

A Three-Decade Analysis of the Public Policy Impact on Violence Against Women

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Abstract

Violence against women (VAW) is a global issue that causes physical and psychological harm and hinders women's participation in various life aspects, impeding a country's development and economy. In this regard, research on the issue tends to focus on health, socio-economic, or legal aspects and prevention, overlooking the impact of public policy on VAW. This study utilises bibliometric analysis to investigate the impact of public policy on VAW over the last three decades. The sample analysed was 405 articles. The results show that the literature production in this field tends to increase yearly. Despite the issue being more prevalent in low- and middle-income countries, research is predominantly conducted by developed countries, with the US, UK, and Canada being the most influential. Public policies have both direct and indirect impacts on women. Policies can create social conditions that increase gender equality, encouraging improvements in women's social and economic conditions. On the other side, public policy can increase women's vulnerability to violence. It is an urge to address VAW that tends to increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, it is essential to critically evaluate policy implementation and ensure women can access various forms of protection and assistance.

Keywords:

violence against women; policy impact; bibliometric analysis

Introduction

The UN defines violence against women (VAW) as "any act of gender-based violence (GBV) that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993). Globally, almost one in three women (30 per cent) aged 15 and older have undergone violence at least once in their lifetime, with an estimated 736 million women affected. This figure does not include sexual harassment (World Health Organization, 2021).

Different types of violence are linked and significantly affect the lives of women. Structural violence, for instance, stems from the unequal availability of adequate housing, health services, and employment opportunities. These circumstances lead to interpersonal violence and gender-based violence (GBV) for women in precarious social situations (Montesanti & Thurston, 2015). Women in lower and lower-middle-income countries pose a higher risk of experiencing violence than women in other countries (Singh & Mathew, 2023). In this regard, those

experiencing violence have higher rates of mental and health problems than those who have not (World Health Organization, 2021).

Violent actions infringe upon the fundamental human rights of women and hinder their capacity to engage fully in economic, political, and social spheres of life (Kabeer, 2014). It can also lead to numerous expenses for the state, victims/survivors, and communities. For instance, the expenses associated with VAW in Vietnam are significant and have widespread repercussions. These costs mainly include lost earnings and out-of-pocket expenses that women have to bear due to the violence they experience (UN Women, 2012).

Moreover, women who suffer from domestic violence (DV) earn 35 per cent less than those who do not (UN Women, 2012). About half a million working days in Egypt are lost annually due to VAW. The health sector spends over USD 14 million to treat only 25 per cent (around 600,000) survivors (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics and the National Council for Women, 2015). The annual economic impact of VAW in Morocco is estimated to be around MAD 2.85 billion, roughly equivalent to USD 308 million (Haut Commissariat au Plan Maroc, 2019). The figure serves as a harsh reminder of the catastrophic effects that VAW has on both the lives of women and the economy of the country. The economic burden it places on the nation is quite significant. The issue has far-reaching adverse consequences and has become a major obstacle to achieving equitable and sustainable development goals (Kabeer, 2014).

This vulnerability is a serious concern that needs to be addressed. Resolution 69.5 of the "World Health Assembly" in 2016 called for global action against VAW with a national multisector approach. Despite these responsibilities, 49 countries lack clear policies on this issue (Singh & Mathew, 2023), and historically, efforts to address VAW have tended to be sectoral (Maternowska et al., 2021). In this regard, though the relationship between public policy and VAW has been studied from various approaches, previous research has focused on health, socio-economic, and legal aspects. Likewise, research has predominantly centered on preventing violence in low- and middle-income countries (Ellsberg et al., 2015). However, the impact of public policy on VAW has been overlooked.

Thus, the study has two main objectives. *First*, it aims to analyse the literature produced over the last 29 years (1995 to 2023) on the impact of policies on VAW. *Second*, the study seeks to recognise trends and patterns in scientific behaviour over the study period. This study's findings will assist in developing relevant indices and enable ongoing progress evaluation.

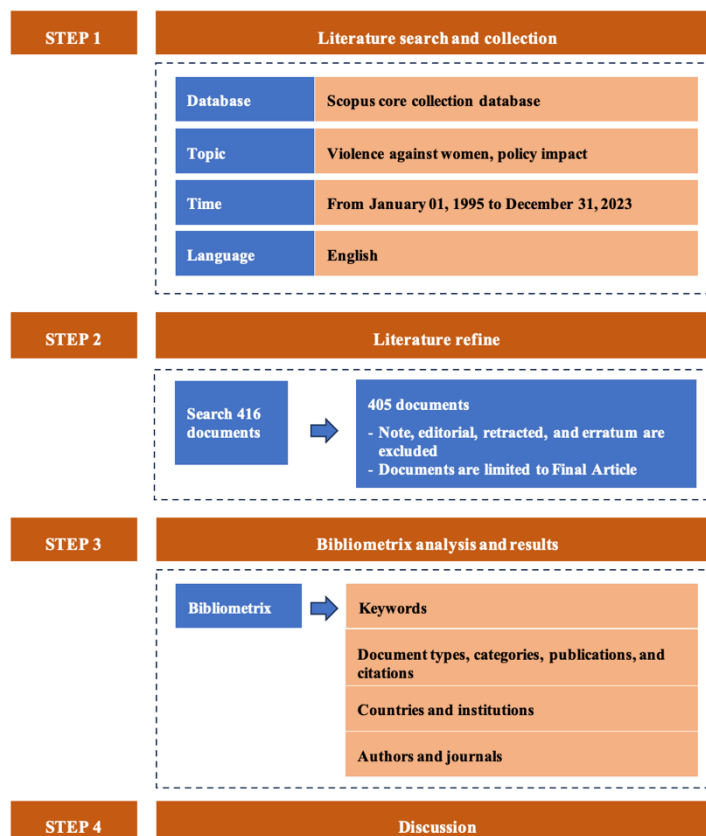
Methods

Despite abundant bibliographic data sources and metrics, Scopus remains the most comprehensive publication metadata and impact indicator source. Based on comparing initial

