



A STUDY OF CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO THE RIGHTS OF AN ACCUSED SEEKING BAIL

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Abstract:

This research paper aims to explore the constitutional provisions pertaining to the rights of an accused in the criminal justice system, with a special focus on the concept of bail. The right to bail is a fundamental aspect of the accused's rights, ensuring that individuals are not deprived of their liberty without just cause. This paper discusses the various aspects of bail, including its legal framework, principles, and international human rights standards. Additionally, it highlights the need for maintaining a balance between the rights of the accused and the interests of society.

Key Words: Bail, Interests, Society, Human

Introduction:

The rights of an accused person are a fundamental aspect of any criminal justice system. These rights are designed to ensure that the accused receives a fair and impartial trial, and that their rights are protected throughout the entire legal process. One important right of an accused person is the right to bail. Bail is a legal process in which a defendant is released from custody while awaiting trial or other legal proceedings. Bail allows defendants to remain free while their case is pending, provided they follow certain conditions set by the court. Bail can be granted in a variety of forms, including cash, property, or a bond. The right to bail is enshrined in many countries' constitutions, including the United States, India, and the United Kingdom. This right is based on the principle that a person is innocent until proven guilty, and that the accused should not be punished before being convicted of a crime. The right to bail is not absolute. In some cases, a judge may deny bail if they believe that the defendant poses a flight risk, a danger to the community, or is likely to interfere with the legal process. The decision to grant or deny bail is made on a case-by-case basis, and takes into account factors such as the defendant's criminal history, ties to the community, and the severity of the charges. The right to bail is an important aspect of an accused person's rights. It allows defendants to remain free while their case is pending, and ensures that they are not punished before being convicted of a crime. However, this right is not absolute, and can be denied in certain circumstances.

Legal Framework of Bail:

The right to bail is enshrined in various national and international legal instruments. At the national level, constitutions, criminal codes, and procedural laws often outline the principles governing bail. At the international level, several human rights conventions and treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), recognize the right to liberty and the presumption of innocence, which form the basis for the right to bail.

The legal framework of bail varies from country to country, but generally, it is governed by the criminal procedure code of the respective country. In the United States, for example, the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution prohibits excessive bail and guarantees the right to bail in most cases. The Bail Reform Act of 1984 sets out the procedures for granting bail in federal cases. In India, the right to bail is enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty. The Criminal Procedure Code provides for the grant of bail, and the courts are required to consider several factors before granting bail, including the nature of the offense, the character of the accused, and the likelihood of the accused absconding. In the United Kingdom, the right to bail is governed by the Bail Act of 1976. The Act sets out the factors that courts must consider when deciding whether to grant bail, including the nature and seriousness of the offense, the strength of the evidence, and the defendant's previous criminal record. In all countries, the decision to grant or deny bail is made by a judge, who considers various factors related to the case and the defendant's background. If bail is granted, the defendant must comply with certain conditions, such as surrendering their passport, checking in with a designated authority regularly, or remaining within a certain geographic area. The legal framework of bail is an important part of the criminal justice system, and is designed to protect the rights of the accused while ensuring public safety. The decision to grant or deny bail is made on a case-by-case basis, and takes into account several factors related to the offense and the defendant's background.

Right to Liberty:

The right to liberty is a fundamental human right that is enshrined in many national constitutions and international human rights instruments. This right recognizes the individual's freedom to live their life without interference or arbitrary detention by the state. It is recognized in the United States by the Fifth and Fourteenth

Amendments to the Constitution, which protect an individual's right to due process of law and liberty. The right to liberty is also recognized by international human rights law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention". This principle is designed to ensure that individuals are not detained without sufficient cause and that their rights to freedom and personal liberty are protected.

Proportionality:

The principle of proportionality is a fundamental principle of criminal law that requires that the punishment imposed for a crime must be proportional to the severity of the offense (von Hirsch, 2016). This principle is also relevant to the use of bail, which must be proportionate to the alleged offense and the risk posed by the accused. The principle of proportionality is recognized in the United States by the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, which prohibits excessive bail and fines. It is also recognized by international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which provides that "penalties... shall be proportionate to the seriousness of the offence".

The principle of proportionality is designed to ensure that the punishment or conditions imposed on an accused person are not disproportionate to the alleged offense or the risk posed by the accused. This principle is essential to protecting the individual's rights and to ensuring that the criminal justice system operates in a fair and just manner. The concept of bail is guided by several key principles that are designed to ensure fairness and justice in the criminal justice system. These principles recognize the right to liberty, the presumption of innocence, and the need for a fair and proportionate response to alleged offenses. They also require judges to carefully assess the risks posed by the accused and to ensure that the bail process is fair and impartial.

