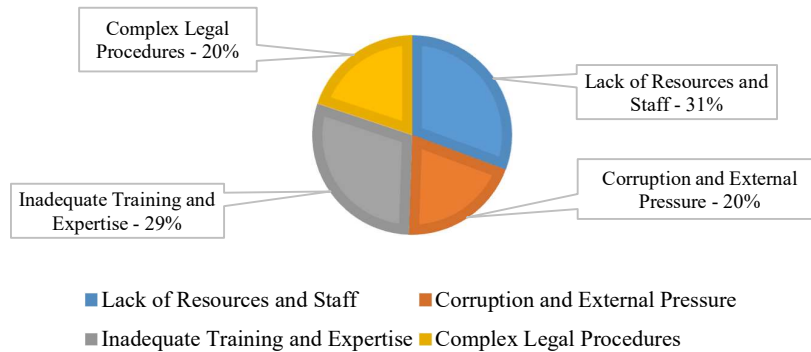
Fig. 2: Recorded Answers For Question - 2.



The figure shows that 166 respondents (45.9%) believe the 2023 reforms have slightly improved the speed of justice delivery. Furthermore, 84 respondents (23.2%) felt that the reforms have significantly improved the situation. On the contrary, 79 respondents (21.8%) indicated no noticeable change, and 33 respondents (9.1%) thought the reforms have worsened justice delivery. Overall, these results suggest a positive outlook, with nearly 69.1% of respondents perceiving some level of improvement.

Question 3 was intended to identify the principal challenges police face in conducting timely investigations. A total of 362 responses were provided for this question. The responses are displayed in Fig-3.

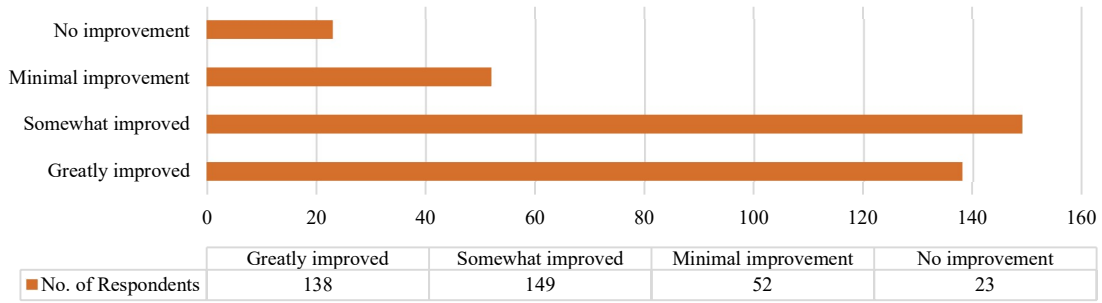
Fig. 3: Recorded Answers For Question - 3.



The figure highlights that 111 respondents (30.7%) identified a lack of resources and staff as the primary challenge, while 107 respondents (29.6%) cited inadequate training and expertise. Additionally, 72 respondents (19.9%) pointed to corruption and external pressure, and another 72 respondents (19.9%) felt that complex legal procedures hinder timely investigations. These findings indicate that multiple structural obstacles contribute to delays in police operations, with resource constraints and training emerging as key issues.

Question 4 aimed to understand respondents' views on how the use of technology and forensic tools has enhanced police investigation efficiency. A total of 362 respondents answered this question, and their responses are shown in Fig-4.

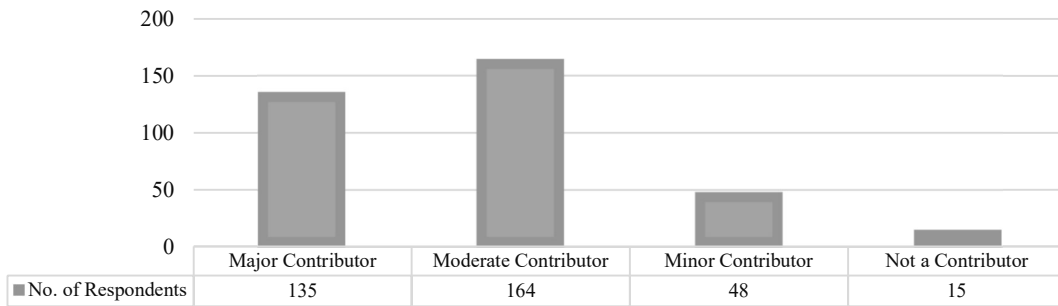
FIG. 4: RECORDED ANSWERS FOR QUESTION - 4.



The figure reveals that 149 respondents (41.2%) believe that technology has somewhat improved police efficiency, while 138 respondents (38.1%) indicated that it has greatly improved operations. On the other hand, 52 respondents (14.4%) felt there was only minimal improvement, and 23 respondents (6.3%) thought there was no improvement. The majority of respondents (79.3%) acknowledged the positive impact of technology on police work, indicating optimism about the role of modern investigative tools.

Question 5 was designed to evaluate the perceived contribution of police delays to judicial backlogs. The question received 362 responses, with the results shown in Fig-5.

