Architecture, Urban Planning, and Structural Violence: Mechanisms of Producing Anti-life Space for the Subaltern in Contemporary Cities

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Abstract
This research critically investigates the pivotal role of architecture and urban planning in the perpetual reproduction of "structural violence" embedded within the physical fabric of contemporary metropolitan environments. The central research problem addresses precisely how spatial processes, urban policies, and decision-making frameworks systematically and covertly precipitate social exclusion, resulting in the generation of "anti-biotic space" for subaltern populations. Grounded in a rigorous qualitative methodology, specifically employing "thematic analysis," this study conducts a profound examination of the mechanisms generating spatial inequality. The requisite empirical data were meticulously aggregated from two primary sources: comprehensive library documentation across architecture, urbanism, and sociopolitical sciences; and in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a distinct panel of 100 experts, comprising an equal representation of 25 university professors in architecture, 25 in urban planning, and 25 in sociology, alongside 25 experienced senior researchers. The core objectives include diagnosing the latent mechanisms within spatial policy-making that necessitate the marginalization of lower classes; analyzing the severe biological and infrastructural ramifications of these dynamics; and elucidating the interpretative power of theoretical frameworks such as Galtung's structural violence, Lefebvre's production of space, and Harvey's spatial justice. Furthermore, the study aims to formulate pragmatic strategies for mitigating spatial disparities. Conclusively, the findings demonstrate that the aggressive commodification of land, discriminatory zoning regulations, and displacement-inducing urban renewal projects function as the fundamental instruments of structural violence, which systematically erode the essential livability and socio-spatial rights of vulnerable communities within the modern urban landscape.
Keywords: Spatial Justice, Social Exclusion, Production of Space, Spatial Inequality, Livability.

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1.Introduction

The contemporary city is, in essence, a paradoxical space (Atkins, 2022); a realm that is simultaneously a locus of hope for social mobility, capital accumulation, and cultural crystallization, yet at the same time, functions as a massive machine reproducing social inequalities on an increasing scale (Sarkar et al., 2024, pp. 1392-1393; Klinenberg, 2018, p. 5). The physical fabric of the city, from buildings and streets to infrastructures and public spaces, is not merely a neutral and passive container for social events; rather, it is itself the product of power relations and prevailing political-economic processes, actively participating in shaping these relations (Imani Jajarmi & Masoudian, 2019; Samadi et al., 2020; Ghorbani Sepehr & Janparvar, 2019). In this context, the disciplines of architecture and urban planning, as key professions in shaping space, play a decisive role. However, beyond the intentions of designers or planners, spatial decisions are often made within frameworks that prioritize the interests of dominant groups over the basic needs of subaltern groups (Clark, 2020; Nicoletti, 2022; Mohammadi, 2020).

This research is founded on the premise that many physical and social pathologies in today's cities—such as extensive marginalization, spatial poverty, and the decline of livability in low-income neighborhoods—are not accidental consequences or inevitable byproducts of development, but constitute the direct result of a form of "structural violence." The concept of structural violence, first introduced by Johan Galtung (Galtung, 1969, pp. 168–171), refers to those harms and deprivations that are not imposed by a single, deliberate actor, but by social, political, and economic structures that appear "natural" and "legal" (Buer & Villenave, 2024). This type of violence is hidden, gradual, and indirect, manifesting itself in the form of unequal "Life Chances."

When applied within the context of urban studies, structural violence in architecture and urbanism refers to processes that systematically deprive subaltern groups of access to vital urban resources (decent housing, public services, clean air, efficient transportation) through land and housing policies, zoning laws, infrastructure budget allocation, and urban renewal projects (Forde, 2024; Bernroider et al., 2025, pp. 1–20; Dadashpoor & Shojaee, 2022). These processes, by creating institutional inefficiency within the agencies and actors involved in urban management (Alizadeh & Amanpour, 2023), ultimately lead to the production of what this research terms "Anti-life Space."Anti-life Space is not merely a poor space; it is a space wherein all physical, social, and institutional mechanisms operate against the livability, dignity, and flourishing potential of its inhabitants. These spaces are the product of exclusion and marginalization[1] (Mbembe, 2019, pp. 64-67; Hamraie, 2020, p. 409).

It must be noted that the application of structural violence theory in the context of Iranian cities is not a mere replication of Western texts, but a response to observed realities within the local planning system. Recent studies in Iranian urban planning (Alizadeh & Amanpour, 2023; Shafiee & Abdi Daneshpour, 2020) indicate that the structure of urban management in Iran, despite substantive differences with classical liberal systems, follows a similar pattern of commodifying space through mechanisms such as "density selling" and "land-use change laws". This functional alignment between bureaucratic decisions (structure) and the intensification of marginalization (spatial consequence) in Iranian cities confirms the validity of employing the analytical framework of structural violence. Therefore, relying on these contextual confirmations, the present research delves into the deeper, technical layers of this relationship.

In other words, by emphasizing the issue of "Contextualization of Theory" and avoiding "hasty generalization" in critical urban studies, global theoretical propositions (such as the theories of David Harvey or Henri Lefebvre on neoliberalism and space) cannot be considered applicable to Iranian cities (which have a combined rentier-state political economy) without mediation and verification. The validity question of this research is whether the "impact of structures on spatial configuration" in the Iranian context operates like the West? And if yes, where is the evidence before entering the discussion of mechanisms? The general answer was that although the base theories (structural violence and production of space) are global, their instances in Iran (such as density selling, Article 5 Commission, and state renewal plans, etc.) are objective evidence confirming these theories.

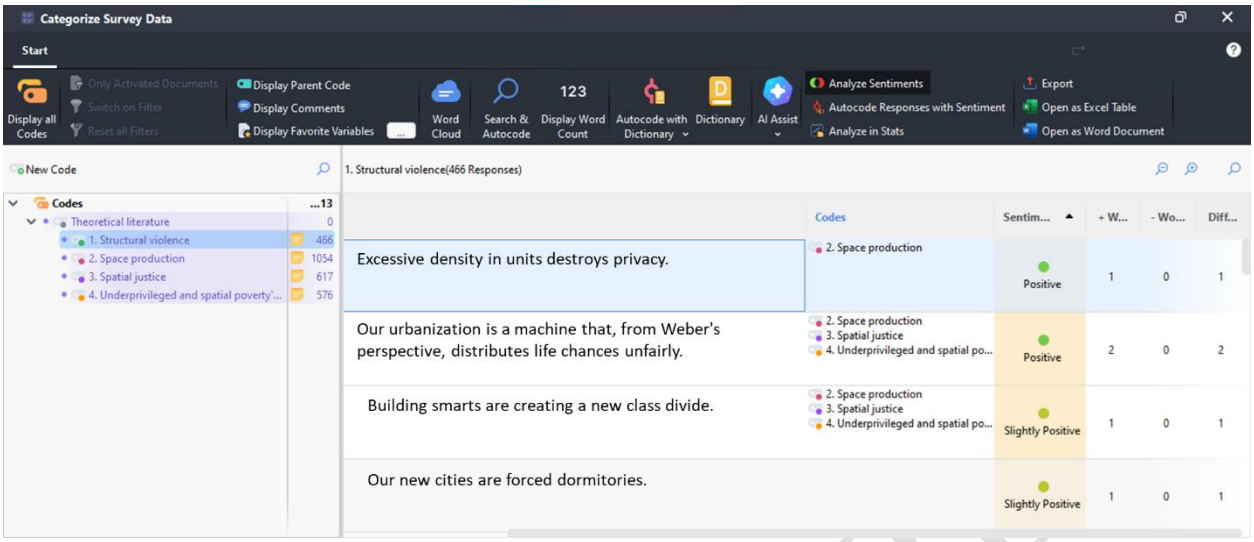


Figure 1: Examination of the research problem from the interviewees' perspective within the framework of theoretical literature.

The primary problem of this research is: How, and through what mechanisms, do the disciplines of architecture and urban planning depart from their specialized and technical positions to become tools for establishing and intensifying this structural violence? In other words, how do decisions ostensibly made in the pursuit of "development," "modernization," or urban "efficiency" practically lead to the driving of subalterns to marginal areas, increased living costs for them, and the formation of dysfunctional and vulnerable urban fabrics? It is worth noting that assuming the state of "spatial exclusion" and inequality in this research is not a subjective prejudice, but is based on a broad body of prior empirical studies in the context of Iranian urbanism. Numerous quantitative and qualitative studies (Imani Jajarmi & Masoudian, 2019; Dadashpoor & Shojaee, 2022; Bagheri Miab et al., 2024) have confirmed the definite occurrence of phenomena such as selective segregation, marginalization, and class divides in the spatial structure of Iranian cities.

However, what remains neglected in this rich literature is the explanation of the "black box" of processes that produce these outputs. Therefore, moving beyond the phase of "describing inequality" (which has been achieved previously), the present research focuses its approach on "causal analysis," seeking to answer the question of which technical and policy mechanisms within the specialized systems of architecture and urban planning play a role in reproducing this proven situation. Thus, this research no longer seeks to prove the "presence or absence" of inequality[2], but relying on this proven fact, seeks to fill the knowledge gap regarding the "how" and the "Disciplinary Mechanisms" of architecture and urban planning in shaping it.

In recent decades, the dominant discourse in urban planning, under the dominance of neoliberal paradigms, has focused on concepts such as the "competitive city," "urban entrepreneurship," and "mega-projects" (Majerowitz & Allweil, 2019, pp. 43–45). This approach, often accompanied by the privatization of public spaces, the intense commodification of housing and land, and deregulation, has fueled the intensification of spatial inequalities (Sternberg, 2023, pp. 78–80). In such a context, architecture and urban planning have sometimes been reduced to tools for facilitating capital accumulation and "gentrification," and the "Right to the City" for a large portion of urban residents, especially the subaltern, has been ignored (Stein, 2019, pp. 15–17).

The significance of this research lies in several aspects: First, by directly linking the theory of "structural violence" from political and social sciences with the "production of space" from critical geography and architecture, it attempts to provide an interdisciplinary analysis of the mechanisms producing inequality in the city. This approach goes beyond describing urban poverty to explain the processes generating poverty. Second, this research focuses on "Anti-life Space" as an analytical concept. This concept helps us move away from a sole focus on economic dimensions of poverty (such as income) and attend to the physical,

environmental, and social dimensions of deprivation that are directly shaped by design and planning decisions. For example, the location of polluting industries near subaltern settlements, the lack of per capita services and green space, and the design of unsafe and exclusionary public spaces are all instances of producing Anti-life Space.

In a more complete statement, it must be said that using the concept of "Spatial Poverty Trap" or similar concepts requires proving whether in Iranian cities, "location" really acts as an independent factor in poverty or is merely a reflection of income poverty? The general answer here is that the concept of "Anti-life Space" and "spatial poverty" are not merely abstract terms, but the best descriptors for the living condition of groups who, due to distance from the center, lack of formal ownership deeds, and deprivation of urban services in Iran, are trapped in the cycle of poverty. In a more precise answer, it should be said that applying concepts such as "spatial poverty trap" to the existing situation in Iranian cities is based on objective evidence obtained from urban surveys. Research conducted in the field of spatial justice and service distribution in the country's metropolises (Maleki & Azadbakht, 2018; Yaghoubi & Shams, 2019) clearly shows that the variable of "place of residence" has a significant correlation with quality of life and citizen health indicators. This significant coexistence of poverty and place in the geography of Iranian cities, which operates beyond income poverty, justifies and necessitates the application of analytical frameworks based on the "production of Anti-life Space" to explain the mechanisms of this phenomenon.

Third, while many studies focus on the consequences of inequality, this research seeks to identify the "mechanisms." This study seeks to answer how "algorithms of violence" are encoded within ostensibly technical and neutral policies such as zoning, density selling, and the evaluation of construction projects. Finally, the necessity of this research in the contemporary Iranian context is doubled by challenges such as the expansion of informal settlements, the inefficiency of urban regeneration plans, and the housing crisis. Understanding how architectural and urban planning decisions can act as a form of structural violence is the first step toward moving towards "spatial justice" and formulating practical solutions for creating more livable and equitable cities for all.The following table summarizes the relationship between the problem, questions, and objectives of the research.

It should be explained that the formulation of the subsidiary questions of this research is based on a stepped approach. Before entering the first question (how exclusion occurs), relying on objective and empirical data obtained from the review of documents and previous studies mentioned above (reviewed in the literature review), this research considers the occurrence of the phenomenon of "spatial exclusion" and "segregation" in the studied urban system as a proven fact and a definitive assumption; therefore, the first question does not seek to prove the existence of exclusion, but by moving beyond the descriptive level, seeks to analyze the policy and physical "mechanisms" that have created this established situation[3].

Table 1: General Research Framework (Problem, Questions, and Objectives)

Main Problem	The unintended or systematic participation of architecture and urbanism in the reproduction of "structural violence" through technical and policy processes leading to the creation of "Anti-life Space" for subaltern groups.
Central Question	What are the mechanisms of architecture and urban planning's role in the production and persistence of structural violence and the Anti-life Space of the subaltern?
Subsidiary Questions	1. How does spatial exclusion occur through policies (land, zoning)? 2. What are the drivers and stabilizers of these trends? 3. What are the spatial and biological consequences of these mechanisms? 4. What is the explanatory role of critical theories such as structural violence (Galtung), production of space (Lefebvre), and spatial justice (Harvey) in understanding this phenomenon?
Main Objectives	1. To identify exclusionary mechanisms. 2. To analyze the spatial and biological consequences of inequality. 3. To theoretically explain the role of design professions in structural violence. 4. To extract common themes and patterns of violence. 5. To formulate practical strategies for reducing inequality.

2.Literature Review

This section engages in the reading and analysis of theoretical and conceptual currents that form the foundation for understanding "structural violence" in the context of space and the city. Unlike the theoretical foundations section (which deals with the deep explanation of selected theories), the literature review focuses on a critical review of works and concepts that, across the intersection of architecture, urban planning, social sciences, and political science, have provided the ground for posing the problem of the present research. This review is based on four conceptual axes that collectively construct the perceptual framework necessary for analyzing "Anti-life Space."

First Current: From Direct Violence to Structural Violence in Space

The concept of "structural violence," formulated by Johan Galtung, is the point of departure for this research. Literature related to Galtung extends violence beyond its narrow definition (direct physical harm) (Ruíz, 2024, pp. 80-83), emphasizing harms resulting from social, political, and economic structures that systematically prevent the flourishing of individuals' human potential (Khougar et al., 2023, p. 2; Sahib Nasi et al., 2020, pp. 36-37). In recent decades, researchers in social sciences and peace studies have applied this concept to analyze health inequalities, poverty, and educational deprivation (Macassa, 2023; Prior et al., 2024).However, the entry of this concept into urban studies and architectural literature is more recent but highly insightful.

Titles such as "Rebel Cities" and studies related to critical geography have shown how political-economic structures "inscribe" themselves into the city's fabric (Bobic & Haghighi, 2023; Auyero et al., 2015). Contemporary literature in this field argues that urban planning decisions, such as the construction of highways that bisect neighborhoods or the placement of polluting industries near low-income settlements, are clear instances of structural violence (Afrogh, 2017; Maleki & Azadbakht, 2018; Boehmer & Davies, 2018); because these decisions, although lacking a direct violent "agent," systematically target the health, livelihood, and quality of life of a specific group of citizens (Locke et al., 2026). This literature considers space not merely as a context, but as a "medium" and "instrument" for exercising this hidden violence (Prieto et al., 2025).

Second Current: Production of Space and Representation of Power

The second key current is the literature emerging from Henri Lefebvre's theory of the "Production of Space." Lefebvre, by presenting the triad of "spatial practice," "representations of space," and "representational spaces," demonstrated that space is not a neutral product, but intensely "political" and "social" (Zieleniec, 2018; Mahmoudi & Fani, 2018). Contemporary literature in architecture and urbanism, especially in the critical tradition, has used this framework to deconstruct design and planning processes (Huchzermeyer, 2021, pp. 48-49). "Representations of space," which include zoning maps, master plans, and construction laws, are known in this literature as the "space of designers and bureaucrats" (Brown, 2020; Manouchehri Miandoab, 2021). This space is a "conceptual" and "abstract" space wherein power relations and the dominant ideology (often neoliberal and based on land exchange value) are institutionalized (Yusefi et al., 2025). Research shows how this "conceptual space" in practice suppresses, disciplines, or excludes the "lived space" of subaltern groups (Mady, 2022). Therefore, the literature on the production of space teaches us that structural violence in the city occurs precisely in the gap between the "conceptual space" of designers and policymakers (based on the logic of capital) and the "lived space" of residents (based on need and use value).

Third Current: Spatial Justice and the Right to the City

This current comprises the extensive literature surrounding the concepts of "spatial justice" and the "Right to the City." Edward Soja considers spatial justice not just as the fair distribution of resources in space, but the active role of space in producing inequality itself (Soja, 2015). Following him, David Harvey argues that urban crises and increasing inequalities are the product of the systematic dispossession of the subaltern from urban resources (Borja, 2022). Literature related to spatial justice has specifically addressed mechanisms of "displacement" and "gentrification" (Helbrecht, 2018). These works show how "urban regeneration" or "renewal" policies, ostensibly carried out with the aim of "improving environmental quality" (Hochstenbach, 2016), in practice drive indigenous and low-income residents to distant margins devoid of services (Anti-life Space) through astronomical increases in land and housing prices (Eckardt,

2021; Zuk et al., 2018). This literature views "social exclusion" not just as a consequence, but as a deliberate "spatial project" advanced by a coalition of investors, developers, and government institutions (Brickell et al., 2017).

Fourth Current: Subaltern Studies and Spatial Poverty

Finally, literature related to "Subaltern Studies" and "Spatial Poverty" aids in understanding the condition of the target groups of this research. Although subaltern studies initially focused on the context of Indian historiography, its implications for urban studies, especially regarding "informal settlements," have been very significant (Mukhopadhyay, Zérah, & Denis, 2020, p. 583; Jatkar, 2024, p. 2). This literature warns us that the subaltern are not passive subjects devoid of agency; contrary to common narratives defining them as crisis-ridden and passive neighborhoods, they engage in resistance, self-organization, reinterpretation of space, and the creation of their own "representational spaces" (such as land occupation and self-help housing construction) even within that "Anti-life Space" (Henn et al., 2025; Nazrul Fattah & Walters, 2023). Simultaneously, the concept of "spatial poverty" or "spatial poverty trap" emphasizes that poverty is not merely a lack of income, but a set of spatial deprivations (distance from employment centers, poor access to infrastructure, exposure to environmental pollution) that is reproduced cyclically[4] (Grant, 2010; Nicoletti, 2022). This literature directly targets the physical consequences of structural violence, showing how urban design and architecture can assist in stabilizing poverty by ignoring these spatial dimensions[5]. It can be concluded that the concept of "spatial poverty" (or spatial poverty trap) effectively demonstrates that poverty is not just an issue of income, but an issue of spatial structure, urban design, access to transport, services, and opportunities; thus, architecture and urban planning play an active role in stabilizing or reducing poverty.

