

The Reliability of Witness Testimony in Violent Crimes in the Context of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: An Analytical Study Through Legal Practices

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Abstract

This analysis explores the ways post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), could affect the accuracy of testimony in violent crimes. This research examines the link between the psychological trauma, that may be experienced by witnesses at the time, or in the aftermath of the crime itself, their ability to provide accurate and reliable testimony in subsequent legal action. The study relies on legal and psychological literature to examine how PTSD alters perception and memory, and how that might affect the accuracy of testimony in criminal cases. The paper looks at the ways that the legal systems in the US and UK deal with testimony altered by psychological trauma. In the USA, court trials use a PTSD impact assessment for witnesses to evaluate their ability to provide correct testimony. The courts in the United Kingdom are encouraged by guidance to consider psychological effects on testimony in criminal matters involving psychological trauma. The study will also cite an international legal framework for addressing the effects of PTSD on testimony, including United Nations standards that urge courts to implement trauma-sensitive practices to achieve justice.

Keywords: *Witness Testimony, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Violent Crimes, Reliability of Testimony, Psychological and Legal Assessment.*

Introduction

Witness testimony is considered an essential piece of evidence by the courts, to support facts of the case, particularly in violent crimes, like homicide, physical assault, rape, and terrorism (Waleed I. Saleem & Farah Malik, 2023). Yet, the accuracy of such testimonies can be severely compromised if a witness is experiencing PTSD as a result of exposure to a traumatic crime. PTSD affects cognitive functioning, the ability to remember and retrieve details accurately, which can have a detrimental effect on how credible testimonies are in court. Understanding how PTSD affects witness testimonies, therefore, is essential for ensuring justice and creating legal and psychological tools, that improve the accuracy of testimony evaluation in such cases.

This topic plays an important role in describing the problems, that judicial systems face when dealing with testimonies of witnesses whose psyche has been damaged by trauma connected to violence. It speaks to the necessity for careful legal and psychological means, to evaluate such testimony. Legally, these repercussions might erode the credibility of testimonies, potentially compromise the integrity of trials. Psychologically, PTSD stymies the ability to vividly recall and access memory. Thus, this study aims to provide legal solutions that consider the psychological effects to establish a balance of justice in court proceedings.

Moreover, this study highlights how the application of PTSD in the legal context may be broadened. In particular, it proposes to study how environmental differences impact witnesses in non-violent crime (e.g., economic or environmental crime), areas that are often not covered by the literature. It also recommends how to enhance the collaboration of psychological and legal professionals through greater application of modern psychological profiles or tests in judicial practice. This cross-discipline approach is necessary in principle as it responds to the issue of description of trauma-related inaccuracies contained in testimonies,

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providing a wider range of perspectives that break the moulds of reductive, culturally irrelevant frames (Waleed I. Saleem & Farah Malik, 2023)

This research seeks to demonstrate the process, by which PTSD affects witnesses' ability to provide accurate testimonies in violent crimes, analyze the way trauma such as violence/crime affects cognition, memory, and information retrieval. It is also intended to examine the legal and psychological frameworks, that challenge the veracity of testimonies from witnesses with psychic trauma. Moreover, the research will analyze legal and forensic rules in some legal jurisdictions, such as the USA and the UK, to safeguard the trustworthiness of testimonies in those cases. Furthermore, the proposed research aims to further develop the interactions between the psychological and legal perspectives, fostering the formation of collaboration between psychological and legal professionals integrated with fact-based legal mechanisms to facilitate the preservation of memories from trauma survivors.

The research is guided by some main questions: How does PTSD impact witness accuracy? What are the legal and psychological techniques to assess these testimonies? How do courts across jurisdictions such as the United States and United Kingdom approach the issue of PTSD? It aims to elucidate the possible legal challenges presented by testimonies, affected by trauma and discuss integrative strategies for approaching, such testimonies; that combine legal and psychological viewpoints to improve their reliability. The approach employed is a comparative descriptive analysis of legal and psychological literature, as well as the practices of legal systems in these countries. Additionally, the study has the objective of designing legal standards supported by psychological evidence to help lawyers in cases of PTSD patients assess witnesses' testimonies.

