



Elucidating the role of child labor in the concept of child-friendly cities

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Abstract:

Aims: The concept of child-friendly cities aims to be inclusive of all children, catering to their needs regardless of their socioeconomic-geographic backgrounds. The policies of such cities should uphold the well-being, development, and rights of all children, including Child Labor. In line with this, this research seeks to elucidate the role of Child Labor within the concept of child-friendly cities.

Methodology: This qualitative research employs a meta-synthesis approach, utilizing Sandalowski and Barroso's seven steps for data analysis. Data extraction was conducted from the academic research databases "semanticscholar," "Science Web of," and "Scopus" by combining the two primary keywords of the research: "friendly child cities" and "child labor." A total of 29 articles were retrieved and analyzed using the Max QDA software.

Findings: The research findings demonstrate that the child-friendly city approach positively impacts children's well-being, enhances their quality of life, and reduces the cycles of poverty and inequality. Urban planning for Child Labor should consider their specific needs, such as safe working environments, educational opportunities, and protection from exploitation.

Conclusion: In alignment with the research objective, the findings suggest four new categories for addressing the needs of Child Labor: support, education, income, employment, profession and work, and health. Considering urban planning principles, these categories can be further subcategorized as Urban housing, Kindergarten streets, Work and play neighborhoods, Health streets.

Keywords: Child; Child-friendly city; Child labor; Urban poverty; Urban space

1. Introduction

Designing a special environment for children requires special care, this age group has different physical and mental conditions, and even this difference is true for the different stages of childhood [1]. The concept of child-friendly cities focuses on creating urban environments that support the well-being, development, and rights of all children, including Child Labor. The goal of such cities is to be inclusive, catering to the needs of all children regardless of their socioeconomic background or employment status [2, 3]. It is crucial to recognize that the principles of child-friendly cities align with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensuring that children's rights are upheld and they have access to essential services and opportunities [4, 5].

Understanding public spaces as shared conductors can also

enhance children's socialization and well-being in cities [6, 7]. Today, urban planning for children and young people still means planning for an insignificant part of society [8]. In line with this, efforts to create child-friendly cities should encompass the active participation of children, like any other city dwellers, in the community design and planning process. This participatory approach ensures that the perspectives and experiences of Child Labor are also considered in urban planning and development, leading to more inclusive and sustainable communities [9]. Therefore, achieving child-friendly cities requires the involvement of various stakeholders and effective communication strategies, and Child Labor are among these stakeholders. Child labor has been a persistent social issue for decades, despite global opposition [10]. According to recent reports from the International Labour Organization, there are nearly

168 million child laborers, with 85 million working in hazardous conditions [11]. The employment of these children has severe consequences for their physical, emotional, and psychological development, potentially leading to impaired health, academic failure, and social isolation. Moreover, child labor perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality, as these children are deprived of opportunities to gain skills and education that could improve their socioeconomic status [12–14]. In recognition that the presence of Child Labor in urban spaces is often a sign of poverty, the Child Friendly Cities (CFC) initiative was introduced by UNICEF to serve as a framework for promoting and upholding children's rights based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [15]. Integrating Child Labor into the CFC framework necessitates a multidimensional approach that addresses their rights to protection, provision, and participation [16]. It is essential to acknowledge that urban planning plays a pivotal role in creating child-friendly environments, emphasizing the importance of public spaces, transportation, social networks, play areas, green spaces, and governance. Child Labor are also part of a city's social fabric, and all children have inherent rights, such as education, healthcare, and play, which a child-friendly city has the responsibility to facilitate [17].

Children engaged in various forms of work in urban spaces face heightened risks, presenting a unique challenge within the context of child-friendly cities. Urban planning for these children must consider their specific needs, including safe and accessible work environments, educational opportunities, and protection from exploitation [18]. Efforts can be directed towards eliminating child labor or ensuring the protection of these children from economic exploitation. This includes providing access to quality education, healthcare, and recreational spaces, as well as ensuring that children's voices are heard in society [19]. While contemporary cities strive to create child-friendly spaces that fully address children's needs and rights, this concept often focuses on privileged children, paying less attention to the situation of Child Labor in urban environments. In practice, Child Labor, as one of the most vulnerable groups of children in cities, are often excluded from these spaces and opportunities. They face numerous challenges related to health, education, safety, and social well-being in cities. Address-

ing these issues requires special attention to this segment of society in urban planning and design. This research aims to elucidate the role of Child Labor within the concept of child-friendly cities. By examining previous scholarly research using a meta-synthesis approach, the study identifies key concepts in this field and proposes recommendations for empowering these children, supporting their families, and creating suitable opportunities for their personal growth within the framework of child-friendly cities.

2. Literature review

Child friendly city

In response to new normative frameworks and action plans formulated in the context of human rights by UN-Habitat and UNICEF, this initiative was launched in 1996. Since then, it has provided guidelines on how to implement and integrate a rights-based approach by local governments (or cities) in all services and decision-making processes that affect children [20]. A child-friendly city is a city, local community, or any local governance system that is committed to upholding children's rights as specified in the Convention on the Rights of the Child [21]. In such a city, children's views, needs, priorities, and rights are an integral part of public policies, programs, and decisions. This definition implies that a child-friendly city is a city that is suitable for all citizens [22].

It can be said that a child-friendly city is a city where children, regardless of their age, should be recognized as credible citizens who can participate in improving the quality of cities and towns. Their participation should be developed, they should be listened to, and their decisions should be respected. In a child-friendly city, appropriate governance requires providing children with an adequate view of urban development and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision-making [23].

The timeline for a Important periods in the field of child-friendly city is presented in figure 1.

