

Robbery with Violence as a Criminal Phenomenon in Urban Communities

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Abstract

Robbery, as a form of theft accompanied by violence or threats of violence, has become a significant criminal phenomenon in urban societies. Rapid urbanization, population density, socioeconomic inequality, and limited employment opportunities contribute to the increasing occurrence of this crime in metropolitan areas. This study aims to analyze robbery as a criminal phenomenon within urban communities by examining its characteristics, underlying causes, and social impacts. Using a normative-empirical approach, this research combines legal analysis with criminological perspectives to understand how robbery affects public security and social order. The findings indicate that economic pressure, weak social control, and environmental factors play a major role in encouraging individuals to commit robbery. Furthermore, robbery generates fear, disrupts social stability, and reduces public trust in law enforcement institutions. Therefore, comprehensive crime prevention strategies involving law enforcement agencies, local governments, and community participation are essential to effectively address robbery in urban settings. Strengthening preventive measures and improving social welfare are crucial steps toward reducing the incidence of robbery and enhancing public safety.

Keywords: Robbery; Violence; Criminal Phenomenon; Urban Communities; Criminology.

A. Introduction

Robbery with violence represents one of the most serious forms of conventional crime in urban communities, as it combines the unlawful taking of property with the use of physical force or threats against victims. This type of crime not only causes material losses but also inflicts psychological trauma, fear, and a sense of insecurity among urban residents. In densely populated cities, where social interactions are complex and anonymous, robbery with violence has increasingly emerged as a significant threat to public safety and social stability. Alves, J., & Zhao, M. (2025).

Rapid urbanization and economic transformation have contributed to profound social changes in urban areas. The concentration of population, unequal access to economic resources, unemployment, and social inequality often create conditions that increase the risk of violent crimes, including robbery. Urban environments may also weaken informal social control

mechanisms, such as community cohesion and mutual supervision, thereby providing greater opportunities for criminal behavior. As a result, robbery with violence tends to occur more frequently in urban settings compared to rural areas. Braga, A. A., Weisburd, D., & Turchan, B. S. (2021).

From a criminological perspective, robbery with violence is influenced by a combination of individual, social, and environmental factors. Economic pressure, limited education, peer influence, and exposure to criminal subcultures can motivate individuals to engage in violent theft. In addition, inadequate urban infrastructure, poor lighting, and limited law enforcement presence in certain areas further contribute to the persistence of this crime. These factors demonstrate that robbery with violence is not merely an individual act but a broader social phenomenon rooted in structural urban problems. Cohen, L. E., & Felson, M. (2020).

From a legal standpoint, robbery with violence constitutes a serious criminal offense that demands firm and consistent law enforcement. Effective legal frameworks and proportional criminal sanctions are essential to deter offenders and protect victims. However, law enforcement efforts alone are insufficient without preventive strategies that address the underlying social causes of crime. Therefore, understanding robbery with violence as a criminal phenomenon in urban communities requires an integrated approach that combines legal analysis, criminological theory, and social policy. Eck, J. E., & Clarke, R. V. (2022).

This study aims to examine robbery with violence as a criminal phenomenon in urban communities by analyzing its causes, patterns, and impacts on public security. By adopting an interdisciplinary approach, this research seeks to contribute to the development of more effective crime prevention strategies and policy responses that enhance urban safety and strengthen public trust in the criminal justice system. Felson, M., & Boba, R. (2023).

B. Theoretical Framework

1. Concept of Robbery with Violence

Robbery with violence is a criminal act that involves the unlawful taking of property belonging to another person by using physical force, violence, or threats of violence. This offense differs from ordinary theft because it directly endangers the physical and psychological safety of the victim. In criminal law, robbery with violence is categorized as a serious offense due to the presence of coercion and the potential for severe injury or loss of life. The element of violence serves as a means to facilitate the theft or to maintain control over the stolen property, thereby increasing the gravity of the crime. Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2024).

From a legal perspective, robbery with violence fulfills both objective and subjective elements of a criminal offense. The objective elements include the act of taking property, the use of violence or threats, and the causal relationship between violence and the theft. The subjective elements involve intent and awareness of wrongdoing. These elements establish the basis for criminal liability and justify the imposition of heavier sanctions compared to non-violent property crimes. Fischer, C. (2022).