Theoretical Framework

The association between post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and cognition, especially with respect to memory, has been a major focus of investigation in the fields of psychology and law. One of the psychological disorders that has a significant effect on an individual's ability to recall memories correctly, especially those related to traumatic events, is PTSD. When it comes to the law, these effects can be a substantial obstacle in determining the relative reliability of testimonies, given by witnesses afflicted with this disorder, leading to many questions about the fair and equitable treatment of their testimonies without doing an injustice. Numerous studies demonstrate that PTSD can affect cognitive functions, in such a way that witnesses' testimony becomes susceptible to misrepresentation or inconsistencies in respect to what actually happened (Kaminer & Eagle, 2010; Svingen, 2023).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Definition

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a psychological condition, that develops due to an individual suffering from a traumatic or distressing event, such as wars, serious accidents, or assaults, both physical and psychological (Nazia et al., 2023). It is identified by a set of symptoms, that includes frequent remembering of the trauma, such as nightmares or triggered memories, avoidance of things that remind you of the event, and hyper-vigilance (for instance, being constantly nervous or anxious). Symptoms in affected individuals can range from mild to moderate and may be permanent if not treated properly. Diagnosis is generally based on expert medical opinion, taking into consideration the extent to which symptoms affect the ability to perform day-to-day activities (McDonald, 2016).

Effects of PTSD on Cognition and Memory

One major effect of PTSD on individuals is its strong influence on cognitive domains, especially memory. People with PTSD may struggle to accurately remember events, both related and unrelated to the trauma. Among the difficulties most common to PTSD are attention problems and difficulty concentrating, which negatively impact the ability to process new information or recall past experiences. In addition, such individuals can be more prone to memory distortions, where memories can be modified or distorted owing to continued psychological pressure associated with recalling information (Tanielian et al., 2016; Kaminer & Eagle, 2010).

PTSD and the Reliability of Witness Testimonies

Witness testimonies hold a significant place in the judicial system, since the court relies heavily on testimonies, to create evidence and then pass judgments. The symptoms of PTSD lead to a struggle for the individual to provide an accurate testimony (Abdelaziz, 2024), PTSD does have an effect on testimonies, that could vary from confusion in details, or to such anxiety that it could potentially cloud the witness's ability to remember events clearly. Sometimes, these effects make it hard to separate what is real from what is distorted in the witness's memory, which becomes a challenge for the court in deciding the credibility of their testimonies (Baker et al., 2024; Weiss, 2020).

The Effect of Psychological Trauma on Witnesses' Event Memory Accuracy

Research has established that psychological trauma has the potential to compromise an individual's ability to remember events well. People suffering from PTSD could experience strong signs of stress, disorientation, and a sense of unreality, which can impact their ability to accurately recollect events. This could lead to trouble recalling specific details of events, or even having them ordered out of sequence. Distortions in the perception of memories can also occur, as people tend to interpret events incorrectly or remember them as more prominent than they truly are. In the context of law, this can be problematic, as the memory may not accurately represent the event itself, leading to distortions of memories due to psychological trauma (Brunton-Smith et al., 2024; Ernsdorff & Loftus, 1993).

PTSD and the Testimony of Victims of Sexual Assault and A Child Witness Case

PTSD holds unique implications for victims of sexual assault, as its effect on witness testimony in violent crime varies widely and presents unique challenges. The victim is harmed not just by the crime itself but might also become a central witness in the case. If the perpetrator and victim share a connection, and there was an intention in targeting the victim, the entanglement of old and new memories may complicate the situation (Abdelaziz, 2024). These victims, adjusted from time to time by psychological trauma from painful events, may have their testimony change. Those emotions are likely to create a vulnerable state for a child, reducing their accuracy of memory and their ability to articulate what occurred in a courtroom setting (Hershkowitz et al., 2007). In these circumstances, it is compounded for child victims, as their psychological and cognitive development makes it harder to be precise, cogent about the trauma (Lyon, 2007). Moreover, child witnesses asked to testify in these cases, may experience even more effects on their testimony, due to being exposed to violence earlier in their lives (Goodman-Brown et al., 2003). Children can also have difficulty understanding and articulating legal concepts, and their emotional states can change, affecting the reliability of their testimony. As a result, the testimonies of child victims may face challenges in court, due to doubts about their reliability, particularly when their role as victims tends to overlap with their role as witnesses. Consequently, their mental state must be taken into account during any such judicial examination to ensure fair justice (Amuda, 2023).

Literature Review

The analysis highlights case law concerning the effect PTSD has on legal testimony, particularly in instances of violence. In this review, the paper aims to analyze the psychological and legal aspects related to how psychological trauma might influence the accuracy of legal testimony, and how to address the effects of psychological trauma in the legal framework. It also examines the knowledge deficiencies of earlier investigations, and discussing future directions, which might lead to improvements in the management of testimony impacted by trauma.

