

A RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: ARE THE TRENDS GROWING?

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Abstract

Introduction: violence against women is a global public health problem. Although there has been much research done on violence against women there are few studies to provide of the current scientific production.

Method: In this study, bibliometric analysis has been used to evaluate the 1,984 documents from 1986 to 2020 based on SCOPUS databases. These documents were analyzed quantitatively by Bibliometric R Package and VOSviewer software. In addition, the 20 top-cited papers were analyzed qualitatively.

Results: The research findings show that the United States is a leader in this field with the most highly cited articles and also the most number of publications followed by the UK, Canada, Australia, and South Africa. A total of 1,984 documents were collected from the Scopus database and were analyzed in bibliometric Research Package and VOSviewer. Results showed that the average citations per year for each document were 23.39% and the annual scientific production growth rate was 16.86%. Keywords analysis indicates that most articles focus on sexual violence", "sexual assault", intimate partner violence", "violence against women", "sexual abuse", "domestic violence", "child sexual abuse", "prevention" and "rape". Sources such as the "*Journal of*

Interpersonal Violence", *Journal of Violence Against Woman*", *Journal of Violence and Victims*", *Psychology of Women Quarterly*", *Journal of Adolescent Health*", *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*", and *American Journal of Public Health*", *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*" and *American journal of Public Health and Lancet*" are the top most productive in this field.

Conclusion: Examining the articles showed that the vast majority of women have experienced verbal, sexual, intimate partner violence, cyber harassment, etc.

Keywords: Bibliometric, violence against Women, Sexual Harassment, Gender Discrimination, Sexual assault, Women.

Introduction

Violence and sexual harassment are possibilities that could occur throughout the life of any woman at any age across the world (1, 2). Although men are also sexually harassed, Due to-gender issues, this subject is more common among women (3-5). Generally, women are more prone to violence and being in certain situations, such as the workplace, educational settings, and private life, could incur negative psychological and physical consequences for them (6-8).

Violence against women affects over three million women in the United Kingdom (UK) every year(9). In European countries, laws on sexual violence against women and children have been enacted as social measures (10, 11). Violence against women, in addition to suffering for the victims and their families, also causes harm to society, and rehabilitation for the victims is one of the costs incurred by societies (12). Intimate partner violence and sexual harassment of a stranger are two common forms of violence against women (13, 14).

In addition, similar terms such as Sexual Harassment have been the focus of many international studies (15-19). Over the past 20 years, a great deal of research has been done on violence against women and their understanding of the types of violence and the factors that make them more vulnerable to violence(20, 21).

In addition, there has been a growing interest since the 1980s in definitions of sexual harassment.

An important issue that arises when trying to define sexual harassment is to identify which behaviors is harassing (4, 22). Research shows that almost one in two women has experienced harassment in various forms during their social, educational, and professional lives. Data suggest that harassment is degrading and frightening and can sometimes be associated with physical violence (23-25). There were shocking reports in South African newspapers from 1999 to 2004 about more than 30% of female students being raped at schools. Also, the incidence of HIV is now more than three to four times higher among girls and young women than boys (26) and in many types of research the authors argued that it is related to violence against women. Research consistently demonstrates that, like any other form of sexual violence, workplace sexual harassment also causes victims significant psychological, health-related and occupational consequences (27-29).

As Mohammadkhani, Forozan (30) Concluded, rehabilitation services should consider the impact of any factor that may be altered or modified by some known mediating interventions. In fact, it can be said that reducing psychological pathology has a beneficial effect on the experience of spousal violence, which is one of the types of violence against women (30).

Bibliometric measures can assess the volume of research output on a certain subject based on various indices, such as the number of publications on the subject, the number of citations to articles on the subject, and collaboration networks (31). Bibliographic research contributes to new topics and recent findings in a field through citation analysis and analysis of highly cited studies. Top-cited papers are defined as those that have received the highest number of citations in a given period (32).

In fact, in order to provide better services to people affected by violence, it is necessary to have complete information about the subject of violence itself. In fact, sometimes the hidden dimensions of violence are ignored, which can be considered for rehabilitation policy makers of violent women by examining previous work and obtaining a model from the results of previous research.

Given the limited number of bibliometric studies on publication patterns and trends on “violence against women”, this article seeks identify and analyze the top-cited documents on violence against women and find a pathway for future research. The quantitative analysis of all the relevant documents and the qualitative analysis of top-cited documents on violence against women give a

general view of the current trends of research and guidelines for future research. In this study, we seek a quantitative and qualitative classification of previous studies on violence against women. By categorizing previous studies, the results obtained and the proposed solutions can be used better. Areas that have not been studied are also revealed to be explored in the future.

