
FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY AND MEDICAL EVIDENCE IN INDIAN CRIMINAL TRIALS: A DOCTRINAL AND JUDICIAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The increasing reliance on scientific methods in criminal investigation has significantly transformed the evidentiary framework of Indian criminal trials. Among these developments, forensic psychology and medical evidence have emerged as critical tools in establishing culpability, assessing credibility, and ensuring procedural fairness. This article undertakes a doctrinal and judicial analysis of the role of forensic psychology and medical evidence within the Indian criminal justice system. It critically examines the statutory framework under the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, and analyses key judicial pronouncements of the Supreme Court and High Courts concerning the admissibility, probative value, and limitations of expert evidence. The study further explores challenges such as evidentiary misuse, lack of standardized forensic infrastructure, and judicial inconsistency in evaluating expert testimony. By adopting a doctrinal research methodology supported by case law analysis, the article highlights the need for greater scientific integration, judicial sensitivity, and regulatory reforms. The article concludes by proposing legal and institutional reforms to strengthen the reliability and ethical application of forensic psychology and medical evidence in criminal trials, thereby enhancing the accuracy and fairness of criminal adjudication in India.

1. INTRODUCTION

The administration of criminal justice in India has undergone a significant transformation with the increasing incorporation of scientific and expert-based evidence. Traditional reliance on oral testimony and confessional statements has gradually given way to evidentiary methods grounded in forensic science, psychology, and medical expertise. Among these developments, forensic psychology and medical evidence occupy a crucial position in determining culpability, assessing mental states, and ensuring evidentiary reliability in criminal trials.

Forensic psychology, as an interdisciplinary field combining law and behavioural science, plays a vital role in understanding criminal behaviour, assessing witness credibility, evaluating the mental condition of the accused, and assisting courts in interpreting complex human conduct. Similarly, medical evidence—ranging from post-mortem reports and injury analysis to DNA profiling and psychiatric evaluations—serves as an indispensable aid in corroborating facts and reconstructing criminal events. The Indian courts have increasingly relied upon such expert evidence to arrive at reasoned and just conclusions.

Despite its growing importance, the use of forensic psychology and medical evidence in Indian criminal trials remains fraught with challenges. Issues relating to admissibility, probative value, expert competence, infrastructural limitations, and judicial inconsistency continue to affect the effective integration of scientific evidence into the criminal justice system. The Indian Evidence Act, 1872, while recognising expert evidence under Section 45, does not provide a comprehensive framework to address the complexities of modern forensic disciplines.

This article undertakes a doctrinal and judicial examination of the role of forensic psychology and medical evidence in Indian criminal trials. By analysing statutory provisions, judicial pronouncements, and contemporary challenges, the study seeks to evaluate whether the existing legal framework adequately accommodates scientific advancements and safeguards the rights of the accused while ensuring justice for victims.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

Research Problem

The central problem addressed in this study is the lack of a coherent and standardised legal approach towards the admissibility, evaluation, and reliance on forensic psychology and

medical evidence in Indian criminal trials. While courts increasingly depend on expert testimony, inconsistencies in judicial interpretation and systemic deficiencies raise concerns regarding evidentiary misuse and wrongful convictions.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are:

1. To examine the concept and scope of forensic psychology within the Indian criminal justice system.
2. To analyse the legal framework governing medical and expert evidence under the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.
3. To study judicial trends relating to the admissibility and evidentiary value of forensic and medical evidence.
4. To identify practical and legal challenges in the use of expert testimony in criminal trials.
5. To suggest reforms aimed at strengthening the reliability and ethical application of forensic psychology and medical evidence in India.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a doctrinal research methodology, primarily based on the analysis of statutory provisions, judicial decisions, and secondary legal literature. The research relies on the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and landmark judgments of the Supreme Court and various High Courts concerning expert and medical evidence.

In addition to statutory and judicial sources, the study examines scholarly articles, commentaries, and reports on forensic science and psychology to assess contemporary challenges and international best practices. A comparative and analytical approach has been employed to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing legal framework and to propose reforms that align with constitutional principles and the evolving needs of criminal adjudication.