The concept of child-friendly cities encompasses how governments manage cities based on children's interests. It also refers to cities that uphold children's fundamental rights, including health, transportation, protection, education, and culture [24]. The integration of these indigenous cultures

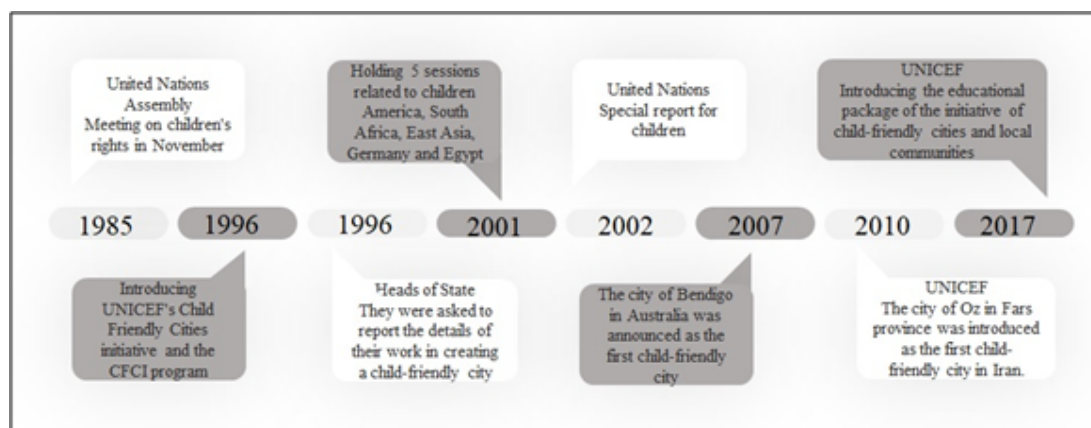


Figure 1. Important periods in the field of child-friendly city.

and character education can contribute to the activation of child-friendly cities, especially in urban areas [25, 26]. This initiative aims to ensure that local governments prioritize children's well-being and rights in their policies and programs. The child-friendly city concept emphasizes children's "right to the city" and supports their active and safe participation in urban environments [27]. These policies involve combining government, community, and business resources to create sustainable and comprehensive policies that cater to the needs of all children [28]. Evaluating these policies, such as child-friendly schools, is crucial to ensure the successful implementation of child-friendly initiatives at the local level [29]. Achieving the goals of a child-friendly

city requires coordination among various sectors. Studies focusing on different countries demonstrate that these policies are designed to accelerate the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and translate children's rights into tangible actions at the local level [30]. As evident from the preceding discussion, child-friendly cities have devised a set of indicators to address the multi-faceted issue of child labor, encompassing a wide range of challenges faced by children, particularly in cities of less developed countries [3]. The table below highlights some of these critical indicators. Table 1. shows child-centered theories in urban planning.

Table 1. Some child-centered theories in urban planning.

Theorists	Dimensions	Descriptions
Jacobs,1961	physical social operational	The tranquility of urban spaces is not initially secured by the presence of police forces; rather, it is fundamentally maintained by an intricate and often subconscious social network that governs interactions among residents. The tranquility of urban spaces is not initially secured by the presence of police forces; rather, it is fundamentally maintained by an intricate and often subconscious social network that governs interactions among residents. Jane Jacobs, a renowned urban planner, championed this notion, emphasizing the role of "eyes on the street" in deterring criminal activity.
Whyte,1980	physical social	Urban sociologist Herbert Gans emphasized the importance of occupancy in deterring crime and maintaining the safety of public spaces. He argued that when these spaces are actively used by law-abiding citizens, they become less attractive to potential offenders.
Riggio,2002	physical social operational	The concept of child-friendly cities (CFCs) has emerged as a prominent paradigm within the domain of sustainable urban development. This approach underscores the fundamental principle that urban environments should be designed and managed with the specific needs and aspirations of children in mind. The core objective is to ensure the safety, health, education, and active participation of children in shaping their communities.
Gill,2007	physical social	He serves as a global champion for promoting children's outdoor play and mobility.
Malone,2015	physical social operational	The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 emphasize the critical need to address the rights and needs of the most vulnerable children and their communities. UNICEF, through its urban programs such as the Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI), plays a pivotal role in tackling urbanization challenges and upholding children's rights.
Bishop & Corkery,2017	physical social	Children's voices are often neglected in public health policies, even among public health professionals and place-based health practitioners.
Brown et al.,2019	physical social operational	To create truly child-friendly cities, we must embrace a paradigm shift in urban planning, adopting new policies and approaches that encompass a holistic understanding of children's needs and aspirations. This requires comprehensive education and training for professionals across diverse fields, including planning, public health, transportation, environment, sports and recreation, education, arts, and culture. By empowering these professionals to effectively address the issues outlined in this agenda, we can collectively transform our cities into nurturing environments that foster the well-being and development of all children.

Child labor

A 2013 report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) [31] estimates that approximately 265 million children worldwide are engaged in child labor, constituting 17% of the global child population. Globally, an estimated 200 million children, or those under 17 years of age, are employed in various industries (including food services, manufacturing, and construction), and around 20 million children are trapped in forced labor [33]. Currently, over six million children reside in impoverished neighborhoods, rendering them vulnerable to service deficiencies and the detrimental effects of social and health inequities in these urban environments, with this number expected to rise [16, 34]. Consequently, Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 aims to eradicate child labor in all its forms by 2025. However, even a decade prior to this deadline, this goal remained elusive as in 2016, approximately one in ten children (152 million in total) between the ages of 5 and 17 were engaged in child labor globally, with many working as unpaid family laborers in the agricultural sector [35]. These figures and research underscore the limited impact of international conventions and corresponding national legal frameworks on eradicating child labor, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive approach [35–37].

