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Truth in Context: Exploring the Role of Circumstantial Evidence in a Criminal Trial

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ABSTRACT

Since time immemorial, the discourse surrounding human rights has occupied a central position in societal. The Law of Evidence encompasses a structured framework of regulations employed to discern and ascertain factual information in the adjudication of disputes and the establishment of legal rights and obligations. It encompasses all forms of substantiation introduced during a trial, stratifying as either direct or indirect, with the latter encompassing circumstantial evidence. The utilization of circumstantial evidence, in conjunction with oral testimony, assumes a pivotal role in the adjudication of criminal cases by bolstering the credibility of witnesses and facilitating equitable judicial determinations. This paper delves into the role of circumstantial evidence within the context of legal proceedings, contending that while direct evidence may carry more inherent persuasiveness for jurors, circumstantial evidence also serves as a vital instrument in ascertaining the truth within the specific circumstances of a case. The research seeks to explore the substantive importance of circumstantial evidence in the realm of criminal trials. Employing a comprehensive analysis of pertinent case law and scholarly literature, this study endeavors to contribute to an enhanced comprehension of how judicial bodies can effectively evaluate circumstantial evidence within the overall spectrum of evidentiary appreciation.



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1. Introduction

Sir James Fitzjames Stephen defined the law of evidence “as a system of rules for ascertaining controverted questions of fact in judicial inquiries” (Stephen, 1876). As logic is essential to reasoning similarly evidence is essential for the judicial verdict. Every judicial verdict is given with the object of determining or declaring rights or liabilities; it depends on facts. Before a judicial verdict can be pronounced, the judge is required to find out those facts which, by the substantive law, constitute the rights and liabilities. This job of finding facts is the paramount work of a judge; it is also the most difficult part of a judicial verdict. This fact-finding job is also structured: through principles and rules; those principles and rules are now recognized in the law of evidence (Qanoon-e-Shadat Order, 1984, n.d.)

The term evidence is not simple to explain and describe comprehensively in a strait jacket (Greenleaf, 1899), however, it can be understood to include every kind of proof lawfully presented during the trial to persuade a judge on the alleged facts essential to have a judicial verdict, and based on the law applicable in Pakistan it includes oral as well documentary evidence (Qanoon-e-Shadat Order, 1984, n.d.). Further, besides other categories of evidence (Patterson, 1965) evidence can also be divided into (a) direct and (b) indirect evidence (*The Future of Indirect Evidence - PMC*, n.d.). The indirect evidence includes the circumstantial evidence (Zamir et al., 2016). Direct evidence is the evidence that can prove a fact without any aid from any other evidence, for instance, an ocular account in a murder trial, whereas circumstantial evidence is the evidence that by itself is not able to prove a fact (Wills, 1862). Thus, in a case where there is no ocular account of a murder trial, if someone is seen while running away from a place of occurrence, where some fire shots were heard with a pistol in his hand, it would be circumstantial evidence in that case (*Evidence May Be given of Facts in Issue and Relevant Facts*, n.d.). And in such cases when the case against an alleged accused person rests on circumstantial evidence, the courts observed that circumstantial evidence is evidence of relevant facts from which, one can, by process of intuitive reasoning, infer the existence of facts in issue or *factum probandum* (*Circumstantial Evidence | Criminal Cases, Proof & Admissibility | Britannica*, n.d.).

Studies show that courts often do not give enough importance to evidence like DNA and fingerprints (called circumstantial evidence), but they value things like what people say they saw or confessed to (called direct evidence) more. However, research suggests that circumstantial evidence is occasionally proved to be stronger and more probable than direct evidence. The common reason for this situation is that courts might not fully grasp the value of circumstantial evidence, so they do not realize how much it affects the chance that the defendant is guilty (Heller, n.d.).

Circumstantial evidence pertains to evidence that allows the judge to deduce the presence or absence of contested facts. This category includes both forensic evidence, such as blood or fingerprints, and non-forensic evidence that, on its own, does not establish the culpability of the accused (Bergman et al., 2017). Furthermore, there is also a prevailing notion is that circumstantial evidence holds no validity within criminal proceedings under Islamic legal systems (Ahmad et al., 2019), a belief that is not accurate. Contrary to this misconception, circumstantial evidence carries substantial significance within the framework of Islamic law, holding a distinct place and value in its own (Nurullah, 2019).