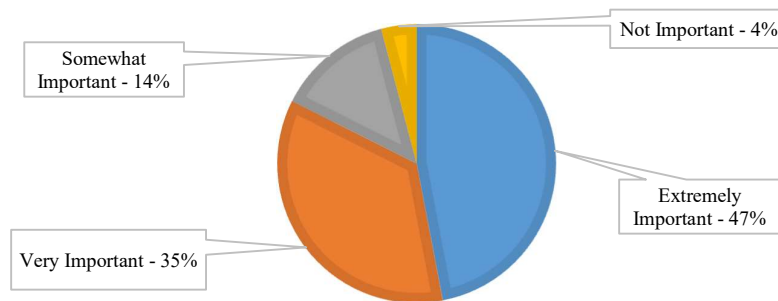
Fig. 5: Recorded Answers For Question - 5.



The figure demonstrates that 164 respondents (45.3%) consider police delays to be a moderate contributor to judicial backlogs, while 135 respondents (37.3%) view them as a major contributor. Additionally, 48 respondents (13.3%) see police delays as a minor factor, and only 15 respondents (4.1%) believe they are not a contributor at all. These findings suggest that a significant majority (82.6%) of respondents recognize police delays as an important factor in exacerbating judicial backlogs.

Question 6 was designed to measure respondents' views on the importance of inter-agency cooperation (e.g., between local police and central agencies) in speeding up criminal investigations. A total of 362 responses were received for this question. The responses are illustrated in Fig-6.

Fig. 6: Recorded Answers For Question - 6.

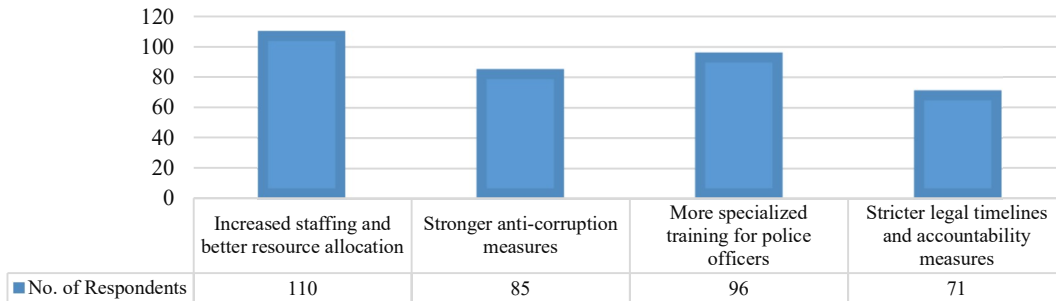


The figure shows that 170 respondents (47.0%) rated inter-agency cooperation as extremely important, while 128 respondents (35.4%) considered it very important. Additionally, 49 respondents (13.5%) found it somewhat important, and 15 respondents (4.1%) thought it was not important. These results indicate that an overwhelming

majority (82.4%) of respondents recognize the critical role of inter-agency cooperation in expediting investigations.

Question 7 aimed to identify the reforms respondents believe are most necessary to improve police operations for faster justice delivery. A total of 362 responses were gathered, and the results are presented in Fig-7.

Fig. 7: Recorded Answers For Question - 7.



The figure illustrates that 110 respondents (30.4%) believe increased staffing and better resource allocation are the most necessary reforms. Additionally, 96 respondents (26.5%) favored more specialized training for police officers, while 85 respondents (23.5%) supported stronger anti-corruption measures. Lastly, 71 respondents (19.6%) suggested stricter legal timelines and accountability measures. These results reflect a broad agreement on the need for a multi-faceted approach to reform police operations, with a particular focus on resources, training, and accountability.

• **Analysis of the Results**

This section examines the findings of the study aimed at evaluating public opinions of police efficacy, the effects of the 2023 criminal law amendments, and the structural obstacles that hinder the prompt administration of justice in criminal cases. The results will be assessed according to the study questions, concentrating on the impacts of new laws, structural obstacles in police operations, and the role of delays in judicial backlogs. The study seeks to offer a nuanced picture of the perceived successes and shortcomings of the police force and legal system by comparing the survey findings with these main points.

1. **Effect of the 2023 Criminal Legislation on Law Enforcement Efficacy**

The initial research examines the impact of the 2023 criminal legislation, particularly the BNS, 2023 and the CPA, 2022, on the efficacy of police operations in facilitating prompt justice. The survey indicates that 45.9% of respondents believe the 2023 reforms have marginally enhanced the efficiency of justice delivery, whilst 23.2% perceive these reforms as having substantially improved the situation. This indicates that the legal modifications are perceived as predominantly favorable, however they may not have resulted in the significant transformations that were originally expected.

The BNS, 2023 aims to reform criminal law by the simplification and consolidation of legal procedures, significantly establishing stronger timelines for police investigations. The CPA, 2022 expands the parameters for gathering forensic and biometric evidence and seeks to enhance the efficiency of investigations. Notwithstanding these measures, over one-fifth of respondents (21.8%) indicated no discernible change, while a lesser segment (9.1%) perceived that the reforms have deteriorated justice delivery.

The varied responses can be ascribed to the difficulties in converting legal reforms into tangible enhancements in practice. The legislation has established procedures to expedite police operations; nevertheless, the efficacy of these instruments frequently relies on the existing infrastructure, training, and accountability systems inside police departments. The increased utilization of biometric data under the Identification Act could expedite investigations by facilitating quicker access to essential evidence; but, without sufficient technological infrastructure and appropriate training, its effectiveness may be constrained¹⁰.