Methods

A quantitative bibliometric study and a qualitative analysis of violence against women were carried out for this paper. Bibliometric studies cannot be a substitute for qualitative peer evaluation. Therefore, they should be used with caution only to evaluate scholarly outputs. (33). Adding a qualitative analysis to a Bibliometric study helps gain more insight into the scholarly outputs in the scholarly outputs in question (34). Hence, in this study, a bibliometric study was carried out in addition to analyzing top-cited documents on violence against women.

Web-based citation databases, such as Scopus and Web of Science (WOS), are often used to obtain information in bibliographic studies. (35, 36). Scopus has a broader coverage of social sciences compared to WOS (37). However, to select the best possible database for collecting data, a title search of the intended search term was first to run on both Scopus and WOS. The search term was extracted from published documents and reliable resources about violence against women and included: TITLE: (Sexual OR gender OR sex-based) AND TITLE: (harassment OR inequality OR discrimination OR violence).

The title search for the search term on June 29, 2020, led to the retrieval of 11,780 documents from Scopus and 11,218 from WOS. Therefore, Scopus was selected as the preferred source for data collection. The refined search revealed 2,123 documents from Scopus, a number that also included the 2020 publications. In order to avoid partial information from 2020, this year's data were eventually removed from the data set. The final search result yielded 1,948 documents, which had been indexed in Scopus in the period from 1986 to 2020. These documents were analyzed by Bibliometric R Package, which is designed specifically for quantitative Bibliometrics research (38). The second software used to analyse the data was vosviewer, a computer program for Bibliometric mapping (39). Table 1 presents the main information and document types for the collected bibliometric data.

Table 1. Summary of the main collected bibliometric data

Description	Results	Document Type	No.
Documents	1,948	ARTICLE	1,532
Sources (journals, books, etc.)	923	ARTICLE IN PRESS	13
Keywords indexes	3,619	BOOK	54
Author's keywords	2,746	BOOK CHAPTER	85
Period	1986 - 2019	CONFERENCE PAPER	20
Average citations per document	23.39	EDITORIAL	19
Authors	5,955	LETTER	20
Authors of single-authored documents	307	NOTE	27
Authors of multi-authored documents	5,648	REVIEW	171
Single-authored documents	336	SHORT SURVEY	7
Authors per document	3.06		
Collaboration index	3.5		

Results

A total of 1,984 documents were collected from Scopus Scopus that were stored in an Excel spreadsheet to extract the main data and analyze them in Bibliometric R Package and VOSviewer. The 20 top-cited of these 1,984 documents were selected for qualitative analysis. The results of the quantitative assessment of the 1,984 documents and the qualitative analysis of the 20 top-cited papers led to the following results:

Annual scientific production

Figure 1 illustrates the publication trends in the intended research area in the period from 1986-2020 (up to the end of 2019). The annual scientific production growth rate was 16.86%. The trend of publication has been growing continuously, reaching its maximum in 2019, with 239 documents published during this year.

Figure 2 illustrates the average citation per year for each document. This figure was 23.39 for all the years, as shown in Table 1. The maximum average citations per year (5.2) pertained to four documents published in 1990.

There was one more peak in the average citation per year in the year 2003, with five average citations per year for 23 documents. Figure 3 presents the bibliographic coupling of 1,948 documents on violence against women. The more important a document is, the larger is its label and circle (39). Between 1990 and 2003, issues such as intimate partner violence were raised, and writers such as Silverman, Raj, Mucci, & Hathaway (2001), Wood, Maforah, & Jewkes (1998), etc., addressed these issues.