4. CONCEPT AND SCOPE OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY IN CRIMINAL TRIALS

Forensic psychology is an applied branch of psychology that intersects with the legal system, particularly in the context of criminal investigation, trial, and adjudication. It involves the application of psychological principles, methods, and expertise to issues arising within the criminal justice process, including assessment of offenders, victims, witnesses, and investigative procedures. In criminal trials, forensic psychology assists courts in understanding behavioral patterns, mental states, cognitive capacities, and psychological responses that are otherwise beyond the scope of ordinary judicial knowledge.

In the Indian criminal justice system, forensic psychology has gained prominence primarily through its association with expert evidence under Section 45 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872. Although the statute does not explicitly refer to “forensic psychology,” it recognizes expert opinions in matters of science, art, and specialized knowledge, thereby providing a legal basis for the admissibility of psychological expertise. Courts have interpreted this provision broadly to include psychiatric and psychological evaluations relevant to criminal responsibility, competency, and credibility.

The scope of forensic psychology in criminal trials extends to multiple stages of the justice process. At the pre-trial stage, psychological profiling and behavioural analysis are often utilised to assist investigative agencies in understanding offender characteristics, motives, and patterns of criminal conduct. During trial, forensic psychologists may be called upon to assess the mental fitness of the accused, evaluate the psychological impact of offences on victims, particularly in cases involving sexual violence and trauma, and assist in the evaluation of witness reliability. Such assessments become especially significant where mental illness, diminished responsibility, or vulnerability of witnesses is in issue.

Judicial recognition of forensic psychological evidence is evident in cases where courts have relied upon expert opinions to determine the mental condition of the accused and the voluntariness of statements. The Supreme Court, while emphasising the corroborative nature of expert evidence, has acknowledged its utility in aiding courts when issues of mental capacity and behavioural assessment arise. However, the Court has also consistently cautioned against blind reliance on such testimony, reiterating that expert evidence is advisory in nature and must be evaluated in conjunction with other material evidence on record.

The scope of forensic psychology further encompasses risk assessment, offender rehabilitation, and sentencing considerations. Psychological evaluations may inform judicial discretion in sentencing by providing insights into the likelihood of reoffending, prospects of reform, and the need for therapeutic intervention. In this context, forensic psychology contributes not only to adjudication but also to the broader goals of correctional justice and social reintegration.

Despite its expanding relevance, the application of forensic psychology in India remains limited by structural and institutional constraints. The absence of uniform standards for psychological assessment, lack of accredited forensic psychologists, and insufficient forensic infrastructure restrict its effective use. Moreover, judicial hesitation stemming from concerns regarding subjectivity and reliability continues to limit the evidentiary weight accorded to psychological opinions.

Thus, while forensic psychology holds significant potential to enhance evidentiary accuracy and fairness in criminal trials, its scope within the Indian legal framework remains underdeveloped. A more structured integration, supported by statutory clarity, professional regulation, and judicial training, is essential to harness its full potential within the criminal justice system.

5. MEDICAL EVIDENCE UNDER INDIAN LAW

Medical evidence constitutes a crucial component of criminal adjudication in India, serving as an objective and scientific means of corroborating facts in dispute. It includes a wide range of expert inputs such as post-mortem reports, injury certificates, medico-legal examinations, DNA analysis, toxicology reports, and psychiatric evaluations. Medical evidence plays a decisive role in establishing the cause of death, nature of injuries, time of occurrence, and the mental condition of individuals involved in criminal proceedings.

The legal foundation for the admissibility of medical evidence is primarily derived from the Indian Evidence Act, 1872. Section 45 recognises the opinion of experts in matters of science and specialised knowledge, thereby encompassing medical and forensic expertise. Additionally, Sections 51 and 73 provide supplementary guidance regarding the relevance and comparison of expert opinion with other evidence. Medical practitioners, by virtue of their professional training and experience, are treated as expert witnesses whose testimony assists courts in understanding technical aspects beyond common knowledge.

Post-mortem examination reports form one of the most frequently relied upon forms of medical evidence in homicide cases. Such reports help determine the cause, manner, and approximate time of death, thereby aiding courts in reconstructing the sequence of events. Indian courts have consistently held that medical evidence, though corroborative in nature, can assume decisive importance when it conclusively supports or contradicts ocular testimony. Where medical findings are inconsistent with eyewitness accounts, courts have exercised caution and, in certain cases, have preferred medical evidence over unreliable oral testimony.