While it is true that direct evidence is stronger circumstantial evidence is also crucial for uncovering the truth in specific situations. In criminal cases, using circumstantial evidence is vital to support the credibility of witnesses and ensure fair decisions. This type of evidence minimizes errors in court proceedings and deserves serious consideration in criminal trials. Therefore, the inclusion of circumstantial evidence alongside witness testimonies in criminal trials contributes to fairer judgments by the court's (Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 1994).

As it is said that circumstances are inflexible proof, they do not bend to the interaction of parties, therefore, in the light of importance of circumstantial evidence in determining the credibility of available evidence in a criminal trial (Mayanja, 2017), this paper seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how courts can effectively weigh circumstantial evidence during appreciation of evidence. The research

findings will provide insights into the role of circumstantial evidence in court proceedings and the factors that influence its admissibility and weight. The aim is to highlight the significance of circumstantial evidence in establishing the truth in context and ensuring justice is served. Ultimately, the paper will demonstrate the necessity of giving due weightage to circumstantial evidence in criminal trials and its crucial role in ensuring a fair and just legal system.

In this paper, we will review the legal literature on circumstantial evidence and analyze key cases where it has been used to determine witness credibility and influence the outcome of trials. We will also examine the factors that affect the use of circumstantial evidence, such as its relevance, reliability, and probative value. Our aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of circumstantial evidence in trial, in determining the credibility of witness testimony, and to offer insights that will help legal practitioners evaluate and use circumstantial evidence more effectively in the pursuit of justice.

Evidence: Direct v Indirect

In trial proceedings, the evidence presented to prove a fact or disprove it is referred to as 'judicial evidence'. This type of evidence can be classified into three categories, namely oral evidence, documentary evidence, and physical evidence. When a witness testifies that they directly perceived a fact in question with one of their five senses, it is known as direct evidence¹. On the other hand, indirect and circumstantial evidence involves relevant facts that can be used to infer the presence or non-existence of a fact in question, in addition, it is distinct from direct evidence, which refers to a witness's personal or first-hand knowledge of facts in question (Keane & McKeown, 2020).

Circumstantial evidence enables the establishment of a fact in issue through inference rather than direct means and thus qualifies as 'indirect' evidence (Emson, 2006). This term encompasses all evidence that can be presented in court and can be used to make an inference that leads to the proof of a fact in issue to a certain extent. Thus, circumstantial evidence can include a wide variety of things, such as: Fingerprints found at the scene of a crime, DNA evidence, Footprints, Surveillance footage or CCTV Camera recordings, the discovery of tools or weapons used in the commission of the crime (recoveries), testimony from witnesses who saw the suspect in the area around the time of the crime (last seen evidence), financial records, Call Data Records (CDR) and phone records, and even suspicious behavior of the accused such as absconson or providing false pleas of alibis includes in circumstantial evidence (Wills, 1862).

In legal trials, evidence is deemed relevant if it can logically validate or refute a matter needing proof. Specifically, relevant evidence is that which alters the probability of the matter under scrutiny. Lord Simon of Glaisdale emphasized that circumstantial evidence operates by progressively and exponentially eliminating alternative scenarios (*Regina v Kilbourne*, n.d.). Pollock CB guided the jury, analogizing circumstantial evidence not to a chain, where a single broken link would compromise the whole, but rather to a rope made of several strands. He explained that while one strand alone might not bear the load when intertwined with others, the combined strength could be substantial and sufficient (*Regina v Exall And Others*, n.d.).

A well-established principle in law states that while a witness may lie, circumstances cannot. It is not essential to have direct eyewitness evidence to prove the involvement of a person in a crime. The culpability of an individual can also be established using circumstantial evidence (*Vilas Pandurang Patil v State of Maharashtra*, n.d.). Notwithstanding, the court should exercise prudence when relying solely