and current content coverage, Scopus offers more comprehensive overall coverage than other bibliometric databases. It has been extensively utilised in bibliometric research (Pranckutė, 2021). A literature search was carried out using the following specific query: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("violence against women", AND policy, AND impact OR effect) AND PUBYEAR > 1993 AND PUBYEAR < 2024 AND (EXCLUDE(DOCTYPE, "no") OR EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE, "ed") OR EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE, "tb") OR EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE, "er")) AND (LIMIT-TO(PUBSTAGE, "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO(LANGUAGE, "English")). On February 27, 2024, 405 documents were retrieved and exported in CSV format for further analysis. The research framework is shown in Fig. 1.

The research employs the methodology of bibliometric analysis, which is a well-established field in bibliometrics. Bibliometric analysis involves the quantitative examination of bibliographic material. The analysis offers a thorough comprehension of a research field organised by papers, authors, and journals (Marvi & Foroudi, 2023; Merigó & Yang, 2017). It uses quantitative models and methods to analyse research disciplines, including examining networks such as co-occurrence, co-citation, co-authorship, and bibliographic links. This methodology aids in exploring topics and comprehending the literature thoroughly using quantitative methods to showcase the literature's state of the art (Marvi & Foroudi, 2023). The analysis can be improved by incorporating scientific maps using specialised software (Lazarides et al., 2023).

Figure 1.
Bibliometric analysis flowchart



This technique visually represents the structure and attributes of a specific study area using bibliographic data. Bibliometric mapping seeks to recognise up-and-coming research domains, analyse collaboration patterns, and monitor a research field's progress over time. By studying the interrelationships among different research topics, authors, institutions, and publications, bibliometric mapping provides insights that can improve research practices and outcomes (Donthu et al., 2021; Lazarides et al., 2023; Setyowati, 2020; Yaqoub et al., 2023).

This research employed the Bibliometrix software platform, an open-source tool built on the R language, to examine journal-related data from the last 29 years. It provides robust statistical techniques and visualisations that deliver dynamic visualisations that show change across time when performing performance analyses or determining the field's conceptual, intellectual or social structure (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

Results and Discussion

Literature Characteristics

There were 405 documents obtained from the Scopus database, with publication characteristics as depicted in Fig. 2. There has been a 10.8 per cent increase in publications yearly. A total of 1,110 authors were involved in the publication of policy impact in VAW, with 127 being sole authors. The articles comprised into six categories: articles, review, conference paper, book, and book chapter – note, retracted, erratum, and editorial were excluded from the search results. The "Article" category ranked first with 284 documents (70.1 per cent), "Book Chapter" with 57 documents (14.1 per cent), "Review" with 42 documents (10.4 per cent), "Book" with 14 documents (3.5 per cent), and "Conference Paper" as many as eight documents (2.0 per cent).

Figure 2.

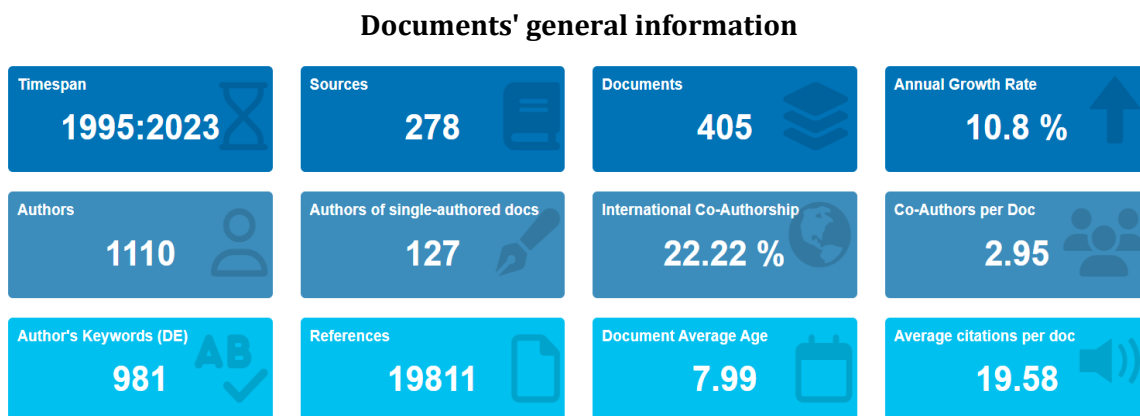
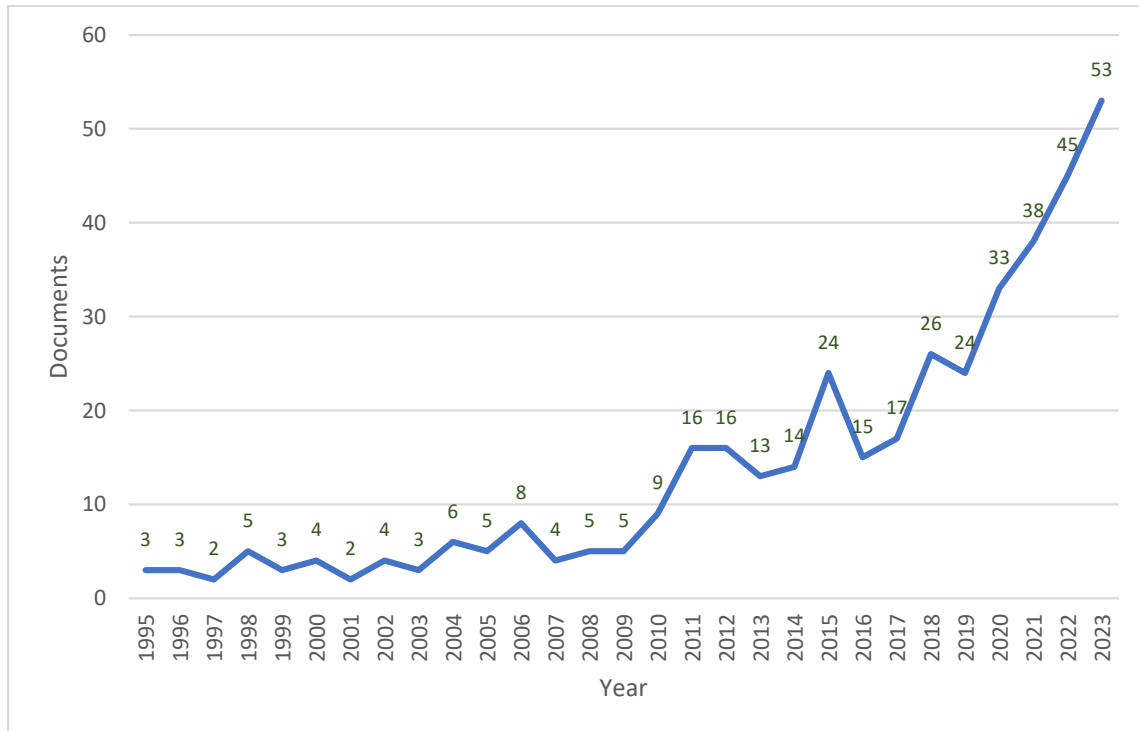