Child labor remains a contentious issue in social science research, globally recognized as a social and human rights violation that has become a pressing concern for world leaders

[12]. This phenomenon poses significant challenges to children's well-being, as past research has consistently demonstrated the detrimental impacts of child labor on children's physical, social, and psychological development. Their employment negatively affects access to educational institutions and academic performance, hindering their cognitive and environmental growth. These adverse effects can have long-lasting consequences. On a micro level, the detrimental impacts of child labor extend to family well-being [21]. On a macro scale, it presents substantial impediments to sustainable development in developing countries, as human resource development is crucial for achieving economic progress [38].

Below we will discuss some theories of the pathology of child labor Table 2.

It is important to note that not all work performed by children is classified as child labor. For instance, the participation of children or adolescents in activities that do not negatively impact their health or personal development or disrupt their schooling is generally considered a positive practice (and often referred to as “child work” [31] and can contribute to the development of children's skills and the well-being of their families. In contrast, the term “child labor” encompasses forms of work that deprive children of their childhood, hinder their growth potential, and are detrimental to their physical and mental development [35]. The relationship between children and cities is of paramount sig-

Table 2. Some theories of the pathology of child labor.

Approaches	Descriptions
Conflict theory	From a political economy perspective, social ills, including child labor, stem from underlying social inequalities, particularly economic disparities and the unjust distribution of societal resources and opportunities. The fundamental cause of social ills lies in intra-societal contradictions. In such a context, the law transforms into a mere mechanism for controlling discontented, impoverished, and powerless members of society, while simultaneously safeguarding the position and status of the privileged class. Given the emphasis of the political economy approach on the distribution of wealth and political power within cities, conflicts over resource and amenity allocation significantly impact urban form and structure. Urban life is characterized by constant tensions and struggles between the poor and the wealthy, shaping the physical and social character of cities (Sharee Pour, 176:2012).
Social exclusion theory	Social Exclusion: A term that is often difficult to define and still has conceptual ambiguities. Social exclusion refers to the denial of access to resources and opportunities available in society to specific individuals or groups. The roots of this concept lie in France, where it was first used in the mid-1970s to refer to people with disabilities who lacked access to welfare services (Ramachandran, 2016:25). Social exclusion is a dynamic state in which social networks, social institutions, and friendship groups are gradually weakened and eventually disappear (Silver, 2007:1). Social exclusion is a process by which certain social groups and individuals are excluded from society and marginalized.
Poverty theory	The Culture of Poverty Theory: Originating from a social psychological perspective, the Culture of Poverty Theory posits that the culture of poverty is a lifestyle characterized by psychological and social dimensions such as isolation, withdrawal, and a lack of family support for its members. Adventurousness, aggression, and succumbing to immediate emotions and desires are hallmarks of poverty culture (Afshani et al., 1993).
Theory of relative deprivation	Relative Deprivation: Arising from the comparison of one's own living conditions with those of more affluent individuals, relative deprivation involves individuals comparing their beliefs and values despite sharing common backgrounds with others. In other words, relative deprivation is defined as the actors' perception of a discrepancy between their value expectations and value capabilities. Value expectations represent the living conditions and goods that people believe they deserve. Value capabilities are the goods and conditions that they realistically believe they can acquire and maintain (Runciman, 2009:1224).

nificance for both. Not only do different built environments shape distinct childhoods, but child-friendliness serves as an indicator of a city's overall quality. Extensive research in environmental psychology and children's geography has highlighted the importance of urban space as a habitat for children. Conversely, cities have largely been designed without considering children's needs since the advent of modernity [39].

Despite the growing research attention to the severity, causes, and intervention measures to curb it, child labor remains a pressing issue in child protection [40]. Additionally, child safety is another critical concern emphasized within frameworks such as UNICEF's Child-Friendly Cities framework and the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities framework [15, 41] and urban planning. Consequently, this research aims to elucidate the position of child labor within the concept of the child-friendly city and explore new dimensions of this social and urban dilemma.

3. Methodology

This research is applied in terms of its purpose and qualitative in nature with a meta-synthesis approach and library-based data collection. It should be noted that meta-synthesis is derived from the interpretive paradigm [42] and is a research method that uses rigorous qualitative methods to combine existing qualitative studies with the aim of constructing more meaning through a comprehensive interpretation based on qualitative studies, including the use of conceptual coding of data to build a comprehensive model that provides insights into the phenomenon under study [43]. This approach identifies patterns in qualitative data and aims to enrich understanding of a topic, generate new theoretical insights, and also serve as a tool for developing appropriate interventions [44].

Given the abundance of different approaches to synthesizing qualitative research, the seven-step approach of Sandelowski and Barroso (2007) [15] was used as it is a stimulus for thought and creativity [45]. On the other hand, the search stages aimed at identifying research reports and the

reliability of the selected articles were conducted by experienced experts using the Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) method [46], which is a structured tool that is accessible online and is typically guided, developed, and selected by a ten-question checklist by the relevant literature. These steps are used to assess the quality of primary qualitative research studies to determine the accuracy, validity, and importance of the qualitative research studies [47] Which is indicated in figure 2.