¹ Article 70 of QSO, 1984: "Proof of facts by oral evidence: All facts, except the contents of documents, may be proved by oral evidence. 71. Oral evidence must be direct: Oral evidence must, in all cases whatever be direct, that is to say— If it refers to a fact, which could be seen, it must be the evidence of a witness who says he saw it; If it refers to a fact, which could be heard, it must be the evidence of a witness who says he heard it; If it refers to a fact, which could be perceived by any other sense or in any other manner, it must be the evidence of a witness who says he perceived it by that sense or in that manner; If it refers to an opinion or to the grounds on which that opinion is held, it must be the evidence of the person who holds that opinion on those grounds"

on circumstantial evidence to arrive at a conviction (*State of Haryana v Ved Prakash*, n.d.). There is also a view that there is no distinction between direct and circumstantial evidence as both are considered valid forms of evidence in court. The only difference lies in the fact that direct evidence directly proves the commission of the crime, while circumstantial evidence provides circumstances that lead to an appealing inference of culpability (*Nanahau Ram v State of MP*, n.d.). Essentially, circumstantial evidence is a source of incidental and subsidiary proof that involves drawing inferences from facts that are closely related to the main question (*Liyakat v State of Uttaranchal*, n.d.).

2. Standard of proof: Civil v Criminal Trial

The Qanoon-e-Shahadat Order 1984 maintains parity in the execution of general principles of evidence equally in civil and criminal trial. The standard of proof mandated is that of a prudent and reasonable individual. Nonetheless, the evidentiary value in civil as well as in criminal trials varies: the same evidence that satisfies the threshold in a civil case may fall short of establishing guilt beyond a reasonable doubt in a criminal trial. While a mere preponderance of probability may suffice in a civil trial, a higher degree of judicial certainty is indispensable for securing a guilty verdict in criminal cases (*Ch. Razik Ram v Ch. Jaswant Singh Chouhan and others*, n.d.).

In *Bater v Bater*, Denning LJ discussed the varying levels of proof required, suggesting that the ongoing debate regarding the standard of proof might largely involve semantics. While it's true that our legal system mandates a more rigorous standard of proof in criminal cases compared to civil cases, this principle is not absolute. Denning LJ further elaborated that even in civil cases, the proof may rely on a preponderance of probability, yet there can be varying degrees of probability within that standard. The degree of probability is contingent upon the specific subject matter. For example, when a civil court examines a fraud allegation, it naturally demands a higher degree of probability compared to a situation involving the establishment of negligence. While the civil court doesn't uphold as strict a standard as a criminal court, even when dealing with criminal charges, it still requires a level of probability appropriate to the context (*Bater v Bater*, n.d.). The legal principle dictates that the weightage of evidence varies considerably in civil and criminal cases. A civil matter could be determined by a mere balance of possibilities or probabilities (*Standards of Proof in Civil Litigation 62 Modern Law Review 1999*, n.d.), whereas in criminal proceedings, the maxim of "better ten guilty go free than one innocent be wrongly convicted" holds sway (*Sarah Hobson's case*, n.d.).

In legal terms, it is established that a criminal trial necessitates a higher standard of proof than a civil trial, owing to the more severe consequences of an erroneous conviction. Although this is not a strict law, it is founded on principles of public policy and cautiousness (Clermont & Sherwin, 2002). Consequently, it implies that the prosecution has the burden of presenting evidence that establishes the culpability of the accused beyond any reasonable doubt (Littlejohn, 2020). The law court must be convinced of the guilt of the accused with a high degree of moral certainty which convinces it as a reasonable person under the situations of the case regarding the proof of charge beyond reasonable doubt. In other words, the evidence must be so strong that it leaves little room for doubt or uncertainty about the culpability of the accused (Mungan, 2011).

In Pakistan, the pivotal precedent that reaffirmed the standard of proof in criminal cases as proof beyond reasonable doubt is found in the Safdar Ali case. The court declared that the fundamental principle laid down in *Woolmington v DPP* is entirely relevant in Pakistan. In the *Woolmington* case, the House of Lords emphasized, "Throughout the entirety of the English criminal law, one consistent principle remains, that the prosecution bears the responsibility of establishing the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, except the defense of insanity and any statutory exceptions, as previously mentioned" (*Safdar Ali v the Crown*, n.d.). Nevertheless, the notion of "beyond reasonable doubt" in common law was formulated during the 18th century. This standard gained judicial validation in *Rex v Abramovitch*, signifying its acceptance by the courts of law (*Reasonable: The Most Consequential Word in the Criminal Law - Gary Slapper, 2014*, n.d.).