Earlier Research on PTSD and Testifying in Court

Affecting millions of people, there have been many studies that have shown how PTSD affects legal competency. Studies suggest that people with PTSD experience problems grasping the temporal or sequential features of successive events around the traumatic event and reconstruct their memories using distorted details surrounding these events, making them less trustworthy witnesses of a crime in court

(Cohen & Friedman, 2020). Studies also suggest that psychological disorders impair remembering events clearly, so testimony may be less reliable (Aldwin et al., 2016). Psychological stress can also worsen psychological symptoms and make it harder to provide accurate testimony due to its involvement in exposure during testimony in court (Schwabe et al., 2013).

Psychological Studies on Testimony in Violence Cases

The psychological literature has already examined how traumatic life experiences — like violent incidents — can affect how accurately we can testify about them in a court of law. Research indicates that PTSD victims of violence may have trouble remembering detailed information about events as a result of memory distortion, induced by the psychological trauma itself (Baker et al., 2014). For instance, one study focused on victims of sexual assault and showed that due to the effects of psychological trauma these individuals had difficulty recalling the details of the event (Ehlers & Clark, 2000). Moreover, other studies have also shown that cognitive deficits and difficulties in recalling events can lead to false testimony in trial, or raise concerns regarding the validity of statements provided by victims of violence (Brown et al., 2019).

Law and the Reliability of Testimony

The legal field has identified that PTSD impacts the quality of eyewitness testimony (Davies, 2015): chronically powerful psychological trauma has a negative effect on memory and the ability to critically analyze information. Some research in this area highlights the need for psychological experts to be involved in matters relating to witnesses afflicted by PTSD; there is an expectation that such scientific examination will inform the legal system about the implications of PTSD on the accuracy of witness testimony (Phelps, 2018). A few legal studies point toward the necessity of creating legal mechanisms specifically to verify the lay testimonies of people, such as victims of violence with PTSD (Posttraumatic Stress Disorder), like having them testify about the events in different ways, in order to lower the psychological effects of traumatic events on their testimonies (Saxe et al., 2007). Such procedural safeguards also aid in the overall functioning of the criminal justice system, as the purposeful degradation of witnesses with PTSD can result in tortuous trials.

In conclusion, the recent literature examines the effect of PTSD on legal testimony much better in terms of volume and depth than in the past, especially when it comes to proceedings related to violence. Psychological research proves a significant disruption of parameters for correct testimony, and legal studies emphasize the need to take this post-traumatic disorder into account, when determining the reliability of judicial declarations, especially those involving experiences and sensational cases. At the same time, there is still a lack of complete understanding about the psychological mechanisms of how trauma affects testimony and about the most appropriate solution, as to how policy should be addressed most effectively. Nonetheless, the existing data point to the possibility of cooperation between psychology and law enforcement, and the need to ensure justice and such traumatic processes as victim and witness testimony. Future research should address ways to improve the cooperation in cases of violence as well as psychological methods, to increase the objectivity of criminal process results, guarantee the legal rights of the parties involved. New aspects of this study also could be explored. For instance, it is possible to talk more about the integration of psychological and law enforcement aspects in problem-solving. Thus, it is possible to introduce a model of approach for psychologists and legal process discussions in cooperation with case as an example.

Second, new outlines of PTSD experiences are well-known in different legal aspects, that could be examined, whereby assessing the effect of this dysfunction is not only relevant to violent behaviors, but also economic crimes and environmental crimes, which are issues that some literature has not sufficiently highlighted in their studies. Third, novel frameworks for assessing testimony in the legal context could emerge, such as incorporating legal overlays based on the findings of novel psychological investigations. Some such ideas include psychological testing of witnesses before testifying in certain cases, also the use of psychological intervention programs, intended to mitigate the risks of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Finally, looking at the cultural weight of testimonies may give us a new perspective. Perhaps assessing the impact of PTSD on testimony in countries or cultures with differing traditions

surrounding testimony and legal processes, compared to Western studies would further the understanding of this issue.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and its Effect on Testimony Credibility in Violent Crimes: Legal Hurdles and Considerations

Testimonies are key for establishing facts in criminal cases, especially in violent crimes, in the judicial system. On the other hand, parties who have symptoms of post-traumatic stress (PTSD) may face psychological issues that can compromise their testimonies. This disorder affects the recall of the witness and can contribute to memory distortion and problems organizing the events. Within this context, it is important to examine the impact of PTSD on the credibility of testimonies in criminal cases as well as explore the possible legal remedies in this regard.