In the first step, as in any research method, a suitable and developed research question directs the meta-combination, after determining the primary purpose of the combined research study, the parameters that form the criteria for entering the research should be specified, and this is because What studies should be excluded helps. First, we identify the four main topics: primary topic (what), population (who), time (when) and cognitive methodology (how) [48] and our research begins with questions that include factors and Useful concepts in knowledge transfer through transnational projects are found in the existing literature. Research often uses these factors to produce a common frame of reference that can be used for knowledge transfer. The formulation of the study question is essentially the targeted development of a specific research question. He knows the most important task of metacombination [49]. Also, the research questions help the researcher to determine the entry and exit criteria based on it. Based on the above, the main question of the research is "how to explain the position of working children in the concept of a child-friendly city?" In the second step, the search for related articles in the most reliable scientific research databases "semanticscholar", "science Web of" and "Scopus" was done by combining the two main keywords of the research, i.e. friendly child cities and child labor, and 29 articles were extracted. It should be kept in mind that the search has been done in the title, abstract and keywords of authentic English scientific research articles in the last ten years. In the third step, the screening of each of the articles according to the 50-point method of Kasp was scored from one

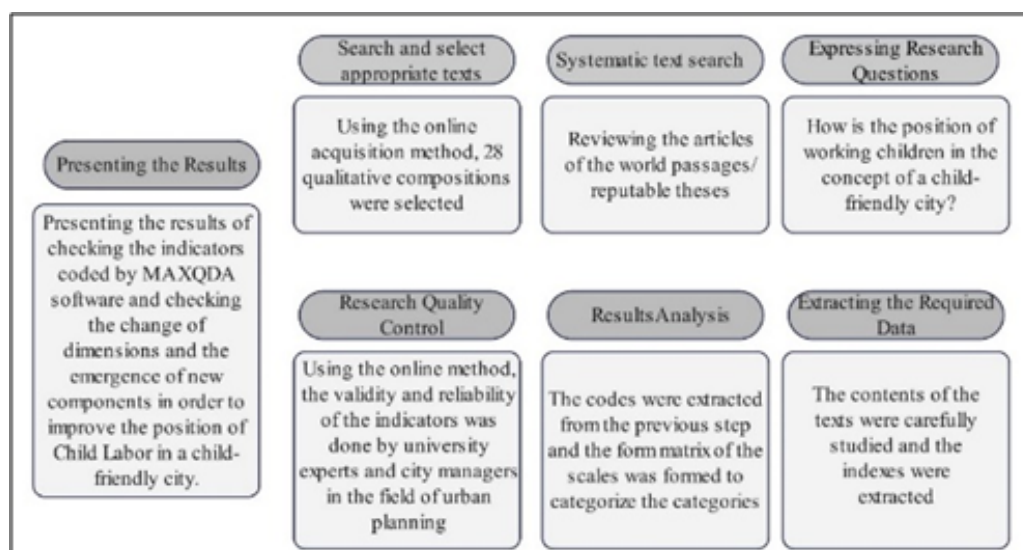


Figure 2. Sandelowski and Barroso's seven steps of metacombination in this research (adapted from: [32])

to five, and the articles whose sum of points exceeded 21 were scientifically and qualitatively confirmed and the rest were removed. . After screening the selected articles, 29 articles were included in the meta-synthesis process, and the selection process of the articles is shown in the image below.

Step 1: Defining the research question and inclusion criteria

As with any research method, a well-developed research question provides direction for the meta-synthesis. After determining the primary objective of the mixed research study, the parameters that constitute the study's inclusion criteria must be identified. This helps determine which studies should be excluded. Initially, we identify four main themes: primary topic (what), population (who), time (when), and methodological approach (how) [48]. Our research begins with questions that encompass the factors and concepts useful in knowledge transfer through transnational projects found in the existing literature. Studies often use these factors to generate a shared reference framework that can be used for knowledge transfer. The formulation of the research question essentially considers the purposeful development of a specific research question as the most important task of meta-synthesis [49]. The research questions also assist the researcher in determining the inclusion and exclusion criteria accordingly.

Based on the above, the main research question is formu-

lated as follows: "How is the position of child labor conceptualized within the concept of the child-friendly city?"

Step 2: Literature search

A search for relevant articles was conducted in the most reputable academic databases, namely "semanticscholar," "Science Web of," and "Scopus," using a combination of the two main research keywords: "child-friendly cities" and "child labor." A total of 29 articles were extracted. It should be noted that the search was conducted in the titles, abstracts, and keywords of relevant English-language academic articles published in the past ten years.

Step 3: Screening and selection of articles

In the third step, each article was screened using the 50-point CASP method, receiving a score from one to five. Articles that scored a total of 21 or more [46]¹ were considered scientifically and qualitatively sound and were retained, while the remaining articles were excluded. After screening, a total of 29 articles were included in the meta-synthesis process. The article selection process is illustrated in the following figure.

The screening steps for selected articles are presented in figure 3.

Articles were selected from the period of 2014 to 2024.

¹The scoring method for the articles is as follows: (40 – 50) excellent, (31 – 40) very good, (21 – 30) good, (11 – 20) average, (0 – 10) weak)