Furthermore, the study underscores a significant concern, despite the perception of the reforms as advantageous, there remains skepticism regarding the efficacy of their implementation. The absence of observable advancements, particularly among the 30.9% who perceive no change or believe the circumstances have deteriorated, highlights the necessity of not only implementing reforms but also ensuring that police personnel are well equipped and prepared to utilize these new instruments. The survey data indicates that although the 2023 criminal legislation has enhanced police efficiency, additional practical help may be necessary to achieve its full potential.

¹⁰ Jain AK, Nandakumar K and Ross A, ‘50 Years of Biometric Research: Accomplishments, Challenges, and Opportunities’ (2016) 79 Pattern Recognition Letters 80

2. *Structural Barriers Impeding Police Investigations*

The second study topic examines the institutional impediments, including understaffing, corruption, and insufficient training, that persistently obstruct police investigations notwithstanding the implementation of the new legislative framework. The poll indicated that the primary obstacles to prompt investigations were insufficient resources and personnel (30.7%) and poor training (29.6%). This illustrates that, despite sophisticated legal reforms, operational difficulties within police units substantially impede the timely administration of justice.

Many respondents mentioned resource restrictions, including understaffing and insufficient current investigation tools, as a persistent issue. This corresponds with overarching criticisms of the criminal justice system, wherein police departments frequently suffer from inadequate funding and are ill-equipped to address the increasing demands of contemporary criminal investigations. Although the new criminal laws prioritize the utilization of forensic technology, several police stations nationwide still lack the fundamental infrastructure necessary for efficient implementation of these changes. This generates a disparity between the objectives of the law and the realities of enforcement, impeding the entire judicial process.

Likewise, insufficient training was recognized as a significant obstacle. The implementation of contemporary forensic procedures, data analysis, and sophisticated investigative methodologies necessitates that police officers receive training in the utilization of these technology. Nevertheless, the absence of structured training programs results in numerous officers being inadequately prepared to utilize these new tools. This is especially troublesome when advanced investigation techniques, such as DNA analysis or cybercrime forensics, are required for rapid case resolution¹¹. In the absence of sufficient training, police must depend on antiquated methods that are both inefficient and ineffective.

As per 19.9 percent of respondents identified corruption and external pressure as substantial impediments. Corruption within the police force, frequently influenced by political or financial constraints, can result in intentional delays in investigations, eroding both the efficacy of police operations and public confidence in the legal system. In reference to some of the prominent cases, like the Vyapam affair, illustrate how external influences can obstruct investigations, resulting in extended trials and postponed justice.

The survey results indicate that although the 2023 criminal legislation offers a framework for enhancing police efficiency, systemic challenges such as understaffing, insufficient training, and corruption persist as significant obstacles. It is imperative to address these systemic problems for the reforms to result in concrete enhancements in justice delivery.

3. *Impact of Police Delays on Judicial Backlogs and Incarceration Durations*

The final study question examines the impact of delays in police investigations on judicial backlogs and extended detention durations, and if enhanced accountability and inter-agency collaboration could alleviate these problems. The survey results indicate a significant agreement regarding the impact of police delays on judicial backlogs, with 45.3% of participants recognizing delays as a moderate factor and 37.3% considering them a major factor.

The police delays frequently arise from the previously described structural issues, such as insufficient resources and corruption, which impede the prompt resolution of investigations. These delays result in prolonged pre-trial imprisonment for accused individuals, exacerbating jail congestion and infringing against human rights. An illustrative instance of this is the significant population of under-trial inmates in India, many of whom are incarcerated for extended periods owing to protracted investigation delays. This extended incarceration infringes upon the rights of the accused and imposes a significant strain on the legal system, hindering the advancement of other cases.

The poll emphasized the significance of inter-agency collaboration, with 82.4% of participants rating it either extremely or very vital for expediting investigations. Efficient collaboration between local law enforcement and central investigative bodies, such as the CBI, can markedly diminish delays by optimizing information exchange, resource sharing, and coordinating investigation initiatives. In instances of organized crime or financial fraud, inter-agency collaboration is essential for evidence collection and prompt intervention.

Accountability measures, such as more stringent timetables for police investigations and judicial oversight, are essential to mitigate delays. By holding police units accountable for unmet deadlines and insufficient investigations, the legal system can alleviate bottlenecks and ensure the timely progression of cases. The accountability procedures must be harmonized with the necessity for comprehensive and equitable investigations, since expediting cases may jeopardize the integrity of justice rendered.

The survey responses reveal that delays in police investigations are broadly acknowledged as a significant factor in judicial backlogs; nonetheless, there is hope that enhanced accountability and collaboration may alleviate these challenges. By mitigating these delays, the criminal justice system can enhance its efficiency, thereby decreasing both the case backlog and the duration of pre-trial detention for defendants.