Fig. 3 displays a graph representing the yearly count of papers published on the impact of public policies on the issue of VAW from 1995 to 2023. The graph indicates a rising trend, with the number of publications increasing from 3 in 1995 to 405 in 2023. The rapid publications

occurred in the last decade, with 289 documents published or accounting for 71.4 per cent of total documents published since 1994. A significant increase occurred from 2010 to 2011 (9 to 16 documents or 77.8%) and 2014 to 2015 (14 to 24 documents or 71.4 per cent). In 2016, there was a decrease in the number of studies from the previous year, from 24 to 15. During these two decades, the highest number of studies was in 2023, with as many as 53 documents.

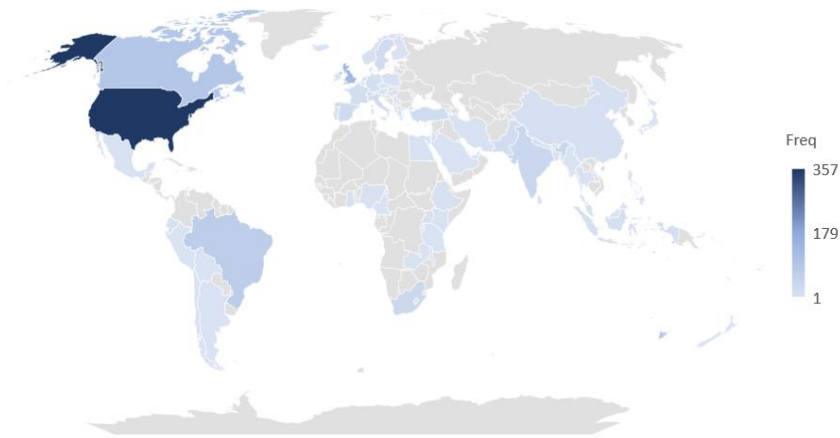
Figure 3.