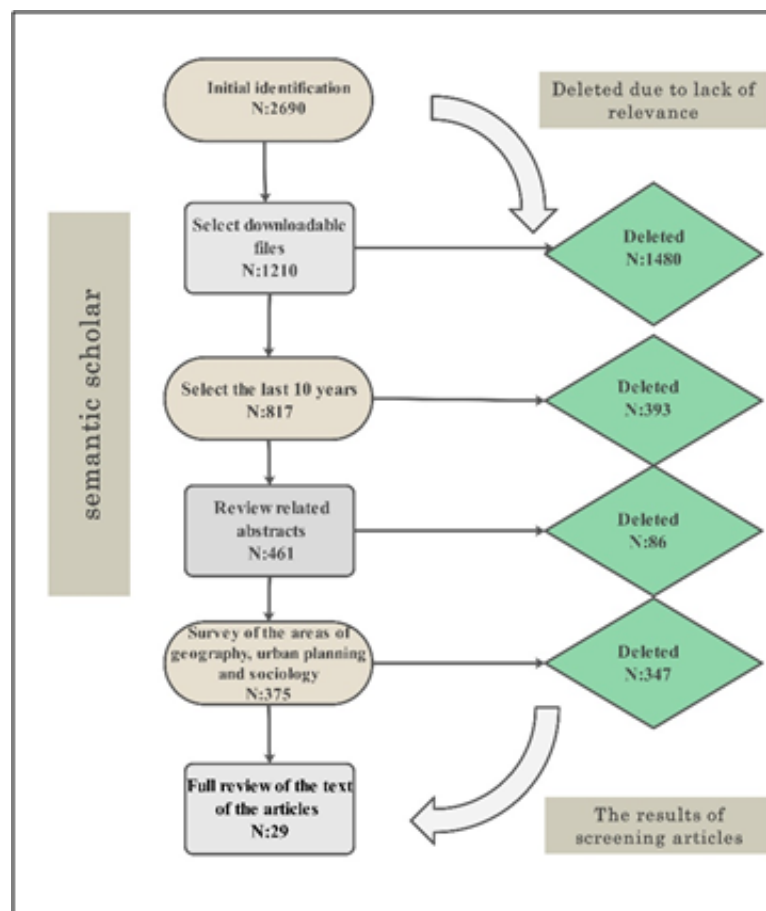


Figure 3. Screening steps of selected articles.

Upon examining the publication year of the articles, it was found that the majority of the selected studies for this research were published in 2024 and the least in 2020. The key texts and main frameworks of the selected articles, such as abstracts, research objectives, and findings, were carefully reviewed and analyzed multiple times at this stage.

Step 4:

In the fourth step, the selected articles were continuously reviewed to reach the appropriate content. After selecting the final documents and sources, the text of the articles was extracted using a systematic review method in MAXQDA software. The authors' names, along with the year and codes of the articles from the selected sources, were also extracted. Based on the inductive coding process, the articles

were classified into five main concepts and topics: child-friendly cities, children's rights, child labor, child-friendly cities and urban forces, child labor and public spaces, child-friendly cities and urban space security, child labor and urban economy.

Step 5:

In the fifth step of this research, 67 codes were identified and categorized into five main categories. Based on the similarity of the identified concepts, they were classified into 5 categories, 11 main concepts, and 51 codes, which are shown in Table 3 below.

In the sixth step of the research quality assessment, the primary and secondary indicators and categories that were part of the research design were utilized. This research project

Table 3. Categories, concepts and codes extracted from sources.

Thematic classification	Article No	Codes frequency	Coding	Main concepts	Item
Child-friendly city and citizenship rights of Child Labor	A1, A3, A10, A14, A29, A22	4	Enhancing child safety in urban spaces	Citizenship rights	Social dimensions
		3	Eliminating social stigma for street children		
		2	Providing social support services for children's families		
		4	Safeguarding children's rights in line with human rights and UNICEF principles		
		3	Establishing mental health centers and offering free counseling		
		5	Supporting social services for street children's families		
		13	Providing a suitable environment for children's social interactions		
		11	Creating opportunities for children's participation in urban decision-making		
		5	Cultural and artistic empowerment of child labor	Educational and cultural	
		5	Expanding health and medical facilities for children		
		7	Developing social programs and projects for children's cultural education		
		7	Expanding educational opportunities for children		
Child friendly city and city rules	A8, A9, A28, A26, A21, A16, A11, A8	7	Targeted urban policies for children's working hours	Implementation of city policies and laws	Dimensions of urban policy
		20	Root cause analysis of support policies for street children and their families		
		2	Establishment of a Children's Council		
		1	Multi-level coordination among stakeholders in the planning process	Urban planning	
		3	Knowledge exchange between researchers, policymakers, and citizens		
		14	Planning for sustainable urban development		
		2	Comprehensive monitoring of the implementation of urban laws	Urban rules	
		8	Interactive and comprehensive communication between children and urban legislators		
		6	Enactment of new urban laws in line with international standards		

Continued of Table 3.

Thematic classification	Article No	Codes frequency	Coding	Main concepts	Item
Child Labor and public spaces	A6, A7, A25,	3	Realization of children's rights in the urban context	Recreation and health of children	Physical dimensions
	A24, A23, A20,	3	Incorporating Children's Sports Facilities into Urban Fabric		
	A19, A18, A17	9	Establishing Children's Playgrounds in Neighborhoods		
	A15.A16, A13, A12	8	Developing Recreational Spaces for Children Citywide		
		5	Expanding Green Spaces and Urban Parks		
		10	Optimizing Neighborhood Physical Features	Public spaces	
	17	Fostering a Supportive Environment for Children's Mental Growth:			
Child-friendly city and safety of urban space	A4, A5, A27, A17	3	Ensuring Child Safety in Work Environments	Security and safety of urban space	Functional dimensions
		12	Enhancing Safety in Public Urban Spaces		
		6	Tailoring Citizen Services to Children's Needs		
		13	Creating Multifunctional Spaces for Children		
		8	Facilitating Safe and Easy Access to Natural Environments	Access and transportation	
		8	Guarantee Access to Educational and Healthcare Services		
		3	Enhance Access to Sports and Educational Facilities		
		1	Leverage Technology for Location-Based Support		
		1	Enhance Nighttime Security on Commuter Routes:		
		11	Construct Safe Pedestrian Paths		
9	Implement Child-Friendly Public Transportation				
Child labor and urban economy	A2, A9	2	Monitor Children's Working Hours and Age Requirements	Children's financial rights and skills	Economic dimensions
		5	Prevent Exploitation of Children's Vulnerabilities		
		7	Prevent Exploitation of Children's Vulnerabilities		
		3	Prevent Exploitation of Children's Vulnerabilities		
		3	Provide Financial Support and Credits for Child Laborers		
		3	Enhance Skills of Child Laborers for Labor Market Entry		
		3	Monitor and Ensure Fair Wages for Child Laborers	Employment and entrepreneurship	
		3	Create Government-Supervised Employment Opportunities for Children		
		2	Protect Children's Assets and Property		
		4	Foster Entrepreneurship Opportunities		
		2	Promote Stable and Secure Employment		
		3	Ensure Fair Compensation within National Labor Laws		

