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Community Crime Prevention Research Trends: A Bibliometric Analysis

Teuku Fahmi^{1*}, Iqrak Sulhin², Anggi Aulina Harahap³

Department of Criminology, University of Indonesia, Indonesia

email: teuku.fahmi02@ui.ac.id^{1*}, iqrak.sulhin@ui.ac.id², anggiaulina@ui.ac.id³

Abstract. Research into community crime prevention has become a major area of concern in recent decades. However, a comprehensive and systematic literature review on this topic is still relatively scarce. This study analyzes research trends on community crime prevention using bibliometric analysis and VOSviewer visualization. The scope of this study included 84 articles published in 62 source titles indexed by Scopus from 1981 to December 2024. The results of the bibliometric analysis show that research trends on community crime prevention vary in terms of the development of scientific article themes, reviews of the diversity of crime prevention strategies, and collaboration between researchers. In addition, the results of the analysis also identified an increase in interest in topics that emphasize community-based approaches to crime prevention.

Keywords. Neighborhood watch, community policing, fear of crime, crime control.

1. Introduction

The study of crime prevention has become a complex global issue and continues to attract the attention of academics, policymakers, and the wider community. One approach that has become increasingly popular in efforts to reduce crime rates is community crime prevention. This approach emphasizes community involvement in efforts to improve safety and security [1]. This approach focuses on strengthening community capacity [2], collaboration with multiple stakeholders [3] [4], and implementation strategies tailored to local needs [5] [6].

The community crime prevention approach shifts the focus from traditional law enforcement to proactive actions that involve community members in crime prevention activities [7] [8]. O'Brien and Yar (2008) also highlighted the importance of community initiatives involving various local actors, including the police and other local authorities, in efforts to control crime [9]. However, various community crime prevention strategies still face various challenges, including rapid social change [10], urbanization problems [11], and the emergence of new, more complex forms of crime [12].

To understand the development of research and practice in the field of community crime prevention, a systematic analysis of the existing literature is required. Bibliometric analysis is an effective method for quantitatively measuring and analyzing various aspects of scientific literature. The use of this method will enable researchers and institutions to identify research trends and reveal the relationship between various concepts and topics in the field of community crime prevention. This study aims to conduct a bibliometric analysis of scientific literature on

crime prevention at the community level. This analysis will provide a comprehensive picture of the development of research in this field, identify the main themes studied, and reveal the collaborative network between researchers. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of science and community crime prevention practices.

2. Methods

Bibliometric analysis is often used to measure and analyze various aspects of scientific literature using quantitative data [13] [14] [15]. The bibliometric analysis procedure conducted in this study includes three stages: (1) database selection, (2) determining keywords and search criteria, and (3) data extraction.

In the first stage, we limited the scope of the literature search to the Scopus database. The selection of this database was based on the consideration that Scopus has a good reputation and high quality [16], is one of the leading scientific article indexing databases [17], and is widely used as a source when conducting literature reviews [18]. The second stage identifies all relevant articles from the Scopus database. The search criteria used the following string "community crime prevention" by covering the article title, abstract, and related keywords in the Scopus database (accessed on June 13, 2025).