Documents by year



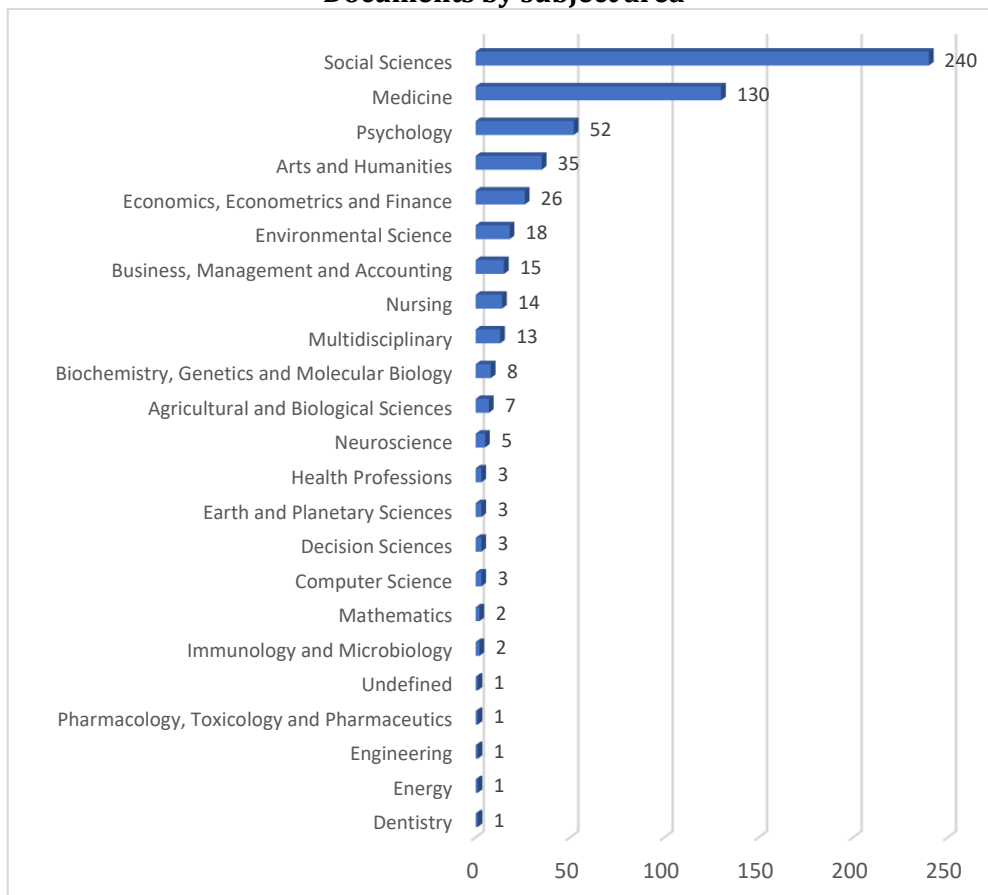
Analysing the publications and citations of documents related to VAW in various countries can be a valuable tool in identifying the countries that have significantly contributed to the study of VAW in policy contexts. Between 1995 and 2023, scholarly articles on the subject were published by a total of 68 countries, based on the country of affiliation of the first author (Fig. 4). As of 2023, the US is in the first position with 357 publications. This position was followed by the UK (n=135), Canada (n=89), Australia (n=78), and Brazil (n=71). Among the top 10 countries, only India and Brazil are categorised as developing countries, while others are categorised as developed countries. It implies that most studies related to VAW are conducted by developed countries, predominantly not from the Asian continent. In terms of time, the Netherlands started research on VAW in 1995, while the US and the UK began in 1998, with the most publications recorded in 2023.

Figure 4.
Country scientific production



The types and numbers of documents' subjects for three decades (1995-2023) are depicted in Fig. 5. The five highest is in the subject area of "social sciences", "medicine", "psychology", "art and humanities", and "economics, econometrics and finance". The smallest number of fields of study are "pharmacology", "toxicology and pharmaceuticals", "immunology and microbiology", "engineering", "energy", and "dentistry", with one publication each.

Figure 5.
Documents by subject area



Scholars use academic journals as a platform to share innovative ideas and information. As a result, assessing the most productive journals in this field is essential. These journals publish carefully-reviewed articles that showcase the latest advancements in related fields by conducting thorough peer reviews (Chen et al., 2020). In this study, 405 articles were published in 278 journals; the top 10 most influential journals have been ranked based on the number of publications. As shown in Table 1, most of the top 10 journals are from the UK, four are based in the US, and the remaining are from Switzerland. The Journal of Interpersonal Violence has published the most articles (n=14; TC/articles), followed by the Plos One (n=10; TC/articles=19.6) and BMC Public Health (n=8; TC/articles=7.6).

Table 1.
Most influential journals in the field of policy impact in VAW

No	Journal	Country	Articles	TC	TC/Articles	Publication Year Start
1	Journal of Interpersonal Violence	United States	14	233	16.6	2002
2	Plos One	United States	10	196	19.6	2015
3	BMC Public Health	United Kingdom	8	61	7.6	2015
4	Violence Against Women	United States	8	195	24.4	2005
5	Women's Studies International Forum	United Kingdom	8	91	11.4	2011
6	BMC Women's Health	United Kingdom	7	135	19.3	2015
7	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	Switzerland	5	55	11.0	2010
8	Politics and Gender	United Kingdom	5	60	12.0	2011
9	Trauma, Violence, and Abuse	United States	5	176	35.2	2006
10	Gender And Development	United Kingdom	4	113	28.3	1998

Table 2 shows the top 10 publications with the highest number of citations. Six of these publications were cited more than 200 times. In the list of the top 10 publications cited globally, four of them focus on intimate partner violence (IPV), covering the subtopics of prevention, prevalence, risk factors, and psychological impact (Agüero, 2021; Htun & Weldon, 2012; Ludermir et al., 2010; Sardinha et al., 2022). These highest-cited documents have been published in *The Lancet*, *American Political Science Review*, *The Lancet Global Health*, *Journal of Politics*, *Global Health Action*, *World Development*, and *Social Science and Medicine*.

Table 2.
Most cited publications globally

Rank	Reference's name	Type	Journal	Year	Citation	DOI	Reference
1	"Prevention of violence against women and girls: What does the evidence say?"	Review	The Lancet	2015	487	10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61703-7	(Ellsberg et al., 2015)
2	"The civic origins of progressive policy change: Combating violence	Review	American Political	2012	353	10.1017/S0003055412000226	(Htun & Weldon, 2012)