The survey findings provide significant insights into public perceptions of law enforcement practices and the

¹¹ Hewling MO, 'Digital Forensics: An Integrated Approach for the Investigation of Cyber/Computer Related Crimes' <<https://uobrep.openrepository.com/handle/10547/326231>> accessed 19 September 2024

overarching criminal justice framework. Despite the favorable perception of the 2023 criminal law amendments, systemic issues inside police departments, including understaffing, inadequate training, and corruption, persistently obstruct the provision of prompt justice. Furthermore, delays in police investigations are regarded as a significant factor contributing to judicial backlogs, intensifying the issue of extended imprisonment for accused individuals. The findings highlight the necessity for additional reforms, both legislatively and within police operations, to ensure the complete realization of the objectives of the 2023 reforms. Augmented accountability and inter-agency collaboration will be essential in tackling these systemic challenges and enhancing the efficacy and equity of the criminal justice system.

DISCUSSION

- ***The Role of Police in Criminal Investigations***

The police play a pivotal role in criminal investigations, significantly influencing the administration of justice and the safeguarding of society within any criminal justice system. In contemporary policing, especially after the implementation of the 2023 criminal laws in India — the BNS, the BNSS, and the BSA — police protocols and duties have experienced substantial transformations. These statutes seek to optimize criminal investigation procedures, enhance the acquisition and safeguarding of evidence, and promote more effective cooperation among various law enforcement entities¹². The changing function of the police in the investigative process is shaped not just by legislative frameworks but also by technological advancements, forensic science, and an increased focus on human rights and procedural equity.

The criminal investigations commence when law enforcement is notified of a crime, typically by a FIR, which signifies the formal initiation of the inquiry under the BNS. The police are responsible for collecting information, investigating crime sites, identifying suspects, and finally assembling evidence for court presentation. The new legislation has intensified investigation procedures. A notable alteration implemented by the BNSS is the focus on minimizing delays in the filing of charges and the presentation of cases to the judiciary. The BNSS stipulates that investigations must comply with more stringent timelines to eradicate persistent problems, including unwarranted delays that exacerbate judicial backlogs¹³. This reform was essential, as India's criminal justice system has frequently faced criticism for its lethargic speed in investigating and prosecuting offenses. Incidents such as *Nirbhaya* exposed systemic inefficiencies, underscoring the necessity for optimized procedures to ensure prompt justice.

The BSA 2023 has broadened the parameters for employing contemporary forensic methodologies and digital data to facilitate a comprehensive investigation. The compilation of DNA samples, biometric information, and digital forensics has become increasingly standardized and accessible to law enforcement officials across. The CPA, 2022, established under the new legislation, enhances the police's capacity to gather physical and biometric identifiers from suspects, including fingerprints, iris scans, and voice samples. These tools have become indispensable for identifying perpetrators and associating them with criminal activities. In the *Pradyuman Thakur*¹⁴ case, forensic evidence, such as CCTV footage and biometric data, was crucial in identifying the actual perpetrator, rectifying an earlier misidentification by law enforcement. This case exemplifies the increasing dependence on forensic tools to both resolve crimes and prevent erroneous allegations that have traditionally afflicted the court system.

The preservation of evidence, a vital component of police investigations, has been underscored in the recent revisions. The BSA requires that the chain of custody for all types of evidence be rigorously preserved to guarantee its admissibility in court. A crucial stipulation is that police officers must meticulously record and document evidence from the point of collection until its presentation in court. Historically, the loss or contamination of evidence has frequently resulted in the acquittal of culpable individuals, shown by the *Aarushi Talwar*¹⁵ case, where deficiencies in evidence management posed considerable obstacles to achieving a conviction. The new legislation seeks to mitigate such dangers by mandating more stringent processes for evidence preservation, which encompass the utilization of tamper-proof containers and digital logs that monitor the individuals who have interacted with specific pieces of evidence. This not only safeguards the integrity of the inquiry but also enhances public trust in the criminal justice system.

Furthermore, due to the increase in digital offenses and the intricacy of contemporary crimes such as cybercrime, money laundering, and terrorism, law enforcement must now manage a varied assortment of evidence forms¹⁶. According to the BSA 2023, digital evidence holds equal significance to physical evidence, and law enforcement is now equipped to retrieve, safeguard, and examine digital data from electronic devices, such as

¹² *Id.* n7.

¹³ Dandurand Y, 'Criminal Justice Reform and the System's Efficiency' (2014) 25 Criminal Law Forum 383

¹⁴ Barun Chandra Thakur vs. CBI AIR 2017 SC 5735

¹⁵ Dr. (Smt.) Nupur Talwar vs State of U.P. And Anr. 2013 (82) ACC 303

¹⁶ Sarkar G and Shukla SK, 'Behavioral Analysis of Cybercrime: Paving the Way for Effective Policing Strategies' (2023) 2 Journal of Economic Criminology 100034

mobile phones, laptops, and internet communications. The recent *Yes Bank fraud*¹⁷ case illustrated the significance of digital evidence in tracing financial transactions and uncovering fraudulent operations. The capacity of law enforcement to adjust to emerging criminal methodologies via enhanced forensic and technical advancements is essential for the efficacy of contemporary investigations.

A vital aspect of police operations is their cooperation with other law enforcement agencies, both domestically and abroad. In India, the coordination between local police forces and national agencies such as the national CBI, the NIA, and the ED has been enhanced under the BNSS. This legislation facilitates improved inter-agency communication, acknowledging that intricate crimes frequently traverse numerous jurisdictions and necessitate collaborative efforts. A significant instance of inter-agency coordination is the *Sushant Singh Rajput*¹⁸ case, in which the Mumbai police, Bihar police, and CBI jointly investigated several facets of the actor's demise, encompassing claims of financial misconduct, substance misuse, and potential foul play. The case, criticized for procedural delays and jurisdictional issues, highlighted the imperative for cohesive collaboration among several investigative agencies.