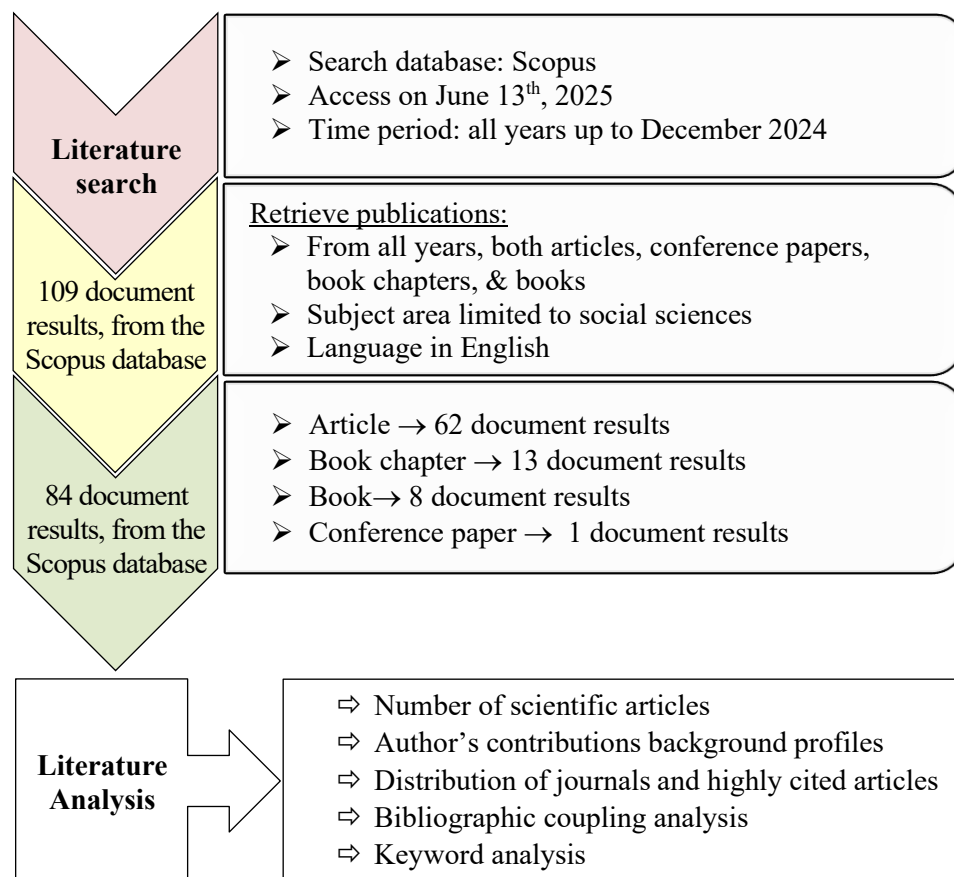


Figure 1. Research method and strategy

In the data extraction stage, 109 articles were obtained from the initial Scopus search results. The next step applied three criteria: the targeted subject area is social science; document types are articles, book chapters, books, and conference papers; and English language. From the

determination of these criteria, the Boolean retrieval strategy produced the following operations (TITLE-ABS-KEY("community crime prevention") AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"ar") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"ch") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"bk") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE,"cp")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA,"SOCI")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE,"English"))), and at this stage we found 84 documents. The next step is to conduct a bibliometric analysis of the number of scientific articles, document types, year of publication, and organizational affiliation. Visualization with VOSviewer software was used to describe the main research topics and observe collaboration patterns between the authors on the research topics examined in this study (Figure 1).

3. Results and Discussion

Number of scientific articles

The results of data extraction from the bibliometric analysis of 84 articles on community crime prevention show that the first article was published in July 1981. The article written by Lewis and Salem (1981) was entitled "Community Crime Prevention: An Analysis of a Developing Strategy" which was published in the Journal of Crime & Delinquency, Vol. 27, No. 3, Jul. 1981, pp. 289-444. In this article, the authors explore the theoretical basis of a new strategy to reduce crime, namely community crime prevention [19]. The two theoretical bases explored in this study are victimization and social control perspectives. The crucial findings of this article emphasize the importance of community development and citizen participation in crime prevention efforts. The first article indexed by Scopus became the initial milestone in the development of studies on the topic of community crime prevention, although the second article was published five years later. Based on Figure 2, it can be observed that within a period of 15 years (1981-1995), the publication trend on the topic of community crime prevention was quite minimal, namely, only 13 articles. However, since 2000, this topic has been widely studied and published by researchers, and it was recorded that by December 2024, there had been 84 articles, with an average publication of 2-3 articles per year.