In cases involving bodily harm, medical evidence in the form of injury reports and medico-legal certificates assists in determining the nature of injuries—whether simple or grievous—and the weapon used. This assessment is vital for the appropriate application of penal provisions under the Indian Penal Code. Similarly, in sexual offence cases, medical examinations of victims play a critical role in substantiating allegations, assessing trauma, and ensuring procedural fairness, while also safeguarding the dignity and privacy of the victim.

Advancements in forensic medicine, particularly DNA profiling and toxicological analysis, have further strengthened the evidentiary value of medical evidence. DNA evidence has been increasingly recognised by Indian courts as a highly reliable scientific tool for establishing identity, paternity, and biological linkage. While courts have acknowledged its probative value, they have also emphasised the need for strict adherence to procedural safeguards to prevent contamination and misuse.

Psychiatric and psychological medical evaluations also form an integral part of medical evidence, especially in cases involving insanity pleas, competency to stand trial, and assessment of mental illness. Sections 84 of the Indian Penal Code and relevant provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure interact with medical evidence to determine criminal responsibility and fitness of the accused. Courts have relied on psychiatric opinions to evaluate claims of unsoundness of mind, while simultaneously reiterating that such evidence must be scrutinised carefully and cannot be accepted mechanically.

Despite its importance, the use of medical evidence in Indian criminal trials is not without limitations. Delays in medical examination, lack of specialised forensic facilities, inadequate training of medical professionals in legal procedures, and inconsistencies in expert testimony often undermine its reliability. Furthermore, courts have repeatedly cautioned that medical

evidence is essentially advisory and must be evaluated in conjunction with other evidence on record.

Thus, medical evidence occupies a pivotal yet complementary role in criminal adjudication. When properly collected, analysed, and presented, it enhances evidentiary accuracy and judicial confidence. However, its effectiveness depends largely on institutional capacity, professional integrity, and judicial sensitivity in assessing expert testimony within the broader framework of criminal justice.

6. ADMISSIBILITY AND EVIDENTIARY VALUE OF EXPERT TESTIMONY

Expert testimony occupies a distinctive position in the law of evidence, functioning as an aid to judicial understanding rather than a substitute for judicial decision-making. Under Indian law, the admissibility of expert evidence is primarily governed by Section 45 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, which renders relevant the opinions of persons specially skilled in matters of science, art, foreign law, or identity of handwriting and fingerprints. Medical practitioners, forensic scientists, psychiatrists, and psychologists fall within the ambit of this provision, provided their expertise is duly established.

The rationale for admitting expert evidence lies in the recognition that courts may require assistance in matters involving technical or scientific complexity. However, Indian courts have consistently maintained that expert opinion is advisory in nature and does not bind the court. The judiciary retains the ultimate responsibility of evaluating the credibility and weight of such evidence in light of the facts and circumstances of each case.

Judicial interpretation of Section 45 has evolved to emphasise both the utility and limitations of expert testimony. In *State of Himachal Pradesh v. Jai Lal*, the Supreme Court clarified that expert evidence is admissible to furnish the court with scientific criteria for testing the accuracy of conclusions but cannot be treated as substantive evidence by itself. The Court cautioned that an expert's opinion must be supported by reasons and data, and its probative value depends on the cogency of the underlying methodology.

In *Selvi v. State of Karnataka*, the Supreme Court addressed the admissibility of scientific techniques such as narco-analysis, polygraph examination, and brain mapping. While recognising the investigative utility of forensic psychology, the Court held that involuntary

administration of such techniques violates the constitutional protection against self-incrimination under Article 20(3) of the Constitution. The judgment underscored the need to balance scientific advancement with individual rights and due process, thereby setting clear constitutional limits on the use of forensic psychological evidence.

Medical expert testimony has also been subjected to careful judicial scrutiny, particularly where it conflicts with ocular evidence. Courts have repeatedly held that medical evidence generally serves a corroborative function; however, where it completely rules out the prosecution version, it may assume decisive importance. In *Krishan Kumar Malik v. State of Haryana*, the Supreme Court emphasised the significance of medical and forensic evidence in sexual offence cases, while simultaneously cautioning against overreliance on expert testimony in the absence of credible supporting evidence.