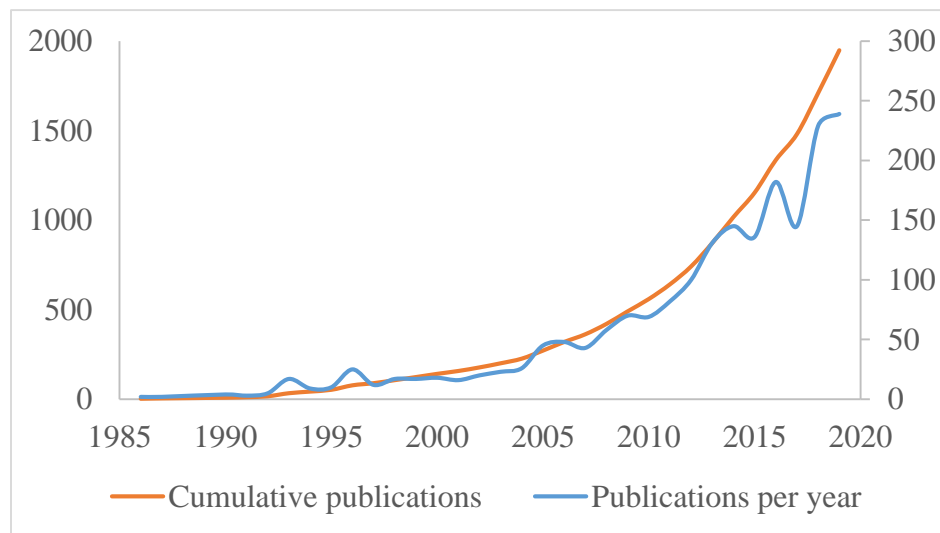


Figure 1. The number of publications in the research area from 1986 - 2020

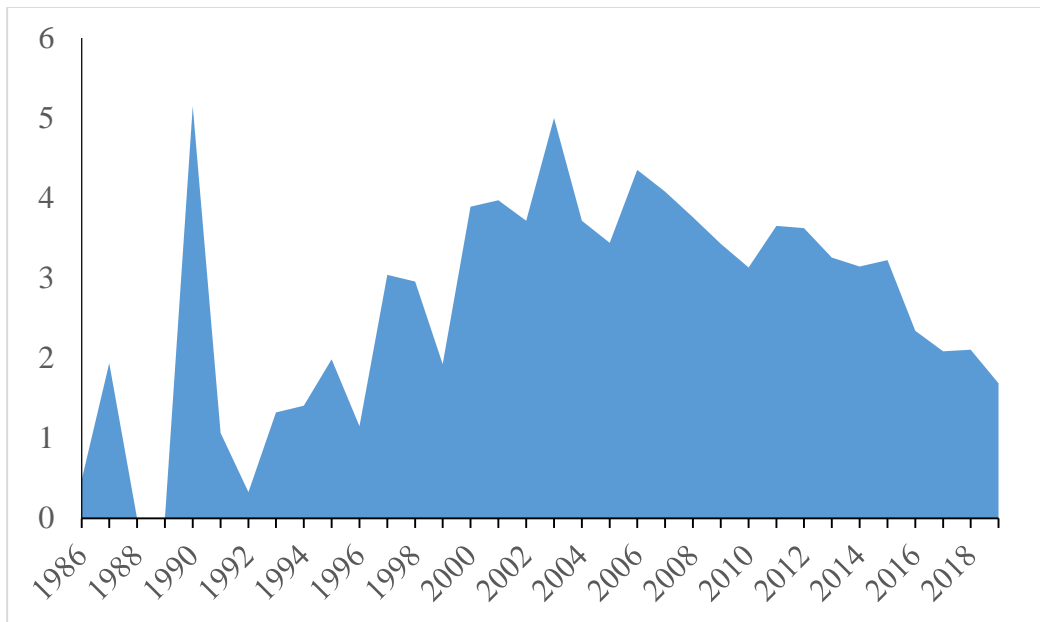


Figure 2. Average citations per year

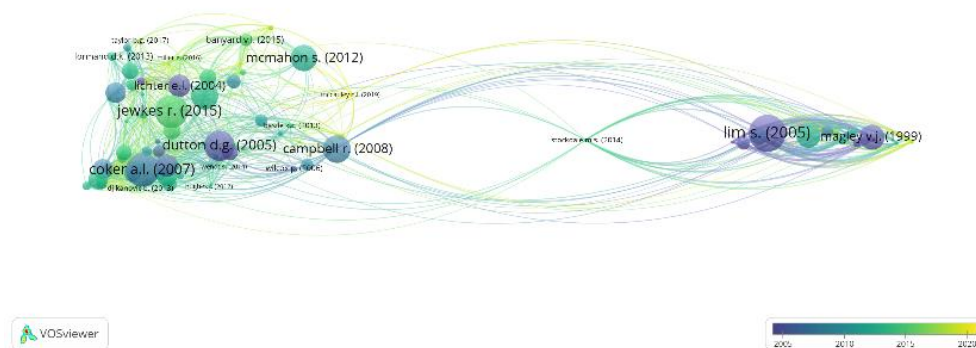


Figure 3. Bibliographic coupling of documents

The top 30 authors' keyword dynamics

There were 2,746 author keywords suggested by the authors of the documents at the end of the abstracts. VOSviewer software uses both mapping and clustering approaches to calculate the

association strength among the keywords(39). The keywords that were closely associated have been structured into the same cluster and shown by the same color (40). Figure 4 shows the network visualization of author keywords. This Figure shows the relationship among the top 30 author keywords used. Sexual violence, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, violence against women, sexual abuse, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, prevention, and rape are the most important and most keywords forming a cluster. The top 30 most repeated author keywords with their trends are illustrated in Figure Keywords such as sexual violence, violence, gender-based violence, sexual abuse, mental health, bullying and substance use have also been frequent in recent years. The relationship between cited sources, author keywords, and country has been illustrated by a three-field plot in Figure 5. This Figure has selected three metadata fields, including the author keywords as the middle field, cited sources as the left field and country as the right field. This figure shows the relationship among the top author keywords, top cited sources and top countries. The most relevant keywords, such as sexual assault, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, gender, dating violence, prevention, domestic violence, bullying, rape, adolescents, sexual abuse, violence against women, violence, discrimination, women, gender-based violence, mental health, HIV and depression are mostly the top author keyword. Sources such as the Journal of interpersonal violence, Journal of violence against women, Journal of violence and victims, Psychology of women quarterly, Journal of adolescent health, Journal of consulting and clinical psychology, American Journal of public health and the lancet are the top journals publishing articles about violence against women. Figure 6 shows that researchers from the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and South Africa contributed the most to the publications.