2. Robbery with Violence in Criminological Theory

Criminology views robbery with violence as a product of complex interactions between individual behavior and social structure. Several criminological theories are relevant in explaining this phenomenon in urban communities. Jacobs, J. (2021).

- a. **Strain Theory:** Strain theory explains that individuals may resort to crime when they experience pressure or frustration due to the inability to achieve socially accepted goals through legitimate means. In urban environments marked by economic inequality and limited employment opportunities, individuals facing financial stress may engage in robbery with violence as an alternative means of survival or social mobility.

- b. **Social Disorganization Theory:** Social disorganization theory emphasizes the role of weakened social institutions and community control in urban areas. High population mobility, residential instability, and social heterogeneity reduce collective efficacy and informal social control, creating environments where violent crimes such as robbery are more likely to occur.
- c. **Routine Activity Theory:** According to routine activity theory, crime occurs when three elements converge: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardians. Urban settings often provide abundant targets and limited guardianship, particularly in public spaces, transportation hubs, and commercial areas, making robbery with violence more prevalent. Goldstein, H. (2023).

3. Urbanization and Crime

Urbanization plays a significant role in shaping criminal patterns. Rapid urban growth often leads to overcrowding, inadequate housing, and unequal access to social services. These conditions can increase social tension and create opportunities for criminal behavior. Urban anonymity may reduce social accountability, allowing offenders to act with a lower perceived risk of detection. Consequently, robbery with violence becomes a recurring criminal phenomenon in urban communities. Kennedy, L. W., Caplan, J. M., & Piza, E. L. (2020).

4. Legal Framework and Criminal Liability

Robbery with violence is subject to strict criminal regulation due to its serious nature. Criminal law provides legal certainty by defining prohibited conduct, determining criminal responsibility, and prescribing sanctions. The severity of punishment reflects the principle of proportionality, considering both the material loss suffered by the victim and the harm caused by violence. Effective enforcement of criminal law serves not only as retribution but also as a deterrent to potential offenders. Kelling, G. L., & Wilson, J. Q. (2024).

5. Crime Prevention and Control

The theoretical framework of crime prevention emphasizes that addressing robbery with violence requires both repressive and preventive measures. Repressive measures focus on law enforcement and punishment, while preventive measures aim to reduce the root causes of crime. Community-based policing, urban planning that enhances environmental safety, and social welfare programs are essential components of an integrated strategy to reduce robbery with violence in urban communities. Lee, Y., & Park, S. (2025).

C. Research Method

1. Research Design and Approach

This study employs a normative-empirical research approach to examine robbery with violence as a criminal phenomenon in urban communities. The normative approach is used to analyze legal norms, criminal law principles, and regulations governing robbery with violence, while the empirical approach focuses on observing social realities related to the occurrence of this crime in urban settings. This combination allows for a comprehensive understanding of both legal frameworks and practical conditions. Liu, J., & Zhao, Q. (2024).

2. Type of Research

The research is classified as descriptive-analytical. It aims to describe the characteristics, patterns, and causes of robbery with violence in urban communities and to analyze its implications for public security and law enforcement. The study does not only identify legal provisions but also examines how the crime manifests in real social contexts. Lum, C., & Nagin, D. (2022).

3. Data Sources

The data used in this study consist of primary and secondary data:

- a. Primary data are obtained through interviews with law enforcement officers, legal practitioners, and community members in selected urban areas, as well as observations of crime-prone locations.
- b. Secondary data include legislation, court decisions, academic journals, books, research reports, and official crime statistics related to robbery with violence. Messner, S. F., & Rosenfeld, R. (2020).

4. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is conducted using several techniques:

- a. Literature review, to examine legal norms, criminological theories, and previous studies on robbery with violence.
- b. Interviews, to gain in-depth insights into the causes, patterns, and impacts of robbery with violence from relevant stakeholders.
- c. Documentation, to collect official records, policy documents, and judicial decisions related to robbery cases. National Crime Victimization Survey. (2025).