The evidentiary value of expert testimony further depends on the competence, impartiality, and consistency of the expert witness. Courts have expressed concern regarding contradictory expert opinions, lack of standardisation in forensic procedures, and institutional deficiencies affecting the reliability of expert evidence. In such cases, judicial discretion plays a crucial role in determining whether expert testimony inspires confidence or merely creates doubt.

Another important aspect of admissibility relates to procedural safeguards. Courts have stressed that the collection, preservation, and examination of forensic and medical evidence must adhere to established protocols to prevent contamination and manipulation. Failure to comply with procedural requirements may weaken the evidentiary value of expert testimony, even where the scientific technique itself is reliable.

Thus, while expert testimony forms an indispensable component of modern criminal trials, its evidentiary value is inherently contingent. Indian courts have adopted a cautious and balanced approach, recognising the importance of forensic psychology and medical expertise while reaffirming the primacy of judicial evaluation and constitutional safeguards. The admissibility and weight of expert evidence ultimately depend on its scientific validity, procedural integrity, and consistency with the overall evidentiary record.

7. JUDICIAL TRENDS AND CASE LAW ANALYSIS

Indian courts have played a pivotal role in shaping the contours of admissibility and reliance

on forensic psychology and medical evidence. Judicial trends reveal a cautious yet evolving approach, balancing the need for scientific assistance with concerns regarding reliability, procedural fairness, and constitutional safeguards. The Supreme Court and various High Courts have consistently reiterated that while expert evidence is a valuable aid, it cannot replace substantive proof and must be evaluated in conjunction with the totality of evidence.

One of the dominant judicial trends is the insistence on corroboration. Courts have repeatedly held that medical and forensic evidence generally serves a corroborative function and gains significance when it aligns with ocular or circumstantial evidence. In *Ram Narain Singh v. State of Punjab*, the Supreme Court observed that medical evidence is primarily intended to support direct evidence and becomes decisive only when it completely rules out the prosecution version. This approach underscores judicial reluctance to treat expert testimony as conclusive in isolation.

At the same time, courts have demonstrated willingness to accord primacy to medical evidence where eyewitness testimony is unreliable or inconsistent. In *State of U.P. v. Krishna Gopal*, the Supreme Court acknowledged that when medical findings are so conclusive as to negate the possibility of the occurrence as alleged, courts must not hesitate to prefer scientific evidence over oral testimony. This judicial stance reflects an increasing recognition of the objective value of medical and forensic science in ensuring evidentiary accuracy.

Judicial engagement with forensic psychology has been more restrained, largely due to concerns regarding subjectivity and methodological limitations. In cases involving assessment of mental illness and criminal responsibility, courts have relied on psychiatric evaluations while emphasising strict scrutiny. The Supreme Court in *Dahyabhai Chhaganbhai Thakkar v. State of Gujarat* clarified that the burden of proving insanity under Section 84 of the Indian Penal Code lies on the accused and that medical opinion must be supported by surrounding circumstances and conduct. This approach illustrates judicial caution in accepting psychological evidence without corroborative behavioural indicators.

Sexual offence jurisprudence provides a significant illustration of evolving judicial sensitivity towards medical evidence. In *State of Punjab v. Gurmit Singh* and subsequent cases, courts have emphasised that absence of physical injuries or medical corroboration does not necessarily negate the testimony of the victim. More recently, in *State of Haryana v. Bhagirath*, the Supreme Court reaffirmed that medical evidence must be appreciated contextually and

cannot be used to discredit otherwise trustworthy testimony. These decisions reflect a shift from rigid evidentiary expectations towards a more victim-centric and trauma-informed approach.

DNA evidence has emerged as a strong trend in judicial reliance on scientific accuracy. Courts have increasingly treated DNA profiling as a reliable method of identification, subject to procedural safeguards. In *Mukesh v. State (NCT of Delhi)*, the Supreme Court relied extensively on DNA evidence while cautioning that its evidentiary value depends on proper collection, preservation, and chain of custody. This trend indicates judicial confidence in advanced forensic techniques, coupled with insistence on procedural integrity.

However, judicial trends also reveal systemic concerns. Courts have repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with inadequate forensic infrastructure, delays in forensic reporting, and lack of expert training. High Courts, in several cases, have highlighted the need for specialised forensic laboratories and trained professionals to avoid miscarriage of justice. Such observations reflect judicial awareness of institutional shortcomings affecting the reliability of expert evidence.