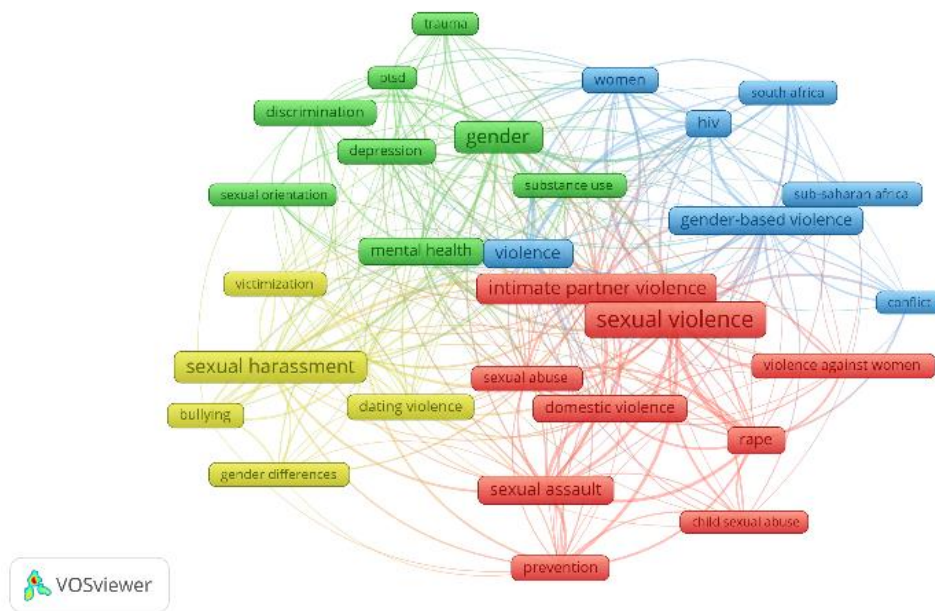


Figure 4. the network visualization of the top 30 author keywords

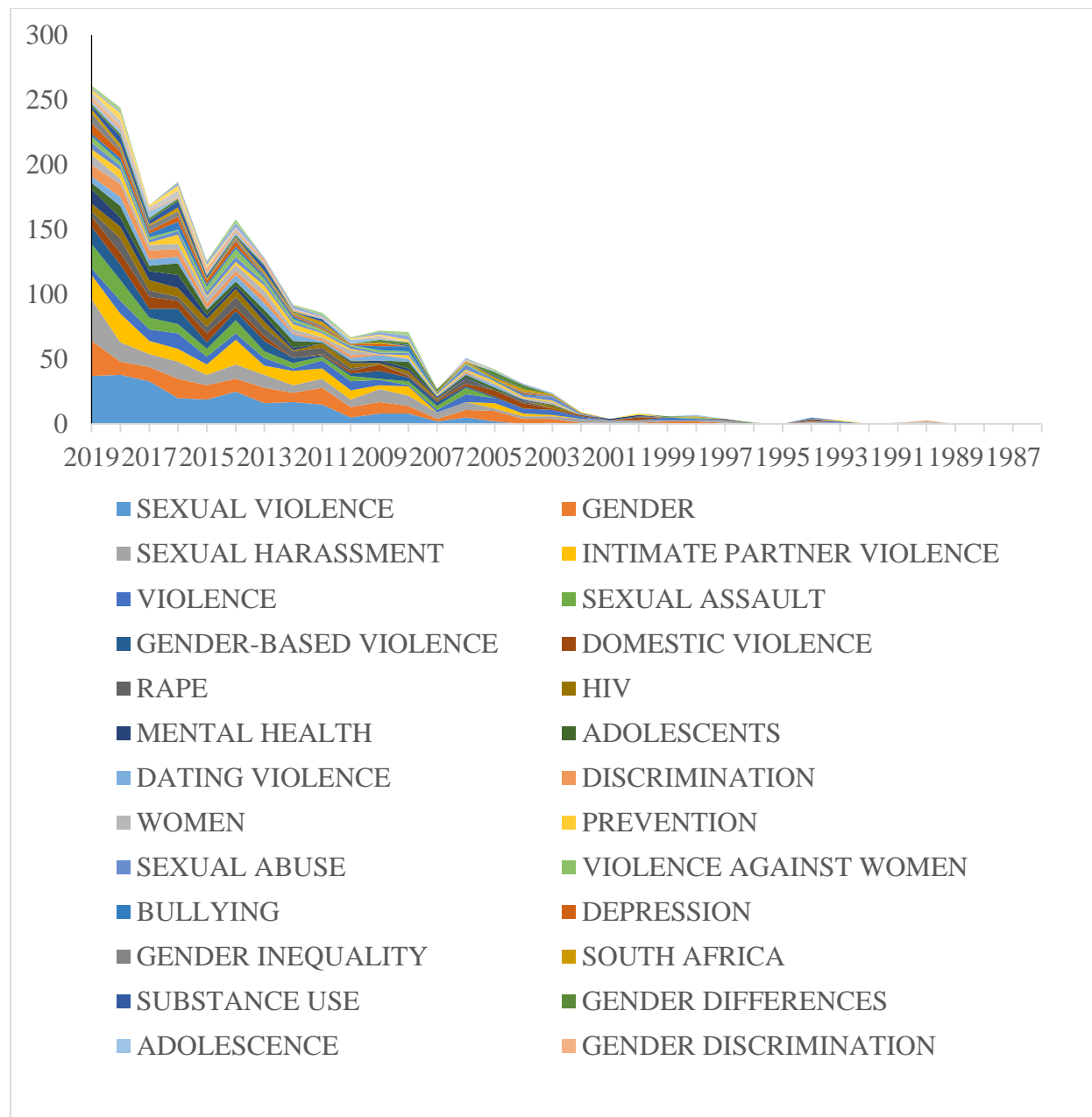


Figure 5. the top 30 author keywords

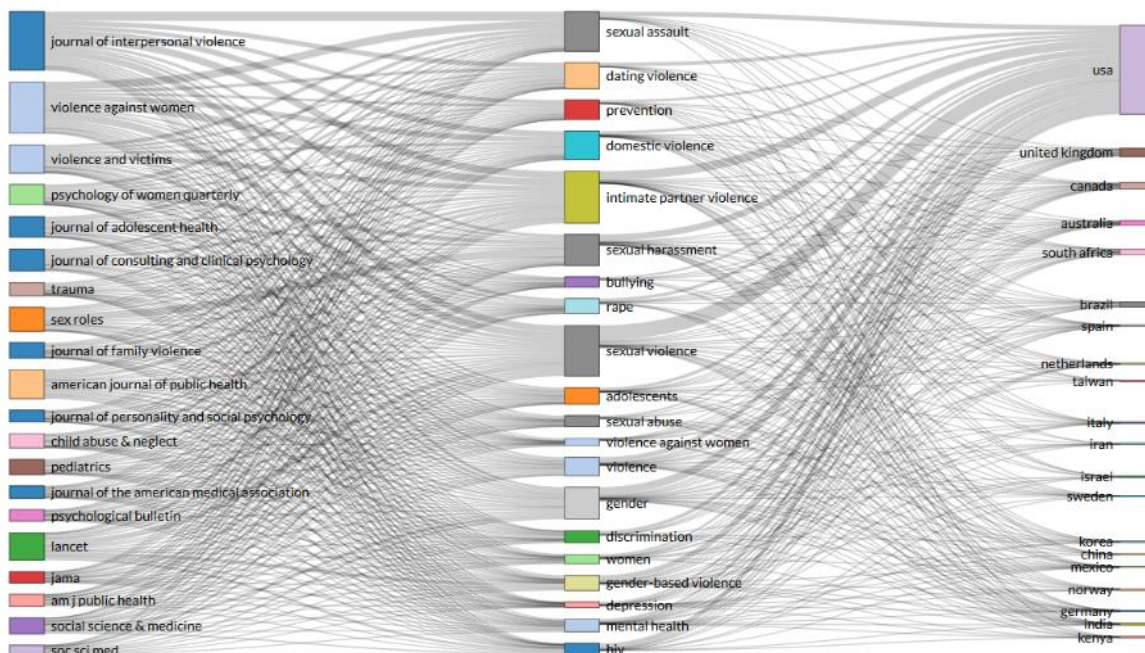


Figure 6. the three-field plot of cited sources, author keywords, and country (from left to right)

Top 30 bibliographic coupling of countries

The authors who had published the 1,948 documents on violence against women belonged to a total of 166 countries. Almost half of the countries had one document in the research area. The bibliographic coupling of the top 30 countries is illustrated in Figure . The emerging countries in the research area of violence against women have been shown by yellow color. According to the acquired knowledge, historically, the number of researches related to sexual violence has been higher in high-income countries. But the emergence of quality studies from other countries, especially Africa, along with multinational studies examining interpersonal and sexual harassment is changing.

Table 2 demonstrates the authors' countries divided by single country publications (SCPs) and multiple country publications (MCPs). The USA, which has published 145 (17.14%) MCPs out of the 701 studies on violence against women, was at the top. Many co-authors worked collaboratively on the subject of violence against women with a collaboration index of 3.5 (Table 1). High-income countries seemed to report more harassment and discrimination versus lower or upper-middle-income countries.