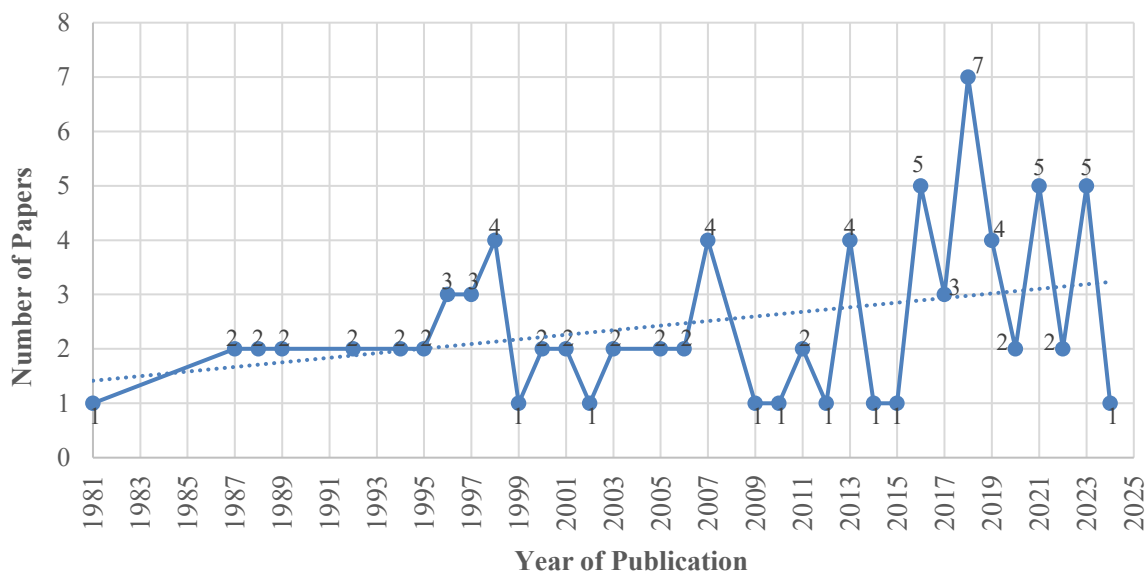


Figure 2. Community crime prevention publication trends

Figure 3 shows a picture of the document type of articles on community crime prevention indexed by Scopus. Of the 84 articles, almost all of the document types are in the form of articles

(73.8%) and book chapters (15.5%), while the rest were in the form of books (9.5%) and conference papers (1.2%).

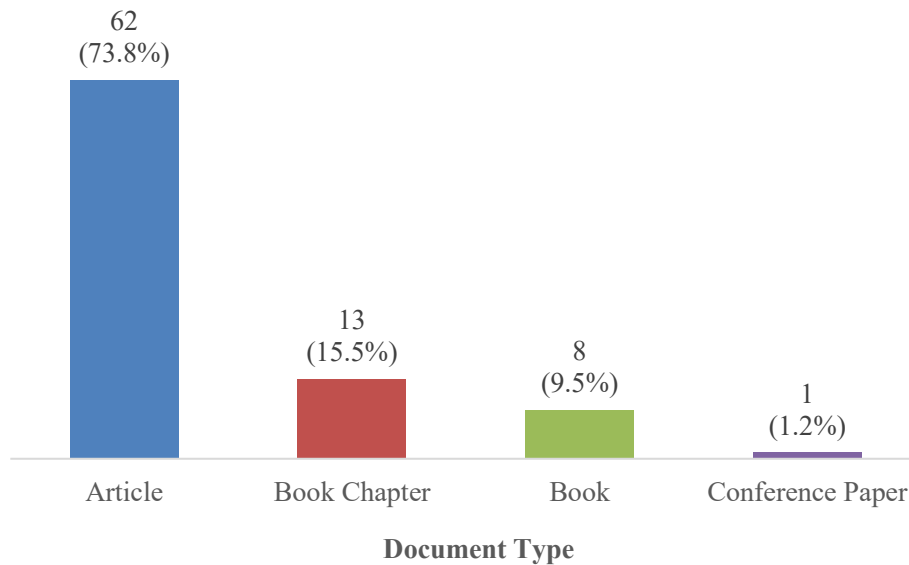


Figure 3. Document type in community crime prevention studies indexed by Scopus

Authors' background profiles

Referring to metadata based on country/territory from the topic of community crime prevention, we found 18 countries of origin for the authors. Figure 4 presents the top six countries with the most author contributions. It can be seen that documents by country or territory, the United States, has the most author affiliations with 29 articles, followed by the United Kingdom with 16 articles, Australia with 12 articles, Canada with 7 articles, Germany with 3 articles, and New Zealand with 2 articles.