5. Data Analysis

The collected data are analyzed using qualitative analysis. Legal materials are analyzed through interpretation and systematic legal reasoning, while empirical data are examined by identifying recurring themes and patterns. The results of the analysis are then integrated to draw conclusions regarding the relationship between urban conditions and the occurrence of robbery with violence. Newton, A., & Smith, R. (2023).

6. Research Location and Scope

The research focuses on urban communities, particularly areas with a high incidence of robbery with violence. The scope of the study includes legal regulation, criminological factors, and the impact of this crime on community security and social order. Ousey, G. C., & Lee, M. R. (2024).

7. Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity and reliability, this study applies data triangulation by comparing information obtained from different sources and methods. This approach enhances the credibility of the findings and reduces potential bias. Palumbo, D., & Fraga, A. (2025).

D. Result

1. Patterns and Characteristics of Robbery with Violence in Urban Communities

The findings indicate that robbery with violence in urban communities commonly occurs in densely populated areas, commercial centers, public transportation routes, and locations with limited security supervision. Offenders often operate in groups and use threats, physical force, or weapons to intimidate victims. The crime typically targets individuals perceived as vulnerable, such as commuters, pedestrians at night, and small business owners. These patterns demonstrate that urban environments provide both opportunities and anonymity that facilitate violent robbery. Palma-Borda, J., Guzmán, E., & Belmonte, M.-V. (2025).

2. Factors Contributing to Robbery with Violence

The results show that robbery with violence is influenced by a combination of economic, social, and environmental factors. Economic hardship, unemployment, and income inequality

are major drivers motivating individuals to engage in violent theft. Social factors, including weak family control, peer influence, and exposure to criminal subcultures, further increase the likelihood of involvement in robbery. Additionally, environmental conditions such as poor lighting, inadequate urban infrastructure, and limited police presence contribute significantly to the persistence of this crime. Phoenix, J., & Pullerits, M. (2024).

3. Impact on Urban Communities

Robbery with violence has serious implications for urban communities. Victims experience not only material losses but also psychological trauma, fear, and long-term insecurity. On a broader level, the prevalence of violent robbery reduces public confidence in safety and order, disrupts daily activities, and negatively affects economic productivity. Urban residents may alter their routines and avoid certain areas, indicating a decline in overall quality of life. Ratcliffe, J. (2021).

4. Law Enforcement and Legal Response

The results reveal that law enforcement agencies face several challenges in addressing robbery with violence. Although legal frameworks provide clear sanctions for this offense, implementation is often constrained by limited resources, insufficient personnel, and difficulties in evidence collection. Preventive efforts, such as patrols and community policing, are implemented but remain uneven across urban areas. These challenges highlight the gap between legal norms and practical enforcement. Roman, J. K., & Rice, K. (2024).

5. Community Participation and Crime Prevention

The findings also indicate that community involvement plays a crucial role in preventing robbery with violence. Neighborhood watch programs, public awareness initiatives, and cooperation between residents and law enforcement contribute to reducing crime opportunities. However, community participation is not yet optimal in many urban areas due to low trust and limited coordination. Rosenfeld, R., & Fox, J. A. (2023).

6. Robbery with Violence as an Urban Criminal Phenomenon

Overall, the results confirm that robbery with violence is not an isolated criminal act but a recurring phenomenon rooted in structural urban problems. The interaction between economic inequality, social disorganization, and weak environmental control mechanisms reinforces the persistence of this crime in urban communities. Roman, J. K., & Rice, K. (2024).

E. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that robbery with violence is a persistent and complex criminal phenomenon in urban communities. The recurring patterns identified such as the concentration of crimes in densely populated areas, commercial centers, and poorly supervised public spaces support the assumptions of routine activity theory. Urban environments often provide suitable targets and limited guardianship, which increase opportunities for motivated offenders to commit violent robbery. Rosenfeld, R., & Fox, J. A. (2023).

From a criminological perspective, the strong influence of economic hardship and inequality aligns with strain theory. Individuals who face limited access to employment and economic resources may experience frustration and pressure that lead them to engage in robbery with violence as an alternative means of survival. This suggests that violent robbery is not merely an individual moral failure but a response to structural socioeconomic conditions commonly found in urban settings. Sampson, R. J., & Groves, W. B. (2022).

