

## Exploring the Perception of Children Living in Old and Distressed Neighborhoods about the Ideal Neighborhood; Case Study: Hesarak-e Bala Neighborhood in Karaj

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### Abstract

Children are an important group of residents in urban neighborhoods whose feelings and views about their neighborhood and its quantitative and qualitative characteristics have a great impact on their individual and social development. Therefore, considering their demands in designing and organizing urban neighborhoods, especially in old and distressed neighborhoods that do not have good quality, is important and necessary. Therefore, the present cross-sectional study with a mixed method and focusing on the Hesarak-e Bala neighborhood located in the distressed area of Karaj tries to examine and evaluate the views of fourth to sixth-grade children regarding: (1) their level of interest in their neighborhood (collecting data using interview and analyzing with a statistical mechanism) as well as (2) their visual and written perspectives about ideal neighborhood (based on their drawings and its analysis thorough an interpretive mechanism). 134 children participated in the first part, and 28 children participated in the second part. The findings indicated the lack of children's interest about their current neighborhood and the significant relationship between this issue and the gender and age. Moreover, the results showed the importance of various natural and artificial elements in their image and visualization of the ideal neighborhood.

**Keywords:** Child-friendly neighborhood, Child-centered city, Child psychology, Children's drawings..

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