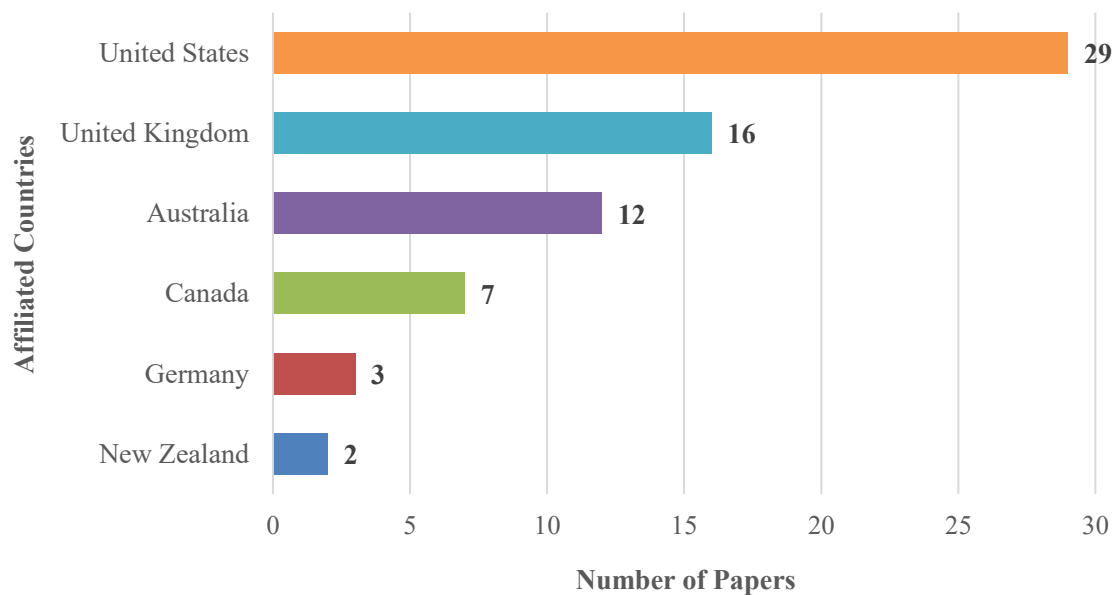


Figure 4. Top 6 most affiliated countries publishing "community crime prevention" research

In the next section, we present the author’s profile based on affiliation. Affiliation in Scopus refers to the institution or organization where a researcher is affiliated when conducting research and publication. Therefore, affiliation indicates where a researcher works or is affiliated when the topic of community crime prevention is published. From the 84 articles, we identified 102 affiliations referring to institutions or organizations in 18 countries. The scope of affiliation includes institutions such as universities, research institutions, police education programs, and police departments. Table 1 shows that Washington State University Pullman has the largest number of papers (total papers/TP 4 articles) with a total of 16 authors (TA), and it then became a reference for 179 citations (TC). However, when measuring the quality of articles by calculating total citations/total papers (TC/TP), the article published by the author from the University of Nebraska Omaha showed the highest result, which was 86.3 (this shows that one article has an average of 86.3 citations). Washington State University Pullman and the University of Nebraska Omaha also rank at the top for collaborative activities in producing papers (total authors/total papers), with the highest collaboration score of 4.00 (this indicates that an average paper is written collaboratively by 4 people).

Table 1. Top 5 author affiliation institutions researching “community crime prevention”

Rank	Institutions	TP	TA	TC	TC/TP	TA/TP
1 st	Washington State University Pullman	4	16	264	66	4
2 nd	Northwestern University	3	7	62	20.7	2.3
3 rd	University of Leeds	3	4	120	40	1.3
4 th	University of Nebraska Omaha	3	12	259	86.3	4
5 th	Indiana University Bloomington	3	9	63	21	3

The data analysis revealed that 145 authors collaborated to write articles on "community crime prevention". Table 2 lists the 10 authors with the largest number of scientific article publications. The table indicates that each author on this list has published 2 articles. However, when viewed based on the quality of papers, Ling Ren (Sam Houston State University) has the highest score for Quality of Papers (111.5), with a total of 223 citations in his two articles.