The BNSS 2023 include measures for enhanced collaboration between law enforcement and intelligence organizations in the fight against terrorism and organized crime. The legislation facilitates expedited intelligence exchange, permitting prompt interventions and apprehensions. This was pivotal in instances such as the *2008 Mumbai attacks*¹⁹, where insufficient cooperation between intelligence services and law enforcement resulted in a delayed reaction. Conversely, recent counter-terrorism initiatives, including the removal of sleeper cells in 2022, have illustrated the advantages of enhanced inter-agency cooperation, with synchronized operations and intelligence-sharing resulting in effective outcomes²⁰.

Alongside domestic collaboration, international cooperation has become increasingly significant, particularly in instances of transnational crime including human trafficking, drug smuggling, and computer fraud. The BNS 2023 enhances this by acknowledging international conventions and agreements, enabling Indian police to collaborate more efficiently with global law enforcement entities such as INTERPOL. The *Mehul Choksi extradition*²¹ case exemplifies the collaboration between Indian authorities and international nations to apprehend a fugitive economic offender. Despite the intricate legal and diplomatic obstacles, the new legislation seeks to streamline processes for international collaboration, guaranteeing that perpetrators cannot evade prosecution by traversing borders.

The reforms implemented in 2023 also tackle the matter of police accountability and transparency in criminal investigations. The BNS mandates enhanced control of police operations, requiring that all arrests, detentions, and interrogations be documented and reviewed by the judiciary. This is a crucial advancement in the prevention of custodial violence and the safeguarding of the rights of the accused. Custodial fatalities, exemplified by the *Jayaraj and Bennix*²² case in Tamil Nadu, have illuminated the nefarious aspects of police conduct, wherein the absence of accountability resulted in human rights infringements. The new legislation fosters a culture of transparency by mandating the police to keep comprehensive records of their investigative activities, so reducing the likelihood of misuse and ensuring the integrity of the investigative process.

The integration of victim protection measures inside the BNS represents a significant advancement in criminal investigations. The victims of severe crimes, especially women and children, frequently encounter intimidation and threats that may obstruct investigations. The 2023 revisions include explicit safeguards for vulnerable witnesses, guaranteeing that their testimony is recorded in a secure and sympathetic setting. In instances of sexual assault, exemplified by the *Unnao rape*²³ case, when the victim encountered significant coercion and intimidation from the perpetrator, these protective measures are crucial for administering justice while safeguarding the victim's safety.

The new laws also emphasize improving the wellbeing of police personnel which advocates for enhanced working conditions, augmented recruitment, and greater access to mental health facilities for officers, acknowledging that overburdened and understaffed police forces can result in inefficiency and burnout²⁴. This is essential for enabling police personnel to execute their responsibilities efficiently while safeguarding their wellbeing. Well-trained, well-equipped, and supportive police officers are more likely to conduct comprehensive investigations, resulting in increased successful prosecutions and expedited justice.

¹⁷ Rana Kapoor vs. Directorate Of Enforcement & Anr. Cr. App. No. (ST). 4999 of 2020

¹⁸ Rhea Chakraborty vs. The State of Bihar AIR 2020 SC 3826

¹⁹ Mohd. Ajmal Amir Kasab v. State of Maharashtra, (2012) 9 SCC 1

²⁰ Klein FJ and Witztum RJ, 'Judicial Administration 1972-1973' (1972) 1972 ASAL 717

²¹ Mehul Choksi vs Union Of India & Ors. AIR ONLINE 2020 DEL 1236

²² Jayaraj and Bennix vs. State of Tamil Nadu, Suo Motu W.P. (MD) No. 7042 of 2020

²³ Kuldeep Singh Sengar vs. State of Uttar Pradesh (2014) 9 SCC 177

²⁴ Fox J and others, 'Mental-Health Conditions, Barriers to Care, and Productivity Loss Among Officers in An Urban Police Department' (2012) 76 Connecticut medicine 525

The role of law enforcement in criminal investigations is intricate and progressively complicated, influenced by the requirements of contemporary crime and the changing legislative structures that regulate their functions. The 2023 criminal law reforms—BNS, BNSS, and BSA—have implemented substantial modifications intended to enhance investigative protocols, guarantee the collection and storage of evidence, and promote cooperation among law enforcement authorities. Implementing modern technologies, enhancing inter-agency collaboration, and assuring transparency and accountability might revolutionize police investigations in India²⁵. Despite ongoing obstacles, especially concerning structural concerns such as corruption, understaffing, and inadequate training, the reforms represent a substantial advancement toward a more efficient, equitable, and transparent criminal justice system.