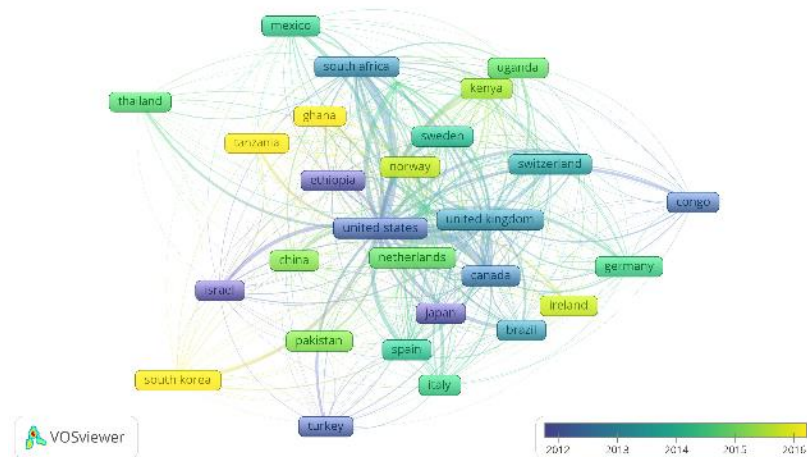


Figure 7. The overlay visualization of the top 30 countries' bibliographic coupling

Table 2. the top 30 corresponding authors' countries

Country	Documents	SCPs	MCPs
USA	846	701	145
UNITED KINGDOM	88	63	25
CANADA	57	40	17
AUSTRALIA	53	41	12
SOUTH AFRICA	43	27	16
BRAZIL	35	26	9
ISRAEL	20	14	6
SPAIN	20	15	5
KOREA	16	9	7
INDIA	14	7	7
GERMANY	12	9	3
JAPAN	11	10	1
MEXICO	11	8	3
NETHERLANDS	11	7	4
ITALY	10	7	3
SWITZERLAND	10	5	5
BELGIUM	9	6	3
FRANCE	8	6	2
SWEDEN	8	4	4
TAIWAN	8	5	3

The top 30 bibliographic coupling of sources

There were 923 sources (journals, books, etc.) with reference to Table 1. The linkage between the top 30 sources is illustrated in Figure. This Figure presents the world of clusters of related journals. Clusters that were located close to each other on the map indicated closely-related fields.

Table 3 shows that the “Journal of Violence against Women” was ranked first in terms of resource impact and second in terms of the number of publications among publications in this field. Table 3 suggests that the number of publications was almost in the same order when the citation frequency of the journal during the viewing process is different. These variations have different reasons.

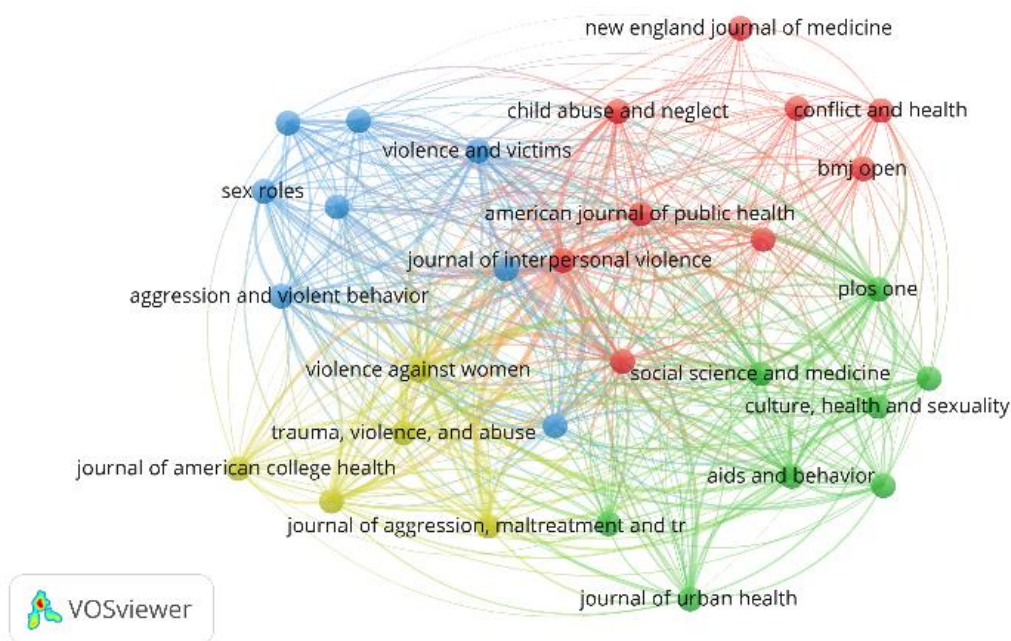


Figure8. Bibliographic coupling of the top 30 sources

Table 3. The top 30 sources and their relevant impact (TC=times cited, NP=number of papers, PY=publication year, I=impact, P=publication)