Table 2. Top 10 author researching “community crime prevention” based in the number of published papers

Rank	Author Name	Institutions	Number of Papers	Number of Citations	Quality of Papers
1 st	Adam Crawford	University of Leeds	2	69	34.5
2 nd	Patrick G. Donnelly	University of Dayton	2	56	28
3 rd	Karen Evans	University of Liverpool	2	1	0.5
4 th	David P. Farrington	University of Cambridge	2	64	32
5 th	Michael Gaffney	Washington State University Pullman	2	213	106.5
6 th	Peter Homel	Griffith University	2	6	3
7 th	Tim Hope	Centre for Crime and Justice Studies	2	59	29.5
8 th	Dan A. Lewis	Northwestern University	2	59	29.5
9 th	Nicholas Lovrich	Washington State University Pullman	2	213	106.5
10 th	Ling Ren	Sam Houston State University	2	223	111.5

Distribution of journals and highly cited articles

A bibliometric analysis was also conducted, which identified and cataloged 84 articles related to "community crime prevention" from 62 different publication sources. Table 3 presents the top 10 publication sources of articles on "community crime prevention". The British Journal of Criminology (Oxford University Press) is in the top position with a contribution of 5 papers, followed by Crime Prevention and Community Safety (Springer Nature) in second place and the Journal of Policing and Society (Taylor & Francis) in third place with 4 papers each. The Journal of Criminal Justice and the British Journal of Criminology have higher CiteScores, SJRs, and SNIPs than other journals, indicating that these two journals are more prestigious in this field.

Table 3. Top 10 sources of “community crime prevention” publications based in number of publications

Rank	Source Title	CiteScore (2023)	SJR (2023)	SNIP (2023)	Number of Papers	Number of Citations
1 st	British Journal of Criminology	6.3	1.045	1.815	5	130
2 nd	Crime Prevention and Community Safety	1.5	0.204	0.556	4	14
3 rd	Policing and Society	5.4	0.820	1.510	4	114
4 th	Crime Delinquency	4.3	0.937	1.257	3	243
5 th	Contemporary Justice Review Issues In Criminal Social and Restorative Justice	1.3	0.206	0.517	2	32
6 th	Crime and Delinquency	4.3	0.937	1.257	2	58
7 th	European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research	4.6	0.486	1.146	2	38
8 th	Evaluation	3.6	0.658	1.075	2	103
9 th	Journal of Crime and Justice	2.3	0.616	0.830	2	40
10 th	Journal of Criminal Justice	6.9	1.332	1.656	2	180

Overall, of the 84 articles on “community crime prevention” published between 1981 and December 2024, all contributed 2028 citations. The magnitude of the citations indicates that one article examining “community crime prevention” has 24.14 citations (equivalent to 24 citations). Table 4 lists the 10 most cited publications. It can be seen that the article by (Jeursen, 1996) entitled "Neighborhood responses to disorder and local attachments: The systemic model of attachment, social disorganization, and neighborhood use value" from the Sociological Forum is the most cited article (contributing to 214 citations), with an average annual citation of 7.46. The article by Rosenbaum, D.P. (1988), “Community crime prevention: A review and synthesis of the literature,” was ranked second most cited, with a title of 204 citations. Then, an article by Ren, L. et al. (2005), with the title "Linking confidence in the police with the performance of the police: Community policing can make a difference" with 177 citations.

