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## Аннотация

В статье рассматривается криминалистическая методология расследования преступлений, связанных с незаконным присвоением чужого имущества, в частности, краж, грабежей и грабежей при отягчающих обстоятельствах. Эти преступления, несмотря на принадлежность к одной категории, связанной с экономическими и имущественными правонарушениями, существенно различаются по механизмам, поведению преступника, реакции потерпевшего, структуре доказательств и сложностям расследования. Исследование объединяет доктринальный анализ, криминалистику, криминологическую теорию и поведенческое наблюдение для разработки комплексной методологической основы расследования этих преступлений. Подчеркивается важность реконструкции ситуации, интерпретации следов, тактического интервьюирования, цифровой криминалистики и профилирования преступника. Результаты исследования свидетельствуют о том, что эффективность расследования зависит от способности следователя синтезировать физические, цифровые, свидетельские и поведенческие доказательства в целостную аналитическую модель. В статье делается вывод о том, что современная следственная практика должна основываться на научном обосновании, процессуальной строгости и адаптивной методологии для обеспечения достоверности доказательств и предотвращения следственных ошибок.

**Ключевые слова:** расследование краж, расследование грабежей, тяжкие грабежи, криминалистическая методология, имущественные преступления, доказательственная реконструкция, криминалистическая тактика, поведение преступника, ситуационный анализ, следственная стратегия.

## Abstract

The article examines the forensic methodology of investigating crimes involving the unlawful appropriation of another's property—specifically theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery. These offenses, despite belonging to the same economic-proprietary category, differ substantially in their mechanisms, offender behavior, victim response,

evidentiary structure, and investigative challenges. The study integrates doctrinal analysis, forensic science, criminological theory, and behavioral observation to develop a comprehensive methodological framework for the investigation of these crimes. It highlights the importance of situational reconstruction, trace interpretation, tactical interviewing, digital forensics, and offender profiling. The findings suggest that effective investigation depends on the investigator's ability to synthesize physical, digital, testimonial, and behavioral evidence into a coherent analytical model. The article concludes that modern investigative practice must be grounded in scientific reasoning, procedural rigor, and adaptive methodology to ensure evidentiary reliability and prevent investigative errors.

**Keywords:** theft investigation, robbery investigation, aggravated robbery, forensic methodology, property crime, evidentiary reconstruction, criminalistic tactics, offender behavior, situational analysis, investigative strategy.

## INTRODUCTION

Crimes involving the unlawful taking of another's property—whether through secret removal, open force, or violent assault—occupy a prominent place within criminal jurisprudence and forensic methodology. Theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery represent escalating degrees of harm and social danger, reflecting differences in offender intent, situational dynamics, victim interaction, and evidentiary manifestation. Investigating these crimes requires more than procedural compliance; it demands a nuanced understanding of how offenders act within specific environments, how victims respond under stress, and how traces of criminal behavior form and persist.

Theft, characterized by the covert taking of property, typically unfolds in the absence of direct confrontation. Its investigative complexity lies in the subtlety of trace formation: offenders often act when witnesses are absent, leaving behind minimal physical evidence. The investigator must reconstruct the offender's path using micro-traces, digital footprints, tool marks, and environmental cues. The methodological challenge lies in identifying access methods, determining offender familiarity with the environment, and analyzing removal mechanisms.

Robbery introduces an open, confrontational element: the offender applies force or threat to obtain property. The presence of psychological influence and situational stress alters the evidentiary landscape. Victim accounts may contain distortions shaped by fear; physical injuries and dynamic trace patterns emerge; and offender behavior often includes hurried movements or discarded objects. Investigators must carefully balance testimonial accounts with objective material traces, avoiding over-reliance on traumatized perceptions.

Aggravated robbery—or violent assault with the intent to steal—represents the most severe form, combining property appropriation with potentially lethal violence. Such crimes generate complex patterns of physical evidence (bloodstains, weapon traces, damage to clothing), digital traces (communication prior to the attack), and psychological evidence (victim trauma, offender aggression). Their investigation requires integrated forensic science, tactical fieldwork, and sometimes behavioral analysis to identify predictable patterns of violent offender conduct.