SOURCE	H_INDEX	TC	NP	PY_START	I RANK	P RANK
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	21	1472	49	1995	1	2
SOCIAL SCIENCE AND MEDICINE	20	2350	28	1990	2	4
JOURNAL OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE	18	1032	64	2004	3	1
AIDS AND BEHAVIOR	16	979	22	1998	4	5
PLOS ONE	15	584	35	2011	5	3
AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH	14	1475	15	1999	6	13
JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT HEALTH	13	927	19	1993	7	9
SEX ROLES	13	678	18	1996	8	11
VIOLENCE AND VICTIMS	12	677	22	1996	9	6
JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S HEALTH	12	1071	20	1996	10	7
TRAUMA, VIOLENCE, AND ABUSE	12	974	20	2007	11	8
ACADEMIC MEDICINE	10	448	15	1993	12	14
JOURNAL OF YOUTH AND ADOLESCENCE	10	991	14	2001	13	16
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT	9	381	19	2003	14	10
BMC PUBLIC HEALTH	9	177	14	2006	15	17
PSYCHOLOGY OF VIOLENCE	9	460	14	2010	16	18
PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN QUARTERLY	9	609	9	1995	17	28
ARCHIVES OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOR	8	336	14	2006	18	19
CONFLICT AND HEALTH	8	255	14	2010	19	20
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS	8	406	12	2007	20	23
NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE	8	543	11	1993	21	26
PSYCHOLOGY OF MEN AND MASCULINITY	8	329	9	2002	22	29
CULTURE, HEALTH AND SEXUALITY	7	172	14	2013	23	21
WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES	7	222	14	1994	24	22
AGGRESSION AND VIOLENT BEHAVIOR	7	687	12	2002	25	24
AIDS CARE - PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIO-MEDICAL ASPECTS OF AIDS/HIV	7	129	12	2005	26	25
AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ORTHOPSYCHIATRY	7	330	8	2000	27	33
JOURNAL OF ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROMES	7	182	8	2007	28	34
JOURNAL OF AGGRESSION, MALTREATMENT AND TRAUMA	6	89	18	2006	29	12
JOURNAL OF URBAN HEALTH	6	372	9	2005	30	30

Qualitative analysis of the top 20 documents

Evaluating the content of highly cited articles can help in exploring and recognizing the most important research topics and concerns in the field under study. The top-cited documents were selected based on the times cited per year (TCpY) and were then qualitatively analyzed. The TCpY of years passed since the document publication date. The threshold for selecting the top-cited documents was having a TCpY better than good. The publications were qualitatively analyzed based their titles and abstracts.

This study reviewed the top 20 articles published on the research subject. As shown in Table 4, we examined the research subject and findings in these 20 articles. We found that the vast majority of women have experienced violence against women and sexual harassment (verbal harassment, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, cyber harassment, etc.). Research also suggests the growing trend of violence against women and sexual harassment, especially in areas such as South Africa. The effects of violence against women and sexual harassment include rising HIV rates and behavioral and psychological problems such as suicide, depression, etc. Among the titles, sexual violence against women, with seven documents, and intimate partner violence, with five documents, had the greatest repetition.

Extensive evidence from a diverse population of women shows that one out of every four women in the “United States” has been a victim of intimate partner violence (41). In addition, data from the to help and rehabilitate victims of sexual violence, show that 63% of West African women identified by the IRC are considered Were abused by their best partner(42).

Six of the best articles have used surveying and systematic review methods. The use of a questionnaire with two items, an interview with 4 and a survey with 9 Items was used among the top researchers in this field. The results extracted from the articles, as shown in the list in Table 4, suggest that the most frequently-reported results pertained to the effects of violence against women on women’s health with five studies. The next most frequent result was on the prevalence of sexual harassment, and it is necessary to identify the factors contributing to this rate in order to prevent it altogether.

The results reported by Temple, Shorey (43)and Vagi, Olsen (44) Showed that one of the ways to prevent violence is to pay attention to gender, awareness and attitude of adolescents towards violence, which can lead to appropriate programs to prevent violence in relation to adolescents.

Given the results and the effectiveness of sexual harassment on women's health and social problems, it is recommended to conduct more research on these issues. Many women do not report their experiences of sexual harassment because of fear or damage to reputations. Sexual harassment is considered a global pandemic that needs to be eradicate.