Overall, judicial trends demonstrate a nuanced approach that neither blindly accepts nor outright rejects forensic psychology and medical evidence. Indian courts have sought to integrate scientific expertise within the evidentiary framework while preserving judicial discretion, constitutional values, and procedural fairness. This evolving jurisprudence highlights the need for clearer statutory guidance and institutional reform to ensure consistent and effective use of expert evidence in criminal trials.

8. CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY AND MEDICAL EVIDENCE

Despite the growing reliance on forensic psychology and medical evidence in criminal trials, several legal, institutional, and practical challenges continue to hinder their effective utilisation within the Indian criminal justice system. These challenges not only affect the reliability of expert evidence but also raise concerns regarding procedural fairness and the risk of wrongful convictions.

One of the primary challenges is the absence of uniform standards and regulatory oversight governing forensic psychological assessments and medical expert testimony. Unlike other jurisdictions where forensic experts operate under well-defined professional and ethical

guidelines, India lacks a comprehensive statutory framework regulating the qualifications, accreditation, and accountability of forensic psychologists and medical experts. This regulatory vacuum results in inconsistent assessment methods and variable quality of expert opinions presented before courts.

Another significant challenge lies in infrastructural inadequacies and institutional constraints. The forensic ecosystem in India is marked by a shortage of accredited forensic laboratories, trained professionals, and modern equipment. Delays in forensic analysis and reporting are common, often weakening the evidentiary value of medical and scientific evidence. Such delays not only compromise investigations but also prolong trials, adversely affecting both the accused and victims.

The subjectivity associated with forensic psychology presents additional difficulties. Psychological assessments inherently involve interpretative elements, which may vary depending on the expert's approach, training, and experience. Courts have frequently expressed apprehension regarding the reliability of such assessments, particularly when they lack empirical backing or are unsupported by corroborative evidence. This concern contributes to judicial hesitation in assigning significant weight to psychological opinions, thereby limiting their effective use.

Procedural lapses in the collection, preservation, and chain of custody of medical and forensic evidence further undermine evidentiary reliability. Instances of contamination, mishandling, or incomplete documentation of samples have been noted in several cases, leading courts to discard otherwise relevant scientific evidence. The absence of standard operating procedures and inadequate coordination between investigative agencies and forensic experts exacerbate this problem.

Another challenge pertains to judicial inconsistency in evaluating expert testimony. While courts acknowledge the importance of scientific evidence, there is no uniform approach to assessing its probative value. Divergent judicial standards across jurisdictions result in unpredictability, which affects legal certainty and consistency in criminal adjudication. This inconsistency is particularly evident in cases involving conflicting expert opinions, where courts often lack clear guidelines for resolution.

The limited forensic literacy among legal practitioners and the judiciary also poses a substantial

challenge. The rapid advancement of forensic science has outpaced legal training, resulting in gaps in understanding complex scientific methodologies. This knowledge gap may hinder effective cross-examination of experts and judicial appreciation of scientific evidence, thereby impacting the quality of adjudication.

Finally, ethical concerns relating to misuse and coercive application of forensic techniques continue to persist. The potential for violation of individual rights, particularly in the context of involuntary psychological testing and intrusive medical examinations, necessitates heightened judicial vigilance. Balancing the interests of effective investigation with constitutional safeguards remains a persistent challenge in the integration of forensic evidence.

Collectively, these challenges highlight the need for systemic reform to ensure that forensic psychology and medical evidence serve as reliable tools for justice rather than sources of ambiguity. Addressing these issues is essential to enhance evidentiary accuracy, safeguard constitutional rights, and strengthen public confidence in the criminal justice system.

9. NEED FOR LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

The effective integration of forensic psychology and medical evidence into the Indian criminal justice system requires comprehensive legal and institutional reforms. As scientific methods increasingly influence criminal adjudication, the law must evolve to provide clarity, consistency, and safeguards that ensure both evidentiary reliability and protection of constitutional rights.