Table 2: Summary of Conceptual Currents in Literature Review

Conceptual Current	Core Concept	Relation to Research (Anti-life Space)
Structural Violence	Hidden and institutionalized violence in social and spatial structures.	Explains that "Anti-life Space" is not the product of direct action, but the result of the systematic and structural design of inequality.
Production of Space	Space as a social, political, and economic product (Conceptual, Lived, Spatial Practice triad).	Shows that "Representations of Space" (master plans, zoning) are the main tools for producing "Anti-life Space" for the subaltern (in lived space).
Spatial Justice	Unjust distribution of resources and opportunities in space, and the role of space in producing inequality (Right to the City).	Conceptualizes "Anti-life Space" as the physical manifestation of "spatial injustice" and the deprivation of the subaltern's "Right to the City."
Subaltern Studies and Spatial Poverty	Agency of marginalized groups and the role of spatial deprivations in stabilizing poverty.	Helps in understanding the lived experiences of residents of "Anti-life Space" and analyzing the physical mechanisms (infrastructure, access) that reproduce poverty.

Results of Pearson Correlation Test in Conceptual Currents of Literature Review▼

Correlation: Pearson's r

1. Structural violence | 2. Space production

p-value: 1-tailed | Highlight: none

	1. Structural violence	2. Space production	3. Spatial justice	4. Underprivileged and spa
1. Structural violence		۰/۰۰۷ (p=۰/۴۷۲۹) N=100	-۰/۱۷۸ (p=۰/۰۳۷۸) N=100	۰/۲۲۵ (p=۰/۰۱۲۳) N=100
2. Space production	۰/۰۰۷ (p=۰/۴۷۲۹) N=100		۰/۲۹۶ (p=۰/۰۰۱۴) N=100	-۰/۳۸۷ (p=۰/۰۰۰۰) N=100
3. Spatial justice	-۰/۱۷۸ (p=۰/۰۳۷۸) N=100	۰/۲۹۶ (p=۰/۰۰۱۴) N=100		-۰/۲۳۷ (p=۰/۰۰۸۹) N=100
4. Underprivileged and spatial poverty`s Studies	۰/۲۲۵ (p=۰/۰۱۲۳) N=100	-۰/۳۸۷ (p=۰/۰۰۰۰) N=100	-۰/۲۳۷ (p=۰/۰۰۸۹) N=100	

Based on the output from MAXQDA software and the presented correlation matrix (Table 2), the relationships between the four main conceptual currents of the research contain significant semantic implications for explaining existing theoretical gaps and the necessity of formulating the "Anti-life Space" conceptual framework. It should be noted that the provided correlation matrix is the result of "Code Co-occurrence" analysis in the text of interviews conducted with 100 experts (N=100) using MAXQDA software; thus, it indicates the "mentality of experts," not necessarily the theoretical texts themselves nor a mere bibliometric analysis thereof. The purpose of this analysis in this section is to reveal the existing "discursive gaps" in the professional community and the mental literature of experts, which forms the basis of this research's innovation.

The interpretation of these relationships is as follows:

1.Theoretical Independence of "Structural Violence" and "Production of Space" (Semantic Rupture): The absence of a significant correlation between the two variables "Structural Violence" and "Production of Space" (r=0.007, p=0.4729) is the most important finding of this analysis to justify the innovation of the present research. This result indicates that in the existing literature, discussions related to the mechanisms of "Production of Space" (mainly with a Lefebvrian approach) and the foundations of "Structural Violence" (with a Galtungian approach) have been raised as separate theoretical islands. In other words, urban planning and architectural texts have less frequently addressed the issue of how processes of space production themselves act as instruments for exercising structural violence. This statistical disconnect confirms the necessity of integrating these two theories to explain the concept of "Anti-life Space."

2.Discursive Opposition of "Production of Space" and "Subaltern Studies"**:** The significant negative correlation between "Production of Space" and "Subaltern Studies" (r=-0.387, p=0.000) indicates an epistemological gap in the examined texts. This inverse relationship suggests that whenever research literature has focused on macro and technical processes of "Production of Space" (master plans, zoning, and representations of space), attention to the agency and daily life of the "Subaltern" has decreased. This finding confirms that formal systems of space production often have a "top-down" nature and stand in contrast to the lived realities of spatial poverty. In response to how correlations are interpreted, specifically the significant negative correlation between "Production of Space" and "Subaltern Studies" (r=-0.387), this finding indicates a "discursive opposition" and an epistemological rupture in the experts' views; meaning that as the focus on technical and macro dimensions of "Production of Space" increased, attention to the agency and life of the "Subaltern" decreased. This statistical rupture is precisely the gap that this research seeks to fill by integrating these two areas, and thus, the research innovation lies in creating a link between these separate theoretical islands. That is, experts concerned with "Production of Space" address "Subalterns" less, and vice versa. This finding proves the necessity of the present research's innovation (integrating the two).

3.Internal Correlation of "Spatial Justice" and "Production of Space": The significant positive relationship (r=0.296, p=0.0014) between these two variables shows that the discourse of spatial justice (Harvey and Soja) within the context of theoretical literature is heavily based on the foundations of the production of space. However, considering the negative correlation of spatial justice with "Subaltern Studies" (r=-0.237), it can be inferred that even spatial justice discussions sometimes remain at an abstract level and do not necessarily fully overlap with the concrete and micro experiences of the subaltern.

4.Link between "Structural Violence" and "Subaltern Studies": The positive correlation (r=0.225, p=0.0123) between these two currents indicates the high capacity of structural violence theory to explain the condition of the subaltern. The reviewed texts confirm that poverty and marginalization are not accidental phenomena, but the result of hidden and structural violence.

Pearson test results show that the missing link in the subject literature is the lack of a unified framework that can directly connect "Production of Space" to "Structural Violence" and explain the synergistic effects of these two on the "life of the subaltern." The concept of "Anti-life Space" in this research sits precisely at the intersection of these statistical breaks (especially filling the gap between production of space and structural violence). Qualitative examination of interview codes and codes assigned to them (Figure 2) also demonstrates the problematic nature of this literature from the interviewees' perspective, consistent with the quantitative test.

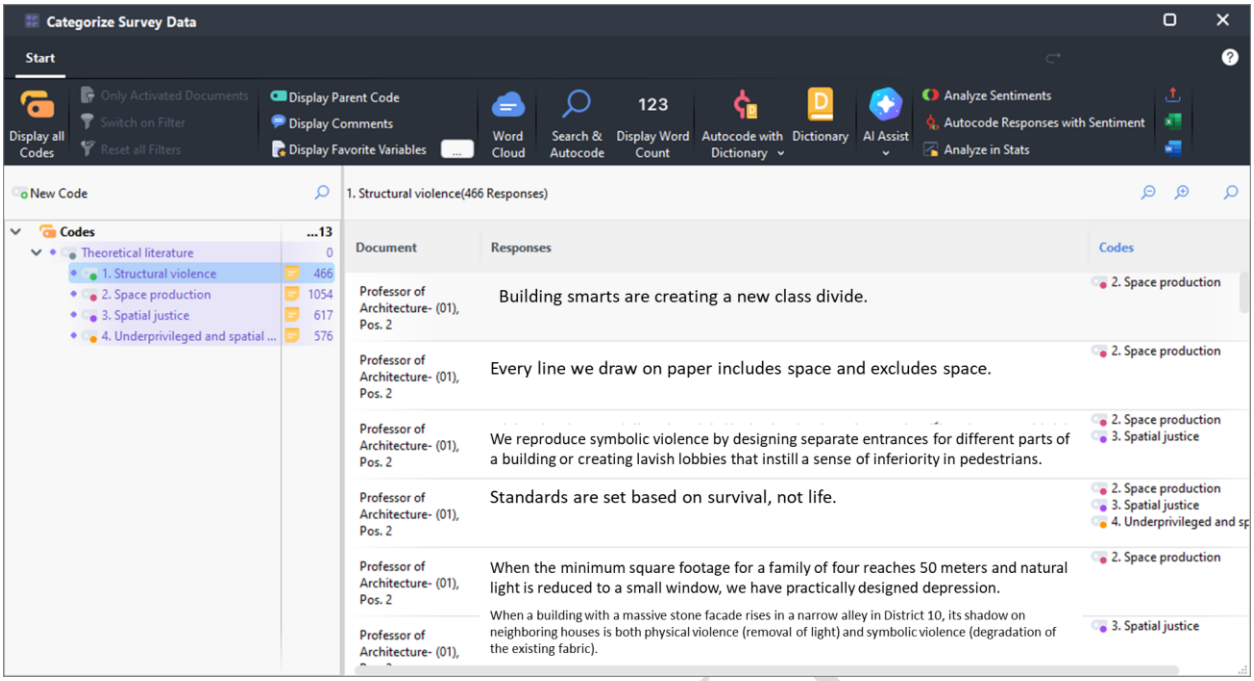


Figure 2: Verifying the relevance of research literature from the perspective of problematization among interviewees by examining codes assigned to each section of their interviews.

3.Background

In this section, prior empirical and theoretical research that has more specifically addressed the intersection of design, planning, and social inequality is analyzed. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate the research gap that the present study aims to fill. The background is presented at three levels: international studies, domestic studies (Iran), and thematic studies (focused on specific mechanisms).

3.1.International Background: From Gentrification to Environmental Apartheid

International research in the last two decades has increasingly focused on the role of neoliberal urban policies in exacerbating inequality.The first group consists of studies focusing on "Gentrification" and "Displacement" (Lees et al., 2016, pp. 27-29). Works such as the research by Loretta Lees and colleagues (2021) in London detail how "regeneration" policies led by the state and private capital have resulted in the "social cleansing" of low-income neighborhoods and their replacement with middle and affluent classes (Lees & Robinson, 2021). These studies highlight the role of "architecture" in this process, not as a neutral act, but as a tool for "branding" and "attractiveness" of space to increase social capital and attract financial capital, serving as a factor for neighborhood revitalization and social backing for interventions in urban fabrics (Godarzvand Chegini et al., 2023).

The second group addresses "Spatial Apartheid" and "Environmental Apartheid." Research conducted in North American cities has clearly shown how zoning laws have historically acted as legal tools for racial and class segregation (Lens, 2022). These studies establish a direct link between land-use zones (e.g., proximity of subaltern residential areas to industrial or highway uses) and health indicators (such as asthma rates or life expectancy) (Dillon, 2024; Boeing et al., 2023). Safransky, in her analysis of "algorithms of violence," shows how bureaucratic and technical decisions (such as infrastructure budget allocation or waste management) are made based on data that itself carries class and racial biases, ultimately leading to "environmental violence" against the subaltern (Safransky, 2020).

The third group focuses on "Informal Settlements" in the "Contemporary World." Challenging the "formal/informal" binary, these works show how governments actively produce and manage "informality" as a mode of governance to control surplus populations, not as a side phenomenon, but as part of the logic of spatial production and governance in contemporary cities (Vittoria Ferroni et al., 2023). Research in this area indicates that government "non-intervention" in providing infrastructure for these areas is itself a

"political act" and a form of structural violence to keep labor cheap and maintain the status quo, characterized as "governmental silence / structural neglect" (Atkinson, 2024).

Table 3: Summary of Key International Research

Area of Study	Key Finding (Mechanism of Violence)	Relation to Present Research
Gentrification & Regeneration (London)	Public-private renewal policies as "social cleansing" and class displacement.	Analysis of exclusionary mega-projects.
Environmental Justice & Zoning (USA)	Zoning as a historical tool for segregation and imposing environmental inequality (Environmental Apartheid).	Analysis of the role of zoning and design regulations.
Urban Management & Algorithms	Technical bureaucracy and data-driven decisions as "algorithms of violence" against poverty.	Analysis of urban management and unequal budgeting.
Informality & Governance (Contemporary World)	Production of "informality" and infrastructural "non-intervention" as a mode of governance and control.	Understanding displacement to margins and service imbalance.

3.2.Domestic Background (Iran): Focus on Consequence, Neglect of Mechanism

Domestic research related to urban inequality in Iran can be divided into several categories:The first category includes extensive studies describing and analyzing the status of "marginalization" and "informal settlements," such as: (Houshangi et al., 2023; Naderi Mayvan et al., 2025; Amiriraz et al., 2022). These studies often address the social, economic, and physical dimensions of these settlements, causes of migration, and prevailing poverty using sociological or geographical approaches. While these works are very rich in describing the "consequence" (formation of dysfunctional space), they have less addressed the intra-disciplinary "mechanisms" (in architecture and urban planning) that caused this displacement.The second category includes research critiquing "Master and Detailed Plans," such as: (Darkesh & Esterki, 2020; Salaripour et al., 2022). These studies have rightly emphasized the "top-down," "static," and "physicalist" nature of these plans, showing how they have failed in the face of the social and economic realities of the city. However, the critique in these studies often remains at the level of the "efficiency" of the plans and has rarely viewed these plans as "instruments of structural violence" and "spatial ideology"[6]. The third category is dedicated to the subject of "Urban Regeneration" and "Renewal of Distressed Fabrics," such as (Andalib, 2017; Yaghoubi & Shams, 2019; Aliakbari et al., 2022; Mahdavi et al., 2024). These studies often focus on the participatory, financial, and executive dimensions of renewal projects. The critique leveled at this category of studies (and upon which the present research is based) is the neglect of the phenomenon of "displacement" in these projects. Many of these studies consider "renewal" as inherently desirable and have not paid sufficient attention to its social consequences for subaltern residents (such as the inability to return to the neighborhood after renewal).

Table 4: Categorization and Critique of Domestic Research

Research Category	Main Focus	Strength	Weakness (Research Gap)
Marginalization Studies	Description of socio-economic and physical status of informal settlements.	Presentation of rich empirical data on poverty and deprivation status (consequences).	Neglect of analyzing "causes" and "mechanisms" of displacement within urban policies.
Critique of Master Plans	Critique of "top-down" and "physicalist" approaches in urban planning.	Highlighting the inefficiency of the formal planning system.	Focus on "inefficiency" of plans instead of analyzing them as "political instruments" and ideological tools of power exercise.
Regeneration Studies	Investigation of financial, executive, and participatory dimensions in	Attention to the necessity of improving physical quality.	Neglect of analyzing consequences of "displacement" and social exclusion of

	renewal of distressed fabrics.		indigenous and subaltern residents.

The review of the background shows that while international literature has increasingly addressed the political and violent role of design and planning, studies within Iran have mainly been either descriptive (describing poverty) or critical-technical (critiquing plan inefficiency). The main gap that the present research aims to fill is the lack of a theoretical and empirical link between "technical and specialized mechanisms" of architecture and urban planning (such as zoning regulations, per capita allocations, design standards, project budgeting) and the concept of "structural violence." In other words, previous research has less frequently addressed the question of how a "technical decision" (such as determining building density or defining the width of a passage) can, in practice, become a tool for the systematic exclusion of the subaltern and the production of "Anti-life Space." This research, relying on theories of structural violence (Galtung), production of space (Lefebvre), and spatial justice (Harvey and Soja), attempts to open this technical-specialized "black box" in the disciplines of architecture and urban planning and analyze it as a "political arena."

4.Methodology

This research, aiming to achieve a deep and interpretive understanding of the mechanisms producing "Anti-life Space," is situated within the framework of a combined interpretive-critical paradigm (Creswell & Poth , 2024, pp. 14-16). The central problem of the research—namely, how architecture and urbanism play a role in reproducing structural violence—possesses a complex, hidden, and multifaceted nature that cannot be assessed through quantitative methods alone. Therefore, a qualitative research method has been adopted. Among qualitative methods, "Thematic Analysis" has been selected as the primary strategy. This method is a systematic process for "identifying, analyzing, and determining patterns" (themes) within qualitative data (Kiger & Varpio , 2020, pp. 846-847).

In other words, this research, on one hand, considering the nature of the subject (structural violence) and its goal which goes beyond mere description to "discover hidden mechanisms" and "reveal structures producing inequality" in urban space, falls within the framework of the "Critical Paradigm." Research seeking to "discover hidden mechanisms," "analyze power structures," and analyze concepts such as "structural violence" and "spatial justice," ontologically believes in stratified realities independent of the mind, and epistemologically seeks to go beyond appearances and reach underlying structures. These features exactly match the "Critical Paradigm" and specifically "Critical Realism." On the other hand, since it intends to analyze and critique the underlying layers of social reality and power relations institutionalized in architecture and urbanism leading to the production of Anti-life Space relying on qualitative methodology, it also falls under the "Interpretive Paradigm."

Thematic analysis enables the researcher to immerse themselves in the data, identify recurring semantic patterns, organize them, and ultimately explain the phenomenon under study (mechanisms of structural violence).Based on the frameworks provided for thematic analysis and considering the objectives of this research, the "general approach" adopted is a combination of the following options. This approach seeks to identify hidden meanings in the data, relying on the research's theoretical framework as well as themes emerging from the text of the data.

Table 5: Explanation of the General Research Approach in Thematic Analysis (Khalid Ahmed & et. al., 2025; Naeem & et. al., 2023)

Axis	Selected Approach	Justification for Selection in This Research
Nature	Interpretive	The research does not merely describe data but seeks to interpret the "how" and "why" of hidden mechanisms (hidden violence).
Source of Theme Generation	Combined (Theory-	The analysis begins with a deductive approach based on theories of structural violence, production of space, and spatial justice (initial theory-driven

	driven and Data-driven)	coding), but in subsequent stages, emerging themes are extracted from within the data (interviews and documents) using an inductive approach.
Observability	Latent	The main focus is on identifying "hidden meanings" and "presuppositions" governing policies and technical decisions that are not observable at the surface level.
Analytical Role	Integrative	Final themes act as axes that aggregate and integrate concepts from architecture, urban planning, social sciences, and political science around the "research topic."
Position of Theme	Central	Extracted themes form the main focus of the analysis, and the network of themes is shaped around them.
Hierarchy	Main and Sub-themes	Analysis is conducted at two levels: Main themes (organizing) showing macro dimensions of structural violence, and Sub-themes (basic) classifying instances and more detailed mechanisms under each main theme.

The interdisciplinary nature of "structural violence in space" necessitated that the sample reflect the intersection of technical knowledge (architecture and urban planning) and critical knowledge (social and political sciences). Hence, purposeful sampling of the "expert sampling" type was used. The statistical population consisted of 100 experts divided into four equal groups:

1. **25 University Professors in Architecture:** Focusing on individuals with a history of research in social theories of architecture, social housing, and participatory design.
2. **25 University Professors in Urban Planning:** Focusing on specialists in urban planning, land and housing policy, urban management, and spatial justice.
3. **25 University Professors in Social Sciences:** Focusing on urban sociologists, anthropologists of space, and specialists in development and inequality studies.
4. **25 Researchers and Activists:** Including individuals with a history of field research or direct executive work in informal settlements, regeneration projects, and advocacy planning.

In this research, "Stratified Purposeful Sampling" strategy was employed for participant selection to enable comparison and analysis of perspectives across specialized subgroups (Patton, 2014, pp. 264-267). The selection of an equal sample size (25 individuals per group) and a total of 100 samples, although exceeding the usual saturation limit in qualitative studies, was done with the aim of "Data Triangulation" and achieving maximum "Interpretive Validity" in confronting a multifaceted phenomenon[7] (Maxwell, 2012, p. 124). This approach enabled researchers to prevent the dominance of a single discipline's prevailing discourse (e.g., the physicalist view of architects) over the final analysis and achieve an analytical balance[8].