Table 4: The qualitative analysis of the top 20 documents based on the TCpY
(TC= time cited, TCpY=Times cited per year)

No.	Source	TC	Subject		Research Methods	Results	
			TCpY	Sexual violence Gender inequality Gender-based violence Intimate partner violence		Behavioral problems Prevalence of SV Sexual problems Increased HIV Empowerment Endangering health Changes in social norms	
1	Silverman, Raj (45)	843	42.2	1	1	1	1
2	Jewkes, Flood (46)	231	38.5	1	1		1
3	Heise, Greene (47)	52	26.0	1	1		1
4	Vagi, Olsen (44)	151	25.2	1	1	1	1
5	Abrahams, Devries (48)	121	17.3	1	1	1	
6	Santana, Raj (49)	226	15.1	1	1	1	
7	Jewkes, Levin (50)	262	14.6	1	1		1
8	Dunkle, Jewkes (51)	202	14.4	1	1		1
9	Espelage, Basile (52)	118	13.1	1	1	1	
10	Dunkle and Decker (53)	103	12.9	1	1		1
11	Ybarra, Espelage (54)	170	12.1	1	1	1	
12	Salazar, Vivolo-Kantor (55)	77	11.0	1	1		1
13	Dunkle, Jewkes (56)	186	10.9	1	1	1	
14	Decker, Peitzmeier (57)	73	10.4	1	1	1	
15	Wood, Maforah (58)	234	10.2	1	1	1	
16	Gupta, Falb (42)	80	10.0	1	1		1

17	Decker, Wirtz (59)	88	9.8	1	1	1
18	Raj, Santana (41)	143	9.5	1	1	1
19	Temple, Shorey (43)	75	9.4	1	1	1
20	Dartnall and Jewkes (60)	73	9.1	1	1	1

Discussion

This article is written with the aim of identifying and analyzing highly cited documents on violence against women and finding a way for future research. It is difficult to collect data on violence against women, because many women do not report their experiences of sexual harassment due to fear or damage to reputation. Scientific production on this subject reflects the interest of researchers around the world in favor of progress in the field of violence against women.

Gender discrimination and violence against women occur in all societies and are prevalent among all social classes. The present findings suggest that violence against women is still a common problem in the world today and has not yet been resolved. The number of publications is continuously growing and the maximum number of publications occurred in 2019, reaching 239 documents in this year. Examining the articles showed that the vast majority (82.84%) of women have experienced violence against women (verbal, sexual or cyber harassment, intimate partner violence, etc.). Keywords such as sexual violence, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, violence against women, sexual abuse, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, prevention and rape are the most important and most frequently-used keywords. In the results, several highly cited articles can be seen. In the results section, empowerment and change in society are mentioned, which shows the importance of education and prevention in the field of rehabilitation of victims of violence. Sometimes in society, violence may not be prevented in certain areas, but by empowering women, they can be helped not to be in situations of violence and to prevent violence in some way.

Sources such as the “Journal of interpersonal violence”, “Journal of violence against women”, “Journal of violence and victims, psychology of women quarterly”, “Journal of adolescent”, “Journal of consulting and clinical psychology, American Journal of public health and lancet are the top journals publishing articles about violence against women. Research also reports a growing trend of violence against women, especially in regions such as South Africa. The effects of

violence against women include an increase in health problems, an increase in HIV statistics, and behavioral and psychological problems such as suicide, depression, and so on. That is the reason we can find these terms in the author keywords. Endangering the health of women as half of the population is very important. Especially in the psychological dimension, it can have very negative effects. Therefore, by identifying important sources and classifications in this study, we can have more detailed in the field of women's empowerment and help their rehabilitation with preventive measures.

Conclusion

An extensive bibliometric analysis of research documents on violence against women was conducted in this study using Scopus. Research from 1986 to 2020 has been identified both quantitatively and qualitatively. Examining the articles showed that the vast majority (82.84%) of women have experienced violence against women (verbal, sexual or cyber harassment, intimate partner violence, etc.). Research also reports a growing trend of Violence against women, especially in regions such as South Africa. Since studies show an increase in the prevalence of violence against women in the world; therefore, we recommend further studies on the subject, especially in countries other than the US, in which most violence against women studies has been carried out. Examination of the results of previous research shows that researchers have paid attention to the issue of women's empowerment along with prevention. In fact, one of the important issues in the rehabilitation of affected women is to increase their empowerment to prevent further violence. In this study, by categorizing repetitive keywords, introducing and categorizing important sources and prolific journals in this field, as well as qualitative review of highly cited articles, a model of practical information for rehabilitation activists, especially women who have been abused designed for future studies.

A review of previous sources shows that the most visited research is related to American and European countries. Non-European countries have conducted fewer studies on violence against women or received fewer citations. This is partly indicative of the taboo nature of violence against women in non-European countries. Well-cited articles on the subject have addressed the causal relationship associated with violence and published a review and identification of the types of violence and its consequences. The extent to which rehabilitation can help women suffer less has not been considered and research has not been widely cited.

Given the various reports that are heard daily about various forms of violence against women, it is necessary to conduct more serious research on this issue in all aspects, especially rehabilitation. In the categories made in this article, the results and suggestions of the research can be used and violence can be used to plan for the rehabilitation of women affected. In order to plan for an issue, its various dimensions must be known in order to plan better. Therefore, the classification results made in this article can be useful for rehabilitation activists of injured women. In fact, the main purpose of this research, in addition to categorizing the topics, is to reach the point in which there is a lack of research so that researchers can make more efforts in this regard.

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