- **Challenges Faced by Police in Delivering Speedy Justice**

A major impediment to the prompt resolution of criminal cases is the lack of resources and staff. Envision a situation in which police stations are inundated with cases yet lack the requisite resources and staff to manage them effectively. This phenomenon is widespread in multiple areas, indicating a more extensive systemic problem within law enforcement authorities. The newly established legal frameworks under the BNS and BNSS have established lofty objectives for accelerating criminal investigations and trials. The BNSS establishes rigorous deadlines for concluding investigations and submitting charges. Nevertheless, numerous police departments persist in contending with significant personnel deficits and inadequate resources. The deficiency of forensic specialists, antiquated technology, and insufficient financing are substantial obstacles to achieving these new requirements. The resource deficit frequently necessitates that police officers handle a substantial number of cases with insufficient assistance, leading to delays and inefficiencies. The Nirbhaya case prominently illustrated this issue, as delays in the investigation were partially ascribed to these resource constraints. The lack of required tools and sufficient personnel affects the effectiveness of the mandated modifications for more efficient procedures²⁶.

In addition to resource limits, legal and procedural impediments constitute a significant challenge. The BSA, BNSS, and BNS have implemented several modifications to enhance investigative processes and uphold the integrity of evidence. The BSA underscores the need of thorough evidence documentation and the preservation of a rigorous chain of custody, essential for maintaining the integrity and admissibility of evidence in court. Although these modifications aim to improve procedural integrity, they simultaneously create new complications that may result in delays. The law enforcement officials and forensic specialists must traverse a complex array of procedures and documentation, thereby hindering the investigative process²⁷. The Aarushi Talwar case exemplifies how procedural flaws and delays adversely impacted the investigation's results. The intricacy of complying with new procedural norms, along with the necessity for meticulous documentation, frequently leads to unforeseen delays, undermining the advantages intended by the changes.

The impact of corruption and external pressures exacerbates the quest for expedited justice. Corruption in the police force and the wider legal system can appear through bribery, favoritism, and inappropriate political influence. Notwithstanding the implementation of anti-corruption measures inside the BNSS, entrenched practices and structural challenges persistently compromise the integrity of the legal system. Corruption undermines the integrity of investigations and leads to delays and inefficiency. The Vyapam fraud exemplifies how corruption in recruitment and testing processes can cause substantial delays and undermine public confidence in the legal system²⁸. The BNSS seeks to address these challenges through improved supervision and accountability; nevertheless, the efficacy of these initiatives is frequently undermined by enduring corruption and opposition to reform.

The pace of justice is also significantly impacted by other forces, such as social and political issues. It is prominent cases or politically sensitive inquiries might exert excessive pressure on law enforcement agencies, resulting in expedited or prejudiced investigations. In certain cases, these demands may lead to compromised investigations or the prioritization of specific cases above others. The Sushant Singh Rajput case underscored the intricacies of managing high-profile investigations involving various agencies, with external pressures possibly affecting the investigation's trajectory. The BNSS and BNS incorporate measures to tackle these concerns, including more transparency and accountability. The execution of these provisions is frequently impeded by the

²⁵ Bureau TH, 'Integration of Technology into Criminal Justice System Requires Careful Consideration: CJI' *The Hindu* (1 April 2024) <<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/interplay-between-law-and-technology-can-ensure-criminal-justice-reform-cji/article68017343.ece>> accessed 19 September 2024

²⁶ Hughes RG, 'Tools and Strategies for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety' in Ronda G Hughes (ed), *Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses* (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US) 2008)

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Pinto EP, 'Health Justice and the Dialectics of Power: State, Medical Profession and Civil Society' in Edward Premdas Pinto (ed), *Health Justice in India: Citizenship, Power and Health Care Jurisprudence* (Springer 2021) <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-8143-4_5> accessed 19 September 2024

enduring impact of external variables.

A comprehensive strategy is necessary to tackle these difficulties. Augmenting money and resources for law enforcement agencies is essential to surmounting resource limitations. Moreover, the investment in contemporary technology, forensic facilities, and personnel training is vital for equipping police to comply with the elevated standards established by the new legislation²⁹. Streamlining compliance processes and simplifying procedural requirements can alleviate delays resulting from legal complications. Enhancing efficiency and minimizing the duration of investigations can be achieved by developing more user-friendly documentation methods and alleviating bureaucratic obstacles³⁰. Addressing corruption necessitates stringent control systems and a dedication to transparency. Implementing effective anti-corruption methods, fostering ethical behaviors, and guaranteeing accountability for officers' acts are essential measures for restoring public trust and enhancing the integrity of the justice system³¹.

Furthermore, mitigating external influences necessitates the establishment of a more resilient and autonomous law enforcement framework. This entails conducting inquiries grounded in evidence and legal principles, devoid of external influences or public sentiment. Formulating explicit protocols for managing high-profile cases and improving inter-agency collaboration can alleviate the influence of external demands on the investigative process.

The 2023 criminal law reforms in India signify substantial advancement in modernizing the criminal justice system; nonetheless, issues such as resource limitations, procedural impediments, and corruption persist as important obstacles. The effective execution of these reforms depends on thoroughly resolving these structural challenges. By concentrating on augmenting resources, streamlining processes, addressing corruption, and minimizing external influences, the criminal justice system can more effectively align with the objectives of the new legislation and strive to provide justice more promptly and efficiently³². The pursuit of a more efficient justice system necessitates collaborative efforts from all stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, lawmakers, and the judiciary, to provide a fair and responsive legal framework that follows the values of justice and equity.