Effect of PTSD on Credibility of Testimony

Psychological problems facing these witnesses with PTSD, severely impede their ability to accurately testify. Such challenges encompass profound anxiety, nervous tension, and lack of concentration, elements that impede the organization of thoughts and memory retention of details. In addition, a witness with PTSD may be unable to recall traumatic memories or interact with the courtroom environment without becoming stressed or panicking, further reducing the reliability of their testimony (Baker et al., 2024; Ai & Ismail, 2024). Witnesses can experience a psychological condition known as impaired memory, wherein the witness challenges to remember specific aspects of events as their memory of the traumatic experience is still heavily jostled. Such a reaction accounts for memory distortion, reforming or misremembering of the event due to the psychological constraints tied with the trauma (Ehlers & Clark, 2000; Quas et al., 2005).

The Legal Implications of PTSD Involved Evidence

Testimonies altered by PTSD in the judiciary, however, may contribute to uncertainties of legal credibility. Some people think that this can cause distortion in memory or even the testimony itself are less reliable. A large number of legal systems emphasize the requirement for mechanisms, to assess the psychological impact they have, explaining that people suffering from PTSD may be unable to deliver an accurate testimony or even retell accounts, especially in cases of violent crime.

The U.S. System

This part examines how expert testimony has been challenged for credibility in the United States, despite the prevalence of violent crimes, including sexual offenses that affect the mental well-being of victims, who could belong to the PTSD subpopulation. To prevent psychological trauma, there are procedures on how visual or recorded testimonies may be used for witnesses, who have difficulties testifying. These procedures help lessen the psychological stress on the witness, and thus enhance the quality of testimony presented in court. In addition, witnesses may also seek the advice of psychological experts to determine; how the disorder may influence the correctness of their testimony and submit reports, regarding the trustworthiness of their declarations (Saxe et al., 2007; Khanov et al., 2024).

The UK System

Protective measures are in place in the United Kingdom that serves the purpose of mitigating the psychological trauma that accompanies giving testimony from witnesses who suffer from PTSD. Some of the measures taken include the right to give testimony by audio or video recording, and psychological evaluations of witnesses are done prior to testimony to better assess the severity of the disorder and how it may affect the witness's ability to provide an accurate and reliable statement. Those evaluations are implemented to guarantee that the testimonies given are true and not heavily swayed by psychological disorders (Phelps, 2018).

Legal Remedies for Testimonies Affected by PTSD

Adjusting the testimony procedures, to accommodate the note of the witness, would be one applicable legal solution, for guaranteeing adequate testimony of a witness affected by PTSD. This may involve permitting testimony by non-formal means, such as audio or film recordings, to alleviate the psychological burden of testifying in court (Saxe et al., 2007; Ai & Ismail, 2024). In addition, providing psychological support to witnesses, shall be included in the early stage of legal proceedings, during the evidence submission, for example, psychological counseling or a psychological support program for witnesses, in which the witness shall also be prepared for testimony, especially in terms of coping with psychological trauma before submitting the testimony. We should also direct the courts to seek the help of psychological experts to consult on how to evaluate, adjudicate, and assess testimonies from PTSD-affected individuals in order to come to fair and just conclusions under the law.

Psychological and Legal Strategies to Improve the Accuracy of Testimonies in Violence Cases: Assessing and Assisting Witnesses with PTSD

Firstly, the criminal testimonies in violence cases need to be treated more carefully, compared to other violence cases to avoid negatively impacting the accuracy of testimonies, their psychological effects provided by witnesses, particularly those who suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Consequently, as a state that impacts cognitive functioning and memory, it can alter the recall of events (Phelps, 2018). Thus, the simultaneous implementation of psychological and legal approaches is necessary to facilitate reliable accounts, while avoiding additional psychological trauma for the testimony providers (Saito et al., 2024).

Techniques for Examining Trustworthiness of Testimony Following Trauma

Psychological trauma impacts cognitive faculties centering on the brain, such as storing and recalling information based on time, that are extremely complex neural functions. Psychological research validates that witnesses suffering from PTSD, could potentially experience “blended memories,” which occurs when events become enmeshed, non-sequenced due to the anxiety and fear interfering with both the short- and long-term memory (Ehlers & Clark, 2000). Specialized psychological approaches are then applied to assess the reliability of the testimony, such as the Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale (CAPS), which assesses what portion of trauma has an impact on memory responses (Quas et al., 2005). Forensic psychology is in charge of the reports of what witnesses are emotionally ready on (e.g, their stress reaction when they start to remember the events (Campbell, 2002)). Such techniques help judges recognize the psychological framework of testimony, assess its reliability. For instance, it analyses “memory details” by finding contradictions between different accounts given by a witness, measuring their consistency. Some memories stored during trauma could be vivid and specific, while others could be vague, or entirely deleted based upon the physiological reaction to trauma (Suk, 2010).