Table 4. Top 10 articles on “community crime prevention” with the most citations

Rank	Title (Authors)	Year	Source Title	Document Type	Total Citations	TC/Y
1 st	Neighborhood responses to disorder and local attachments: The systemic model of attachment, social disorganization, and neighborhood use value (Taylor, R.B.)	1996	Sociological Forum	Article	214	7.46
2 nd	Community crime prevention: A review and synthesis of the literature (Rosenbaum, D.P.)	1988	Justice Quarterly	Article	204	5.61
3 rd	Linking confidence in the police with the performance of the police: Community policing can make a difference (Ren, L. et al.)	2005	Journal of Criminal Justice	Article	177	9.26
4 th	The Theory and Research Behind Neighborhood Watch: Is it a Sound Fear and Crime Reduction Strategy? (Rosenbaum, D.P.)	1987	Crime & Delinquency	Article	128	3.38
5 th	Speaking truth to power: Empowerment ideology as social intervention and policy (Perkins, D.D.)	1995	American Journal of Community Psychology	Article	111	3.76
6 th	Crime prevention in a communitarian society: Bangjiao and tiao-jie in the people's republic of China (Zhang, L. et al.)	1996	Justice Quarterly	Article	89	11.75
7 th	Rethinking sports-based community crime prevention: A preliminary analysis of the relationship between midnight basketball and urban crime rates (Hartmann, D. & Depro, B.)	2006	Journal of Sport and Social Issues	Article	70	3.11
8 th	The Partnership Approach To Community Crime Prevention: Corporatism At the Local Level? (Crawford, A.)	1994	Social & Legal Studies	Article	62	3.72
9 th	The Structure and Operations of Neighborhood Watch Programs in the United States (Garofalo, J. & Mcleod, M.)	1989	Crime & Delinquency	Article	58	2.03
10 th	Gendering 'Soft' policing: Multi-agency working, female cops, and the fluidities of police culture/s (McCarthy, D.J.)	2013	Policing and Society	Article	57	1.63

Keyword co-occurrence analysis

Keyword co-occurrence analysis is a useful bibliometric analysis technique. With this method, a deeper understanding of a research field can be obtained, and important trends, patterns, and relationships can be identified. The results of the analysis obtained 156 author keywords from 84 articles on the topic "community crime prevention" which formed into 5 clusters (Figure 5). Cluster 1, marked with 4 nodes and colored Red, primarily focuses on research areas including citizen participation, community organizing, crime prevention, and private security. Cluster 2, designated as Green, comprises 4 nodes and is primarily focused on research areas including community policing, gender, neighborhood watch, and police. Cluster 3, denoted in blue, comprises 3 nodes primarily focused on research areas of community crime prevention, crime control, and neighborhood watch. Cluster 4, identified by its yellow color, encompasses three nodes that are predominantly focused on informal social control, private policing, and vigilantly. Cluster 5, which is distinguished by the color Purple, consists of 2 nodes with a focus on research themes including the fear of crime and response to disorder. Overall, the visualization provides an interesting glimpse into how various concepts relate to each other in community crime prevention research and practice.