Reason for Sample Selection: The selection of a statistical population consisting of elites and experts (Elite Interviewing) in this research is based on a conscious epistemological choice to explain the "anatomy of power" in the production of space. Unlike phenomenological research focusing on the "lived experience" of violence victims, the aim of this study is to analyze the "internal logic" and "technical-legal mechanisms" generating violence ; mechanisms that are "top-down" in nature and often concealed within the hidden layers of bureaucratic decision-making and design studios. Laura Nader, a prominent anthropologist, calls this approach "Studying Up," arguing that to understand the roots of inequality, the researcher should not merely focus on the poor (victims) but must question the structures and institutions that reproduce poverty (Nader, 2018).

In the complex context of contemporary architecture and urbanism, processes such as land-use changes, determination of building densities, and formulation of design standards occur in a specialized and technical space to which subaltern residents typically have no access or oversight. Therefore, experts and elites in this field act as "Key Informants" who can decode the hidden codes and technical logic of structural violence (Dexter, 2008, pp. 16-19). On the other hand, the presence of the "field researchers and activists" group among the interviewees ensures the indirect but analyzed reflection of field realities and the voice of subaltern groups in the final analysis, without the research falling into the trap of mere descriptive reductionism[9]. It should be noted that the lack of direct interviews with subaltern residents in this research does not mean ignoring their agency or suffering. Rather, this decision was made based on the principle of "avoiding re-victimization" and focusing on "institutional accountability." Critical urban planning literature shows that in studies related to structural violence, focusing solely on residents' narratives can sometimes divert attention

from "structural causes" and reduce the issue to the level of individual adaptations (Bourdieu, 2000, pp. 12-15; Wacquant, 2007, pp. 202-207).

Therefore, this research, relying on the tacit knowledge of experts who themselves are mediators between structure and people (especially the group of sociologists and activists), has tried to represent the voice of the subaltern not as "raw data" but in the form of "structural demands." This combination facilitates "Data Triangulation" through different human sources. This was vital for understanding a phenomenon rooted in technical decisions (architecture/urbanism) while its consequences are observable in the social context (social sciences).

Data were collected from two main sources:

- Documentary Data: Systematic review of valid library texts (published in the last 5 years) in the four relevant disciplines as analyzable "text".
- Interview Data: Semi-structured interviews with 100 selected experts. Interview questions were formulated based on "research objectives" and "theoretical foundations" to explore the mechanisms, processes, and consequences of structural violence from the perspective of each specialization.

The data collection process took place from October 2023 to May 2024, focusing geographically on the metropolises of Mashhad and Tehran, selecting interview groups informed about field realities. In Tehran province, a significant portion of the population lives in informal settlements: in recent years, it is estimated that about 16–20% of the province's population resides in these areas (Tasnim News Agency, 2018). Mashhad also has the highest rate of marginalization (more than 1.3 million people living in informal settlements) in the country (Tasnim News Agency, 2025).

Mashhad has one of the most acute spatial dual patterns in Iran: in the East, Northeast (Toos–Kashafrud zone, Ghaleh Sakhteman, Tabarsi Shomali (parts), Al-Teymour, Panjtan, Mehrabad, Shahid Rajaee and surroundings) and Southeast (Seyedhi, Ghaleh Khiaban, parts of Shahid Bahonar town, village-neighborhoods swallowed by the city): severe concentration of urban poverty; in the West and Southwest: more affluent, newer construction. Alongside the existence of a vast belt of informal settlements around the city and the special role of migration (internal, rural, foreign nationals), Mashhad is evaluated as even more critical than Tehran in terms of the extent and population of marginalization. Because it has both extensive informal settlements and formal but subaltern fabrics, so the intensity and extent of this phenomenon in Mashhad is greater than Tehran. In both cities, the issue is not just poverty; but structured spatial inequality. And in Tehran: Farahzad Valley (around the valley and margins in West and Northwest Tehran), Islamabad neighborhood in Southwest Tehran, Khak Sefid neighborhood, some parts of Southeast and South like District 19, informal settlements in Tehran suburbs (e.g., around Islamshahr, Pakdasht, Shahriar).

Table 6: Comprehensive Protocol of Semi-Structured Research Interviews

Group 1: Architecture Professors & Professionals
Goal**:** To analyze the role of physical design, building standards, and aesthetics in social exclusion and the production of Anti-life Space (Related to Theme 3: Hostile Architecture and Symbolic Exclusion). Main & Probing Questions: 1. Concept of Architecture's Agency in Exclusion: "In your opinion, to what extent is architecture as a 'discipline' responsible for existing social inequalities in the city? Is the architect merely an executor of the client's orders, or do they have independent agency in producing or reducing spatial violence?" Probing Question: Can you give a specific example of an architectural project that, while formally 'beautiful' or 'award-winning,' practically led to the exclusion of a group of people? 2. Design Standards and Quality of Life: "In designing low-cost housing complexes or supportive projects (like Mehr or National Housing), how do you assess the quality of the defined spaces?" Probing Question: To what extent do current standards (national regulations) regarding lighting, common spaces, and minimum footage meet the residents' 'psychological and social' needs? Are we facing a kind of 'standardization of poverty' in architectural design? 3. Aesthetics and Urban Facade: "How do you view the role of 'facade' and architectural aesthetics in the renewal processes of distressed fabrics?"

Probing Question: What message does the use of expensive materials or specific styles (e.g., Roman or luxury modern) in traditional and poor fabrics send to the indigenous and old residents of that neighborhood? Is this type of architecture not a form of 'visual violence' or a tool of 'branding for removal'?
4. Hostile Architecture and Public Spaces:
"Recently, we have witnessed changes in urban furniture and the design of public spaces (such as segmented benches or the removal of pause spaces). What is your analysis of this design approach?"
Probing Question: As an architect, have you ever faced a request from a client explicitly asking to design the space to be 'unsafe' or 'unusable' for a specific group (e.g., street vendors or the homeless)?

Group 2: Urban Planning Professors & Professionals

Goal: To examine macro planning mechanisms, land policies, zoning, and the political economy of space (Related to Theme 1: Technocratic Mask and Theme 2: Engineering Inequality).
1. Neutrality of Urban Plans:
"In academic texts, master and detailed plans are presented as technical and neutral documents. Based on your experience, to what extent are these plans 'technical' and to what extent 'political' in reality?"
Probing Question: How does the process of approving land-use changes in commissions like Article 5 work? Are these decisions (e.g., changing green space to towers) random, or do they follow a specific pattern of rent distribution?
2. Zoning and Spatial Segregation:
"How can the tool of 'zoning' lead to class segregation in our cities?"
Probing Question: If we look at the distribution map of nuisance land uses (industrial, waste facilities) in the city, do you observe a discriminatory pattern against subaltern areas? How is this pattern technically justified?
3. Political Economy and Density:
"How do you explain the relationship between municipal 'density selling' and the displacement of the subaltern to the margins?"
Probing Question: Can it be said that urban management's dependence on revenue from demolition and reconstruction has practically made the survival of low-income social fabrics impossible? What is the mechanism of this economic pressure on residents?
4. Distribution of Services and Infrastructure:
"In reviewing annual urban management budgets, do you see a balance between northern and southern areas (or center and margin)?"
Probing Question: What are the consequences of deliberate 'disinvestment' in a neighborhood's infrastructure (e.g., lack of sewage or public transport development)? Is this managerial negligence or a type of strategy for population management?

Group 3: Social Science Professors & Professionals

Goal: To theoretically explain structural violence, analyze social and biological consequences, and understand the concept of "Right to the City" (Related to Theoretical Foundations and Theme 4: Consequences).
1. Definition of Structural Violence in the City:
"From a sociological perspective, what are the instances of the concept of 'structural violence' in the fabric of today's Iranian cities? How does it differ from direct physical violence?"
Probing Question: Can we say that citizens living in marginal areas are experiencing a kind of 'hidden violence' imposed by the urban management system? What is the mechanism of this violence?
2. Social Exclusion and Space:
"How can the physical environment (architecture and urbanism) lead to 'social exclusion' or the 'rupture of neighborhood bonds'?"
Probing Question: What is the impact of projects like highway construction or mega-malls within old neighborhoods on residents' social capital? Is the term 'atomization' appropriate to describe the condition of residents in these neighborhoods?
3. Labeling and Stigmatization:
"Media and sometimes urban managers use specific terms to describe subaltern fabrics (like distressed fabric, margin, hotspot of damage). What is the impact of this 'language' on legitimizing harsh physical interventions (demolition)?"
4. Biological and Psychological Consequences:
"What are the impacts of living in a space we call 'Anti-Bio' (lacking security, polluted, dense) on the mental health and existential security of residents?"

Group 4: Field Researchers & Urban Activists

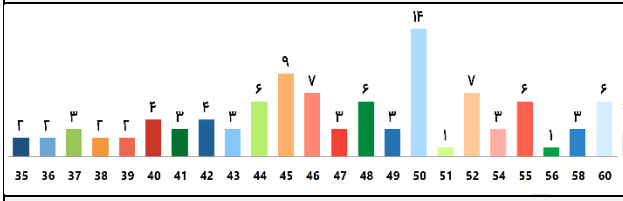
Goal: To extract real field data, understand the gap between plan and reality, and identify residents' survival strategies (Related to Theme 4-4 and Implementation Realities).
1. Gap between Plan and Implementation:

"You who are directly present in the field (low-income neighborhoods or margins), what do you consider the biggest difference between what is written in 'renewal plans' on paper and what happens in 'reality' for the people?"
Probing Question: Have you observed cases where a project started under the title of 'empowerment' or 'regeneration' but ultimately led to the 'eviction' of residents?
2. Experience of Displacement:
"What is the local residents' narrative of the renewal process? How do they feel the pressure to leave the neighborhood?"
Probing Question: Is this pressure merely economic (housing inflation) or do bureaucratic pressures (cutting services, municipal fines, threats of demolition) also exist?
3. Resistance and Survival Strategies:
"How do residents of these areas resist structural and physical pressures?"
Probing Question: Do you observe patterns of 'self-help,' 'nighttime informal construction,' or 'space occupation for work' (street vending) as a reaction to formal restrictions? (Concept of Quiet Encroachment).
4. Bureaucracy and People:
"How is the interaction of subaltern residents with official institutions (municipality, renewal offices)? Does the administrative system treat them as 'citizens' or as 'accused'?"

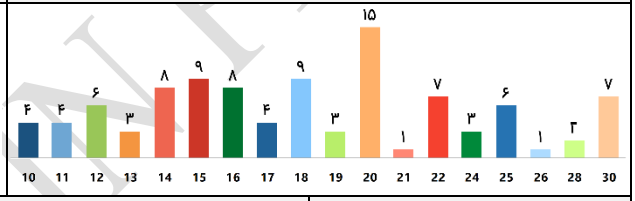
Final Section (Common for all groups)

Conclusion and Solution: "If we want to stop this cycle of structural violence, what is the most important immediate change that must occur in your specialized field (Architecture/Urbanism/Policy)?"
Open Opportunity: "Is there any point we haven't asked about but is vital for understanding this issue?"

Age distribution of interviewees▼



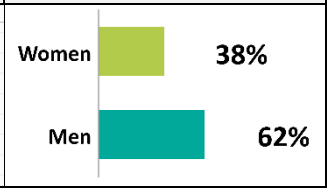
Interviewees' work experience (years)▼



Volume and distribution of codings carried out in the sources of this research with zero depth (macro categories) ▼

Code System	1-Architecture professors	2-Urban planning professors	3- Social science professors	4- Urban researchers and activists	SUM
Theoretical literature	759	729	695	530	2713
Initial coding (theory-based)	4934	4817	4750	5263	19764
Theoretical foundations	2012	1917	1791	1551	7271
Theoretical framework	771	843	680	663	2957
Mechanisms for producing antibiotic sp	559	746	510	644	2459
The consequence of the formation of a	399	413	482	384	1678
Final themes	1265	1361	1151	1083	4860
SUM	10699	10826	10059	10118	41702

Gender of interviewees▼



The data analysis process was conducted according to the "Research Stages" defined in this study (derived from standard thematic analysis approaches):

1. Research Design and Data Transcription: Interviews were fully transcribed into text. Library and policy documents were also standardized into "coding sheets".
2. Familiarization with Data: Researchers immersed themselves in the data through repeated reading of the texts (Table 2).
3. Initial Coding (Theory-driven): In this stage (deductive approach), texts were initially coded based on key concepts derived from theoretical foundations (e.g., Galtung's structural violence, Lefebvre's production of space, Harvey's spatial justice) (Middle Part Of Table 9).
4. Descriptive Coding and Searching for Themes (Inductive): In this stage, temporarily setting aside theories, codes were extracted in a "data-driven" manner (inductive approach), and initial themes were formed based on similarities and differences (Bottom Part Of Table 9).
5. Reviewing Themes: Initial themes were reviewed at two levels: a) Fit with coded data (Fit Analysis) (Figure 4) and b) Creation of a coherent map of themes (Clarity and Distinctiveness Analysis) (Table 10).
6. Defining and Naming Themes (Interpretive Coding): Precise definitions and expressive titles were provided for each final theme.

7. Achieving Theoretical Saturation: The sampling and interview process continued until new data did not lead to the creation of new main themes (Table 11 and Table 12).
8. Analysis and Development: Finally, a "Thematic Network" was drawn showing hierarchical (main and sub) and horizontal relationships (connections between themes). This network served as the basis for the final analysis and answering "Research Questions" (Table 13).

To clarify the data analysis path and objectify the coding stages (from basic concepts to abstract themes), the process of data reduction and organization is presented in the following table. This table objectively demonstrates how "Open Coding" (based on literature and interviews) led to the formation of "Axial Coding" (mechanisms and frameworks) and finally "Selective Coding" (final themes). In other words, this table objectively shows how theoretical concepts and field data shaped different levels of coding in a recursive process.

Table 7: Matrix of Coding Process and Extraction of Themes Related to Macro Categories (Mentioned In Table 6)

Research Stage (Coding Level)	Coding Macro Categories	Constituent Factors (Axial Codes)	Sub-sets and Instances (Open/Descriptive Codes)	Set of Key Words and Terms Extracted from Interview Texts (Field Data)
Familiarization and Theoretical Sensitivity (Pre-coding)	Theoretical Literature	1. Structural Violence 2. Production of Space 3. Spatial Justice 4. Subaltern Studies & Spatial Poverty	(Basic concepts extracted from texts, lacking sub-layers in the code system entered into software)	Hidden violence, macro structure, life chances, social production of space, spatial triad, lived space, abstract space, right to the city, distributive injustice, systematic exclusion, subaltern, voice of the voiceless, marginalization, spatial poverty, livability, spatial inequality, institutional structure, agency of space, social segregation, spatial power.
Open Coding (Deductive/Theory-driven Approach)	Initial Coding (Theory-driven)	1. Legal Mechanisms & Policymaking (Causal & Institutional Factors) 2. Political Economy of Space & Commodification (Expanding Factors) 3. Architecture & Physical Design (Stabilizing & Physical Factors) 4. Infrastructure, Environment & Services (Inequality & Distribution Factors) 5. Social, Psychological & Exclusion Dimensions	1.1. Gap between plans and social reality, 1.2. Legal tools for demolition and removal, 1.3. Corrupt structures and bribery, 1.4. Absence and weakness of supportive laws, 1.5. Bureaucracy of deeds and identity documents, 1.6. Conflict of interest and passing the buck, 1.7. Dominance of state management over public participation. 2.1. Commodification and exchange value, 2.2. Land speculation and rent, 2.3. Financial exclusion mechanisms (housing filters), 2.4. Economic and class inequality, 2.5. Exploitation of labor and space, 2.6. Instability and housing extortion, 2.7. Energy and water poverty (ecology of poverty).	Article 5 Commission, density selling, information rent, digital divide, housing speculation, family dormitories, cellular construction, hostile architecture, defensive design, Roman facades, physical paranoia, heat island, energy poverty, service apartheid, ecology of poverty, invisibility, existential denial, place trauma, spatial segregation, social stigmatization, defenseless spaces, biological displacement, forced migration, everyday resistance, living in suspension, victims of development, defensive architecture, hostile design, urban service apartheid, bureaucratic violence, social cleansing, displacement trauma, life in suspension, housing as commodity, space speculation, density rent, rent-seeking urbanism, systematic marginalization, food deserts, energy poverty, geographic isolation, zoning discrimination,

		(Synergistic & Semantic Factors) 6. Displacement & Expulsion Mechanisms (Results & Consequences)	3.1. Hostile architecture and physical exclusion, 3.2. Low standards and housing insecurity, 3.3. Physical demolition and displacement, 3.4. Poor quality and control of public spaces, 3.5. Class-based architecture (Aesthetics), 3.6. Restriction and insecurity of physical access, 3.7. Density and physical suffocation. 4.1. Lack of vital infrastructure (water, electricity, gas), 4.2. Inequality in public service distribution, 4.3. Pollution and ecology of poverty, 4.4. Insecurity and lack of transport infrastructure, 4.5. Apartheid of services and public spaces, 4.6. Waste management and exploitation of waste picking, 4.7. Health and educational infrastructure. 5.1. Stigmatization and social labeling, 5.2. Invisibility and existential denial, 5.3. Psychological violence and trauma of place, 5.4. Insecurity and lack of social support, 5.5. Gender, identity, and age exclusion, 5.6. Everyday resistance and struggle for survival, 5.7. Vulnerability of specific groups. 6.1. Forced displacement and eviction, 6.2. Driving to margins and Anti-life Space, 6.3. Hangouts and occupied spaces, 6.4. Educational and health consequences, 6.5. Collapse of family and social structure, 6.6. Reverse therapeutic and educational migration, 6.7. Silent victims of development.	legal dispossession, golden signatures, structural corruption, discriminatory laws, showcase urbanism, deceptive facades, residential cells, standardization of poverty, elimination of public spaces, privatization of security, total surveillance, exclusive territories, urban digital divide, environmental injustice, class pollution, forced deterioration, bulldozer renewal, place de-identification, conditional citizenship, invisibility of poverty, silenced voice, everyday resistance, space occupation, informal living, waste economy, spatial exploitation, inequality in access, legal dead-ends, deedless documents, ontological insecurity, social engineering of exclusion.
Open Coding (Explaining Concepts)	Theoretical Foundations	1. Johan Galtung's Structural Violence Theory	1-1. Urbanism as macro structure, 1-2. Architecture as micro structure.	Macro structure of urbanism, micro violence of architecture, daily space, abstract space, symbolic space, spatial

		2. Henri Lefebvre's Production of Space Theory 3. David Harvey & Edward Soja's Spatial Justice Theory 4. Social Exclusion & Spatial Poverty Theory	2-1. Spatial Practice (Perceived/Daily space), 2-2. Representations of Space (Conceptual/Abstract space), 2-3. Representational Spaces (Lived/Symbolic space). 3-1. Segregation, 3-2. Spatial Injustice. 4-1. Spatial poverty trap, 4-2. Informality.	segregation, spatial injustice, poverty trap, informal settlement, crisis management, Anti-life Space, right to the city, accumulation by dispossession, exchange value, use value, lived space, representation of power, social engineering, distributive justice, structural exclusion.
Axial Coding (Structuring & Categorization)	Theoretical Framework	1. Stimulus 2. Structure 3. Mechanism 4. Actions 5. Consequence 6. Crystallization 7. Feedback	(This section structures the conceptual model and lacks sub-sets)	Economic drivers, power structure, exclusion mechanism, physical actions, biological consequences, spatial crystallization, negative feedback, cycle of inequality, stabilization of status quo, engine of violence, technical tool, housing policy, discriminatory design, social results, objective manifestation, reproduction of poverty, integrated system, cyclical process, analysis model, logic of capital.
Axial Coding (Analysis of Mechanisms)	Mechanisms of Producing Anti-life Space	1. Land & Housing Policies 2. Urban Zoning & Design Regulations 3. Mega-Projects 4. Urban Management & Budgeting 5. Urban Environment & Infrastructure	(Operational instances extracted in final analysis)	Land use change, building density, exclusionary zoning, exclusionary renewal, gentrification, unequal budgeting, violence algorithm, unbalanced distribution, vital infrastructure, water & sewage, public transport, green space, showcase projects, waste management, double standards, national building regulations, Article 100 Commission, detailed plans, parking regulations, banking policies.
Axial Coding (Analysis of Consequences)	Consequence of Forming Anti-life Space	1. Displacement to Margins 2. Increased Living Costs 3. Reduced Access to Services 4. Systemic Inefficiency 5. Stabilization of Inequality Cycle	(Objective results of living in Anti-life Space)	Forced marginalization, access cost, time poverty, educational deprivation, health deprivation, food desert, social inefficiency, bond rupture, seismic vulnerability, environmental instability, spatial labeling, reproduction of violence, social isolation, environmental depression, health decline, premature death, low quality of life, nervous tension, ontological insecurity, life in suspension.
Selective Coding (Final	Final Themes	1. Technocratic Mask of Violence	(Abstract and interpreted final themes)	Instrumental specialization, false technical neutrality, rent engineering, urban apartheid,

Theme Construction)		2. Spatial Engineering of Inequality (Urbanism) 3. Hostile Architecture & Symbolic Exclusion 4. Consequences: Life in State of Suspension		exclusionary architecture, symbolic violence, camouflage of violence, suspended life, permanent suspension, existential insecurity, spatial resistance, quiet encroachment, neoliberal urbanism, standardization of poverty, dictatorship of lines, masculine urbanism, showcase architecture, social cleansing, bureaucratic violence.