Psychological and Legal Techniques for Dealing with PTSD-Witness

To minimize the emotional harm to witnesses, specific therapeutic procedures such as Prolonged Exposure Therapy are applied. This kind of therapy subclass is designed to enable witnesses to face their suffering episodes, in a controlled and safe manner, thus facilitating their giving truthful testimony (Saito et al., 2024). In law, there are many strategies, e.g, audio captures of voice on testimony, video captures, etc. Since the thought of confronting the perpetrator during a case in court is stressful, many experience a surge in anxiety and become immobile. These steps enhance the witness's mental status and decrease the anxiety level of the witness (Malik, 2024). Cross-examination that does not exacerbate psychological trauma, can be achieved using supportive questioning techniques, such as open-ended non-leading questions (Khanov, Lelyak, & Shevchuk, 2024).

The Importance of Mental Health Professionals in Enhancing the Accuracy of Testimony

Thus, psychiatrists and mental health experts are providing assistance, in obtaining information regarding the witness's mental state, and they are helping the witnesses before, during, and after the trial (Quas et al., 2005). This includes providing thorough psychological reports clarifying the impact of PTSD on the accuracy of recall testimony. For example, mental health experts can provide a detailed analysis of a perceived response and recall past events over time, such as the presence of "false" or distorted memories (Ernsdorff & Loftus, 1993). They also train witnesses in focus-enhancing techniques like deep breathing or guided meditation to help them present a coherent account of events in their testimony. Psychological counselors are also able to provide group support sessions for witnesses who are affected by PTSD, assisting them as they share their experiences and manage the trauma. Support from a family member or another such source serves to bolster the witness's courage and prepare them for the travails of testifying in criminal cases (Bowman & Mertz, 1996).

Strategies of the Legal Field to Prevent Traumatization in Testimonies

When you have a solid case with evidence, you can take legal action and ensure witness protection during trials. Avdija (2019) suggests one method for achieving this in that special courtrooms should be arranged where violence witnesses do not have to face the perpetrator when giving their testimony. It also provides psychological support facilities in the courtroom, for example, counselors for witnesses. This is part of a larger legal practice in which independent psychological reports can be used as evidence that supports the witness's testimony regarding how PTSD has impacted the witness's memory (Malik, 2024). Moreover, training for lawyers and judges on how to approach witnesses that have been affected by psychological trauma in a sensitive manner is also being provided to make sure that witnesses are not under any further pressure during the trial (Römkens, 2000). Psychological evaluations support leading medical witnesses—which we all know makes justice much better. Such evidence may provide insight into the psychological state of the witness that can contribute to more accurate and fair legal judgments (Mosteller, 1996). Thus, the combination of the psychological and the legal approach underlines that justice can only be enforced if the rights of witnesses are accepted, which is even more important for witnesses who are mentally affected by their experiences, e.g., victims of PTSD. Such measures lead to a decrease in judicial errors, which can inspire public confidence in the system, as seen by these initiatives to provide psychological support to witnesses and to analyze testimonies scientifically. Here is what the text would look like in legalese.

How Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Influences Testimonies Across Different Areas of Law: An Inter-Cultural Perspective

Enter Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a mental health disorder that can make it much more difficult for victims of traumatic events to remember and retell the events. Testimonies also play a significant role in the courtroom as they are an indispensable element that investigations and trials depend on to carry out justice. Testimonies from people with PTSD, however, may be distorted or inaccurate, constituting a legal quagmire, that has yet to yield a nuanced understanding of how PTSD affects witness accounts. Moreover, the significance of PTSD differs in various legal settings, e.g., economic and environmental, and is culturally influenced to facilitate or inhibit an individual's connection between the trauma suffered and the need for justice.

PTSD can not only be involved with violent crime, but also other types including economic and environmental crime. For example, in matters of fraud or financial crime, witnesses may find it difficult to remember the minute particulars of complex financial transactions, or events they were subject to. Psychological stress and anxiety associated with giving testimony, could also lead to memory distortions, potentially compromising the accuracy of evidence presented in court. To give an example, witnesses in economic crime cases may be threatened, by the perpetrator or face social pressures that impact their ability to accurately remember what happened (Phelps, 2018).