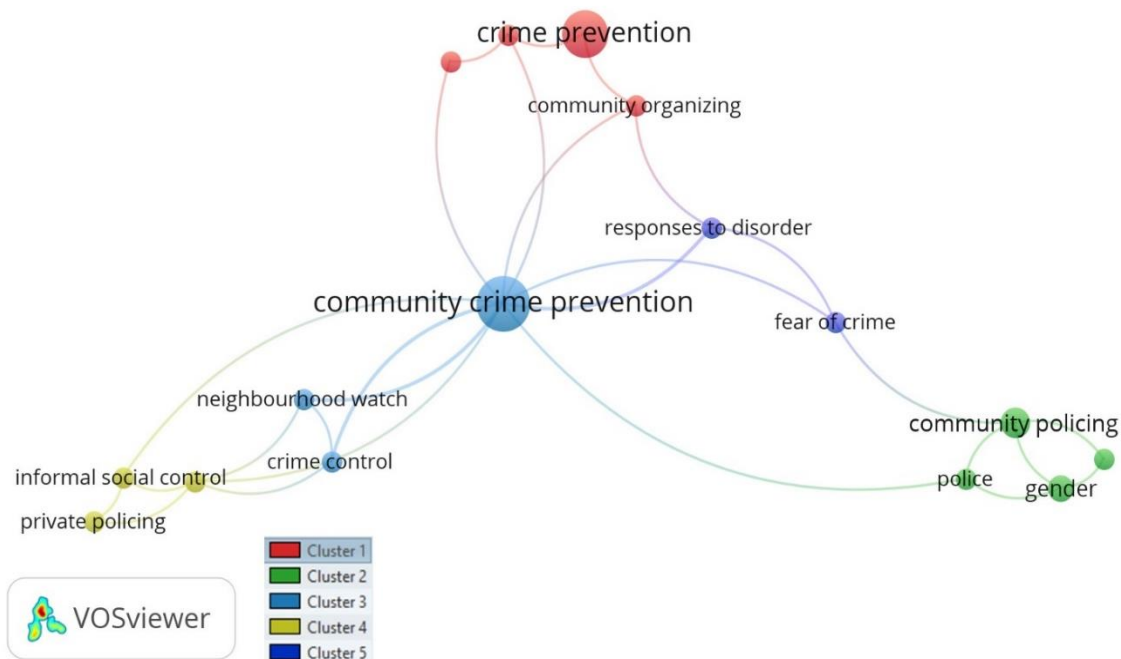


Figure 5. Keyword co-occurrence network visualization for community crime prevention

Figure 6 presents the keyword co-occurrence network by mapping the relationship between keywords from 2010 to December 2024. The topic of “community crime prevention” has undergone evolution and development within the scope of the field of study, including trends, concepts, and research focus. There is an increasing emphasis on community-based approaches, as evidenced by the increasing prominence of terms such as community policing and neighborhood watch. In addition, the concept of crime control is gaining more attention as a key factor in crime prevention. Overall, this visualization provides a strong foundation for further research in the field of “community crime prevention”.



Figure 6. Keyword co-occurrence overlay visualization of community crime prevention

The interesting thing that is apparent from the visualization in Figure 6 is the involvement of technology in creating a safe environment. This is clearly seen from the relationship between the keywords “neighborhood watch” and “crime control” especially in research in recent years. Several studies have examined the topic of community crime prevention that relates it to the use of technology and online media in the implementation of neighborhood watch, especially WhatsApp, and have revealed changes in the pattern/way people respond to crime in their neighborhoods [20] [21] [22] [24]. The use of this WhatsApp Group has increased awareness of crime and encouraged citizen participation in maintaining the security of their neighborhoods.

Table 5 presents the 10 most frequently occurring keywords in the study on “community crime prevention”. The Total Link Strength column shows that these keywords are closely related to each other. For example, the identified keyword “community crime prevention” frequently appears together with the keywords “crime prevention”, “police”, “community policing”, and “crime”. This indicates a strong relationship between these concepts. Regarding the application of crime prevention strategies, in addition to ‘neighborhood watch’, keywords such as “community policing” and “community crime prevention” show that prevention strategies based on community surveillance and participation are popular.

Table 5. Top 10 terms in community crime prevention research

Keywords	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Community crime prevention	14	13
Crime prevention	11	9
Police	3	8
Community policing	4	5
Crime	3	5
Human	2	5
Vigilantism	2	5
Crime control	2	4
Gender	3	4
Neighbourhood watch	2	4

Bibliographic coupling analysis

Figure 7 presents a network visualization resulting from the bibliographic coupling analysis on research related to community crime prevention. This analysis shows the connections among journals based on the articles they refer to together. The more references there are, the stronger is the relationship between the two journals. In this case, the network is divided into three main clusters, indicating groups of journals with similar research foci. Cluster 1 (colored Red) consists of journals such as Advancing Criminology and Criminal Justice Policy, Crime Prevention and Community Safety, Policing and Society, and Journal of Crime and Justice. Cluster 1 is more interested in broader issues of crime, including social control, crime prevention, and communities’ role in addressing crime. Cluster 2 (colored Green) consists of Crime & Delinquency, Justice Quarterly, and Sociological Forum. This cluster is most likely to focus on the theoretical and empirical aspects of crime and delinquency. Cluster 3 (colored Blue) consists of journals such as the British Journal of Criminology, the European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research, and Evaluation. This cluster focuses on research related to developing more effective crime prevention policies.

