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CURRENT PRACTICE OF USING SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CRIMES INVOLVING CAUSING BODILY HARM

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Abstract. This article explores the use of specialized knowledge in investigating crimes involving bodily harm, highlighting its essential role in achieving just and effective outcomes. The study focuses on the application of forensic medical examination, criminalistic methods, and other specialized fields within the investigative framework. The topic's significance is driven by the high prevalence of bodily harm cases in crime statistics, with expert opinions playing a pivotal role in ensuring fairness and precision in investigations. The article aims to assess the effectiveness of specialized knowledge, pinpoint existing challenges, and propose ways to expand its application in investigative practice. The research employs a methodology that includes legal analysis, a thorough literature review, empirical observations from investigative practices, and insights from expert opinions. The findings provide practical and scientific insights to optimize law enforcement operations, enhance investigation quality, and strengthen the reliability of expert conclusions, contributing to a more equitable and robust criminal justice system.

Keywords: bodily injury, criminal investigation, special knowledge, forensic medical examination, criminalistics, psychological examination, investigative practice, expert opinion, legal analysis, criminal procedural legislation

Introduction

Crimes of bodily injury are one of the types of crimes that directly encroach on human health, and ensuring the reliability and validity of evidence in the process of

their investigation is of great importance. The use of special knowledge in this area is an urgent issue, since the conclusions of forensic medical examinations, criminalistic analyses, and other specialists in the field

serve to increase the objectivity of the investigation [1].

Today, due to the growing number of crimes involving bodily injury and the risk of incorrect assessment of evidence during the investigation, this topic is important not only theoretically but also practically [2, 3]. The main purpose of the article is to analyze the legal foundations and practical significance of the use of special knowledge in the investigation of crimes of bodily harm, to identify existing problems, and to develop proposals and recommendations that serve to improve the quality of the investigation. At the same time, the procedure for appointing an expert in the investigation of crimes, the procedural status of experts, and the significance of their conclusions in court decisions are also important issues that need to be addressed in the article.

The article also includes the main issues to be resolved, including improving cooperation between investigative bodies and specialists with special knowledge, eliminating problems encountered in the examination process, and introducing innovative methods in practice.

If we look at the research of other authors on this problem, Russian scientists A.V. Tokarev and U.R. Yakubov developed the theoretical foundations of the use of special knowledge in the investigation of crimes; they paid attention to the importance of forensic medical examination and criminalistic diagnostics [4, 5]. Uzbek lawyers, in particular, J. Rikhsiboyev and Sh. Karimov emphasize the need to increase the evidentiary value of expert opinions in the investigation process and improve the cooperation of experts with investigative bodies [6, 7].

In foreign literature, including sources published in English, it is noted that the use of modern technologies, including biometric and digital forensic methods, in the process of forensic examination can increase efficiency [8]. Thus, the analysis

of the literature shows that although the issue of using special knowledge in the investigation of bodily injuries has been widely studied in scientific circles, there are still a number of unresolved problems in practice, and this article aims to analyze them and provide practical suggestions.

Materials and methods

This study studied the current state of the use of special knowledge in the investigation of crimes of bodily harm and analyzed their effectiveness. During the study, criminal procedural legal documents and the current regulatory framework for forensic medical examination, as well as materials from individual investigative cases conducted on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan, were analyzed. In addition, scientific articles, dissertations, and foreign literature on criminalistics and forensic medicine were studied comparatively [9].

As a methodological approach, legal analysis, comparative-analytical method, statistical observation, as well as the results of interviews with experts and investigators, were used. The objects of research were cases initiated on crimes of causing bodily harm, forensic medical examination documents assigned within them, and the practical activities of investigative bodies. Based on the information obtained, the strengths and weaknesses of the use of special knowledge in the investigation process were identified, and their effectiveness was analyzed.

Research results

According to observations made in the criminal investigation practice of the Republic of Uzbekistan, expert opinions on crimes involving bodily harm have shown a consistent growth trend over the years. In particular, the use of forensic medical examination, criminalistic examination, and psychological examination has increased the objectivity of the investigation [10].

Table 1.

The effectiveness of the use of specialized knowledge in the investigation of criminal cases involving bodily harm (2019–2023)

Year	Number of forensic examinations involved in the investigation	Cases where forensic examination was used (%)	Level of confirmation of cases in court (%)	Cases where uncertainty was identified (%)
2019	120	45	72	18
2020	136	51	76	15
2021	142	54	81	12
2022	158	59	85	10
2023	167	63	89	8

The data in Table 1 demonstrate a steady positive dynamic in the use of specialized knowledge in the investigation of crimes involving bodily harm between 2019 and 2023. The number of forensic examinations increased from 120 in 2019 to 167 in 2023, which represents a growth of 39% over five years [11]. Similarly, the proportion of cases in which forensic examination was applied rose from 45% in 2019 to 63% in 2023, showing an increase of 18 percentage points [12].

The level of confirmation of investigative conclusions in court decisions also improved significantly: from 72% in 2019 to 89% in 2023, which is an increase of 17 percentage points (approximately 23.6% growth). At the same time, the share of cases where uncertainty was identified decreased markedly, from 18% in 2019 to only 8% in 2023, reflecting a reduction of more than half (55%) [13].

Analysis of the research results

These dynamics clearly indicate that the expanded use of forensic medical and other expert examinations has led to greater objectivity in investigative practice and a higher rate of court-approved conclusions, while simultaneously reducing investigative errors and uncertainty.

At the same time, some problems were also identified during the research process:

- Shortage of experts, especially at the regional level;

- Delays in obtaining expertise results in some cases;

- Weaknesses in cooperation between investigators and experts.

These problems can lead to prolonged investigations and injustice in criminal cases.

When comparing the practice of Uzbekistan with foreign experience, it can be seen that the effectiveness of the use of specialized knowledge is increasing. For example, in the United States, psychologists and IT specialists have been involved in forensic medical examinations since 2018 on the basis of an interdisciplinary approach [14, 15]. In this regard, the systematic introduction of criminological and psychological examinations in our country, along with forensic medical examinations, can further strengthen the results of the investigation.

Conclusion

The study confirms that the consistent use of specialized knowledge significantly improves the quality and efficiency of investigations into crimes of bodily harm. At the same time, the research identified several systemic problems that reduce effectiveness, such as the shortage of experts, particularly in regional areas, delays in obtaining expert conclusions and insufficient cooperation between investigators and specialists. These challenges hinder the full realization of

the potential of specialized knowledge in investigative practice.

To overcome these problems and further improve the effectiveness of investigations, it is necessary to strengthen expert capacity through the training and distribution of forensic specialists across regions, as well as to improve cooperation between investigators and experts by introducing unified communication and procedural protocols.

Updating methodological manuals in line with international best practices and incorporating modern technologies, including biometric and digital forensic tools, will allow the investigative process to meet current scientific and practical demands. In addition, introducing electronic systems for assigning and monitoring expert examinations can reduce delays,

while continuous professional development programs for both investigators and experts will enhance interdisciplinary collaboration. Finally, strengthening applied scientific research in the field of forensic science and criminalistics is essential to adapt innovative methods to national investigative practice.

Thus, the study not only demonstrates the growing effectiveness of specialized knowledge in the investigation of bodily harm crimes but also emphasizes that its further development requires comprehensive reforms aimed at expert training, methodological renewal, efficient cooperation, and scientific innovation. Implementing these measures will ensure higher reliability of evidence, reduce investigative errors, and guarantee fairness and justice in criminal proceedings.

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