The data reduction process in this research was carried out based on the "Data Condensation" strategy, reducing 850 initial codes to 16 organizing themes. This structured approach was adopted not to eliminate interpretive richness or ignore the inherent complexity of the phenomenon, but to achieve an "Analytical Order" for explaining the institutional mechanisms of violence. In studies dealing with a high volume of qualitative data (more than 50 interviews), the use of coding matrices and hierarchical thematic networks is considered an essential tool for transitioning from "scattered description" to "coherent explanation" (Miles et al., 2019). Since the aim of this research involves identifying "recurring patterns" in bureaucracy and urban design, structuring themes enables the researcher to reveal hidden connections between seemingly unrelated variables (such as density laws and social isolation) within an integrated conceptual model; thus, the presented tables act as "cognitive maps" helping the reader not to lose the main line of argument in the labyrinth of textual data[10].

Research Rigor and Trustworthiness: To ensure the scientific quality and accuracy of findings, the four criteria of "research rigor" in qualitative architectural and urban studies were utilized (Groat & Wang, 2013, p. 355). The process of securing each of these criteria is as follows:

1.Credibility: To ensure the conformity of findings with the reality of the phenomenon, the "Triangulation" strategy was used at two levels (Silva et al., 2016, p. 290): first, "Data Triangulation" through combining library documents and in-depth interviews; and second, "Personnel Triangulation" (Triangulation of human sources) by utilizing four different groups of experts (architects, urban planners, sociologists, and activists) which allowed for the intersection and verification of perspectives. Furthermore, researchers' long-term engagement with the research field (interviews with 100 experts) up to the point of "theoretical saturation" strengthened the internal validity of findings.

It is important to note that the validation strategy in this research is designed based on the "Multifaceted Triangulation" model. Unlike classical triangulation (mixing methods), this research focuses on "Data Source Triangulation" (Patton, 2014, pp. 555-560). Selecting a large sample size (100 experts) and carefully dividing them into four balanced subgroups (25 people) was not a quantitative choice but a methodological necessity to achieve "Comparative Validity". This scale allowed for observing paradigmatic differences between "technocrats" (architects/urban planners) and "critics" (sociologists/activists) and preventing single-discipline biases. Also, the coding process was refined through three stages of Peer Debriefing by colleague researchers and Member Checking to verify interpretations, ensuring the "Interpretive Validity" of findings (Maxwell, 2012, pp. 124-127). Thus, research validity is guaranteed not through statistical generalization, but through "structural coherence" and "cross-verification" of conflicting expert views[11].

2.Transferability: Although statistical generalization is not intended in qualitative research, to enable the application of findings in similar contexts, the "Thick Description" technique was used (Tracy, 2010, p. 843). Providing precise details of space production mechanisms and extracted typologies (such as abandoned, enclosed, and suspended spaces) allows the reader to assess the adaptability of results to other metropolises with similar structures.

3.Dependability: To ensure the stability of the research process, all analysis stages, including interview transcription, initial code formulation, and theme abstraction process, were documented in a transparent

"Audit Trail". The coding process table presented in the findings section enables the logical tracking of the path from raw data to final themes (Groat & Wang, 2013, p. 358).
4.Confirmability: To reduce personal biases and ensure that findings emerge from the data rather than researcher presuppositions, "Reflexivity" was used throughout the analysis process. Additionally, the high correspondence of thematic analysis results with theoretical foundations (such as Galtung and Lefebvre theories) and the confirmation of existing literature gaps by field data indicate relative objectivity in data interpretation.
Validity and Reliability: Agreement between coders and member checking were used to ensure methodological rigor and reduce interpretive bias in the thematic analysis process. Two strategies, "Double Independent Coding" and "Member Checking," were employed. Based on standard qualitative analysis protocols, "reliability" in thematic analysis is measurable by assessing the level of agreement between multiple coders (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020, p. 4). To this end, 20% of the transcribed interviews (including 20 samples from four expert groups) were randomly selected and independently coded by a colleague researcher (specializing in urban sociology and fluent in MAXQDA) who was not involved in the initial analysis process.
Then, using the "Inter-Coder Agreement" module in MAXQDA 2024, codes assigned by the main researcher and the colleague were compared at two levels: "code existence" and "code frequency". To statistically measure convergence, "Cohen's Kappa" index was used. This index eliminates chance agreements and provides a precise measure for assessing interpretive alignment (Syed & Nelson, 2015). The results showed an average Kappa coefficient of 0.87 for main themes, falling within the "Perfect Agreement" range (Figure 3). Disagreements were discussed in joint sessions and resolved after refining operational definitions of codes.

Figure 3: Calculation of Inter-Coder Reliability (ICR)

Furthermore, to ensure "Interpretive Validity," the "Member Checking" technique was used. Initial findings and the extracted thematic network were provided to 10 interviewees (from each expert group) to assess the alignment of the researcher's interpretations with their experiences and views (Table 8). Their corrective feedback was applied in the theme revision stage, leading to the refinement of some sub-codes, especially in the "Life in State of Suspension" theme.

Table 8: Selected Results of Inter-Coder Agreement Test using Cohen's Kappa in MAXQDA

Theme Code	Agreements	Disagreements	Agreement Percentage	Cohen's Kappa Coefficient
Structural Violence (Macro & Micro Structure)	92	8	92.00%	0.89
Political Economy of Space (Commodification & Rent)	85	15	85.00%	0.81
Hostile Architecture & Physical Exclusion	88	7	92.63%	0.91
Exclusionary Zoning & Infrastructure Apartheid	79	11	87.77%	0.84
Life in State of Suspension (Consequences)	81	12	87.09%	0.83
Stigmatization & Social Labeling	90	5	94.73%	0.93
Total Average	--	--	89.87%	0.87

Data Quantitizing Strategy: Regarding the exploratory use of correlation matrices (Table 2), it should be noted that although the nature of this research is "qualitative" and based on the "interpretive" paradigm, the "Quantitizing" strategy was employed to manage the massive volume of textual data (from 100 in-depth interviews) and enhance precision in identifying hidden patterns[12]. Quantitizing in qualitative research means converting coded data into numerical formats to reveal patterns of repetition and co-occurrence that might be overlooked in purely interpretive reading[13] (Sandelowski et al., 2009). In this regard, correlation tables and cross-matrices presented in this research are used not as tools for "statistical inference" or "measuring causal relationships" (like positivist research), nor for "hypothesis testing" or "statistical generalization" (as common in quantitative research), but as "Heuristic" and "Descriptive" tools to visualize and refine relationships and the strength of links between themes in the participants' mentality (Guetterman & James, 2023). Using this approach[14] in CAQDAS-based analysis Softwares[15] enables the researcher to assess the "Internal Generalizability" of findings within the specific research population and prevent narrative biases[16].

Depth of Analysis: Transition from Description to Explanation with Latent Thematic Analysis: Given the "explanatory" and "structuralist" nature of the research questions aimed at identifying complex mechanisms of violence in space, this study went beyond the conventional "Descriptive Thematic Analysis" approach and utilized "Latent Thematic Analysis". While semantic analysis merely organizes explicit patterns in data, latent analysis views data as markers for entering deeper layers of social reality to identify "underlying presuppositions," "conceptual structures," and "latent ideologies" that have led to the production of Anti-life Space (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84).

In this process, extracted themes (such as "Technocratic Mask") are not merely labels for categorizing interviewees' statements but are considered as "Generative Mechanisms" which, according to the "Critical Realism" paradigm, are responsible for creating observed events in the city (Fletcher, 2017). Thus, thematic analysis in this research is used not as a tool for data reduction, but as a method for "Deconstruction" of the logic governing urban management and architecture to explain the connection between "micro technical decisions" and "macro structural violence"[17].

5.Theoretical Foundations

This research is built upon the intersection of four distinct but overlapping theoretical domains to explain the multifaceted phenomenon of "structural violence" in space. To understand how technical decisions in architecture and urban planning become tools for excluding the subaltern, it is necessary to move beyond purely physical or purely sociological analyses and establish an interdisciplinary framework of political science, critical geography, urban sociology, and architectural theory. The theoretical foundations of this research address, in order: the "nature" of the phenomenon (Structural Violence), the "mechanism" of its production (Production of Space), the "criterion for assessment" (Spatial Justice), and its concrete "consequence" (Social Exclusion and Spatial Poverty).

5.1.Structural Violence Theory (Johan Galtung): From Social Structure to Urban Fabric

The theoretical departure point of this research is the concept of "structural violence," first formulated by Johan Galtung in peace studies. Galtung, by distinguishing between "direct" (personal) and "indirect" (structural) violence, demonstrated that harm and deprivation do not necessarily require a specific deliberate actor. Structural violence is a form of hidden, intrinsic, and institutionalized violence embedded within the social, political, and economic structures of society, systematically preventing the realization of the actual potential of specific groups of people. This violence is "structural" because: (a) it is rooted in institutions, laws, and norms that appear "natural" and "legal"; (b) it is "avoidable," meaning it is the result of unjust distribution of resources and power, not natural destiny; and (c) it leads to "unequal life chances".

Link to Architecture and Urbanism: In recent decades, this concept has spread from political science to urban studies and critical geography. Researchers argue that space and the urban fabric are not only passive contexts but "media" and main "instruments" for exercising structural violence. When an urban planning system legally allows (through zoning) polluting industries to be located solely adjacent to low-income settlements, or when the budget for vital infrastructure (like efficient public transport or green space) is

unevenly allocated to affluent areas, this is not a neutral "technical decision" but a clear instance of structural violence. In this view, architecture and urbanism are a dyad of "structures" generating violence:

1- Urbanism as Macro Structure: Land and housing policies, master and detailed plans, and zoning laws are those political-economic "structures" that determine "who," "where," and "how" one has the right to live in the city. Commodification of housing and land rent-seeking are the foundations of this violent structure.
2- Architecture as Micro Structure: At a closer scale, design decisions themselves can be violent. "Hostile Architecture" (e.g., benches making sleeping impossible) is its overt form. But its more hidden form lies in "dual standards" of design, ignoring the biological needs of the subaltern in minimum housing design, and creating exclusionary public spaces (such as enclosed and privatized residential complexes).

Therefore, "Anti-life Space," as proposed in this research, is the physical and concrete crystallization of this structural violence; a space where all institutional and physical mechanisms operate against the livability and human dignity of its inhabitants (the subaltern).

5.2.Theory of Production of Space (Henri Lefebvre): Space as Political Product

If Galtung's theory explains the "nature" of violence, Henri Lefebvre's theory of "Production of Space" reveals the "mechanism" of applying this violence in the urban fabric. Lefebvre proposed the fundamental proposition that space is not a neutral, a priori "container" for events, but a "social product" produced and reproduced within a context of power relations and economic relationships. To understand this production process, Lefebvre presented his famous spatial triad:

1. Spatial Practice: This is the "perceived" and "functional" space of everyday life; networks of commute, consumption patterns, and daily routines of residents. This space is the concrete lived reality.
2. Representations of Space: This is the "conceptual," "abstract," and "dominant" space. It is the realm of experts, planners, architects, bureaucrats, and capitalists. "Representations of space" include zoning maps, master plans, construction laws, economic models, and architectural renders. This space is where dominant ideology (often neoliberal and based on exchange value) represents itself as "rational," "technical," and "neutral".
3. Representational Spaces: This is the "lived" and "experienced" space by residents. This space is full of symbols, meanings, memories, and resistances. This space is the realm of use value versus exchange value. Representational spaces are often "subaltern" spaces resisting the dominant conceptual space (e.g., land occupation and creation of informal settlements).

Link to Research: The "structural violence" discussed in this research occurs precisely at the point of conflict and domination of "Representations of Space" (conceptual space) over "Representational Spaces" (lived space). The mechanism of producing "Anti-life Space" works as follows: Power institutions (state and capital), through technical and specialized tools (architecture and urban planning), impose their "conceptual space" (e.g., displacement-inducing renewal plans or profit-maximizing zoning) upon the "lived space" of the subaltern (need for decent housing, access to services, place attachment). In this process, the designers' "conceptual space" becomes a legal and technical tool for dispossession, exclusion, and displacement of the subaltern, reducing their lived space to "Anti-life Space".

5.3.Theory of Spatial Justice (David Harvey and Edward Soja): Distribution and Production of Inequality

If structural violence is the "disease" and production of space is the "mechanism of disease," "Spatial Justice" is the "benchmark for health diagnosis" and the normative ideal of this research. Theorists in this field go beyond merely describing inequality to emphasize the active role of "space" in producing and reproducing inequality. Harvey, relying on the Marxist tradition, argues that cities are the main centers of capitalist crises and capital accumulation. He introduces the concept of "accumulation by dispossession," wherein capitalism, for its survival, inevitably resorts to privatizing public resources (urban land, social housing, public spaces) and dispossessing the masses of them. In this view, mega-projects, gentrification, and housing commodification are the main tools of this dispossession. Against this process, Harvey redefines the concept of "Right to the City" (originally borrowed from Lefebvre). The right to the city is not just the right of "access" to existing resources, but the right to "change" the city and "participate" in the

process of space production. Structural violence is precisely the process of "depriving" subaltern groups of this fundamental right.

Soja focuses on the geographical dimensions of injustice. In his book *Seeking Spatial Justice*, he argues that "space" does not merely reflect social inequalities but actively "produces" and "stabilizes" inequality. Injustice has a specific spatial dimension:

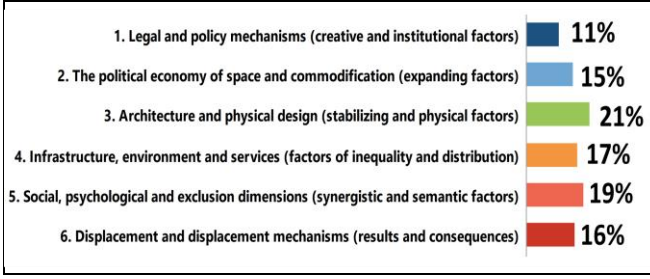
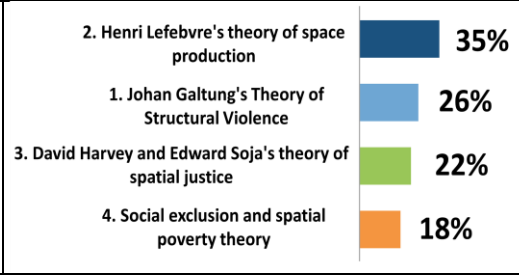
1. Spatial "segregation" is not just a "consequence" of racism or class inequality, but a "mechanism" that intensifies inequality by restricting access to quality schools, suitable jobs, and social networks.
2. "Anti-life Space" in this view is the crystallization of the peak of "spatial injustice"; a geography where all life opportunities are suppressed due to "location".

5.4.Theory of Social Exclusion and Spatial Poverty: Concrete Consequences

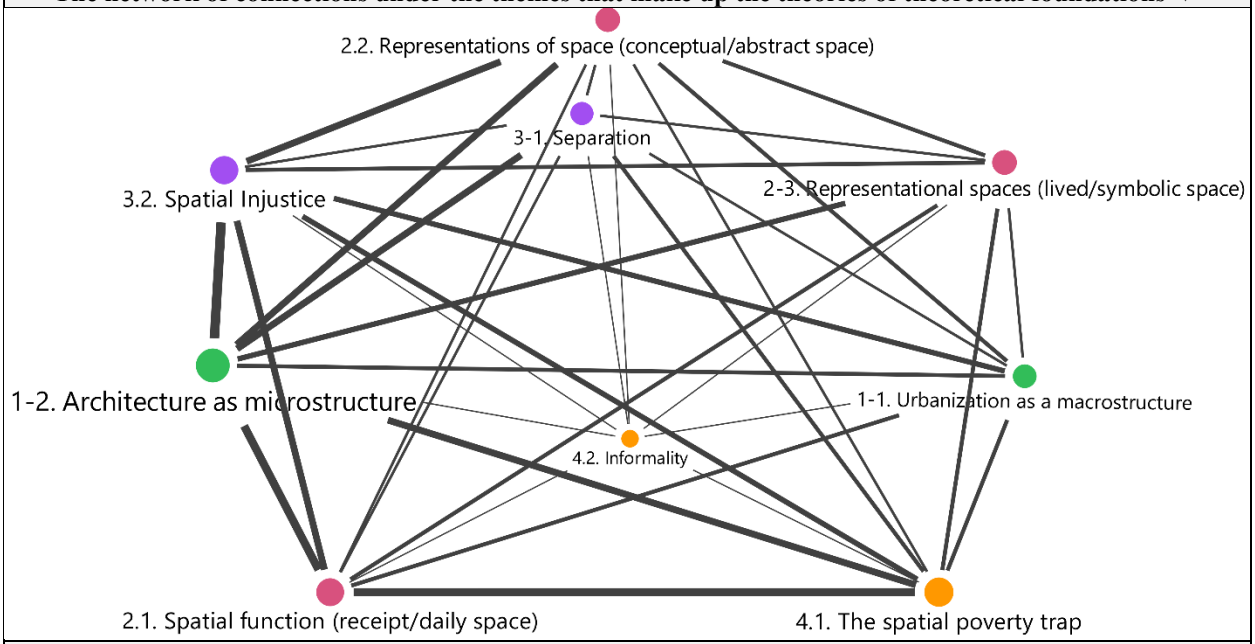
Finally, theories of "Social Exclusion" and "Spatial Poverty" help us understand the lived consequences of structural violence. "Social exclusion" is a broader concept than economic poverty, emphasizing processes that prevent individuals or groups from fully participating in the social, economic, political, and cultural life of society. This exclusion often has a spatial dimension.