was conducted with the support of research grants and the expertise of professors and urban managers with over five years of experience in urban planning and social sciences at Azad University of Mashhad. The selection of these experts was done through probability sampling. The final stage of the meta-synthesis analysis involved the presentation of the results and the extracted model. In this study, the categories, main concepts, and codes identified as influencing factors for child-friendly cities and the presence of child labor were analyzed and their quality was verified. In this stage, the research model obtained at the category level was expanded to the sub-category level, as shown in figure 4.

Through a comprehensive examination of the diverse research and thematic aspects of the extracted articles, a total of 300 concepts relevant to the research topic were coded using the MAXQDA software. These concepts served as the foundation for analyzing and exploring the research findings, with a focus on the most significant themes:

Social dimensions

Citizenship rights:

Children, despite numerous international legal documents affirming their urban rights, often find their needs and perspectives overlooked in public spaces. UNICEF's Child-Friendly Cities initiative aims to assist local governments in realizing children's rights through the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Urban children's rights encompass a wide range, including:

- Access to quality healthcare and prevention of health crises
- Adequate educational facilities within cities
- Suitable and secure housing
- Utilization of green spaces and recreational areas for

children's play and leisure

Children must have a voice in decisions affecting their city and exercise their civic rights. They must be protected from discrimination and potential harm in the urban environment [15].

Educational and cultural dimensions

Education and culture advancement:

Fostering education and culture in cities can contribute to educational advancement, poverty reduction, and child labor mitigation. Educational and cultural programs can also promote a sense of social cohesion and overall community and individual development [2, 50, 51].

These programs, by reducing family vulnerability, not only prevent cultural and social discrimination in the city but also enhance their communication skills, cultural intelligence, social skills, and artistic and mental abilities [37, 52–54].

On the other hand, the cultural and social diversity of societies plays a significant role in the formation of child-friendly cities and helps to create creative and dynamic environments where all children from different backgrounds feel safe and comfortable. When children find the ability to understand and accept differences and receive training, their personal and social identity is strengthened and it also provides an opportunity for children to benefit from each other's different experiences and stories, and finally, such an environment helps to reduce discrimination and inequalities. And it leads to the promotion of social solidarity and the strengthening of human values among future generations.

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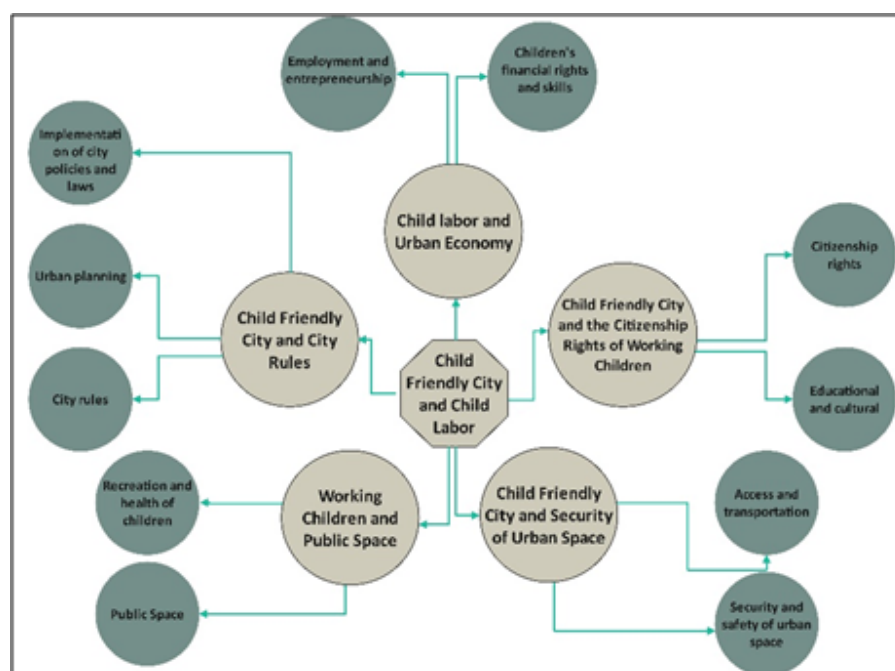


Figure 4. Thematic classification of extracted codes.

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Urban policy dimensions

Urban planning:

Urban planning is a systematic process undertaken for the development and management of cities and urban areas. It encompasses defining urban development goals, strategies, and approaches; designing and implementing various projects and programs to enhance the quality of life for city residents, the environment, the economy, and the social fabric. Urban planning, in the context of creating child-friendly cities, can establish a strong connection with nature by respecting children's rights, building a safe city, and providing spaces for play [52, 55].

Fostering child-friendly cities: the role of urban laws and policies

Engaging children in urban lawmaking:

Establishing a comprehensive and interactive dialogue between children and urban policymakers is crucial to ensure that their voices are heard in decision-making processes and their needs and rights are prioritized. This engagement can drive the development of child-friendly cities and enhance the quality of life for children within urban environments. Strategies to foster this engagement include:

- Organizing joint meetings and gatherings between children and policymakers to discuss urban issues, children's needs, and their active participation in decision-making processes, such as children's councils or committees.
- Creating child-friendly public and recreational spaces in cities tailored to their needs and preferences.
- Providing necessary awareness and training for urban policymakers on children's rights.