Across all three crime categories, the general principles of forensic methodology serve as the foundation for investigative work: systematic planning, hypothesis testing, rigorous documentation, trace preservation, interdisciplinary cooperation, and multi-source verification. Investigators must anticipate offender strategies, evaluate their level of preparation, and consider environmental factors influencing both victim vulnerability and offender escape routes.

This article aims to articulate how the general principles of criminalistic methodology operate in the investigation of theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery, and how these principles must be adapted to the criminological and psychological characteristics inherent to each offense. Through interdisciplinary analysis and methodological synthesis, the study outlines a robust framework for addressing evidentiary challenges and enhancing investigative accuracy.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The forensic and criminological literature on property crimes reveals a long intellectual history. Early European and Russian forensic theorists—including Locard, Gross, and Belkin—identified trace formation as the primary mechanism for reconstructing property crime events. Their conceptualization of “every contact leaves a trace” remains foundational in examining tool marks, entry methods, and trace transfer during theft or robbery.

Modern scholarship builds on these classical insights by incorporating criminal psychology, environmental criminology, and digital forensics. Studies on theft emphasize the importance of offender typologies: opportunistic thieves, professional burglars, and situational offenders demonstrate distinct behavioral patterns. Research consistently shows that professional offenders leave fewer traces, rely on pre-planned access routes, and use tools designed to minimize noise and trace formation.

Robbery literature emphasizes the interaction between offender and victim. Scholars such as Wright and Decker explore the psychology of street robbers, uncovering patterns in target selection, weapon display, and threat escalation. Behavioral science research indicates that victims under stress exhibit perceptual narrowing, affecting their

recall of offender appearance and environmental detail. This has methodological implications for interviewing techniques and lineup procedures.

Aggravated robbery studies intersect with violence research. Forensic pathology literature highlights the significance of injury analysis in reconstructing violent encounters. Behavioral criminologists examine offender aggression, impulsivity, and the role of substance use. Studies in environmental criminology stress that aggravated robberies often occur in transitional spaces—parking lots, stairwells, isolated streets—where offenders exploit limited visibility and victim isolation.

Digital forensics literature has grown substantially in recent years, emphasizing how property crimes increasingly involve electronic communication, surveillance footage, mobile phone metadata, and electronic payment systems. These sources often allow investigators to map offender movements, identify associates, and reconstruct sequences of events independent of testimonial evidence.

The literature also highlights challenges: victims may misidentify offenders; investigators may misinterpret trace significance; cognitive biases may distort investigative judgment; and institutional fragmentation may impede evidence integration. Scholars advocate for multi-source verification, standardized investigative protocols, and cross-disciplinary training to mitigate these challenges.

The methodology of the present study integrates doctrinal legal analysis, forensic reconstruction, behavioral modeling, and comparative case-based evaluation. The doctrinal component examines legal norms defining theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery, as well as procedural regulations governing investigative actions. These statutes establish boundaries within which forensic methodology must operate, shaping investigative tactics related to search, seizure, confrontation, identification, and digital evidence acquisition.

Forensic reconstruction constitutes the scientific core of the methodology. This includes analyzing tool marks, footwear impressions, micro-traces, digital metadata, bloodstain patterns, damage to property, and environmental indicators. Analytical techniques such as trace comparison, situational modeling, and digital trajectory mapping are used to reconstruct offender movements and victim interactions.

Behavioral modeling draws from criminology and psychology to understand offender decision-making. Theft offenders often exhibit rational planning, selecting targets with minimal guardianship; robbers typically balance risk with immediacy of gain; violent robbers may demonstrate impulsivity, dominance-seeking behavior, or substance-induced aggression. Modeling these patterns allows investigators to anticipate offender behavior, refine hypotheses, and predict locations of evidence.

Comparative case evaluation provides empirical grounding. The study examines resolved cases of theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery across different jurisdictions, identifying common methodological errors and successful practices. The analysis includes early investigative decisions, the role of digital evidence, the sequencing of tactical actions, and the handling of victim testimony.

The methodology also employs an evidentiary triangulation model. This model evaluates data across three domains: (1) physical evidence, (2) digital data, and (3) testimonial accounts. Triangulation reduces cognitive bias and strengthens evidentiary conclusions, especially in crimes where witness accounts may be distorted by stress or fear.