1. "Spatial Poverty Trap" describes a situation where the "location" of residence (such as remote margins lacking infrastructure) itself becomes a factor for stabilizing poverty. Distance from employment centers (increased transport cost and time), poor access to health and educational services, and exposure to environmental pollution (environmental violence) are all dimensions of spatial poverty directly created by planning and architectural decisions (or lack thereof).
2. In this framework, subaltern studies, especially Anita Roy's works on "informality," show how governments "produce" "informality" not as a "problem" but as a "solution" for managing surplus populations and keeping labor cheap. In this view, the "Anti-life Space" of informal settlements is not the product of planning failure, but the product of the "success" of a planning system whose goal has been the systematic exclusion of the subaltern.

Table 9: Summary of Theoretical Foundations and Most Important Themes Extracted from Their Alignment with Interview Texts

Theory / Concept	Core Proposition	Role in This Research (Explaining...)
Structural Violence	Systematic, hidden, and institutionalized harm in socio-political structures preventing human flourishing.	Explaining Phenomenon Nature: Defining "Anti-life Space" as physical crystallization of indirect and institutional violence.
Production of Space	Space is a social and political product; conflict between "Conceptual Space" (dominant) and "Lived Space" (subaltern).	Explaining Mechanism: Shows how "Representations of Space" (plans, laws, maps) become tools for exercising structural violence.
Spatial Justice	Space plays an active role in producing and stabilizing inequality. "Right to the City" as the right to change and produce space.	Providing Normative Benchmark: Conceptualizes "Anti-life Space" as the peak of "spatial injustice" and deprivation of the subaltern's "Right to the City."
Social Exclusion & Spatial Poverty	Deprivation from social participation; role of "location" in stabilizing poverty (Spatial Trap); "Informality" as a governance tool.	Explaining Concrete Consequence: Describing the lived experience of "Anti-life Space" residents and analyzing physical deprivations (access, infrastructure).
The most important initial themes extracted and their percentage share▼		**Percentage of correlation between theoretical foundations and the text of the answers▼**
		

The network of connections under the themes that make up the theories of theoretical foundations ▼



The most important sub-themes extracted from the primary themes in the text of the interviewees' responses▼

1. Legal and policy mechanisms (creative and institutional factors)	434	2. The political economy of space and commodification (expanding factors)	472
1.1. The gap between plans and social reality	67	2.1. Commodification and exchange value	345
1.2. Legal means of destruction and deletion	144	2.2. Land and rent trading	522
1.3. Corrupt structures and bribery	443	2.3. Financial exclusion mechanisms (housing filters)	182
1.4. Absence and weakness of protective laws	91	2.4. Economic and class inequality	679
1.5. Bureaucracy of identity documents	129	2.5. Exploitation of labor and space	149
1.6. Conflict of Interest and Institutional Oversight	362	2.6. Housing instability and blackmail	379
1.7. The dominance of public administration over public participation	479	2.7. Energy and water poverty (ecology of poverty)	322
3. Architecture and physical design (stabilizing and physical factors)	816	4. Infrastructure, environment and services (factors of inequality and distribution)	473
3.1. Hostile architecture and physical exclusion	288	4.1. Lack of critical infrastructure (water, electricity, gas)	415
3.2. Low standards and insecurity of housing	616	4.2. Inequality in the distribution of public services	533
3.3. Physical destruction and displacement	354	4.3. Pollution and the Ecology of Poverty	248
3.4. Poor quality and control of public spaces	428	4.4. Insecurity and lack of transportation infrastructure	401
3.5. Class-Based Architecture (Aesthetics)	555	4.5. Apartheid of public services and spaces	622
3.6. Restrictions and insecurity of physical access	760	4.6. Waste management and exploitation of littering	453
3.7. Physical congestion and suffocation	404	4.7. Medical and educational infrastructure	225
5. Social, psychological and exclusion dimensions (synergistic and semantic factors)	761	6. Displacement and displacement mechanisms (results and consequences)	356
5.1. Stigma and social labels	384	6.1. Forced relocation and expulsion	250
5.2. Invisibility and existential denial	425	6.2. Being marginalized and anti-biological space	418
5.3. Psychological violence and trauma of place	255	6.3. Occupied hangouts and spaces	311
5.4. Insecurity and lack of social support	586	6.4. Educational and health consequences	232
5.5. Gender, identity and age exclusion	600	6.5. Collapse of family and social structure	546
5.6. Everyday resistance and struggle for survival	233	6.6. Therapeutic and educational reverse coaching	328
5.7. Vulnerability of specific groups	523	6.7. Silent victims of development	766

6.Theoretical Framework

The presented theoretical foundations provide the basis for constructing an integrated "theoretical framework" acting as the analytical roadmap for this research (Figure 1). This framework is not merely a collection of the above theories but a "process" and "cyclical" model showing how "structural violence" leads to "spatial injustice" and ultimately "Anti-life Space" through "architectural and urban mechanisms". This framework explains the process in six stages:

1. Stimulus: Macro political-economic context (e.g., urban neoliberalism governance, rentier economy) prioritizing "exchange value" of land and housing over "use value".

2. Structure: "Structural Violence" (Galtung) as the invisible and institutionalized dominant force feeding on this economic stimulus, aiming to maintain the status quo and unequal resource distribution.
3. Mechanism: "Production of Space" (Lefebvre), specifically "Representations of Space" (conceptual space), which is the main technical tool for applying this structural violence.
4. Actions: These are the "mechanisms" investigated in this research:
    - *Urban Planning Actions:* Land and housing policies (commodification), discriminatory zoning, mega-projects (displacement-inducing), unequal budget and infrastructure allocation.
    - *Architectural Actions:* Designing dual standards, exclusionary architecture, ignoring livability in minimum housing.
5. Consequence: "Spatial Injustice" (Harvey and Soja) and "Social Exclusion and Spatial Poverty" (Roy and Sheppard).
6. Crystallization: Formation of "Subaltern Anti-life Space" as the physical and geographic manifestation of this process (margins devoid of services, abandoned distressed fabrics, deprived and polluted neighborhoods).

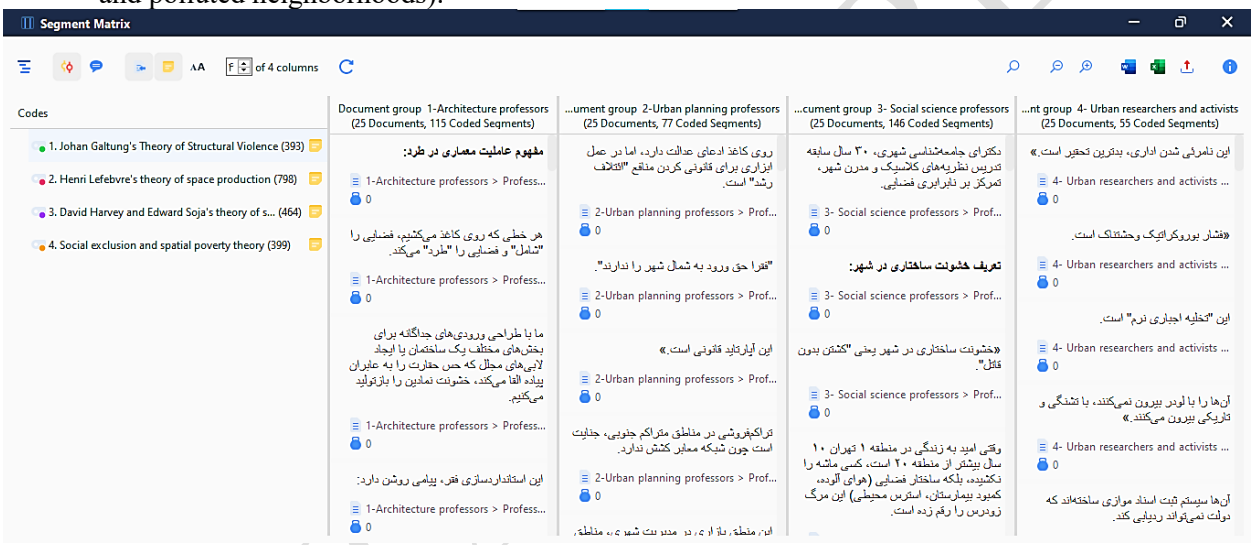


Figure 4: Reading theoretical foundations in interview texts to achieve the bases for constructing the "theoretical framework"

Cyclical Nature: This process is not linear. "Anti-life Space" (Stage 6) itself helps "stabilize" structural violence (Stage 2). For example, "labeling" these spaces as "crime hotspots" or "ugly fabric" justifies subsequent violent interventions (such as demolition and clearance) and intensifies "dispossession" (Harvey), continuing this cycle. In this framework, the specialized disciplines under study (architecture and urban planning) act as technical and instrumental "actors" in "Stage 4," while social and political science disciplines act as "explainers" of structure and consequence (Stages 2 and 5). The role of "Persian Language and Literature" (as per initial request) can also be defined in this framework as a tool for understanding "Lived Space" (Lefebvre's Stage 3) and "Consequence" (Stage 5); where literature and fictional narratives can best represent the "lived experience" of exclusion and life in "Anti-life Space" and amplify the voice of the subaltern.

Table 10: Conceptual Model (Theoretical Framework) of Research: Process of Producing Anti-life Space

Process Stage	Conceptual Title	Related Theory	Explanation of Role in Process
1. Stimulus	Dominant Political-Economic Logic	Theories of Urban Neoliberalism	Initial driving force; prioritizing "exchange value" (profit) over "use value" (biological need); focus on: profit, capital, market, rent, and commodified view of the city.

2. Structure	Structural Violence	Johan Galtung	Macro and hidden framework of power; systematic and unequal distribution of life chances; focus on: system, law, institutions, determinism, and hidden nature of harm.
3. Mechanism	Production of Space (Conceptual Space)	Henri Lefebvre	Specialized and technical tool for applying violence; translating power structure into language of "law," "map," and "plan"; focus on: technical tools, maps, plans, engineering, and abstraction.
4. Actions	Spatial Policies and Designs	Analysis of Current Research	Concrete measures: a) Urbanism (zoning, budgeting, mega-projects); b) Architecture (dual standards, exclusionary design); focus on: specific acts and measures of architecture and urbanism.
5. Consequence	Spatial Injustice and Social Exclusion	David Harvey, Edward Soja, Anita Roy	Direct result of actions; deprivation of subaltern's "Right to the City," creation of "Spatial Poverty Trap" and spatial deprivation; focus on: separation, gap, deprivation, isolation, and negative results.
6. Crystallization	Subaltern Anti-life Space	Research Core Concept	Physical and concrete manifestation of the process; formation of margins, dysfunctional fabrics, and neighborhoods lacking livability; focus on: ugly, dirty, dangerous, and uninhabitable physical reality.
Feedback	Stabilization of Inequality Cycle	Research Analytical Framework	"Anti-life Space" acting as justifier for more structural violence (labeling, cleansing) and reproducing the cycle; focus on: repetition, persistence, labeling, and normalization of the situation.

Percentage of importance of different stages of the process of creating an anti-biodiversity space from the perspective of interviewees ▼

Code System	1-Architecture profess...	2-Urban planning pro...	3- Social science prof...	4- Urban researchers a...	TOTAL
1. Stimulus	۱۴%	۲۷%	۹%	۱۳%	۱۶%
2. Structure	۱۹%	۲۷%	۲۶%	۲۸%	۲۵%
3. Mechanism	۶۷%	۶۵%	۳۵%	۳۱%	۴۶%
4. Actions	۲۴%	۲۸%	۲۱%	۲۳%	۲۴%
5. Consequence	۱۷%	۱۷%	۱۷%	۱۴%	۱۶%
6. Crystallization	۹%	۱۵%	۱۳%	۲۰%	۱۴%
7. Feedback	۱۰%	۱۱%	۱۴%	۹%	۱۱%
NOT CODED	۱۳%	۱۴%	۲۲%	۲۳%	۱۸%
CODED	۸۷%	۸۶%	۷۸%	۷۷%	۸۲%
WHOLE TEXT	۱۰۰% (۳۱,۰۵۷)	۱۰۰% (۲۷,۳۱۰)	۱۰۰% (۲۵,۹۵۵)	۱۰۰% (۲۲,۸۷۶)	۱۰۰% (۱۰۷,۱۹۸)

7.Mechanisms of Producing "Anti-life Space"

The content presented in this section is the result of "Theoretical Synthesis" and systematic coding of documentary sources and specialized texts conducted in the first phase of research. These mechanisms, derived from global and domestic literature, act as an "A Priori Framework" to provide the necessary ground for guiding interviews and analyzing field data in subsequent sections; therefore, the propositions raised in this part reflect mechanisms identified in existing theoretical knowledge, which will be assessed and refined against lived reality in the research field in the "Findings" section[18].

This section forms the analytical core of the research, dissecting concrete processes through which "structural violence" crystallizes in the urban fabric. Relying on the "Production of Space" theoretical framework, this section argues that the investigated mechanisms are the main tools of "Representation of Space" (conceptual and dominant space) that systematically suppress, discipline, and transform "Lived Space" (subaltern experiential space) into "Anti-life Space". These mechanisms, often hidden under a guise of "technical rationality," are in practice deeply "political" actions for the unequal distribution of "Life Chances". The analysis of these mechanisms is presented in the following 5 sections:

1) Land and Housing Policies: Commodification and Rent as Violence: At the center of producing spatial inequality lies the political-economic system's attitude towards "land" and "housing". When these two vital

elements are emptied of "use value" (place of residence, right to the city) and reduced merely to "exchange value" (commodity for investment and speculation), structural violence begins.

Commodification and Dispossession: Neoliberal urban policies transform housing from a "social right" to a "financial asset". This metamorphosis has violent consequences for the subaltern. The formal housing market, through mechanisms such as bank loans (requiring heavy collateral and stable income) and pricing based on maximum profit, structurally prevents low-income groups from entering the cycle of formal ownership. This "Financial Exclusion" is the first step in driving the subaltern towards the "informal" market. In this process, "Dispossession" means not only physical land seizure but stripping the "right" to access decent housing through financial and legal mechanisms.

Engineering Land Rent: In many urban management systems, planning and architectural institutions, instead of "controlling" land rent, turn into "engineering instruments" for "distributing" rent in favor of specific groups. Technical decisions like "land-use change" (e.g., from green space or low-density residential to commercial and towers) or "density selling" directly imply injecting rent to specific owners and skyrocketing land prices in those areas. This price increase acts as a "Financial Wall," preventing the residence or survival of the subaltern in those areas. This process, known in political science literature as "Rent-seeking," when facilitated by "technical" urban planning tools (like Article 5 Commission in Iran), is an institutionalized form of structural violence.

Unequal Pricing and Production of Informality: Land policy directly "produces" "informality". When the formal market becomes inaccessible (due to commodification and rent), subalterns are "forced" to settle on lands lacking security of tenure. These lands (like river banks, steep slopes, or suburban agricultural lands) are "cheap" precisely because the formal planning system has defined them as "uninhabitable" or "illegal"; thus, "informality" is not a "failure" in the system, but a necessary "product" of a system that has commodified land and housing.

2) Urban Zoning and Design Regulations: Technical Tools of Segregation: If land policies are the economic "engine" of violence, "zoning" and "design regulations" are its technical and legal "steering wheel". These tools, seemingly designed for "order," "efficiency," and "safety," have in practice become the most powerful mechanism for "spatial segregation" and "environmental apartheid".

Discriminatory Land Uses: Zoning has historically (especially in North America and South Africa) been an overt tool for racial and class segregation. Today, this discrimination takes more subtle forms. Its most common form is the systematic placement of "Locally Unwanted Land Uses (LULUs)" adjacent to or within subaltern settlements. The "technical" decision to locate a highway, a sewage treatment plant, a landfill, or a polluting industrial zone almost never happens in affluent areas. These decisions, justified by "expert analyses," directly target the health, safety, and quality of life of the subaltern, turning their "lived space" into a polluted and hazardous "Anti-life Space".

This proposition is not a random claim but a reflection of "political selection of space". Although in some cases the temporal precedence of establishment (nuisance use or residents) varies, the stability of this coexistence in subaltern neighborhoods and its absolute absence in affluent neighborhoods indicate a "socio-political filter" in the zoning system. Environmental justice studies confirm that the planning system tends to spill "environmental costs" of development into areas with the least "political resistance power"; a phenomenon known in global literature as the "Path of Least Resistance" (Bullard, 2001, pp. 449-452). According to this theory, one must ask why the system structurally tends to push environmental costs towards the subaltern, even if the relationship (nuisance use or residents) is not linear; therefore, the main issue is not the timing of establishment, but the structural inability of the subaltern to "repel risks" from their lived space[19].

Exclusionary Densification: Violence through density regulations works in two contradictory ways:

1- *Exclusionary Low-Density Zones:* In many affluent urban or suburban areas, zoning laws (like villa codes or minimum land size) make any multi-family or low-cost construction "illegal". This "Exclusionary Zoning" is a legal tool for class "walling" and preventing subaltern entry.
2- *Density Selling and Forced Congestion:* On the other hand, in central areas or low-income neighborhoods targeted for "renewal," selling high building densities (tower construction) leads to severe land price increases, destruction of organic fabrics, and displacement of indigenous residents.

Simultaneously, in informal settlements, "lack" of regulation (or ignoring it) leads to extreme human density in substandard living conditions, which is itself a form of physical violence.

Dual Quality Standards: This mechanism operates at the "architectural" level. Engineering and urban management systems apply standards (such as national building regulations) dually. In formal and affluent areas, these regulations (safety, lighting, open space) are strictly controlled. But in subaltern and informal areas, these standards are either completely "ignored" or "minimum" standards are defined in such a way that they merely provide "shelter" and not "quality of life" and "human dignity". This duality in standards implies the structural acceptance of "second-class life" for the subaltern.

3) Mega-Projects: Displacement-Inducing Renewal and Regeneration without Justice: Large-scale projects, whether renewal of distressed fabrics, construction of transport infrastructure, or urban "branding" projects (like mega commercial centers, stadiums), often act as main catalysts for "structural violence". These projects are the concrete crystallization of "accumulation by dispossession".

Displacement-Inducing Renewals: The process of "Gentrification" or displacement is the main mechanism in this area. This process, often justified under positive discourses such as "upgrading," "beautification," "securing," or "sanitization", is in practice a "social cleansing." Its mechanism works as follows:

1- Labeling: A subaltern neighborhood (often with a suitable location) is labeled as "distressed," "dysfunctional," or a "crime hotspot" (link with social sciences and literature).
2- Intervention: Government or private investors (often in Public-Private Partnerships) intervene.
3- Demolition and Replacement: Existing fabric is demolished and replaced with expensive architecture, luxury residential towers, or commercial uses.
4- Displacement: Indigenous residents, unable to afford new prices (purchase or rent) or through forced acquisitions, are driven to cheaper marginal areas (new Anti-life Spaces). In this process, "architecture" becomes a tool for "branding" space for new classes, and "urban planning" becomes a tool for "facilitating" this class displacement.