3	against women in global perspective, 1975-2005"	Article	Science Review The Lancet Global Health	2015	350	10.1016/S2214-109X(15)00013-3	(Heise & Kotsadam, 2015)
4	"Cross-national and multilevel correlates of partner violence: An analysis of data from population-based surveys"	Article	The Lancet	2022	244	10.1016/S0140-6736(21)02664-7	(Sardinha et al., 2022)
5	"Global, regional, and national prevalence estimates of physical or sexual, or both, intimate partner violence against women in 2018"	Article	The Lancet	2010	242	10.1016/S0140-6736(10)60887-2	(Ludermir et al., 2010)
6	"Violence against women by their intimate partner during pregnancy and postnatal depression: A prospective cohort study"	Review	Journal of Politics	2002	212	10.1111/1468-2508.00167	(Weldon, 2002)
7	"Beyond bodies: Institutional sources of representation for women in democratic policymaking"	Review	American Journal of Public Health	2018	185	10.2105/AJPH.2018.304428	(Yakubovich et al., 2018)
8	"Risk and protective factors for intimate partner violence against women: Systematic review and meta-analyses of prospective–longitudinal studies"	Review	Global Health Action	2016	170	10.3402/gha.v9.31516	(Guedes et al., 2016)
9	"Bridging the gaps: a global review of intersections of violence against women and violence against children"	Article	World Development	2021	167	10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105217	(Agüero, 2021)
10	"COVID-19 and the rise of intimate partner violence"	Article	Social Science and Medicine	2004	142	10.1016/j.socscimed.2004.04.001	(Amoakohene, 2004)
	"Violence against women in Ghana: A look at women's perceptions and review of policy and social responses"						

The research articles involved 1,110 authors. The top 10 authors in terms of the number of publications are listed in [Table 3](#). Four authors were from the US, three from Germany, two from Switzerland, and one from Canada. Stöckl H, from Germany, is one of the seminal authors in the field of policy impact in VAW, with seven articles and 504 citations. Besides, there are Weldon L (Canada), García-Moreno C (Switzerland), and Steinert J I (Germany) who have actively published articles in the field with six, five, and four articles, respectively and with 636, 323, and 232 citations, respectively.

Weldon L is the author with the highest total citations per article; the most cited article was "The civic origins of progressive policy change: Combating violence against women in global perspective, 1975-2005." The research found that feminist activism in civil society influences policy development, leading to a lasting impact on VAW policy (Htun & Weldon, 2012). Stöckl H is another leading researcher, with highly cited articles entitled "Global, regional, and national prevalence estimates of physical or sexual, or both, intimate partner violence against women in 2018." The prevalence of IPV is high globally, especially in low-income countries, which show higher lifetime and past-year prevalence than high-income countries (Sardinha et al., 2022).

Table 3.

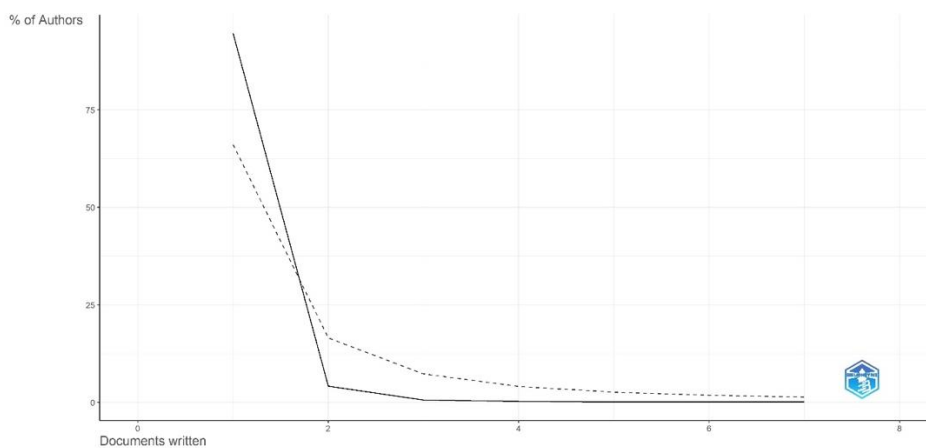
Most influential authors in the field of policy impact in VAW

No	Authors	Country	Articles	TC	TC/Articles	Publication Year Start
1	Stöckl, H.	Germany	7	504	72.0	2013
2	Weldon, L.	Canada	6	636	106.0	2002
3	García-Moreno, C.	Switzerland	5	323	64.6	2000
4	Steinert, J.I.	Germany	4	232	58.0	2018
5	Garcia-Moreno, C.	Switzerland	3	197	65.7	2016
6	Maddoux, J.	United States	3	51	17.0	2012
7	McFarlane, J.	United States	3	40	13.3	2012
8	Meyer, S.R.	Germany	3	275	91.7	2019
9	Nava, A.	United States	3	51	17.0	2012
10	Stark, L.	United States	3	20	6.7	2022

Lotka's Law provides valuable insights into the productivity of authors based on the number of published documents. The data indicates that around 94.7 per cent of authors have only published one document, while a mere 0.1 per cent have published five or more documents. As the number of published documents increases, the ratio of authors who have produced them decreases. These findings suggest that most authors tend to publish only a small number of documents, while a few highly productive authors contribute significantly to the field (Fig. 6).

Figure 6.