- **Impact of Police Operations on Judicial Timeliness**

The effectiveness of a criminal justice system depends not only on the rules and processes that regulate it but also on the operational efficiency of law enforcement organizations. The interaction between police operations and court efficiency is essential, as delays in one domain can affect the entire justice system. Nonetheless, challenges remain about the influence of police operations on judicial proceedings. This study has observed over the effects of police operations on judicial timeliness, emphasizing delays in charge sheet submissions, the impact of police efficiency on alleviating court backlogs, and particular case studies that demonstrate police-induced delays.

An explicit example of police inefficiencies impacting judicial timeliness is the postponement in submitting charge sheets and handling cases. Within the framework of the BNS and BNSS, which prioritize accelerated processes for managing criminal cases, the prompt filing of charge sheets³³ is crucial for facilitating the progression of cases without unwarranted delays. Nonetheless, the actuality frequently fails to meet these standards. In the *Unnao rape*³⁴ case, considerable delays in submitting the charge sheet resulted in extended legal proceedings. The case underscored how inefficiencies in the investigative process can result in a backlog of cases within the judiciary, with delays exacerbating while cases await trial. The BNS requires charge sheets to be submitted within a specified timeframe; nevertheless, the realities of evidence collection, bureaucratic obstacles, and resource constraints may hinder compliance with these requirements. The procedural reforms implemented under the BSA seek to optimize the charge sheet process; nevertheless, in the absence of concomitant enhancements in police operations, these objectives remain difficult to realize.

There is a crucial connection between the workload of judges and the effectiveness of law enforcement when discussing the role that police efficiency plays in reducing court backlogs. By guaranteeing that cases are prepared and submitted on time, effective police operations can considerably reduce the workload on courts. This efficiency includes timely investigations, precise documentation, and excellent cooperation between law enforcement and prosecution teams. Effective police operations help to the reduction of ongoing cases in the courts, which is essential for managing judicial backlogs. Conversely, delays in police investigations may result in a domino effect, amplifying the volume of cases before trial and worsening current backlogs. The *Bhima*

²⁹ Nilendu D, 'Enhancing Forensic Education: Exploring the Importance and Implementation of Evidence-Based Education System' (2024) 14 EGFS 6

³⁰ Gregg Wirth, 'The Future of Law Enforcement Rests in Its Technology Investment' (*Thomson Reuters Institute*, 16 October 2023) <<https://www.thomsonreuters.com/en-us/posts/government/future-of-law-enforcement-technology/>> accessed 19 September 2024

³¹ *ibid.*

³² Verma A and Sharma R, *Combating Corruption in India* (Cambridge University Press 2019)

³³ BNS 2023, s 193.

³⁴ Kuldeep Singh Sengar vs. State of Uttar Pradesh (2014) 9 SCC 177

*Koregaon*³⁵ case exemplifies how delays in investigations and procedural inefficiencies resulted in a backlog of cases in the courts. Moreover enhancing the police efficiency and simplifying operations can result in a more manageable caseload for the judiciary, so increasing the overall timeliness of justice delivery.

Analyzing particular case studies yields significant insights into the effects of police-induced delays on judicial proceedings. A prominent instance is the *Jessica Lal*³⁶ case, wherein early investigative delays and ensuing procedural obstacles resulted in an extended court conflict. The investigation was hindered by delays in evidence collecting and submission, which considerably affected the pace of the judicial process. Likewise, the *Nirbhaya*³⁷ case revealed that delays in police procedures—specifically the duration required to collect and analyze evidence—can prolong the judicial process and affect the overall efficacy of the legal system. Both instances highlight the need of prompt and effective police operations in guaranteeing the delivery of justice without unwarranted delays. The implementation of the BNS and BSA seeks to resolve these concerns by establishing more explicit criteria for investigative timelines and protocols. The efficacy of these measures depends on their execution and the capacity of police forces to adjust to new standards.

The interaction between law enforcement activities and judicial efficiency is further exacerbated by resource limitations and procedural intricacies. Notwithstanding the progress achieved through the 2023 reforms, numerous police departments persist in encountering difficulties associated with insufficient resources, antiquated technology, and poor training. These concerns can impede police forces' capacity to conduct investigations effectively and adhere to the deadlines established by the new legislation. The absence of contemporary forensic facilities or delays in obtaining essential evidence might extend the investigative process, thereby impacting the total judicial timeframe³⁸. Moreover, the procedural intricacies mandated by the BSA, including the necessity for comprehensive documentation and compliance with stringent evidence handling rules, can impose bureaucratic layers that result in delays³⁹. Further confronting these problems necessitates a comprehensive strategy that encompasses resource investment, training enhancement, and procedural optimization to improve overall efficiency⁴⁰.

Furthermore, the influence of police-induced delays on judicial timeliness pertains not only to efficiency but also to justice. Prolonged delays in the investigative and judicial processes can significantly impact the individuals involved, including victims, defendants, and witnesses. The protracted legal proceedings can lead to enduring distress for victims and their families, while defendants may endure extended uncertainty and pre-trial incarceration. The landmark case of *Sushant Singh Rajput* underscored how delays in inquiry and ensuing legal actions can have extensive ramifications, including media scrutiny and public opinion pressures. It is essential that police operations prioritize timeliness and efficiency to protect justice and guarantee fair and prompt resolutions for all parties involved⁴¹.