According to the law of evidence applicable in Pakistan, a fact can fall into one of three categories: proved, disproved, or not proved. As per Article 2 (4) of the Q.S.O. 1984, a fact is considered proved when, upon evaluating the available information, the court either believes in its existence or deems its existence sufficiently likely that a prudent individual should act under the assumption that it exists. Similarly, Article 2 (5) of the Q.S.O. 1984 states that a fact is considered disproved when, after reviewing the pertinent details, the court either believes in its non-existence or considers its absence so likely that a prudent individual should operate under the assumption that it doesn't exist. Furthermore, Article 2 (6) of the Q.S.O. 1984 stipulates that a fact is categorized as not proved when it is neither validated nor invalidated (Qanoon-e-Shadat Order, 1984, n.d.). As per M. Monir the term "proof" is best understood as any means that influences the mind's judgment about the accuracy or falsehood of the subject under consideration, either directly or indirectly. In practical matters, achieving absolute certainty is a rarity, except in mathematical science. Therefore, the term "proof" cannot be likened to a mathematical formula, which is unattainable, but rather pertains to evidence that would persuade a rational individual to form a conclusion. As a result, the notion of proof is not contingent on the accuracy of statements but on the likelihood of their occurrence. In this context, the definition of proof centers around the concept of probability. Had judicial proof implied absolute certainty, it would have excluded circumstantial evidence, which it did not (*Textbook on The Law of Evidence - M. Monir - Google Books*, n.d.).

Furthermore, the court also takes into account matters before it. The proof in a criminal trial is not the consequence of evidence unaccompanied. Evidence is but another means of establishing proof. The court is not solely dependent on evidence to arrive at its decision. The process of proof in a trial extends beyond evidence, encompassing a range of other factors. These include pleadings and pleas of parties, results of local inspections, presumptions, and judicial notice taken by the courts in a trial. In arriving at its decision, the court can rely on various instruments of proof beyond mere 'evidence.' This is why the definitions of 'proved' and 'disproved' do not use the term 'evidence' but instead use the wider expression 'matters before it,' reflecting the court's consideration of multiple factors beyond just evidence (*Textbook on The Law of Evidence - M. Monir - Google Books*, n.d.).

Circumstantial evidence

Justice Mahajan, in *Hanumant v. The State of Madhya Pradesh*, made a noteworthy observation regarding the need for proving a case beyond a reasonable doubt by the prosecution and provided a comprehensive explanation of the factors involved in proving a case using only circumstantial evidence. He emphasized that the circumstances must be conclusive and must eliminate every possibility except for the one being put forth as the proposed proof. The evidence should also establish, with a high degree of likelihood, that the suspect must have committed the act in question (*Hanumant v The State of Madhya Pradesh*, n.d.).

A man can tell a lie but circumstances do not. This statement highlights the importance of circumstantial evidence in establishing the truth before a trial court in legal cases (Druzin & Li, 2011). Circumstantial evidence refers to evidence that indirectly proves a fact or proposition, rather than directly proving it (Dunn, 1981). The worth of circumstantial evidence lies in the element that it is less susceptible to manipulation or distortion than direct evidence such as witness testimony (Barker, 2020). As noted by the Indian Supreme Court in the precedent of *Sharad Birdhichand Sarda*, circumstantial evidence can be as conclusive and compelling as direct evidence if it meets certain criteria, such as being complete, consistent, and inept of clarification on any rational theory other than the culpability of the suspect. Therefore, while a person may be able to lie or misrepresent the truth in their statements, the circumstances surrounding a case can provide strong evidence of the truth that cannot be easily refuted or explained away (*Sarda v State of Maharashtra*, n.d.).

3. Appreciation of Circumstantial Evidence in a Criminal Trial

The standard of proof must be met in cases based on circumstantial evidence. Each fact must be verified independently and circumstances fully established. Court of law must consider primary facts, inferences drawn from them, and common course of events. The cumulative effect of all facts must reject every theory except the culpability of the suspect. A comprehensive chain of evidence must leave no reasonable ground for inference consistent with the guiltlessness of the suspect (*G. Parshwanath v State of Karnataka*, n.d.). In cases where circumstantial evidence is presented, it is essential to establish the circumstances supporting the conclusion of guilt. Each fact presented as evidence must be proved individually, and a distinction must be made between primary facts and the inferences drawn from them. The sufficiency of circumstantial evidence for conviction depends on the collective effect of all the facts, which must be constant only with the suspect's culpability and must exclude every other hypothesis. A complete chain of evidence must be presented, leaving no reasonable ground for conclusions constant with the guiltlessness of the suspect. Four essential factors must be proven to establish guilt by circumstantial evidence, including the complete proof of circumstances, consistency with the premise of guilt, conclusiveness of circumstances, and exclusion of every premise except the one proposed to be verified with moral certainty: the culpability of the accused (*Bhagat Ram v State of Punjab*, n.d.)