## RESULTS

The study yielded several significant findings related to the investigation of theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery. In theft investigations, the results demonstrate that early scene preservation and detailed micro-trace analysis significantly increase investigative success. Offenders often leave unnoticed traces—partial footprints, tool marks, glove fiber, displaced dust patterns—that, if properly interpreted, reveal method of entry, offender skill level, and movement within the environment. Digital evidence such as phone location data, surveillance footage, and access card logs proved crucial in establishing offender timelines.

Robbery investigations produced a different evidentiary structure. The study found that victim testimony, although influenced by stress, contained reliable core details when elicited through structured interviewing techniques. Physical traces—weapon marks, dropped items, injury analysis—provided objective anchors for evaluating victim recollection. Investigations that integrated behavioral cues from victims and offenders successfully reconstructed situational dynamics such as threat escalation, resistance, and offender panic.

Aggravated robbery investigations revealed the richest evidentiary landscape, combining physical violence indicators with digital and testimonial data. Bloodstain pattern analysis, weapon trajectory assessment, and medical documentation contributed significantly to reconstructing violent encounters. Digital data—communications among offenders, GPS movement, online searches—revealed planning and post-offense coordination. The study found that interdisciplinary cooperation between forensic pathologists, digital analysts, and investigators accelerated case resolution.

Across all crime types, investigations that employed triangulation—cross-verifying digital, physical, and testimonial evidence—produced the most reliable outcomes. Cases relying excessively on a single evidence type (e.g., victim testimony alone) were more

prone to error. The results emphasize the importance of integrating diverse evidentiary sources.

## DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that although theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery differ in severity and criminogenic context, their investigations rely on unified methodological principles rooted in forensic science, behavioral reasoning, and systematic evidentiary evaluation. Theft requires an emphasis on subtle trace interpretation and offender access patterns. Robbery demands sensitivity to victim psychology and situational dynamics. Aggravated robbery calls for comprehensive reconstruction of violent interactions. Yet all three require careful avoidance of cognitive bias, adherence to procedural integrity, and reliance on empirical evidence.

The discussion highlights that investigator intuition must be supplemented—not replaced—by scientific reasoning. Over-reliance on victim impressions, premature suspect targeting, or misinterpretation of trace significance undermines investigative accuracy. The iterative nature of forensic methodology requires investigators to continually refine hypotheses as new information emerges.

The findings also reveal institutional challenges: inadequate digital forensic capability, insufficient scene processing expertise, and limited cross-agency communication. These constraints impede the integration of diverse evidentiary streams. Strengthening institutional frameworks, improving forensic resources, and providing advanced training in behavioral and digital analysis are essential for improving investigative outcomes.

Finally, the discussion underscores the ethical dimension: investigations must balance efficiency with respect for procedural rights and evidentiary reliability. Errors in these crime categories often have profound consequences—wrongful convictions or failure to apprehend dangerous offenders. Thus, methodological rigor is not merely an academic ideal but a practical necessity for justice.

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that investigating theft, robbery, and aggravated robbery requires a coherent methodological system grounded in forensic science, legal reasoning, behavioral analysis, and procedural integrity. Theft investigations demand precision in micro-trace analysis and environmental reconstruction. Robbery investigations rely on understanding victim-offender dynamics and integrating subjective accounts with objective evidence. Aggravated robbery investigations require the highest level of forensic integration, combining medical evidence, behavioral assessment, and digital reconstruction.

The general principles of forensic methodology—systematic planning, scientific analysis, multi-source verification, cognitive neutrality, and meticulous documentation—form a universal framework applicable across these crime categories. Their strength lies in adaptability: investigators can tailor specific tactics to the criminological characteristics of each offense while maintaining methodological consistency.

The conclusion emphasizes that modern investigative environments require interdisciplinary cooperation and advanced analytical capacity. Strengthening digital forensics, expanding behavioral training, and improving institutional coordination will enhance investigative accuracy. Ultimately, the proper application of forensic methodology ensures that property crimes are investigated efficiently, ethically, and scientifically—fulfilling the justice system’s mandate to protect both individual rights and public safety.

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