Author Productivity through Lotka's Law



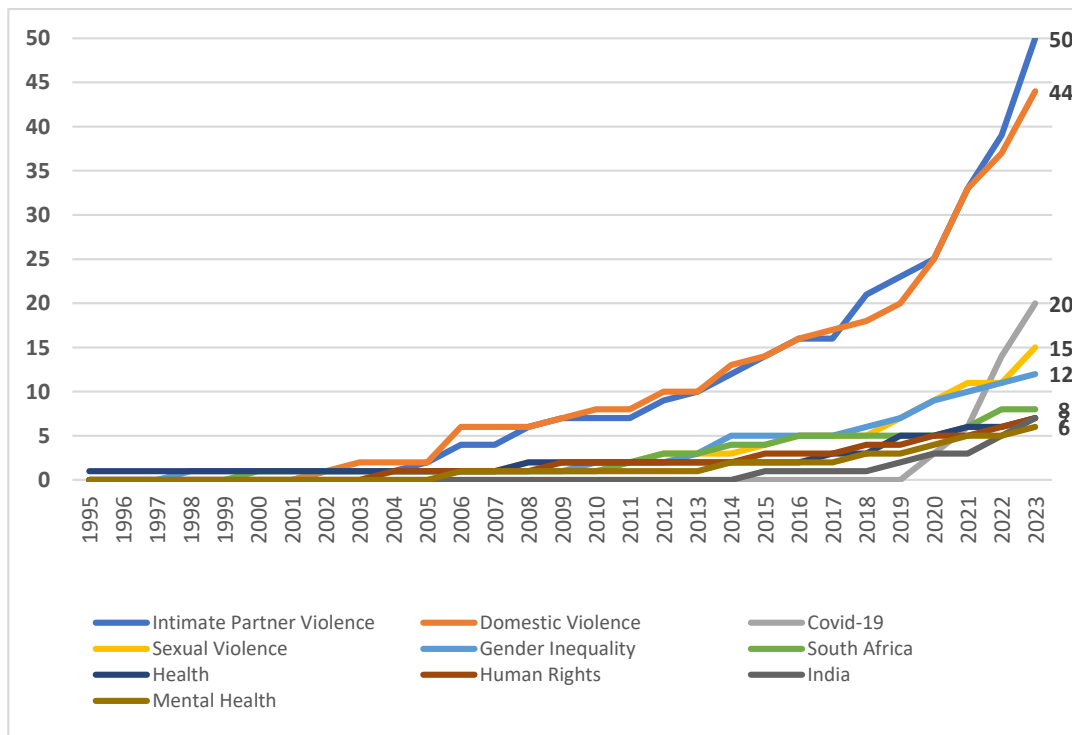
Research Patterns and Trends

Keywords are essential for filtering research. Appropriately selected, they identify the paper's central idea and connect it to related manuscripts (Sampagnaro, 2023; Tohalino et al., 2023). In the literature collected, 981 authors' keywords were found for the topic being investigated. However, to ensure accuracy, specific terms were eliminated from the results. These included duplicates, singular and plural forms of words, and words related to research methods (for instance, interviews, questionnaires, qualitative research, and quantitative research). Additionally, the terms used to search the Scopus database were excluded.

The terms such as "intimate partner violence", "domestic violence", "sexual violence", "COVID-19", and "gender inequality" are among the most commonly used. The terms "intimate partner violence" and "domestic violence" began to appear in 2002, "COVID-19" in 2020, "sexual violence" in 2004, and "gender inequality" in 1998 (Fig. 7).

Figure 7.

Words' frequency over time



Although research on COVID-19 and VAW is relatively new, COVID-19 is a commonly used keyword. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in DV or IPV against women. For instance, in Peru, there has been a rise in calls to helplines to deal with VAW since the lockdown policy was implemented. Before the pandemic, almost 60 per cent of women in Peru had already experienced violence. The prevalence of IPV has decreased over the last ten years, but after the

stay-at-home policy began in mid-March 2020, the occurrence of IPV has increased further due to the response to COVID-19 (Agüero, 2021).

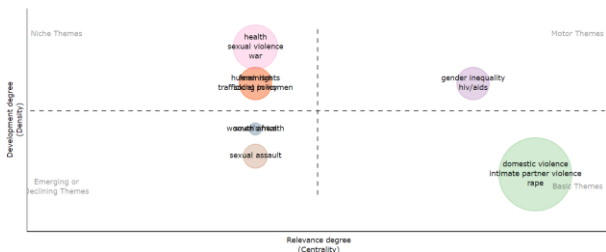
In Brazil, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing forms of IPV and DV, both in women and children (Roman et al., 2023; Vahedi et al., 2023). VAW in the form of sexual violence (SV) is increased in Ethiopia; one in five housemaids experiencing SV and one in three experiencing physical violence. (Adane et al., 2023). In India, the risk of DV increases significantly in households experiencing more significant economic losses and adverse health consequences due to the pandemic (Steinert et al., 2023). Furthermore, many studies also report similar conditions in other countries or regions, such as Russia, China, South Africa (Singh & Mathew, 2023), Nepal (Cornell et al., 2023), Türkiye (Başkan & Alkan, 2023), Lebanon (Akel et al., 2022), Germany (Ebert & Steinert, 2021), Uganda (Mahmud & Riley, 2021a), Indonesia (Purba et al., 2021), and Mexico (Manrique De Lara & De Jesús Medina Arellano, 2020).

Furthermore, thematic evolution analysis was performed to understand the knowledge structure during different periods. The periods were divided into four cut-off points, namely 2011, 2016, 2020, and 2022. The analysis produced diagrams for five consecutive sub-periods, which are 1995-2011, 2012-2016, 2017-2020, 2021-2022, and 2023-2023 (Fig. 8). The first quadrant (top right) contains motor issues, which are quickly advancing and crucial for related fields. The second quadrant (top left) houses highly specialised and peripheral issues. Emerging topics are found in the third quadrant (bottom left). The fourth quadrant (bottom right) includes essential issues that may become important research directions in the future but have received less attention in that period.

Figure 8.