Regeneration without Justice: Even in softer "regeneration" approaches, violence can be hidden. If infrastructure improvement projects (like building parks, improving streets, creating cultural centers) are done without mechanisms to "protect" indigenous residents (like rent control or providing alternative housing on-site), the result will be "Green Gentrification" or "Cultural Gentrification". Environmental improvement leads to skyrocketing taxes and rents, bringing about the same result of displacement in a more gradual manner. Spatial justice in regeneration requires improving the quality of life for "existing residents," not improving "space" for "future residents".

4) Urban Management and Budgeting: Algorithms of Unequal Allocation: If zoning is the "law" of violence, budgeting is its "fuel". Decisions regarding financial resource allocation in urban management are among the most hidden yet powerful mechanisms of structural violence. This process, appearing as a "technical" and "economic" matter based on "cost-benefit," operates deeply "politically" and class-biased. Safransky uses the concept of "Algorithms of Violence" to describe this process (Safransky, 2020). When the municipality distributes infrastructure budget based on criteria such as "regional tax revenue" or "property value added," it algorithmically "deprives" "poor" areas (which pay less tax or have lower property value) of new public investments. This creates a "reproduction cycle" of spatial poverty: poverty leads to disinvestment, and disinvestment intensifies poverty. At the urban management level, prioritizing "showcase" projects (like beautifying urban centers, creating architectural landmarks) over "vital" projects (like sewage networks, public health, safe transport) in marginal areas is a political choice sacrificing "livability" for "city image". This unequal service allocation is a direct manifestation of "structural violence" because it systematically sacrifices the life chances and health of one group for the (economic or reputational) interests of another.

5. Urban Environment and Infrastructure: Unbalanced Distribution of Livability: This mechanism addresses the direct physical and biological consequences of previous decisions. "Anti-life Space" finally crystallizes in "geography" and "infrastructure".

Unbalanced Distribution of Vital Infrastructure: This includes all networks enabling modern urban life.

- Water and Sanitation: Failure to connect subaltern settlements to formal drinking water and sewage networks (under the pretext of being "informal" or "non-technical") forces residents to use

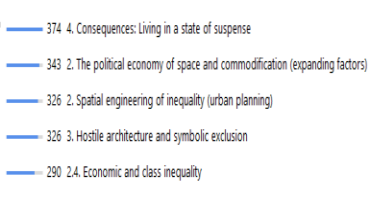
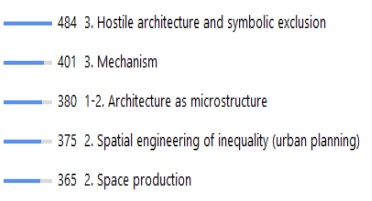
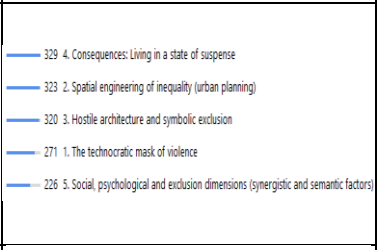
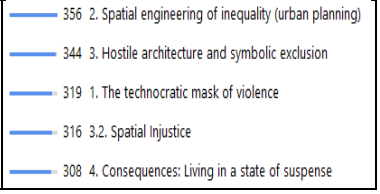
contaminated water or pay exorbitant costs for tanker water. This "sanitary violence" directly affects public health.

- Transportation: Public transport network design is often based on connecting work centers to affluent suburbs, while subaltern margins remain deprived of safe, cheap, and efficient access. This "transport poverty" limits access to employment and education, tightening the "Spatial Poverty Trap". Also, highway construction (often designed to facilitate car movement for middle classes) usually involves destroying and bisecting low-income neighborhoods, imposing noise and air pollution on them.

Environmental Justice and Green Spaces: Architectural and urban planning decisions directly affect residents' micro-environment.

- Heat Islands: Lack of green space, high substandard building density, and use of poor materials in subaltern areas turn these neighborhoods into urban "Heat Islands" with temperatures significantly higher than affluent areas (having green space and lower density). This increases energy costs and health risks.
- Food Deserts: Zoning policies that do not allow large fresh food stores in low-income areas (due to low "economic viability") drive residents into "Food Deserts" ; areas where access to healthy, fresh, and affordable food is difficult or impossible.

Table 11: Analysis of Structural Violence Mechanisms in Producing Anti-life Space

Mechanism	Architecture/ Urbanism Manifestation	Explanatory Theory	Instance of Structural Violence	Most Frequent Keywords	Common Co-occurrences
1. Land and housing policies	Commodification, density selling, ownership laws	Production of space, accumulation by dispossession	"Financial exclusion" of subaltern from formal market; systematic "production" of "informality."		
2. Urban zoning and design criteria	Land use maps, density rules, exclusionary zoning	Spatial justice, structural violence	"Spatial segregation"; legal placement of polluting uses next to subalterns (Environmental Apartheid).		
3. Large-scale projects	Renewal plans, regeneration, urban branding	Accumulation by dispossession, gentrification	"Social cleansing" and class "displacement" under the guise of "improvement" and "development."		
4. Urban management and budgeting	Infrastructure budgeting, resource allocation algorithms	Structural violence, violence algorithm	"Discriminatory investment"; prioritizing affluent and tourist areas over subaltern areas.		

5. Urban environment and infrastructure	Location of transport, water/sewage networks, green space	Spatial poverty trap, environmental justice	Unbalanced distribution of vital services; creating "heat islands" and "food deserts" in subaltern neighborhoods.		

The degree of influence (frequency of independent codes) of the mechanisms of producing anti-biospace on the stages expressed in the theoretical framework of the research▼

Code System	1. Stimulus	2. Structure	3. Mechanism	4. Actions	5. Consequence	6. Crystallization	7. Feedback
Mechanisms for producing antibiotic space							
1. Land and housing policies	176	104	165	115	115	93	49
2. Urban zoning and design criteria	116	160	401	115	109	76	82
3. Large-scale projects	112	106	170	138	77	79	87
4. Urban management and budgeting	130	281	150	175	63	67	49
5. Urban environment and infrastructure	87	120	169	141	78	119	33
SUM	621	771	1055	684	442	434	300

8.Consequence of Forming "Anti-life Space"

The previous section analyzed the technical and policy "mechanisms" and "actions" applied by architecture and urbanism. This section addresses the "consequences" and their "physical crystallization." These consequences collectively define the nature of "Anti-life Space". "Anti-life Space" is a space where not only is "livability" minimized, but "space" itself (fabric, access, infrastructure) actively works against its inhabitants, stabilizing the cycle of deprivation.

Displacement to Margins: Segregation as Consequence: The direct and immediate consequence of the seven mechanisms (especially land commodification and displacement-inducing renewal projects) is the "physical displacement" and "spatial exclusion" of subaltern groups246. This displacement is not merely a horizontal shift but a "fall" into multiple margins:

- Geographic Margin: Being driven to the city's physical periphery, to areas where access costs to employment centers and services are astronomical (transport poverty).
- Legal Margin (Informality): Being driven to spaces lacking "security of tenure". Living in these spaces is accompanied by constant "fear" of demolition and eviction; this "ontological insecurity" is itself a form of psychological violence imposed by the planning structure.
- Environmental Margin: Being driven to the most dangerous lands; places the formal planning system deems "unsuitable" for habitation due to risks like floods, landslides, or severe industrial pollution (proximity to nuisance uses).

Therefore, "marginalization" is not a "choice" by the subaltern, but a necessary "consequence" of a system that "cleanses" the center and desirable areas for capital accumulation.

Increased Living Costs: Paradox of Spatial Poverty: "Anti-life Space" paradoxically increases daily living costs for the poorest groups. Structural violence here manifests as a "Poverty Penalty":

- Access Cost: As mentioned, lack of efficient transport infrastructure consumes a large portion of the subaltern's meager income just to "reach" the workplace. This is a waste of "time" and "money".
- Basic Service Cost: In the absence of formal networks (water, electricity, gas), residents are forced to buy these services from "informal" intermediaries or more expensive alternatives (like tanker water, gas cylinders, generators). The unit rate of these services in the informal market is often much higher than the formal subsidized rate.
- Health Cost: Living in "Anti-life Space" (environmental pollution, poor hygiene, heat islands) directly implies higher disease rates. This imposes medical costs and lost workdays on the family.

Reduced Access to Services: Opportunity Apartheid: "Anti-life Space" is a space cut off from opportunity networks. This is the direct consequence of "unequal budgeting" and "discriminatory zoning".

- Educational Deprivation: Location of quality schools is often a function of property value and pressure from affluent classes. Subaltern neighborhoods either lack sufficient schools or get schools

with the lowest educational and physical quality (from a school architecture perspective). This guarantees "intergenerational reproduction of poverty".

- Health Deprivation: Spatial access to medical centers is a key health indicator. Geographic distance from hospitals and clinics in "Anti-life Space" means increased rates of preventable deaths.
- Deprivation from Public Space: "Anti-life Space" often lacks quality public spaces (parks, squares, libraries, safe play spaces for children). Architecture and urbanism in these areas have failed to "create space" and are reduced merely to "sheltering". This leads to "social capital" poverty and the decline of social interactions (Social Sciences).

Systemic Inefficiency: Social, Biological, and Infrastructural: The consequences of structural violence are not only immoral but "inefficient," undermining the entire urban system.

- Social Inefficiency: Severe spatial segregation and labeling lead to "social rupture" and erosion of "urban solidarity". These spaces, "abandoned" by the formal structure (Political Science), become prone to creating parallel power structures and increasing social anomalies and crime. This imposes security and policing costs on the whole city.
- Biological (Environmental) Inefficiency: "Anti-life Space" is an environmental crisis on a micro scale. Lack of sewage networks leads to groundwater pollution; substandard construction in high-risk areas severely increases city vulnerability to natural disasters (floods, earthquakes). This "instability" will impose irreparable costs on the city in the future.
- Infrastructural Inefficiency: Urban management that allows a large part of the city to grow "informally" and "substandardly" will face huge costs of "reconstruction" and infrastructure "upgrading" in the future, far exceeding the cost of initial "equitable planning".

Stabilization of Inequality Cycle: Labeling and Reproduction of Violence: This is the final and perhaps most destructive consequence of "Anti-life Space". This space is not only the "product" of structural violence but becomes an "agent" for its reproduction. Once formed, "Anti-life Space" is "labeled" by dominant discourse (media, politicians, and sometimes even experts). In literature (Persian Language and Literature discipline) and public discourse, these spaces are represented as "wounds," "festering tumors," "corruption hubs," or "crime-prone zones". This "discursive labeling," which originally describes the consequences of structural violence, ironically acts as a "justifier" for further violence:

- Justifying Inaction: "These areas are unfixable" or "Residents are to blame themselves"; this discourse justifies "unequal budget allocation".
- Justifying Repressive Intervention: This discourse legitimizes severe interventions like "complete demolition" (cleansing) as a security or sanitary "necessity".

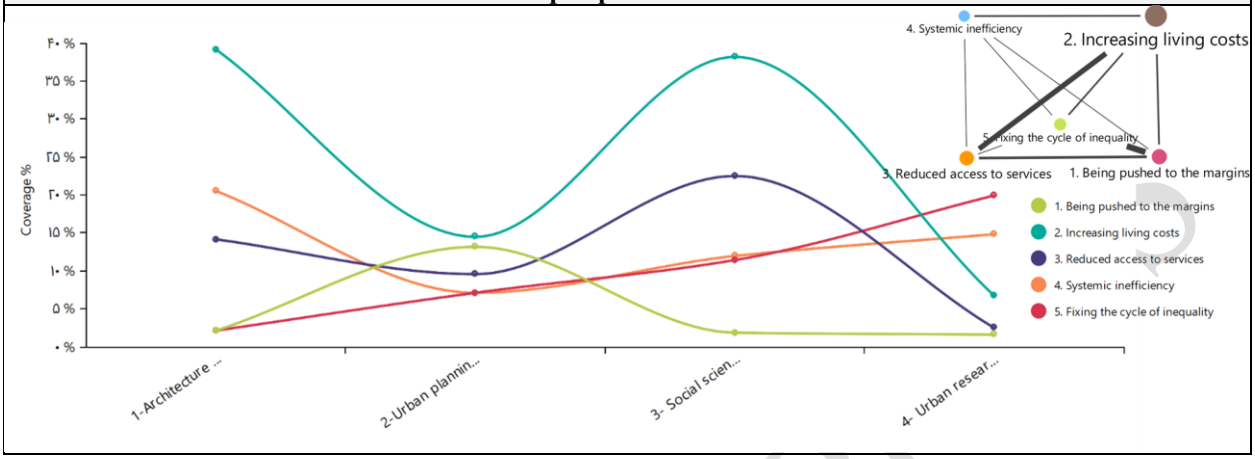
In this cycle, "architecture" (dilapidated and ugly fabric) and "urbanism" (spatial disorder) are used as "evidence" of residents' guilt. Thus, structural violence reproduces itself in an endless cycle: exclusion leads to spatial poverty and inefficiency ; this situation leads to labeling; and this label justifies new exclusionary policies.

Table 12: Consequences of Implementing Violent Mechanisms (Crystallization of Anti-life Space)

Consequence	Description	Main Generating Mechanism	Manifestation in Subaltern Lived Space (Physical Crystallization)
Displacement to Margins	Physical, legal, and environmental exclusion.	Commodification, Displacement-inducing renewal.	Informal settlements, settlement in high-risk areas (river banks, faults), tenure insecurity.
Increased Living Costs	"Poverty Penalty"; higher cost of living.	Unbalanced infrastructure, transport poverty.	High transport cost (distance), high cost of tanker water and informal electricity, medical costs.
Reduced Access to Services	"Opportunity Apartheid"; spatial deprivation.	Unequal budgeting, discriminatory zoning.	Lack or distance of schools, clinics, public spaces; "Food Deserts" and "Poor Parks."
Systemic Inefficiency	Social, biological, and infrastructural vulnerability.	All mechanisms (cumulatively).	Social rupture, high vulnerability to disasters, environmental pollution, fragile infrastructure networks.

Stabilization of Inequality Cycle	"Spatial Poverty Trap" and reproduction of violence.	(Result of full cycle) + Labeling.	"Labeling" neighborhoods as "unsafe" or "ugly," justifying repressive intervention or further abandonment.

Percentage of importance of the consequences of implementing violent mechanisms from the interviewee's perspective▼



9.Findings

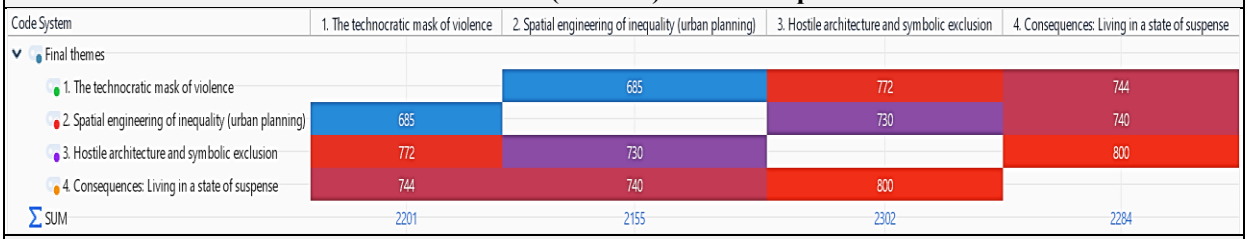
This section presents and analyzes the findings obtained from the qualitative research. As mentioned in the methodology section, the data for this research were extracted through thematic analysis of two main categories of sources: first, in-depth semi-structured interviews with 100 experts, and second, the analysis of library resources. The process of open, axial, and selective coding on this data led to the extraction of over 850 initial codes, which, after reduction and merging, were categorized into 4 main themes (overarching themes) and 16 sub-themes (organizing themes). These themes answer the research questions regarding how architecture and urban planning play a role in producing structural violence and shaping "Anti-life Space".In the following, the extracted thematic network is displayed in Table 13, and then each of the main and sub-themes is explained with reference to qualitative data (direct quotes and patterns extracted from documents).

Table 13: Network of Final Themes (Main and Sub-Themes) Extracted from Data Analysis

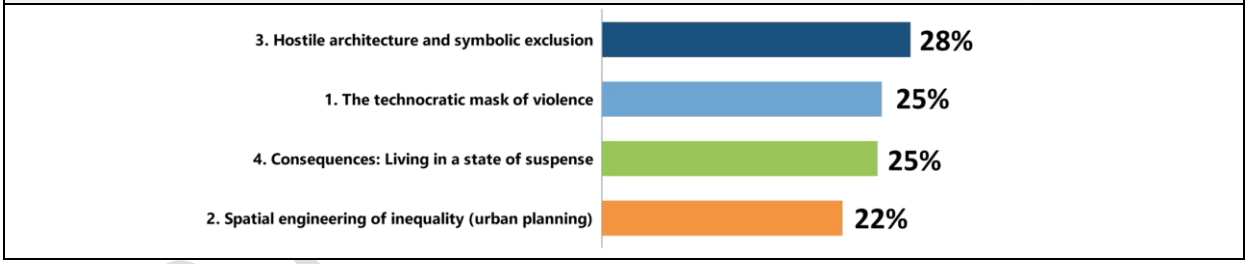
Main Theme (Overarching Theme) + Sample Axial Codes	Sub-Themes (Organizing Themes)	Sample Axial Codes (Derived from Interviews and Documents)
1. Technocratic Mask of Violence: "The master plan is not neutral," "Article 5 Commission is political," "Using technical terms to hide cleansing intent," "Fabricating crime statistics to justify demolition."	1-1. De-sanctification of Technical Neutrality 1-2. Bureaucracy as Exclusion Machine 1-3. Specialized Language as Tool of Silence 1-4. Data Fabrication to Justify Intervention	Bias in planning, political municipality, resident labeling, agency of research, destruction, changing general poverty, bureaucracy, renovation, areas, fabric, neighborhood, violence, gap, segregation, design, political, municipality, background, city, exclusion, elimination of space, aggregation, tool, plans, poverty, density, specialization, spatial, architecture, plan, economy, social, implementation, life.
2. Spatial Engineering of Inequality (Urbanism): "Locating nuisance land uses in the south of the city," "Density selling benefiting large owners," "Budget distribution based	2-1. Exclusionary Zoning 2-2. Legalized Rent-seeking 2-3. Infrastructural Apartheid	Social, political, change, class, neighborhood, aggregation, distribution, density, place, economy, execution, regions, city, space, destruction, water, spatial, residents, neighborhoods, segregation, zoning, north, south, public, renovation, margin, land, background, fabrics, poor, conversion, plan, green,

on property value," "Non-issuance of permits for structural modification."	2-4. Deliberate Production of Informality	infrastructure, user, house, housing violence, distressed, municipality, architecture, life, park.
3. Hostile Architecture and Symbolic Exclusion: "Luxury facades as a cause of high prices," "Anti-sleep benches," "Inhumane minimum footage for social housing," "Residential complexes without interaction space."	3-1. Aesthetics as Tool of Removal 3-2. Defensive and Hostile Design 3-3. Dual Biological Standards 3-4. Confinement in Mass Spaces	Housing, house, political, exclusion, quality, public, conversion, areas, poor, gap, agency, infrastructure, low, aesthetics, hostile, zoning, segregation, resistance, residents, violence, social, rights, spatial, design, city, architecture, density, biological, life, system, renovation, bureaucracy, neighborhoods, background, removal, space, worn-out, distribution, execution, we have done.
4. Consequences: Life in State of Suspension: "Constant fear of municipality bulldozers," "High cost of access to center," "Loss of neighborhood networks," "Nighttime construction and space occupation."	4-1. Ontological Insecurity 4-2. Spatial Poverty Trap 4-3. Social Rupture and Isolation 4-4. Resistance and "Quiet Encroachment"	Gathering, new, place, execution, survival, destruction, work, plan, social, solutions, city, poor, space, spatial, poverty, strategies, neighborhoods, worn-out, cost, network, renovation, elimination, municipality, housing, density, fear, science, rights, specialization, margin, areas, plans, gap, political, economy, life, background, exclusion, design, historical, class, change, city, women, safety, creation, residents, house, water, architecture, fabric, resistance, violence, land, houses, themselves, system, takes.