A foremost reform requirement is the establishment of a statutory framework regulating forensic and medical expert evidence. While Section 45 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 recognises expert opinion, it does not prescribe standards regarding expert qualifications, accreditation, or accountability. Legislative intervention is necessary to define minimum professional standards for forensic psychologists and medical experts, introduce accreditation mechanisms, and ensure ethical compliance. Such regulation would enhance the credibility and uniformity of expert testimony presented before courts.

Institutional reform must also address the strengthening of forensic infrastructure. The expansion and modernisation of forensic laboratories, particularly in underserved regions, is essential to ensure timely and accurate scientific analysis. Investment in advanced

technologies, coupled with adequate staffing and training, would reduce delays and improve the quality of forensic reporting. Establishing independent and well-funded forensic institutions insulated from investigative bias would further enhance evidentiary integrity.

Another critical reform area involves judicial and professional capacity-building. Regular training programmes for judges, prosecutors, defence counsel, and investigators in forensic science and psychology would improve their ability to evaluate expert evidence effectively. Enhanced forensic literacy within the legal community would facilitate informed judicial scrutiny, reduce misinterpretation of scientific data, and ensure more consistent evidentiary standards across jurisdictions.

The formulation and implementation of standard operating procedures for evidence handling is equally necessary. Clear guidelines governing the collection, preservation, examination, and chain of custody of forensic and medical evidence would minimise risks of contamination and procedural lapses. Mandatory documentation and audit mechanisms should be introduced to ensure transparency and accountability at every stage of evidence management.

Reforms must also prioritise constitutional and ethical safeguards. The use of forensic psychological techniques and medical examinations must adhere strictly to principles of consent, dignity, and due process. Judicial oversight should be strengthened to prevent coercive or invasive practices that infringe upon fundamental rights. Incorporating clear legal standards for the admissibility of emerging forensic techniques would help balance investigative efficiency with individual liberties.

Finally, a multidisciplinary approach to criminal justice reform is essential. Collaboration between legal institutions, medical professionals, psychologists, and forensic scientists can promote the development of best practices and evidence-based policymaking. Such an integrated approach would ensure that scientific advancements contribute meaningfully to justice delivery without undermining fairness or reliability.

In sum, targeted legal and institutional reforms are imperative to harness the full potential of forensic psychology and medical evidence in Indian criminal trials. By addressing regulatory gaps, infrastructural deficiencies, and ethical concerns, the criminal justice system can move towards a more scientifically informed, consistent, and just adjudicatory process.

10. CONCLUSION

The increasing reliance on forensic psychology and medical evidence marks a significant shift in the evidentiary landscape of Indian criminal trials. As traditional forms of proof increasingly give way to scientific and expert-based methods, courts are compelled to navigate complex questions of admissibility, reliability, and constitutional protection. This article has examined the doctrinal foundations, judicial interpretations, and practical realities governing the use of forensic psychology and medical evidence within the Indian criminal justice system.

The analysis reveals that while Indian courts recognise the indispensability of expert testimony in resolving technical and scientific issues, they have consistently adopted a cautious approach in evaluating its evidentiary value. Judicial insistence on corroboration, procedural integrity, and constitutional safeguards reflects an effort to balance scientific advancement with the fundamental principles of fairness and due process. At the same time, inconsistencies in judicial application and systemic deficiencies continue to undermine the effective utilisation of expert evidence.

The challenges identified in this study—ranging from regulatory gaps and infrastructural inadequacies to ethical concerns and limited forensic literacy—highlight the need for comprehensive reform. Without uniform standards governing expert qualifications, evidence handling, and judicial assessment, forensic psychology and medical evidence risk being underutilised or misapplied, potentially leading to miscarriages of justice.

The proposed legal and institutional reforms underscore the necessity of a structured and multidisciplinary approach. Statutory regulation of expert evidence, investment in forensic infrastructure, capacity-building within the legal profession, and strengthened ethical safeguards are essential to ensure that scientific evidence enhances, rather than complicates, criminal adjudication. Judicial engagement with evolving forensic methodologies must be informed, principled, and consistent.

In conclusion, forensic psychology and medical evidence possess immense potential to strengthen the accuracy, objectivity, and credibility of criminal trials in India. Realising this potential requires not only scientific advancement but also legal clarity, institutional commitment, and judicial sensitivity. A reformed and harmonised framework can ensure that

expert evidence serves as a reliable instrument of justice, reinforcing public confidence in the criminal justice system while upholding constitutional values.