In cases based on circumstantial evidence, the Indian Supreme Court established five guiding principles known as the "panchsheel." These principles require that (1) the circumstances supporting the inference of culpability must be fully proven, (2) the facts presented as evidence must be constant solely with the premise of the accused's guilt, (3) the circumstances must be decisive in nature and effect, (4) every other hypothesis except the one anticipated to be proved must be excluded, and (5) a comprehensive chain of evidence must be established to eliminate any reasonable grounds for concluding the innocence of the suspect and establish that the suspect is most likely the perpetrator of the act (*Sharad Birdhichand Sarda v State of Maharashtra*, n.d.)

In Pakistan, the landmark case in this context is *Naveed Asghar case*. In this case the accused were found guilty of committing robbery and murder through circumstantial evidence in an unobserved incident. Upon the appeal of the conviction before the Supreme Court, the court emphasized the standard of care criteria in cases relying on circumstantial evidence. The court opined that while circumstantial evidence may at times be conclusive, it must be carefully scrutinized. In cases reliant solely on circumstantial evidence, the circumstances must be thoroughly examined before drawing any adverse inference against the accused. The process of inference and deduction in such cases is complex and prone to fallacy, thus caution must be exercised in accepting proof of facts and circumstances before drawing inferences. Only well-established circumstances should be accepted as a basis for inferences, supported by high-quality evidence to prove the culpability of the suspect. A mere concurrence of circumstances, some of which may be supported by inadequate evidence, can create a false impression and lead to incorrect inferences (*Naveed Asghar v the State*, n.d.). Moreover, in cases solely dependent on circumstantial evidence, the possibility of falsified evidence necessitates an additional level of prudence and caution on the part of the court. The court must scrutinize the evidence with an unbiased judicial approach and strict legal standards to verify its authenticity, relevance, and credibility. When there are signs of possible falsified evidence by the investigating authority, the court must be vigilant against drawing erroneous conclusions. It must ensure the fair and genuine collection of such evidence. Neglecting such prudence and caution may jeopardize the proper and secure dispensation of the criminal justice field (*Hashim Qasim v State*, n.d.).

4. Sufficiency of Circumstantial Evidence in a Criminal Trial

The higher courts have established a well-defined standard of proof for condemning a person based on circumstantial evidence. According to this standard, the circumstances that are used to support the conviction must be fully and completely established and it is imperative that the evidentiary chain presented by such circumstances be sufficiently robust to preclude any reasonable inference that is

consistent with the accused's innocence and it must demonstrate, beyond a reasonable doubt, that it was highly probable, based on all available human knowledge, that the accused committed the act in question (*Bakshish Singh v State of Punjab*, n.d.).

The court emphasized that when handling circumstantial evidence, it is crucial to consider the specific guidelines that pertain to such evidence. In such situations, there is always a risk that unfounded speculation or unfounded suspicions may replace legal proof, which underscores the importance of heeding the cautionary advice given by Baron Alderson to the jury in the case of *Reg v Hodge*. His Lordship said: "The mind was apt to take a pleasure in adapting circumstances to one another and even in straining them a little if need be to force them to form parts of one connected whole; and more ingenious the mind of the individual, the more likely was it, considering such matters, to overreach and mislead itself, to supply some little link that is waiting to take for granted some fact consistent with its previous theories and necessary to render them complete" (Scott, 1965).

The sufficiency of circumstantial evidence to prove the culpability of an accused person must be assessed by considering whether any hypothesis consistent with the individual's innocence can be suggested based on the facts and circumstances presented. If no such hypothesis exists, the evidence is sufficient for conviction (Jamshed et al. 2020). However, if the facts and circumstances can be reconciled with any plausible hypothesis compatible with the individual's innocence, the case must be considered as having insufficient evidence, leading to the acquittal of the accused. In murder cases, the chain of circumstantial evidence must be well-knit, and unbroken, and cannot be reasonably explained away except for the accused's guilt. Any missing link renders the entire chain unreliable, and it would be unwise to rely on such evidence for conviction (*Azeem Khan v Mujahid Khan*, n.d.).

