**Spatial Scale in Crime Location Choice Research**

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**Abstract**

**Aim** In research on crime location choice, spatial scale (size of the unit of analysis) varies widely. However, a discussion lacks of how spatial scale affects the comparability of findings across studies. We review variation in spatial scale in the literature, explain its theoretical foundation, and assess whether variability in spatial scale affects empirical findings.

**Methods** First, we provide a structured review on spatial scale in previously published in crime location choice studies. Second, we summarize the theory of spatial aggregation in discrete location choice. Third, using different spatial scales we assess the choice criteria of 1152 snatching offenders across Chennai City, and explore differences in the findings across three spatial scales.

**Findings** Larger units like neighbourhoods and census tracts have been common in literature. Recent work has utilized smaller units, including street segments and census blocks. A theoretical analysis points out that to compare findings from varying spatial scales, the models must contain a term that reflects spatial scale. Based on the empirical analysis, we present and interpret similarities and differences between findings using multiple spatial scales.

**Conclusions** Based on the literature review and empirical findings, we provide suggestions for deciding spatial scale in future crime location choice research.

**Keywords:**

Crime Location Choice

Discrete Choice Method

Spatial Unit of Analysis

Multiple Spatial Scales

Snatching

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