The influence of police operations on judicial timeliness is a multifaceted problem that encompasses several elements, such as delays in submitting charge sheets, the efficacy of police in addressing court backlogs, and particular case studies illustrating the repercussions of police-induced delays. The recent criminal law revisions of 2023, encompassing the BNS, BNSS, and BSA, seek to tackle these difficulties by implementing new procedural norms and principles. The efficacy of these reforms is contingent upon the capacity of police forces to adjust to these modifications and surmount the intrinsic hurdles of resource limitations, procedural intricacies, and external influences. Enhancing police operations, allocating resources, and optimizing processes can enable the criminal justice system to attain improved efficiency and promptness in administering justice. The pursuit of a more efficient justice system necessitates continuous collaboration among all stakeholders, including law enforcement, the court, and lawmakers, to provide a legislative framework that preserves the tenets of fairness, efficiency, and justice for all.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICE EFFICIENCY IN SPEEDING UP JUSTICE

To improve the efficacy of police operations and accelerate the administration of justice, various critical proposals may be proposed. These emphasize the modernization of investigative tactics and technology, the fortification of legal frameworks and accountability measures, and the improvement of police training and capacity

³⁵ State of Maharashtra vs. Surendra P. Gadling & Ors., AIR 2019 SC 975

³⁶ State (NCT of Delhi) vs. Manish Bhardwaj & Ors. 2023 DHC 1315

³⁷ Mukesh & Anr vs State For Nct Of Delhi & Ors. AIR 2017 SC 2161

³⁸ Kathane P and others, 'The Development, Status and Future of Forensics in India' (2021) 3 Forensic Science International: Reports 100215

³⁹ Kloosterman A and others, 'The Interface between Forensic Science and Technology: How Technology Could Cause a Paradigm Shift in the Role of Forensic Institutes in the Criminal Justice System' (2015) 370 Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences 20140264

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ Lee YH, 'How Police Policies and Practices Impact Successful Crime Investigation: Factors That Enable Police Departments to "Clear" Crimes' (2020) 41 Justice System Journal 37

development⁴². Each of these domains is essential for rectifying existing inefficiencies and harmonizing law enforcement practices with the requirements of modern criminal justice.

Using cutting-edge technology and updating investigative methods are essential elements in increasing police effectiveness. The incorporation of advanced techniques like digital forensics, automated case management systems, and real-time data analytics can markedly improve the efficiency and precision of investigations. Utilizing AI-driven analytics can facilitate the rapid processing of extensive data sets, revealing patterns and correlations that may otherwise remain undetected. Utilizing mobile technologies for field data collecting and reporting can enhance evidence acquisition and minimize delays. Moreover, creating centralized digital databases for information sharing across jurisdictions can enhance cooperation and expedite investigations. The recent implementation of the BSA underscores the necessity for contemporary evidence management protocols, which should be enhanced by the integration of technology to guarantee compliance and efficiency⁴³. Investing in electronic infrastructure expedites investigation processes and facilitates the incorporation of new legal standards and procedural needs.

In order to guarantee that police operations are in line with the values of efficiency and justice, it is imperative to reinforce legislative frameworks and accountability mechanisms. Amending current rules and regulations to rectify deficiencies and ambiguities can enhance procedural clarity and mitigate delays. Establishing explicit protocols for the prompt submission of charge sheets and the handling of evidence might enhance the efficiency of judicial processes. Improving supervision procedures to evaluate police performance and guarantee compliance with legal norms is equally crucial. Creating independent review boards or entities to examine claims of misbehavior and inefficiency can enhance accountability and transparency. The BNS and BNSS reforms underscore the significance of legal adherence, and enhancing these frameworks can promote the seamless execution of the new requirements. Holding police personnel accountable for delays or procedural errors will promote compliance with defined timetables and enhance overall efficiency in the justice system.

Another essential recommendation for optimizing operational efficiency is to improve police training and capacity building. Thorough training programs emphasizing technical skills and procedural understanding can enable police to manage intricate investigations more efficiently. Training must encompass updates on current law requirements, technology instruments, and investigative methodologies to ensure police are prepared to address the exigencies of contemporary policing. Furthermore, investing in leadership development and management training can enhance organizational efficiency and decision-making in police units. Capacity building must also encompass the necessity for specialized skills, including cybercrime investigation and forensic analysis, to effectively address rising crime patterns. By cultivating a culture of ongoing education and professional advancement, police forces can improve their capacity to execute investigations swiftly and in compliance with the most current legal standards⁴⁴.

Furthermore, tackling the obstacles to police effectiveness in expediting justice necessitates a comprehensive strategy. Modernizing investigative procedures via technological integration, fortifying legal frameworks and accountability mechanisms, and augmenting training and capacity development are critical ways for attaining this objective. Executing these proposals can synchronize police operations with modern requirements, guaranteeing that the criminal justice system functions more efficiently and provides prompt justice for all.

⁴² Schulhofer SJ, Tyler TR and Huq AZ, 'American Policing at a Crossroads: Unsustainable Policies and the Procedural Justice Alternative' (2011) 101 JCLC 335

⁴³ Whiting A, 'In International Criminal Prosecutions, Justice Delayed Can Be Justice Delivered' (2009) 50 HILJ 323

⁴⁴ Marenin O, 'Police Training for Democracy1' (2004) 5 PPR 107