Thematic Evolution

(A) 1995-2011

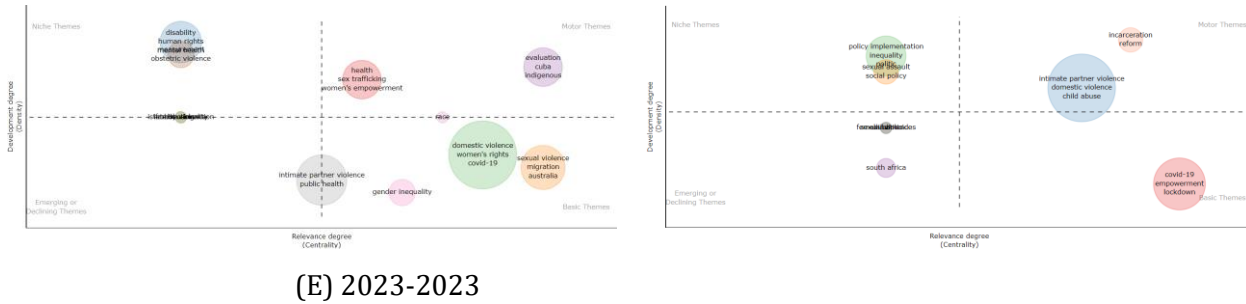


(B) 2012-2016



(C) 2017-2020

(D) 2021-2022



In Fig. 8, it can be seen that "health", "sexual violence", "war", "human rights", "social policy", and "trafficking in women" were niche themes in the 1995-2011 period, with "domestic violence", "intimate partner violence" and "rape becomes the orientation for future research. In the following period, "domestic violence" shifted to become a less developed theme in 2012-2016, while "intimate partner violence" remaining as the primary theme. In the 2017-2020 period, the connection between "COVID-19", "women's rights" and "domestic violence" began to attract researchers' attention.

The topic "policy implementation" is a specific theme in the 2021-2022 period, along with the emergence of discussions regarding "lockdown" and "covid-19". On the other side, "intimate partner violence", which was a primary theme from 1995 to 2016, has shifted to become a mainstream theme in the 2021-2022 period with close relation to "domestic violence" and "child abuse". In this period, "COVID-19", "empowerment", and "lockdown" also began to become emerging themes in this area.

In 2023, "intimate partner violence", "domestic violence", and "COVID-19" are the motor research themes, with "sexual violence" and "physical violence" as future research orientations. Though it often shifts from one quadrant to another, the themes of "domestic violence", "intimate partner violence", and "sexual violence" seem to become unsolved issues that continue to emerge and are discussed in each period.

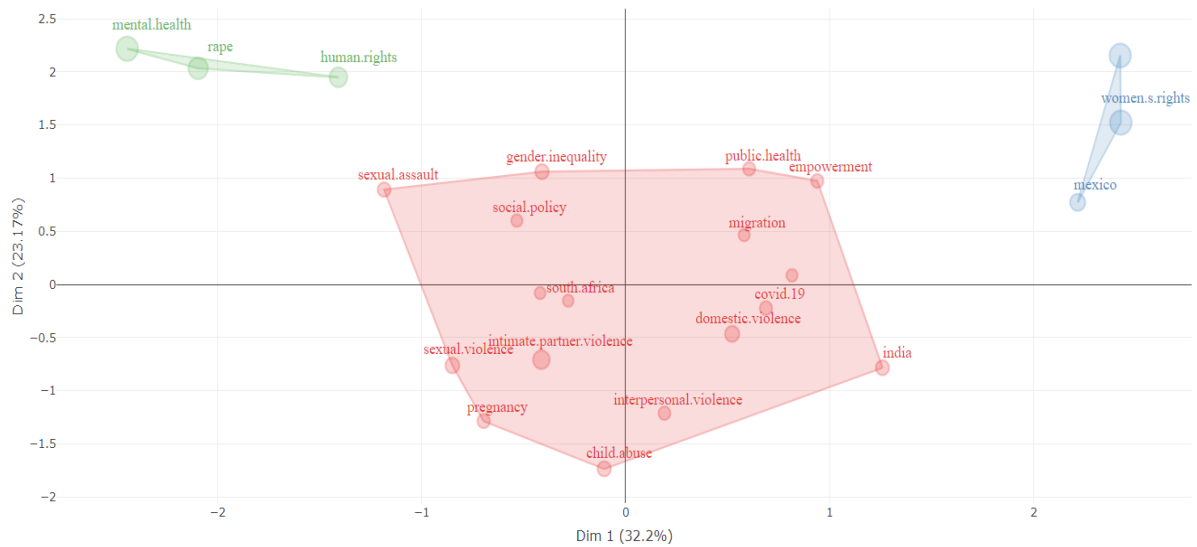
In this study, Multivariate Correspondence Analysis (MCA) was employed to analyse and improve the commonly used keywords found in the articles. MCA is typically used to analyse surveys to highlight data similarities, the categories' relationships and associations more precisely. The method works by locating indicator levels with similar characteristics in a 2-dimensional plot, forming a point cloud. If two keywords are closer to the plot, they are more

related. The indicator's position indicates the number of researched articles in the field (Cui et al., 2024).

Cluster 1 (red), has the highest number of keywords compared to other clusters, consisting of "intimate partner violence", "domestic violence", "COVID-19", "sexual violence", "gender inequality", "South Africa", "health", "India", "sexual assault", "child abuse", "empowerment", "evaluation", "interpersonal violence", "migration", "pregnancy", "public health", and "social policy". The red cluster, located at the centre of the figure, belongs to the main cluster. Cluster 2 (blue) consists of "women's rights", "policy implementation", and "Mexico". Cluster 3 (green) includes three keywords "human rights", "mental health", and "rape" (Fig. 9).

Figure 9.