5. Conclusion

The legal community is split when it comes to precisely differentiating between circumstantial and direct evidence. Some have even gone as far as contending that there's essentially no substantial disparity between the two. By investing effort and ingenuity, all evidence could potentially be categorized as circumstantial (Greenstein, 2008). Nevertheless, the differentiation between direct and circumstantial evidence remains widely acknowledged both in legal discourse and in the general understanding of proof. Wigmore offered a distinction: when we speak of a fact as confirmed through direct or affirmative evidence, it signifies that witnesses have given testimony based on their sensory perception, leaving minimal room for doubt about its accuracy. On the contrary, when we describe a fact as established through circumstantial evidence, it implies that its presence can be reasonably and logically inferred from other facts within the case (Degnan, 1974; Wigmore, 1940).

Litigation systems rely on involved parties to gather evidence like witnesses, documents, and materials, each party is driven to refine information that supports their case before decision-makers. This often results in some evidence being overlooked or missing (Nance, n.d.), therefore, circumstantial evidence is *sin qua non* to reach a just decision in the case. And a criminal conviction can hinge exclusively on circumstantial evidence (Blum, n.d.). As noted by Wigmore, "circumstantial evidence has the potential to be as convincing and compelling as testimonial evidence, and in some cases, even more so" (Wigmore, 1940). Circumstantial evidence falls within the realm of evidentiary categories, representing logical and substantial proof that can effectively serve as sufficient evidence to establish a particular claim (A R Coffey, n.d.). Even within Islamic law, where it is referred to as "Qarinah," circumstantial evidence has achieved the status of sufficient evidence. Scholars contend that it is crucial to clarify any misunderstandings regarding the admissibility of strong Qarinah. It is a valid form of evidence in line with Sharia principles of evidence. Moreover, it can be employed even in cases involving hudud and qisas offenses (*Admissibility of Circumstantial Evidence in Shariah and Pakistani Legal System | Zia e Tahqueeq*, 2022; Muhamad et al., 2015). Today, it's untenable to disregard forensic evidence, which is a form of circumstantial evidence, from a case (Kiely, 2005). This evidence can serve to establish both the

intent and the actions of the perpetrator (Walker, 1915). The primary challenge lies in effectively evaluating circumstantial evidence (Burns, 1957). Nonetheless, it remains highly effective in substantiating a criminal case and should be employed (Willmarth, 1960). It becomes crucial when other types of evidence are inadequate to validate a criminal case in court. Yet, it is imperative that it aligns with and complements the other presented evidence in a trial (Pangestu et al., 2021).

Furthermore, though it is trite law that while the principle of "innocent until proven guilty" is fundamental to our criminal justice system, it is also important to strike a balance between the importance of individual liberty and the need to ensure justice for victims and society as a whole. The judicial system has public accountability and undue dedication to the rule of benefit of the doubt can lead to the acquittal of guilty persons, which can erode the credibility of the law and lead to community demand for severe legal presumptions against prosecuted persons. As such, the principle of assumed innocence must be moderated by the practical need to make criminal justice more effective and realistic, and a balance must be struck to ensure that only reasonable doubts belong to the accused and that the guilty are held accountable for their actions (*State of Rajasthan v Yusuf*, n.d.).

It is high time for the Court to adopt a dynamic approach when evaluating evidence and not a static one. The Court must consider all facts and circumstances of the case and, if convinced that the accused has committed the offense, record a conviction, even if there were technical lapses on the part of the investigating agency or prosecution, as long as the accused's fair trial was not compromised (*Khurshid v the State*, n.d.). And in cases where circumstances are proven and the evidence is so strong that no other explainable conclusion can be drawn except the guilt of the accused, the court of law is obligated to draw an inference against the suspect. And unless the accused can create reasonable doubt or produce strong exculpatory evidence, the circumstantial evidence should not be rejected (*State v Manzoor*, n.d.), this approach needs to be adopted because the public's loss of faith in the criminal justice system stems from the perception that technicalities often allow criminals to escape punishment in criminal cases (*Khurshid v the State*, n.d.). Achieving a high standard of criminal investigation remains a dream in our country. Therefore, it is imperative to examine direct and indirect evidence in tandem. Neglecting the crucial role of circumstantial evidence in various instances can result in unjust judicial verdicts.

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