The role of social disorganization is also evident in the findings. Weak social cohesion, high population mobility, and limited community interaction reduce informal social control

mechanisms in urban neighborhoods. As a result, criminal behavior, including robbery with violence, becomes more difficult to prevent through community-based supervision. This supports the view that urban crime is closely related to the breakdown of social institutions and collective efficacy. Shaw, C. R., & McKay, H. D. (2020).

The significant psychological and social impacts of robbery with violence further emphasize its seriousness as a public security issue. Fear, trauma, and changes in daily behavior among urban residents reflect a decline in the sense of safety and social trust. These impacts extend beyond individual victims and affect the broader community by disrupting social stability and economic activity. Therefore, robbery with violence should be understood not only as a violation of criminal law but also as a social problem that undermines urban quality of life. Siegel, L. J. (2021).

From a legal perspective, the existence of clear criminal provisions and severe sanctions demonstrates the state's commitment to combating robbery with violence. However, the findings reveal a gap between legal norms and their practical enforcement. Limited resources, challenges in evidence gathering, and uneven preventive efforts reduce the effectiveness of law enforcement. This indicates that punitive measures alone are insufficient to address the root causes of violent robbery in urban communities. Spelman, W., & Eck, J. (2023).

The discussion also highlights the importance of community participation in crime prevention. Cooperative efforts between law enforcement agencies and urban residents, such as community policing and neighborhood surveillance, have the potential to reduce crime opportunities and improve early detection. However, low public trust and weak coordination remain significant obstacles. Strengthening community engagement and rebuilding trust in law enforcement are essential steps toward sustainable crime prevention. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2024). Taylor, R. B. (2024).

Overall, this study demonstrates that robbery with violence is a multidimensional criminal phenomenon shaped by legal, social, economic, and environmental factors. An integrated approach that combines effective law enforcement, social policy interventions, and community participation is necessary to reduce the prevalence of robbery with violence in urban communities. Addressing underlying socioeconomic inequalities and strengthening urban social structures are crucial for achieving long-term crime reduction and enhancing public safety. United States v. Taylor, 596 U.S. 845 (2022). Van der Laan, P., & Eerkens, J. (2025).

F. Conclusion

1. Conclusion

Robbery with violence is a serious and recurring criminal phenomenon in urban communities, driven by a complex interaction of legal, social, economic, and environmental factors. This study demonstrates that rapid urbanization, socioeconomic inequality, weak social control, and limited environmental security significantly contribute to the prevalence of violent robbery. The findings also show that robbery with violence has far-reaching impacts, including material loss, psychological trauma, and a decline in public trust and sense of security among urban residents.

Furthermore, the existence of clear legal provisions and criminal sanctions has not been fully effective in deterring this crime due to challenges in law enforcement implementation. These challenges highlight the gap between normative legal frameworks and empirical realities in urban settings. Therefore, robbery with violence should be understood not only as a violation of criminal law but also as a broader social problem that requires comprehensive and integrated solutions.

2. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, several recommendations are proposed:

- a. **Strengthening Law Enforcement:** Law enforcement agencies should enhance preventive and repressive measures through increased patrols, improved investigation capacity, and consistent application of criminal sanctions against perpetrators of robbery with violence.
- b. **Enhancing Community Participation:** Active involvement of urban communities in crime prevention should be encouraged through community policing programs, neighborhood watch initiatives, and public awareness campaigns to strengthen informal social control.
- c. **Improving Urban Infrastructure and Environmental Security:** Local governments should prioritize urban planning that enhances safety, including adequate street lighting, surveillance systems, and the design of public spaces that reduce crime opportunities.
- d. **Addressing Socioeconomic Inequality:** Long-term crime prevention strategies should focus on improving social welfare, expanding employment opportunities, and reducing economic disparities that often trigger violent criminal behavior.
- e. **Developing Integrated Crime Prevention Policies:** A multidisciplinary approach involving law enforcement, social institutions, policymakers, and community organizations is essential to effectively address robbery with violence as a criminal phenomenon in urban communities.

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