MCA of keywords in the field of policy impact in VAW



Cluster 1 discusses various forms of violence, causal factors, driving factors, areas with high prevalence rates of VAW, and the impact of implementing a policy on VAW. Recent cases are in the COVID-19 pandemic condition. Decreased well-being as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown led to an increased likelihood of not eating, reduced life quality, higher violent arguments with partners, and an increase in the frequency of IPV against women in villages (Mahmud & Riley, 2021). Implementing the stay-at-home policy to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus also increased the incidence of IPV and DV (Agüero, 2021).

The initiatives targeting women, advocacy efforts, and home visits may help lower the risk of further victimisation of women. Implementing group training for both women and men, community mobilisation interventions, and combined livelihood and training programs for women can result in positive outcomes. Although there are some gaps in the evidence, specific studies have demonstrated significant positive effects over time. Effective programs addressing

various forms of violence should involve active participation, engage multiple stakeholders, facilitate discussions about the dynamics of gender and violence acceptability, and promote improved communication and family members' decision-making, as well as non-violent behaviour (Ellsberg et al., 2015).

The intersectionality of VAW and violence against children (VAC) is also being discussed in Cluster 1. It includes (1) the risk factors, (2) norms that support violence and discourages seeking help, (3) VAC and IPV often occur within the same household, (4) the intergenerational impacts, (5) general and complex consequences throughout the life span, and (6) VAW and VAC intersect during adolescence, a time when vulnerability to certain types of violence is higher. The presence of similar correlations implies that consolidating efforts to address common risk factors can help prevent both types of violence. The overall consequences and intergenerational impact indicate the necessity for more comprehensive early intervention (Guedes et al., 2016).

Cluster 2 (blue) emphasises identifying factors hindering VAW policy implementation and identifying strong opponents and resistance to the law. The case in Jalisco, Mexico, exemplifies the delay in drafting legislation to combat VAW in a religiously conservative country, which faced pressure from women's rights activists in the 1990s. The women's movement in Jalisco during the 1990s and the introduction of feminist legislation in Mexico to address family violence are significant examples that need to be examined. Similar cases also occurred in Nicaragua during the 2010s (O'Brien & Walsh, 2020).

The issue of VAW seems to be less contentious for religious and state authorities compared to family law matters such as divorce or abortion. However, conservative support for the patriarchal system institutionalises and normalises VAW in various settings, including within the family, as demonstrated by laws that historically or currently condone domestic violence or marital rape. These adversaries utilised their connections to the state and manipulated the 'family discourse' to portray progressives as anti-family to hinder progress and even repeal VAW laws. In Jalisco, several politicians consider violence as a non-issue that requires no intervention from the government. Church leaders aligned with conservative values and closely tied to the state view any laws aimed at addressing family violence as a threat to the traditional church concept of family, heteronormativity, and the rights of men. Church leaders believe men should be the head of the household and responsible for disciplining their families (O'Brien & Walsh, 2020).

Cluster 3 discusses the dominant approach to VAW at the international level, which, since the 1980s, has been defined in the context of human rights. The phrase "women's rights are human rights" has been utilised by feminist activists to illustrate how VAW violates their human rights and fundamental freedoms. It includes their right to equality and protection from torture

or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (Tapley & Davies, 2020; Wiper & Lewis, 2020).

The majority of the movement for women's rights has its roots in the anti-rape movement. GBV survivors find themselves amid a drawn-out and confusing process. The mental health aspect is also a concern not only as one of the impacts of violence experienced by victims/survivors but also related to the right to protection and particular action for vulnerable groups (one of which is suffering from mental disorders), both for victims and for perpetrators. In this regard, the viewpoint of the victim in all its facets is crucial in creating strategies and procedures that reduce the adverse effects of the legal process on accusers and defendants, victims and perpetrators (Davies & Tapley, 2020; Wiper & Lewis, 2020).

Conclusion

The analysis of literature from the past three decades reveals an increasing trend in studies about the impact of public policy on VAW. The number of publications peaked in 2023, with the highest increases occurring in 2011 and 2015. The countries with the most publications are the US, UK, Canada, Australia, and Brazil, respectively. Despite VAW being more prevalent in low- and middle-income countries, research on this topic is mainly carried out by developed countries – based on author affiliation, journal country of origin, and author's country of origin. Low- and middle-income countries are primarily the subjects of research related to VAW rather than being the focal point of the study.

Bibliometric analysis also reveals researchers' concerns and research trends regarding the impact of public policy on VAW. The discussion includes forms of violence, causal factors, driving factors, prevalence, impact of violence, policies related to VAW, factors that hinder implementation and rejection of policies, intersectionality of VAW, and approaches to overcoming VAW at the international level. In this case, terms such as "intimate partner violence", "domestic violence", "sexual violence", "COVID-19", and "gender inequality" are the most commonly discussed themes.

The research conducted also revealed that public policies, both directly and indirectly, have an impact on women. Policies can create social conditions that increase gender equality, encouraging improvements in the social and economic conditions of women. On the other hand, public policy can also increase women's vulnerability to violence, as happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. The conditions are found in various countries.

Throughout each study period, the subjects of "domestic violence," "intimate partner violence," and "sexual violence" have been consistently prevalent. It suggests that these issues persist and are continually addressed in each period. In 2023, "sexual violence" and "physical

violence" are emerging as fundamental areas of research that could become important research focuses in the future. It is also an urge to examine further the handling of SV and physical VAW, as their prevalence has tended to increase since the COVID-19 pandemic. The complexity of this issue extends beyond the mere formulation of policies. It encompasses the critical evaluation of the efficacy of policy implementation, as well as the assurance that victims of violence have access to and acceptance of the various forms of protection and assistance made available to them.

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