Final Main Themes (Internal) Relationship Matrix ▼



Percentage share of main topics ▼



Main Theme 1: Technocratic Mask of Violence: One of the most prominent findings of the research, repeated in the analysis of interviews across all four expert groups (especially sociologists and field researchers), is the "secretive" nature of structural violence in architecture and urbanism. Data show that spatial violence is not naked; rather, it is exercised under the guise of "expertise," "law," and "technical rationality".

De-sanctification of Technical Neutrality: Analysis of interviews with urban planning professors revealed that the belief in the "neutrality" of planning tools is a dangerous illusion. 85% of participants in this group admitted that master and detailed plans are formulated not based on citizens' real needs, but based on "political bargaining" and the "interests of growth coalitions." One senior urban planning professor stated in an interview:

"We teach students in university that the detailed plan is a development document, but in reality, this plan is a rent distribution document. When the city boundary line is moved or the density of a zone changes, this is not a technical decision; it is a violent decision that makes some billionaires and others homeless".

Bureaucracy as Exclusion Machine: Findings from the analysis of administrative processes (such as Article 100 and Article 5 commissions in Iran) showed that urban bureaucracy, instead of facilitating, has turned into a machine for the "legal exclusion" of the subaltern. Documents indicate that the processes for obtaining permits, completion certificates, and utility connections are designed to be so complex and costly that the subaltern have no choice but to resort to "informality." Then, this same bureaucratic system punishes them for the crime of "violating the law." Sociologists referred to this phenomenon in interviews as "bureaucratic violence".

Specialized Language and Data Fabrication: Analysis of renewal plan texts showed that the use of specialized terms such as "regeneration," "empowerment," and "environmental quality enhancement" is often used to conceal more violent realities such as "demolition," "forced displacement," and "gentrification." Furthermore, findings suggest that in many cases, statistical data (such as crime rates or deterioration) are selectively produced or interpreted to justify intervention in subaltern fabrics.

Main Theme 2: Spatial Engineering of Inequality (Urbanism): This theme addresses operational and physical mechanisms at the city scale. The analysis of zoning maps and municipal budgets over the last 5 years (research documentary source) revealed a clear pattern of "systematic discrimination".

Exclusionary Zoning: A comparison of land use maps in affluent versus subaltern areas showed a stark difference. While strict regulations exist in affluent areas to prevent the entry of nuisance uses and maintain tranquility, in marginal and subaltern areas, there is a high concentration of industrial, workshop, warehouse uses, and urban service facilities (such as waste stations). Architecture and urban planning professors emphasized in interviews that this distribution is not accidental. One researcher in the field of spatial justice stated:

"Zoning in our cities is an instrument of apartheid. We do not build walls, but with lines on the map, we determine who has the right to breathe clean air and who must live in the shadow of smokestacks. This means turning the city map into a tool for the gradual death of the poor".

Legalized Rent-seeking and Density Selling: Analysis of the city's political economy showed that municipalities' dependence on revenue from density sales is the driving engine for producing Anti-life Space. Density selling in central and northern parts of the city causes land and housing prices to rise throughout the city, resulting in the displacement of low-income groups to more outer and marginal layers. Findings show that this process creates a "chain displacement" that ultimately throws the weakest strata out of the city's formal limits.

Infrastructural Apartheid: Examination of the distribution of development budgets in municipal budget documents (over a 5-year period) indicates a deep gap. Per capita development budget for each citizen in affluent areas has sometimes been up to 10 times that of less privileged areas. This inequality is more evident in the allocation of vital infrastructure (water, sewage, rail public transport). Interviewees emphasized that this "deliberate shortage" severely reduces livability in subaltern areas, trapping them in a "spatial poverty trap".

Main Theme 3: Hostile Architecture and Symbolic Exclusion: While urban planning builds the macro context, findings show that "architectural design" and "urban design" at the micro scale play a complementary role in exercising violence. This section is based more on data from interviews with architects and field observations.

Aesthetics as Tool of Removal: Architecture and social science professors agreed that "aesthetics" in contemporary renewal and architectural projects has become politicized. Architectural patterns promoted as "modern," "luxury," or "beautiful" are essentially codes for attracting capital and repelling the poor. Analysis of residential projects built in distressed fabrics showed that the architecture of these buildings (with flashy stone facades, luxurious lobbies, and high fences) bears no resemblance to the neighborhood's social fabric, and its clear message to indigenous residents is: "This place no longer belongs to you".

Defensive and Hostile Design: Findings indicate a creeping expansion of "hostile architecture" elements in the public spaces of the studied cities. Benches divided by metal bars to prevent the homeless from lying down, the removal of public drinking fountains, the installation of physical barriers under bridges, and the design of parks in a way that precludes group gatherings were among the cases pointed out by researchers. One participating architect stated:

"As designers, unwittingly or wittingly, we have become soldiers in the war against the poor. The client asks us to design a space that is 'safe,' and in architectural translation, 'security' means a space where homeless people, street vendors, and unemployed youth cannot stop".

Dual Standards and Confinement in Mass: Analysis of social and supportive housing standards (such as Mehr Housing or similar schemes) showed that in these projects, the quality of living space has been sacrificed for quantity (number of units). Ignoring common spaces, inadequate lighting, failure to provide children's play areas, and high unit density per floor have created an environment that environmental psychology professors (in the social science group) called "dormitories of depression." This type of architecture, instead of creating a "home," merely creates a "shelter" that tarnishes the residents' human dignity.

Main Theme 4: Consequences: Life in State of Suspension: This theme is the final output of the combination of the previous three mechanisms. The findings in this section describe the lived experience of those living in this "Anti-life Space".

Ontological Insecurity: The most frequent code in interviews with field researchers and sociologists was the concept of "insecurity." But not insecurity in the sense of fear of crime, rather insecurity of "being." Residents of informal settlements and fabrics undergoing renewal live in a state of permanent suspension. Fear of home demolition by the municipality, fear of rent increases and eviction, and fear of the invalidity of informal deeds make them unable to envision any future for themselves. This constant anxiety is a form of psychological torture imposed by the spatial structure.

Social Rupture and Isolation: Findings showed that physical interventions (such as running a highway through an old neighborhood or demolishing small-grain properties to build large complexes) have destroyed the social and support networks of subaltern residents. Neighbors who helped each other in times of economic crisis are now scattered. This "atomization" of residents has drastically reduced their resilience against poverty.

Resistance and "Quiet Encroachment": Despite all exclusionary mechanisms, data show that the subaltern are not merely passive victims. Findings point to creative survival strategies that Asef Bayat refers to as "quiet encroachment." Nighttime construction, informal tapping into infrastructure networks, self-initiated land use changes (such as converting parking to a workshop or shop), and capturing public spaces for vending are all resistance tactics residents use to reclaim their "Right to the City." Although the architectural and urban planning system calls these actions "violations" and "disorder," research findings show that these are the only possible way to "live" in "Anti-life Space".

Structural Analysis of Viewpoint Distribution (Cross-Tabulation): To better understand the differences in perspectives among the four expert groups, the table below shows the frequency distribution of references to each of the main themes among the groups. This table indicates a type of perceptual division of labor among experts.

Table 14: Relative Frequency of Expert Groups' Emphasis on Main Themes (Percentage of References)

Code System	1-Architecture profess...	2-Urban planning pro...	3- Social science prof...	4- Urban researchers a...	TOTAL
1. The technocratic mask of violence	٢٩%	٢٩%	٢٢%	٢٠%	١٠٠% (٤٢,١٧٥)
2. Spatial engineering of inequality (urban planning)	٢٤%	٣٢%	٢٢%	٢٠%	١٠٠% (٤٠,٩٢٢)
3. Hostile architecture and symbolic exclusion	٣٤%	٢٣%	٢٢%	١٩%	١٠٠% (٧٣,٥٠٧)
4. Consequences: Living in a state of suspense	٢٨%	٢٤%	٢٥%	٢٢%	١٠٠% (٤٨,٢٩٧)

Expert Group	Analysis of Dominant Approach
Architecture	Focus on form, fabric, and aesthetics. Critique of spatial quality and design standards.
Urban Planning	Focus on policy, zoning, and political economy. Critique of master plans and laws.
Social Sciences	Focus on lived experience, social inequality, and power relations. Critique of human consequences.
Researchers	Holistic and critical view. Emphasis on the gap between "plan on paper" and "field reality."

As observed, architecture and urban planning professors tend to focus more on their specialized fields (Theme 3), while sociologists focus more on consequences (Theme 4). Interestingly, field researchers placed significant and equal emphasis on Themes 1 and 2 (Technocratic Mask); this indicates that those directly involved with field reality are most aware of the gap between managers' technical claims and the violent realities of implementation. This finding confirms the necessity of establishing an interdisciplinary discourse to fully understand the phenomenon of structural violence.

The findings of this research clearly show that the production of "Anti-life Space" for the subaltern is not the result of planning failure or lack of resources; rather, it is the product of the success of processes designed to protect the interests of capital and dominant classes. In this process, architecture and urban planning act not as sciences for improving the quality of life for all, but as technologies of exclusion. On one hand, urban planning "engineers" the macro context of inequality with tools like zoning and density, and on the other hand, architecture "stabilizes" and "objectifies" this inequality at the micro scale with hostile designs and dual standards. Ultimately, these processes are hidden under a cloak of technical rationality and development necessities to make resistance against them difficult. However, the micro and everyday resistances of residents show that the dominance of these structures is never absolute, and space always remains an arena of conflict.

10.Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

In the previous section (Findings), the main and sub-themes derived from qualitative data (interviews and documents) were presented within four key axes. In this section, moving beyond the descriptive level of themes, the "analytical results" of the research are addressed. The aim of this section is the structural explanation and modeling of how these themes interact to produce "Anti-life Space." The results show that structural violence in architecture and urbanism is not a random phenomenon or the result of managerial error, but the outcome of an "integrated exclusion system" operating at three levels: "policymaking," "physical design," and "executive management". Results obtained from integrating documentary data and expert analyses led to the identification of "Typologies of Anti-life Space" and the "Matrix of Actors of Violence," which are explained below.

Transition from Discrimination to Violence: Mechanism of Institutionalization: The first key result of the research is proving the transition of the nature of architectural and urban planning actions from "spatial discrimination" to "structural violence." Data analysis shows that the difference between the two lies in "intensity," "systematic intent," and "biological consequences." Results show that technical decisions in contemporary cities (studied cases) do not merely suffice with the unequal distribution of facilities but are designed in such a way as to make living conditions "impossible" for the subaltern. This process occurs through three main channels identified in the following analytical model:

1- Legal Channel: Using zoning tools to make subaltern presence illegal (e.g., banning small-footage construction in specific areas).
2- Economic Channel: Using "density" and "levies" tools to create insurmountable financial barriers.
3- Physical Channel: Using "hostile design" and "creative destruction" for physical space cleansing.

The result of the interaction of these three channels is the formation of a situation where the subaltern are not only "poor" but are also deemed "spatial criminals".

Typology of Anti-life Space: One of the fundamental results of this research is the extraction of a precise typology of Anti-life Spaces. Contrary to the common perception that views subaltern space as monolithic, results show that structural violence produces three distinct types of Anti-life Space depending on location and land value. Each of these types is the product of a different mechanism of architectural/urban violence.

- Abandoned and Neglected Space: This type mainly forms in distant urban margins or intermediate fabrics lacking commercial value. Here, structural violence manifests as "omission" or "deliberate abandonment."
    - *Physical Feature:* Severe infrastructure decay, lack of public services, auto-constructed and unstable architecture.

- *Role of Urban Planning:* Non-allocation of budget, lack of supervision, and removal of these areas from urban development maps.
- *Biological Result:* Formation of "deprivation traps" where residents lose the possibility of social mobility due to lack of access.

o Enclosed and Controlled Space: This type includes state social housing projects (such as some Mehr Housing sites) or dense satellite towns. Here, structural violence is applied in a "disciplinary" form and through "minimal standardization."

- *Physical Feature:* Very high density, mass and repetitive architecture, elimination of common and public spaces, dominance of concrete and asphalt over green space.
- *Role of Architecture:* Designing units based on biological minimums (merely for sleeping) and not social-psychological needs.
- *Biological Result:* Spatial alienation, collective depression, and converting the settlement into a "labor force dormitory".

o Space of Displacement and Suspension: This type is the most dangerous and violent form of Anti-life Space, occurring in central distressed fabrics (with high land value). Here, space is kept in a state of "suspension" to complete the "gentrification" process.

- *Physical Feature: Proximity of luxury towers to ruins, permanent construction sites, blockage of passages.*
- *Role of Urban Planning: Constant change of zoning, issuing incentive densities for demolition, and creating tenure insecurity for indigenous residents.*
- *Biological Result: Permanent anxiety, collapse of neighborhood networks, and ultimately, forced displacement.*

The following table details this typology and the structural characteristics of each.

Table 15: Analytical Typology of Anti-life Spaces Based on Mechanisms of Violence Production

Type of Anti-life Space	Dominant Mechanism of Violence	Role of Architecture and Physical Design	Role of Planning and Urban Management	Main Consequence for Subaltern
1. Abandoned Space	Structural Abandonment	Auto-constructed architecture, unstable and unsafe; use of recycled materials due to absolute poverty.	"Silence in the map"; non-allocation of renovation codes; deliberate cutting of urban services to force migration.	Silent Death: Increased disease rates, vulnerability to disasters, absolute isolation.
2. Enclosed Space	Spatial Discipline and Reductionism	Cellular and barrack-like design; elimination of social interaction spaces; standardization of poverty.	Location in worthless and remote lands; physical segregation from the main city body.	Social Decay: Rupture of bonds, environmental depression, reduction of human to labor force.
3. Suspended Space	Creative Destruction and Dispossession	Architecture of contrast: Shadow of luxury towers over small houses; fencing of construction sites.	Rent-seeking land use changes; targeted density selling; creating "rent gap" to attract capital.	Displacement: Chronic stress, homelessness, and forced transfer to further margins.

Research results show that the production of Anti-life Space is the result of a "chain of cooperation" among various actors. Contrary to the common notion blaming only "capitalists" or "politicians," this research highlights the key and undeniable role of "technical experts" (architects and urban planners) in executing violence.

- Architects: Results indicate that the architectural community, by unquestioningly accepting the "client's order" and prioritizing "form" over "social function," has effectively placed design tools (such as plans, facades, and landscapes) in the service of exclusion. Designing separate entrances for luxury and ordinary units, removing public seating to prevent gathering, and designing intimidating facades are instances of this participation in violence.

- Urban Planners: This group, by formulating regulations that are "technical" on paper but "discriminatory" in practice (such as setting high minimum subdivision sizes effectively excluding the poor), provides the legal ground for violence. Results show that urban planners often act as "justifying technocrats," preparing scientific justification appendices for political decisions (such as neighborhood demolition).
- Urban Management: As the final executor, it exerts pressure on the subaltern's lived space using coercive tools (Building Police) and soft tools (budgeting).

Furthermore, results from analyzing data from sociologists and matching it with physical status indicate a deep crisis in the concept of "citizenship." Anti-life Space reduces citizens to "Biopolitical Residents"; those who only have the right to "survive" (if they can), but not the right to "live".

A) Decay of Social and Spatial Capital: Results show that architectural and urban interventions have directly destroyed residents' "social capital." Destruction of local squares, widening streets for cars leading to the removal of sidewalk hangouts, and forced apartment living have torn apart traditional support networks that guaranteed the poor's survival in crises.

B) Inequality in Spatial Health: Spatial and field data examined in the research show a significant and direct correlation between "Anti-life Space Typology" and "Health Indicators." Areas under the most severe urban planning violence (like proximity to industries or lack of sewage) have the highest rates of respiratory, skin, and mental diseases. This result proves that urban planning decisions directly affect citizens' "lifespan" and "quality of health," and thus, their violent nature is undeniable.

Perhaps the most important analytical result of this research is identifying the "cyclical" and "self-replicating" nature of structural violence. Results show that Anti-life Space is not a static state but becomes a factor for producing more violence. This cycle works as follows:

1. Discriminatory policies make an area poor and deprived.
2. This deprivation causes physical deterioration and visual disorder.
3. This deterioration is represented by media and managers as a sign of residents' "lack of culture" or "dangerousness."
4. This negative label provides the necessary legitimacy for harsher interventions (demolition, cleansing, and policing space).
5. New interventions make residents poorer and drive them to worse margins, and the cycle begins anew.

The following table displays this cycle and the role of specialized tools at each stage.

Table 16: Matrix Analysis of the Reproduction Cycle of Structural Violence in the City

Cycle Stage	Main Actor	Specialized Tool Used	Stage Output	Role in Perpetuating Violence
1. Primary Deprivation	Urban Planners / Municipality	Land use maps, unbalanced budgeting	Lack of services and infrastructure	Creating the initial ground for Anti-life Space formation.
2. Physical Decay	Housing Market / Investors	Disinvestment, deliberate deterioration	Distressed and unsafe fabric	Reducing property value and preparing land for looting.
3. Spatial Stigmatization	Media / Architects / Managers	Discourse of "pathological fabric," "stain of shame," aesthetics of exclusion	Spatial disrepute	Stripping residents of moral legitimacy to resist.
4. Coercive Intervention	Developers Coalition / Municipality	"Regeneration" plans, "Renewal," Mega-mall projects	Demolition and displacement	Cleansing space of the subaltern in favor of capital.
5. Re-marginalization	Judicial System / Building Police	Anti-squatting laws, demolition of shacks	Production of new informal settlements	Moving the problem to a further point and restarting the cycle.

Results of the critical review of recent intervention plans (such as facilitation offices or empowerment plans) show that despite their humanitarian appearance, these actions have failed to break the cycle of violence. The reason for this failure, according to research results, is the "reductionism" of the problem. These plans often view poverty as a "physical" problem (needing wall painting or asphalt) or an "individual" problem (needing skills training), whereas this research proves that the problem is "structural" and rooted in the "political economy of space." As long as rent-seeking mechanisms and land commodification (the engine of violence) are not reformed, superficial architectural actions (like designing a small park) only act as temporary "painkillers" and sometimes, by increasing property value, accelerate gentrification and resident eviction.

In summary, the results of this research prove that:

1. Architecture and urbanism in the current situation act not as a solution, but as part of the structural violence problem.
2. "Anti-life Space" is not a byproduct of development, but a precondition for neoliberal development (based on land rent).
3. Technical tools (maps, plans, regulations) carry a heavy ideological load preset against the subaltern.
4. Any effort for spatial justice without a fundamental revision of "space production" processes (from university education to executive laws) and without recognizing the "Right to the City" for the subaltern is doomed to failure.