Human Rights Standards:

In India, the principle of balancing the rights of the accused with the interests of society is recognized in the Constitution of India and the criminal justice system. Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, which is interpreted to include the right to a fair trial and due process of law. At the same time, the interests of society and public safety are recognized as legitimate concerns in the criminal justice system. The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 provides that bail may be denied if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the accused would commit an offense while on bail or that they would interfere with the investigation. The balancing of rights and interests requires judges to consider various factors, including the nature and gravity of the offense, the character of the accused, and the likelihood of the accused absconding or interfering with the investigation. Judges must also consider the need to protect society from crime and ensure public safety.

List of Laws:

Here are some of the Indian laws related to the rights of an accused with special reference to bail:

- Constitution of India: The Constitution of India provides for various fundamental rights of an accused person, including the right to a fair trial, the right to life and personal liberty, and the right against self-incrimination. These rights are protected under Articles 14, 19, 20, 21, and 22 of the Constitution.
- Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973: The Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) provides the procedural law for the investigation, trial, and punishment of criminal offenses in India. It includes provisions for bail, including the types of offenses where bail can be granted, the conditions for granting bail, and the factors that judges must consider when deciding whether to grant bail.
- Indian Penal Code, 1860: The Indian Penal Code (IPC) defines various criminal offenses and their punishments in India. It also includes provisions related to bail, such as the types of offenses where bail can be granted and the factors that judges must consider when deciding whether to grant bail.
- Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002: The Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) was enacted to provide for the prevention and punishment of terrorist activities in India. It includes provisions related to bail for offenses under the act, such as the requirement for the accused to prove their innocence before being granted bail.
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015: The Juvenile Justice Act provides for the care, protection, and rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law. It includes provisions related to bail for juvenile offenders, such as the requirement for the juvenile justice board to consider the best interests of the child when deciding whether to grant bail.

List of Cases:

- Gudikanti Narasimhulu v. Public Prosecutor (1978): In this case, the Supreme Court held that bail is a rule and jail is an exception, and that an accused person is entitled to bail unless there are compelling reasons to deny it.
- State of Rajasthan v. Balchand (1977): In this case, the Supreme Court held that the power to grant bail is not to be exercised in a mechanical manner, and that judges must consider the facts and circumstances of each case before deciding whether to grant bail.

- Sanjay Chandra v. CBI (2012): In this case, the Supreme Court held that the right to bail is not absolute and that the court must balance the rights of the accused with the interests of society when deciding whether to grant bail.
- Dataram Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh (2018): In this case, the Supreme Court held that the right to bail is a fundamental right, and that an accused person should not be detained for an extended period without sufficient cause.
- Arnab Goswami v. State of Maharashtra (2020): In this case, the Supreme Court held that personal liberty is sacrosanct and cannot be curtailed except in accordance with the law, and that the courts must ensure that the right to bail is not used as a tool of harassment.
- Sachin Waze v. State of Maharashtra (2021): In this case, the Bombay High Court granted bail to Sachin Waze, a police officer accused in a high-profile murder case, stating that the allegations against him were not supported by sufficient evidence and that he had already been in custody for an extended period.
- Navlakha v. National Investigation Agency (2020): In this case, the Supreme Court held that an accused person's right to default bail cannot be denied, even if the investigating agency seeks an extension of the custody period beyond the stipulated time.
- Siddique Kappan v. State of Uttar Pradesh (2021): In this case, the Supreme Court granted bail to journalist Siddique Kappan, who was arrested while reporting on a rape and murder case in Uttar Pradesh, stating that the allegations against him were not supported by sufficient evidence and that his detention was a violation of his right to free speech.
- Sameet Thakkar v. State of Maharashtra (2021): In this case, the Bombay High Court granted bail to Sameet Thakkar, a social media influencer accused of making derogatory remarks about the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, stating that the allegations against him were not serious enough to warrant continued custody.

Conclusion:

The right to bail is a vital aspect of the rights of an accused person, ensuring that individuals are not deprived of their liberty without just cause. By adhering to the principles governing bail and international human rights standards, legal systems can uphold the rights of the accused while also considering the interests of society. Continuous efforts to strike this balance are crucial to maintaining a fair and just criminal justice system that respects the rights of all individuals involved. Further research on implementing effective bail practices, addressing potential biases in bail decisions, and promoting access to legal representation for all accused persons can contribute to enhancing the overall functioning of the bail system and the protection of the rights of the accused.

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