Building this engagement on a foundation of respect, transparency, and ongoing interaction between children and policymakers is essential for achieving positive and meaningful outcomes [15].

Implementing urban policies and laws:

Addressing child labor through effective policies:

Child labor is often driven by family income constraints and uncertain income streams, leading to children dropping out of school. Therefore, implementing effective urban policies and laws related to child labor is critical to protect their rights, ensure their safety and well-being, and promote their healthy development.

The complexity of this issue necessitates a comprehensive set of policy tools to address and impact child labor. Successful implementation of these policies requires coordination among various departments and city councils, informing parents and children about their rights, addressing the

special needs of vulnerable children, and ensuring consistent monitoring of policy implementation [52, 56].

Adopting appropriate policies aimed at increasing the participation of adult family members in the labor market or entrepreneurial activities can mitigate the adverse effects of child labor. Additionally, successful policy implementation can contribute to increased child participation in urban affairs, the creation of child-friendly cities, the provision of safe and protected environments for their growth and development, the strengthening of children's self-confidence, and the enhancement of their cultural and social level. Therefore, due attention must be paid to the proper and comprehensive implementation of these policies and measures related to children. While progress has been made in the past decade, there is still much to learn about the impact of public policy on the stability and quality of work for many children in developing countries [3, 57].

Physical dimensions: shaping child-friendly cities

Recreation and children's health:

Children's daily activities, educational pursuits, and group play within the urban fabric enable them to develop their social and physical skills. These skills empower them to better navigate life's challenges and enhance their communication with others.

Municipalities should create suitable and safe play spaces for children in diverse environments, allowing them to freely engage in recreational activities and spend their time safely. Providing sports activities and establishing parks and green spaces in cities for children can contribute to their physical and mental well-being.

Furthermore, research on children's recreation and health, considering the comfort of children's spaces in different communities with varying population sizes, accessibility levels, and spatial equity, offers valuable insights into promoting sustainable and child-friendly cities that prioritize the needs of residents, from children to their families [57, 58].

Public space:

Public spaces hold immense significance for children, providing a safe environment filled with healthy and educational activities. Unfortunately, in some areas, children are forced into child labor due to poverty, disability, or unfavorable social conditions. This not only poses serious harm to their health and future but also strips them of their fundamental rights.

To address this issue, measures must be taken to ensure children's access to safe and healthy public spaces and create suitable conditions for their entry into the labor market [50, 53, 59].

The street environment plays a crucial role in children's growth and development. However, many urban centers, due to issues of high urban density and traffic congestion, are deemed unsuitable for children's commute from home to school. Many children are deprived of the opportunity to experience the outdoors as their lives are centered around homes and schools. Moreover, limited research explores the potential of street environments during school travel for underprivileged children in older urban areas.

Therefore, creating child-friendly public spaces within neighborhoods, including parks, plazas, playgrounds, and other green spaces, along with providing cultural, artistic, sports, and educational programs and activities for children in public spaces, and educating individuals and families about children's rights and the importance of their health and wholesome development, can significantly improve children's experiences in public spaces; [17, 57].

Functional dimensions: enhancing child-friendly cities

Safety and security of urban spaces:

Ensuring the safety and security of urban spaces for children is a paramount concern. Urban environments should be designed to enable children to safely and confidently utilize streets, parks, public places, and schools.

To foster a safe and secure urban environment for children, measures such as installing surveillance cameras, increasing lighting in areas frequented by children, providing safety and self-care training for children and adolescents, establishing child-friendly police forces, enhancing supervision of schools and public spaces, and encouraging inter-departmental cooperation are essential.

Addressing the safety and security of children in urban spaces is not only crucial from a physical standpoint but also holds significant psychological and social implications, contributing to their healthy development, self-confidence, and the formation of stronger social connections [57].

Accessibility and transportation:

To create child-friendly public transportation, public transportation routes should be tailored to children's needs, providing easy access to essential locations such as schools, parks, recreational centers, and healthcare facilities. Establishing dedicated buses and taxis for children, equipped with safety features and child-friendly amenities, can facilitate improved transportation for children.

Public transportation stations should incorporate safety features such as secure stairs, play areas, and green spaces for children. Additionally, educating drivers and public transportation personnel about children's special needs, safety procedures, and appropriate interactions can enhance the quality of transportation services for children.

Creating child-friendly public spaces for play and recreation at public transportation stations and establishing green spaces around stations can provide a more enjoyable environment for children. Moreover, pedestrian safety, particularly for children, relies on well-designed pathways. Child-friendly routes play a crucial role in protecting young pedestrians. Shared spaces that accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians can also be beneficial for pedestrians [57–60].

Children's labor rights and skills:

Children's labor rights should be established in a manner that safeguards their health, personal development, and human rights. Equipping children with skills is the most effective way to facilitate their growth and development. For instance, providing children with knowledge and practical skills better equips them for the future and prepares them for entry into the labor market.

Therefore, prioritizing children's labor rights and skill development is not only essential for the children themselves but also holds significant value for society and the economy [59].

Furthermore, encouraging children's entrepreneurial spirit and fostering their entrepreneurial capabilities can contribute to the social and economic development of society. Providing entrepreneurship education and workshops to children and adolescents, promoting creative ideas, and enhancing their entrepreneurial skills can cultivate a future workforce of capable and innovative individuals [2, 37].