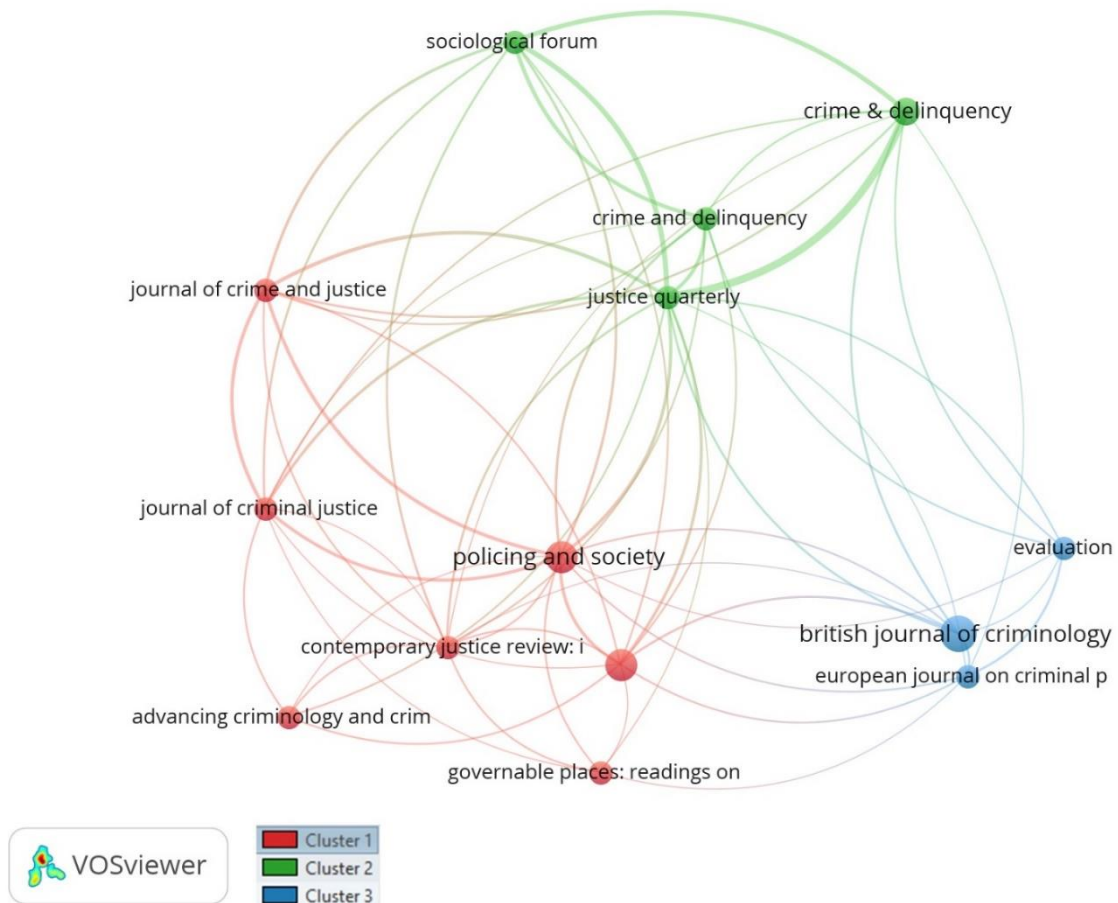


Figure 7. Bibliographic coupling analysis of the network of community crime prevention by sources

4. Conclusion

This study's bibliometric analysis yields an overview of the quality and quantity of community crime prevention articles published globally by various authors. The journals listed in Scopus, a reputable database, published articles between 1981 to December 2024. The bibliometric analysis conducted on 84 scientific articles on community-level crime prevention shows significant developments in this field of research, especially since 2000. There has been a significant increase in the number of publications on community-level crime prevention, indicating a growing interest from researchers in this topic. The analysis shows that research topics in this field are evolving toward a more collaborative approach, involving the community, police, and other stakeholders in crime prevention strategies. Recent studies have increasingly emphasized the importance of community involvement in crime prevention efforts. Concepts such as community policing and neighborhood watch are focal points. Keyword analysis shows a shift in research focus from theoretical aspects to practical applications, with more studies exploring specific crime prevention strategies.

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