In the cases of environmental crimes, such as pollution or ecological destruction, the trauma experienced from exposure to disasters, or major environmental events can compound memory distortion. The psychological pressure from observing environmental destruction, or loss of property, could diminish a witness's ability to remember exact dates, or detailed facts about the incident. Therefore, these psychological components need to be addressed when examining these types of crimes (Quas et al., 2005).

Moreover, individuals from different cultures will testify differently according to trauma. In certain cultures, talking about psychological trauma, might be frowned upon or considered taboo. These cultural factors, may prevent victims from effectively describing their traumatic experiences, raising questions about how credible witnesses they would be in a court. In some cases, witnesses may minimize or conceal effects of trauma to comply with dominant cultural expectations in their communities (Ai & Ismail, 2024).

Dealing with trauma-laden testimonies in various cultures, requires flexible strategies, that take into account the psychological and cultural requirements of witnesses. Such strategies must include creating safe spaces during court, investigative processes, to ensure that witnesses would be comfortable enough to narrate their trauma without fear of social stigma. Providing appropriate psychological support to eyewitnesses may help them recall details more accurately and lessen the trauma's impact on memory, anyway.

Conclusion

This study highlights the psychological effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), in regard to witness testimonies on violent crimes, identifies yet another dimension of this disorder in view of testimonies involving economic and environmental crimes. Special attention should be given to cases involving witnesses with psychological disorders, so that their testimonies can be properly handled by the judicial system, and the rights of all parties involved are protected. The findings emphasize the need for an understanding of the extent of PTSD, to allow for justice across a range of cases and suggest legislation enabling this is necessary. According to the study, it is also important to highlight that witnesses' psychological conditions, should be better understood for all kinds of crime, not only violent crimes, as they play a crucial role in the accuracy and reliability of testimonies. PTSD is bad for detail: the study showed that it distorts the memories of witnesses, so that they do not remember exactly what happened. Such distortions can affect the credibility of testimonies about violent, economic, and environmental crime. For violent crimes — PTSD witnesses have more problems giving accurate information about the trauma, otherwith in the case of economic crimes, like fraud or corruption, psychological pressure from the fear of a legal consequence can negatively influence testimonies. Finally in environmental crimes, feelings of helplessness resulting from continuing environmental damage, may impair witnesses' ability to give accurate accounts.

In addition, there are tremendous concerns with the legal system's ability to assess questions surrounding testimony, when PTSD is present. In order to protect the rights of all parties — including the wrongfully accused — courts need new legal mechanisms, that would subject these testimonies to rigorous scrutiny. Although certain judicial systems have commenced the implementation of procedures, to tackle the impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on testimonies, such provisions still have not reached all corners of the world, leaving disparities in the law.

This suggests the need for cross-fertilization, between psychological and legal practitioner communities. Courts need to collaborate with psychiatric specialists, to conduct accurate assessments of testimonies influenced by PTSD. Efforts should be made for psychiatric expert reports to be more aligned with the judicial process, essentially reconciling justice. The study further suggests developing a legal framework, that contains standards for assessing testimonies undermined by psychological disorders, resulting from economic and environmental crimes. Innovative legal and psychological tools, that examine the accuracy of testimonies in such cases also should be incorporated into this framework. Legal systems need to devote time and resources to ensure they are prepared to deal with such issues.

Finally, judges and lawyers also need training on how PTSD impacts witnesses. This training should include recognizing trauma-saturated testimony and approaches to adjudicating that result in justice. These

measures will also be alongside legal and psychological studies in this area, which should continue to research, the effects of PTSD on witness testimonies in economic and environmental crimes. The results of such studies will help to formulate better legal strategies for handling these cases. This research suggests creating legal policies, that keep the PTSD of witnesses in mind in the context of economic and environmental crimes. It is important that legal systems put in place mechanisms, that assess the impact of these disorders on testimonial accuracy, in order to be of social justice and to protect the interests of all involved in a trial.

Acknowledgment

Author of this Article would like to thank the Governance and Policy Design Research Lab (GPDRL) of Prince Sultan University (PSU) for their financial and academic support to conduct this research and publish it in a reputable Journal.

Funding

This research was funded by Prince Sultan University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, located in the King Salman Neighbourhood

Competing Interests

The author declares no competing interests.

Publisher's Note

The publisher remains neutral about jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Disclosure Statement

no potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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