Employment and entrepreneurship:

Creating job opportunities for individuals working in the children's field, including cultural and sports instructors and their vulnerable families, can contribute to the proper growth and development of this sector [61].

Officials and organizations related to children can, based on these considerations, provide appropriate programs and strategies to create a suitable environment for the employment and entrepreneurship of children and their families within the framework of appropriate laws [52, 62].

4. Discussion

Based on the research findings, child-friendly cities can be categorized into urban subcategories such as neighborhoods, streets, and homes, as urban environments like homes, streets, neighborhoods, and the like are areas where the lives of children, especially Child Labor, unfold, and for the realization of a child-friendly city, the needs and rights of children in urban environments must be addressed and acted upon. This approach covers the various aspects of children's lives in the context of urban environments.

On the other hand, this categorization also includes the following:

- Emphasis on urban space as the main platform for the activities of Child Labor The need for changes at various levels to support Child Labor
- Categorization of support measures based on urban spatial levels
- Alignment with local child-friendly city standards
- Creating a tangible picture of the conditions of Child Labor for all segments of society

Examining the results of this research in comparison with similar research that has addressed the components of this topic shows that the need for the place of Child Labor in the concept of a child-friendly city requires a new and integrated approach to the supervisory, implementation, and social advancement aspects of society.

Of course, it should be noted that previous research has paid more attention to the concepts of child-friendly cities, but the lack of research that has examined all aspects of it to solve the problems of Child Labor and also identifies its impact on the urban space is strongly felt, and for this reason, there is a deep gap in our understanding of how to integrate Child Labor, who are a special vulnerable group,

into the framework of a child-friendly city.

For example, in the results of the research conducted by Nikou and Pokrel (2013), it is necessary to enhance urban management decisions in achieving children's participation in decision-making, create a child-friendly legal environment, and establish a code of conduct in a child-friendly city.

On the other hand, empowering children to recognize their potential as participants in building child-friendly cities requires adults to overlook some of their decision-making powers in the face of children.

On the other hand, the results of the research conducted by Balagopalan (2019) address whether or not children's rights are well-guaranteed by the new government of India. It also shows that the new government, due to its contradictory policies, makes it difficult to guarantee children's rights. It also examines the issue of whether the government, by continuing on its current path of implementing children's rights and creating new deprivations in society, deepens the challenges. In the end, this research concludes that a political-analytical approach and attention to new structural deprivations are needed to better understand the communication issues between governance and children's rights in post-colonial countries.

5. Conclusion:

In the concept of a child-friendly city, the lack of attention to the position and rights of working children is clearly felt, and explaining the position of working children in this concept is a vital and important issue that requires the attention and serious action of city managers, human rights activists, and private and government institutions. A child-friendly city, based on international principles and regulations, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child, must create a safe, healthy and opportunity-creating environment for all children. This space should pay special attention to working children and save them from social, economic and all-round exploitation. Development of a child-friendly city should mean ensuring social justice, sustainable development and respect for children's rights due to the conditions They are in a poor economic, social or

family situation. To achieve this goal, four new categories in the field of protection, education, provision and health can be mentioned, which are also specified in picture number 5, and these categories can be designed and implemented in such a way as to support the rights and needs of working children:

1. Urban home: a space that provides the basic needs of working children and provides a safe and suitable environment for their life and growth, which can include social services, counseling and legal support.
2. Kindergarten Street: Streets that are specifically designed for children's scientific, cultural and social education, and these spaces must provide the necessary capabilities for the development of these children and act as the main points of interaction and learning.
3. Work and play neighborhood: In these neighborhoods, it is possible to access suitable jobs to ensure the livelihood of families, as well as a space for children to play and have fun, which can help reduce the economic and social pressures on the shoulders of working children. cause the child's social development.
4. Salamat Street: Creating an environment that deals with children's health and health and facilitates access to medical and health services for working children, which can help improve the quality of life as well as the growth and physical and mental health of children.

Finally, it should be kept in mind that the explanation and implementation of these infrastructures and categories in child-friendly cities can improve the situation of working children and consider their rights in the society, and this work is not only for the benefit of working children, but also in general It will benefit the urban community, because investing in children means investing in a sustainable future.

And finally, the conceptual model of the research is shown in figure 5.

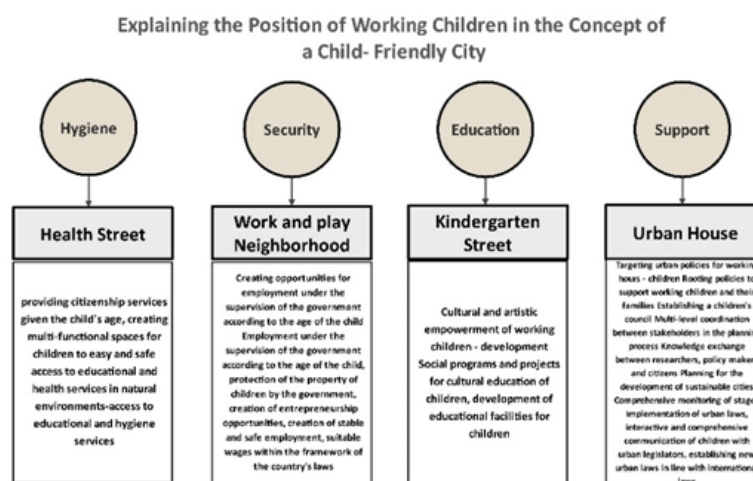


Figure 5. Conceptual model of research.

Authors contributions

Authors have contributed equally in preparing and writing the manuscript.

Availability of data and materials

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, upon reasonable request.

Conflict of interests

The author declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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