ABSTRACT

Crime and offences are as old as our civilization. If we talk of early history, there existed informal way of disposing of these offences which were of simple nature. As the time passed, our living standards and style also changed and got complicated giving rise to new type of offences. Accordingly, procedure to deal with offences was modified also. In the process, a time came when all these informal rules and regulations were codified and a formal system of justice known as court was introduced.

In the study, the researcher has selected to study the pattern of litigation at district level which includes- nature of cases, socio-economic background of litigants, procedural complexities faced by litigants, possibilities of compromise and satisfaction level of litigants.

The main objectives of the study are as under:

1. To analyse the pattern of litigation in district courts.
2. To study the socio-economic background of litigants.
3. To point out the procedural complexities faced by litigants in district courts.
4. To search out the possibilities of compromise between the litigants.
5. To assess the satisfaction level of the litigants.

For the purpose of getting an insight into the pattern of litigation in Haryana purposive study has been adopted. For this, district courts of Rohtak have been opted. Source list containing 150 cases have been availed randomly from office record of district courts Rohtak. The primary data have been collected from two set of respondents i.e. litigants and advocates through interview-schedule method with the help of separate designed structured questionnaires. For the secondary data, the researcher has relied on various books, newspapers, magazines, journals etc. The universe of the study includes 300 litigants and 100 advocates engaged in these cases.
Main findings of the study are as under:

- Filed cases in district courts Rohtak show that out of total 150 cases, 80 (56 percent) are criminal cases whereas 70 (44 percent) are filed as civil ones.
- The 80 criminal cases belong to different categories like murder, sexual offences, property, thefts, drugs, atrocity, assault, negligence, fraud, offence against child and women, kidnapping and miscellaneous minor offences.
- 70 civil cases belong to different categories like property, succession, guardianship, recovery, rent, services, matrimonial, accident claim etc.
- A large majority of respondents (52%) fall in 18-40 age groups.
- About half of the respondents are from general category. 28 percent belong to backward class and 20 percent belong to scheduled castes category.
- As far as educational background is concerned, 45 percent are under graduate whereas 29 percent are either illiterate or under-metric.
- Rural-urban dichotomy indicates that 66 percent (two-third) respondents hail from rural areas.
- The data show that over half respondents belong to low income group and the same belong to unemployed and agriculture/labour.
- Out of 300 litigants, 66 percent are of the view that their litigation is pending for more than two years, while out of 66 percent, 35 percent respondents assert that they have spent more than 5 years.
- For 70 percent respondents, the procedure in district courts is expensive. The reason cited by most of them is advocate’s fees.
- 97 percent of the respondents accepted that their routine life has been disturbed by the litigation. 58 percent take it as mental disturbance.
- Three-fourth respondents are not satisfied with the court proceeding. Majority of them (70%) are dissatisfied due to long dates.
- 60 percent respondents are satisfied with the services of their advocates.
• As far as criminal cases are concerned 33 percent respondents are found dissatisfied while 45 percent gave no answer about their satisfaction.
• The data show that only 5 percent litigants disposed of their cases through compromise. Out of 14, 57 percent cases are disposed of through Lok Adalat.