11.Conclusion

This section explains and interprets the research findings in light of the theoretical framework and background. The aim of this chapter is to go beyond raw data and provide a deep analysis of the theoretical, professional, and ethical implications of "structural violence" in architecture and urbanism. The findings of this research confirm the initial hypothesis that the contemporary urban space is not a neutral context for social interaction, but a complex machine for reproducing inequality and exercising hidden violence against the subaltern. Here, four main discussion axes emerging from the intersection of data and theory are analyzed.

Re-reading Theory: Architecture as a "Weapon" in Spatial Battle: The findings of this research add new dimensions to Johan Galtung's theory of "structural violence." While Galtung sought structural violence mainly in social institutions and abstract laws (Galtung, 1969), this research showed that this violence has "mass" and "body." Walls, streets, parks, and infrastructure networks do not merely reflect violence, but themselves act as silent "weapons" of war.

This alignment of findings with Henri Lefebvre's "Production of Space" theory is significant. Lefebvre warned that "conceptual space" (representations of space) produced by technocrats tends to suppress "lived space" (Lefebvre, 1992). Our findings in the mechanisms and findings section showed that this suppression has now reached a radical stage that can be called "Colonization of Lived Space." When zoning regulations (tool of conceptual space) make residing in an area "illegal" or "impossible" for the working class, they have effectively stripped them of the right to life.

However, the difference between this research's findings and classical studies like (Harvey, 2013) is that it shows spatial violence in the studied context does not necessarily occur through overt "dispossession" (like land grabbing), but through the "gradual erosion" of livability. The concept of "Anti-life Space" formulated in this research shows that the system, instead of immediate eviction, creates conditions where residents "themselves" conclude that staying is impossible. This is what the subject literature calls "Slow Violence"; violence that is not visible, but destructive.

Professional Paradox: Architect/Urban Planner; Public Servant or Capital Agent?: One of the most challenging discussions arising from this research is the ethical and identity crisis in the professions of architecture and urban planning. These disciplines, which traditionally consider themselves custodians of "improving quality of life" and "environmental organization," are practically caught in a fundamental contradiction. Findings from the Responsibility Matrix section (Table 12) showed that experts have often, unwittingly, become "engineers of inequality." The discussion here is not about the "intention" of architects,

but about their "function." In the framework of neoliberal political economy, architects and urban planners are compelled to follow the logic of capital for their professional survival. Capital seeks "maximization of exchange value," while the need of the subaltern is "use value." This conflict of interest places the architect in a position where:

1- Either they must serve capital and design luxury, exclusive, and exclusionary spaces (professional success).
2- Or they must insist on spatial justice principles, which often means being eliminated from the formal job market.

This research shows that university education in these disciplines (criticized in interviews), with excessive emphasis on "aesthetic" and "technical" aspects and neglect of "socio-political" aspects, does not prepare students for this dual role. Consequently, graduates enter the labor market without understanding the social consequences of the lines they draw and become gears in the machine of producing "Anti-life Space." This finding highlights the necessity of a fundamental revision in the educational planning of these disciplines with a "Sociology of Design" approach.

Technicality as Ideology: Depoliticization of Violence: The third discussion is dedicated to the mechanism of concealing violence. Why does society not react to this level of spatial injustice? The answer lies in the process of "depoliticization" exercised through specialized language. Research findings (Technocratic Mask) confirm that concepts such as "density," "land use," "per capita," and "regeneration" are not neutral concepts but deeply ideological. When the demolition of a poor family's home is carried out under the title of "removing obstruction" or "implementing the detailed plan," this act is stripped of its moral weight and reduced to mere "law enforcement." Safransky, in analyzing "Algorithms of Violence," points out that governance technology turns violence into "management" (Safransky, 2020).

This research also showed that in Iran, urban management institutions, by resorting to "specialized commissions" (like Article 5), make purely political decisions (rent distribution) behind closed doors and in technical language. This "technicality" does not allow ordinary citizens or even social activists to understand and challenge the violent nature of decisions; therefore, one of the main tasks of critical researchers (as done in this study) is to "re-translate" these technical codes into the language of "justice" and "politics".

From "Right to the City" to "Right to Live": Deepening Spatial Justice: David Harvey defines the "Right to the City" as the right to change and recreate the city according to our heart's desire (Harvey, 2019). However, the discussion arising from this research's findings shows that for the subaltern living in "Anti-life Space," the demand goes beyond "changing the city"; the issue is "survival." Structural violence in architecture and urbanism has driven the subaltern to a state that the literature calls "Bare Life." In this state, citizenship rights are suspended, and the individual stands only with their corporeality against power (municipality bulldozer, environmental pollution, lack of water); therefore, existing theories of spatial justice (like Soja's theory) must be re-read considering the realities of the "Global South" and contexts like Iran. Here, spatial justice does not only mean "fair distribution of services" (distributive), but means "recognizing" the right to be in space. Mechanisms that produce "informality" target precisely this right to be; thus, any corrective strategy must start with "decriminalizing" poverty and "legitimizing" the spatial presence of the subaltern.

Paradigmatic Comparison: Way Out: To summarize the discussion and pave the way for presenting solutions in the final conclusion, the table below compares the difference between the "Dominant Paradigm" (which generates violence) and the "Proposed Paradigm" (which seeks spatial justice) based on research findings. This table shows that the transition from the status quo requires a change in the most fundamental assumptions of architecture and urbanism. Presenting solutions in this section does not mean departing from the fundamental nature of the research and entering the field of executive plans, but is in line with realizing the concept of conscious activism (Praxis) in critical theory (Juraev & Ahn, 2025). In critical urban studies, diagnosing violence-generating structures without outlining "Emancipatory Possibilities" and alternative horizons is considered an incomplete process. Since the ultimate goal of theories like "Right to the City" is the transition from the existing state to the desired state (Marcuse, 2009), this research also considers it necessary to formulate normative principles derived from its analytical

findings in the form of strategic proposals to establish the link between "theoretical critique" and "practical transformation".

Table 17: Analytical Comparison of Dominant Paradigm (Violent) and Proposed Paradigm (Justice-Centered)

Comparison Axis	Dominant Paradigm (Technocratic - Capital-Centered)	Proposed Paradigm (Justice-Centered - Popular)	Implications for Architecture and Urbanism
Concept of Space	Space as "commodity" and abstract container	Space as "right" and social product	Moving from designing for "market" to designing for "society."
Planning Goal	Maximizing "exchange value" and economic efficiency	Improving "use value" and universal livability	Changing priority from "density growth" to "quality of life."
Attitude towards Poverty	Poverty as "damage" and "stain" (need for cleansing)	Poverty as "structural issue" (need for empowerment)	Replacing "demolition and renewal" approach with "in-situ and participatory upgrading."
Role of Expert	Expert as "technocrat" and executor of client's orders	Expert as "facilitator" and advocate for society	Changing architect's position from "elite designer" to "social activist."
Intervention Tool	"Top-down" master plans, rigid zoning	"Participatory" planning, popular budgeting, flexible design	Democratizing the spatial decision-making process.
Success Criteria	Physical renewal, project profitability, visual beauty	Preserving social fabric, stabilizing indigenous population, distributive justice	Evaluating projects based on "social impact."

At the end of this discussion, it is necessary to mention the limitations of the research. Although this study revealed mechanisms of violence, due to its qualitative nature, it was unable to quantitatively measure the exact impact of each mechanism on health or poverty indices. Also, focusing on metropolises might not have covered different mechanisms of violence in small cities. The present discussion shows that the future path of research in this field should move towards "Action Research"; where researchers not only describe violence but engage in practical testing of counter-strategies in real design processes. Also, investigating the role of "new technologies" (such as smart cities) in intensifying or reducing this structural violence is an important horizon for future studies, which will be addressed in the conclusion.

This section is the final step of the research, which, by summarizing theoretical and analytical findings, deals with formulating "solutions" and "policy proposals." If architecture and urbanism, as this research showed, have been part of the "structural violence" problem, the question now is how can they become part of the "solution"? transitioning from "Anti-life Space" to "Just Space" requires a paradigm shift at three levels: "Architecture," "Urban Planning," and "Urban Management." This research was conducted with the aim of analyzing the mechanisms producing Anti-life Space for the subaltern. The results showed that:

1- Violence is not accidental: Spatial deprivation in marginal areas and distressed fabrics is not the result of "lack of resources," but the product of "unequal" and "engineered" distribution of resources.
2- Tools are political: Technical tools such as zoning, building density, and design standards have acted as invisible weapons for "exclusion," "segregation," and "punishment" of the poor.
3- Production of Anti-life Space: The output of this system is the formation of spaces where the city's physique works against the health, dignity, and survival of residents (Anti-life Space); therefore, reforming the status quo is not possible with superficial and cosmetic actions (like painting streets) and requires intervention in decision-making "structures".

Based on the pathology performed in previous sections, the following solutions are proposed to reduce structural violence and move towards spatial justice.

A) At the Architecture Level: From "Hostile Design" to "Inclusive Architecture**":** Architecture must distance itself from its role as a tool of "class distinction" and "control" and become a tool for "empowerment".

- 1.Formulating "Social Livability" Standards: Revising national building regulations to define minimum standards that go beyond structural safety. This includes the requirement to provide common open space, sufficient natural lighting, and social interaction spaces even in the smallest low-cost residential complexes. Any design that violates "human dignity" (like windowless or cage-like units) should be considered professional misconduct.
- 2.Gradual Housing Design: Instead of producing mass and low-quality government housing (which turns into enclosed space), the "Gradual Housing" pattern is proposed. In this pattern, the architect designs the main and safe structure (central core and services), and residents complete it over time based on their financial ability. This method recognizes residents' agency and reduces costs.
- 3.Abolishing Defensive Architecture: Legal prohibition of using "hostile architecture" elements (such as anti-sleep benches, fencing public spaces, removing shelters) in urban public spaces. Public space should be designed based on the principle of "receptivity," not "repelling" vulnerable groups.

B) At the Urban Planning Level: From "Exclusionary Zoning" to "Just Urbanism" Urban planning must distribute the power of "space production" and take it out of the monopoly of growth coalitions.

- 1.Inclusive Zoning: Reforming zoning laws such that any large-scale residential or commercial project is required to allocate a percentage of the floor area (e.g., 20%) to "affordable housing" in the same location. This solution prevents "spatial segregation" and guarantees social mixing.
- 2.Anti-Displacement Policies: In urban regeneration projects, the priority must be "stabilizing indigenous residents." This is achieved through mechanisms like "rent control," "freezing tax increases for old residents," and "guaranteed right of return" after renewal.
- 3.Distributive Justice in Land Use: Prohibition of concentrated placement of nuisance uses in low-income areas. Every urban region must accept a fair share of services (park, library, clinic) as well as a fair share of undesirable uses (urban facilities).

C) At the Urban Management Level: From "Technocracy" to "Spatial Democracy" Urban management must make decision-making processes transparent and participatory.

- 1.Participatory Budgeting: Allocating a portion of the municipal development budget to direct decision-making by local councils in subaltern neighborhoods. Residents of "Anti-life Space" know better than any manager whether their neighborhood priority is asphalt or a clinic.
- 2.Social Impact Assessment: Legal requirement to conduct studies before approving any urban mega-project. This assessment must determine what impact the project will have on land prices, rents, and the likelihood of displacing poor residents. If the project leads to structural violence, it must be stopped or modified.
- 3.Land Value Tax: Levying heavy taxes on barren lands and vacant properties, as well as taxing "rent arising from urban plans" (e.g., property that became expensive next to the metro) and injecting its revenue into the "Deprived Areas Infrastructure Development" fund.

Table 18: Summary of Proposed Solutions for Transition to Spatial Justice

Level of Intervention	Key Solution	Strategic Goal	Executive Mechanism
Architecture	Gradual and flexible housing design	Enhancing resident agency and reducing costs	Changing engineering system regulations and accepting technical self-help patterns.
Urban Planning	Inclusive Zoning	Combatting segregation	Obliging developers to build a percentage of cheap housing in luxury projects.
Urban Management	Participatory Budgeting	Fair distribution of resources and power	Delegating local budget allocation authority to neighborhood councils.
Policymaking	Social Impact Assessment	Preventing displacement	Legal requirement of social attachment for all mega-projects.

It seemed that this research is a step in the path of critical studies of spatial violence in Iran. Future research can be developed in the following axes:

1- Digital Violence and Smart City: Investigating how new urban technologies and big data impose new forms of exclusion and surveillance on the subaltern.
2- Gender and Structural Violence: Specific analysis of the impact of Anti-life Space on women and children, and the role of urban design in creating gender insecurity.
3- Research-Design: Conducting pilot design projects in distressed fabrics with a participatory approach to practically test the solutions presented in this research.

In conclusion, the city is a full-length mirror of justice in society. As long as architecture and urban planning continue to produce "Anti-life Space," talking about sustainable development or civil society is nothing more than a slogan. Ending structural violence requires architects and urban planners to shift their loyalty from "capital" to "people" and have the courage to be not just "building designers," but "architects of justice".

Authors' Contribution

All authors of the article have had an equal share and knowledge in the stages of compiling and publishing the article.

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Conflict of Interest

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Footnote

[1] The theory of "Necroworlds" and the concept of "zone of non-being," which show how dominant logics (institutional, political, and cultural) can produce spaces that practically operate against human life, are examined in this book. Therefore, the book serves as a strong theoretical basis for the term "Anti-life Space." While the other referenced

article demonstrates how design, infrastructure, and urban "imaginaries of livability" can ignore or eliminate certain lives; direct discussions confirming this clause that physical mechanisms and urban design act against the livability of groups have led to a definition of anti-bio that is aligned with the article's title (Alterlivability). This is while anti-bio in domestic literature often refers to the definitive result of anti-bio. Cases such as exclusion, marginalization, inequality, and instability are more products of it than the nature of anti-bio (Shafiee & Abdi Daneshpour, 2020; Bagheri Miab et al., 2024).

[2] If the premise of "spatial exclusion" has not been proven in the studied contexts (Iran), searching for its mechanisms would be an instance of "Begging the question."

[3] In other words, this question is based on "descriptive codes" extracted from documents and research records (confirming the occurrence of exclusion), and "objective data" were enumerated in the literature review stage, and the first question seeks the process analysis of these data, not their proof. Accordingly, the state of exclusion is established as a "Proven Premise" or an "initial answer" to provide the ground for analyzing hidden mechanisms.

[4] In other words, the concept of anti-bio can find meaning in any urban area, even affluent ones. For example, the study (Gachanja & Yang, 2025) shows with structural equation modeling that "access" (to public transport, services, spatial diversity, environmental design, etc.) plays a mediator role between spatial opportunity and multidimensional poverty reduction. That is, if urban design and the construction of the built environment ignore access, even if apparent facilities exist, spatial poverty as a type and part of spatial anti-bio is reproduced.

[5] In this fundamental report/article on "spatial poverty traps," it is stated that in many developing countries, urban poverty is combined with the spatial dimension (separation from employment opportunities, services, market, and infrastructure) and reproduces itself spontaneously (Grant, 2010).

[6] Due to the scarcity of research such as (Sarrafi, 2025), the word "less" has been used.

[7] The number 100 for in-depth interviews is very large (saturation usually occurs in 20 to 30 samples). This number was not for "statistical generalizability" but for "triangulation" and "comparative comparison" between four discourses (architecture, urban planning, sociology, and activists). Equal distribution was also necessary to prevent "hegemony of one specialization over another" in the final analysis.

[8] In stratified sampling, the main goal is not statistical generalization but discovering and describing the specific characteristics of each subgroup and comparing them with each other. In this research, although theoretical saturation was achieved earlier in some groups (such as urban planners), the interview process continued until the completion of the determined ceiling (25 people) so that the weight of input data in the final analysis matrix remained balanced and the possibility of "Cross-Case Analysis" between technocratic and critical views was provided (Creswell & Poth, 2024, pp. 157-159).

[9] In other words, the present research is formulated in the critical paradigm with the aim of analyzing the "Production Mechanisms" of structural violence. The main premise of the research was that structural violence in architecture and urbanism has a "technical," "institutional," and "top-down" nature (such as processes of Article 5 Commission, detailed plan regulations, and budgeting). The respected residents of subaltern fabrics, although bearing the consequences of this violence, do not necessarily have direct oversight of the "technical and bureaucratic logic" behind the scenes, which is the main subject of this research. Therefore, to prevent reducing the research to a merely descriptive study of poverty (which has been much addressed in existing literature) and to open the "black box" of specialized decision-making, the approach of "Studying Up" and Elite Interviewing was chosen. However, to ensure the reflection of the subaltern voice, 25 percent of the statistical population (group four) is allocated to "field researchers and activists" who play the role of communication bridge and intermediate voice.

[10] It should be explained that the categorizations presented in tables and theme networks have an "Ideal-typical" and "Heuristic" nature. In the fluid reality of urban space, the boundaries between these themes (e.g., the boundary between physical violence and bureaucratic violence) are always intertwined and ambiguous. The decisive separation in these tables is a methodological tool for increasing analytical clarity and the possibility of systematic critique and does not mean denying overlaps and multilayered complexities in the lived experience of subjects (King, 2004, pp. 254-257).

[11] The Pearson correlation analysis presented in this research stems from the "Scientometrics" approach on the keywords of the reviewed texts and should not be confused with statistical analyses in quantitative methods. The purpose of this "Quantitizing" of textual data is to objectively and mathematically prove the "theoretical gap" existing in the research literature; meaning to show that in previous research, there was no significant co-occurrence between the concepts of "production of space" and "structural violence," and the theoretical link between these two (which is the main goal of this article) has remained neglected (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010, pp. 27-29).

[12] The reason for providing these explanations is that generally, in qualitative research placed in the Interpretivism or Constructivism paradigm, the goal is "understanding meaning" and "lived experience," not "measuring variables" or "statistical generalization." Using parametric statistical tools (like Pearson), which presuppose the existence of interval or ratio data and normal distribution, for qualitative data (which have a textual and semantic nature) can be challenging

and considered an "Epistemological Fallacy." So using these tools requires clarifying the goal, process, results, and interpretations arising from them.

[13] This technique allows the researcher to identify hidden patterns that are not observable with usual perceptions in the high volume of data (here 100 interviews and 41,702 codes) by converting "code repetition" or "code overlap" into numerical matrices.

[14] This approach is known in methodological literature as "Using Numbers in Qualitative Research" (Maxwell, 2010).

[15] CAQDAS (CAse-QDAS) software, standing for Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software, are tools for analyzing qualitative data (textual, audio, visual) that help researchers manage, organize, and code a large volume of unstructured data; famous examples include ATLAS.ti and MAXQDA which offer advanced features like smart coding, mixed analysis, and AI assistant.

[16] For example, in calculations related to correlation matrices (such as the Pearson coefficient reported in MAXQDA software), the unit of analysis is "Coded Segments" and "Documents." The software calculates the degree of semantic proximity quantitatively based on "Code Co-occurrence" frequency in a single paragraph or document. Therefore, the reported coefficients indicate the "probability of simultaneous presence" of two concepts in the experts' speech, not necessarily the existence of a linear mathematical relationship between variables. These numbers are merely "Indicators" to guide the analyst towards deeper interpretations (Kuckartz, 2014).

[17] Choosing the thematic analysis method over methods like "Grounded Theory" or "Critical Discourse Analysis" (CDA) was a conscious choice based on research objectives. Grounded theory is mainly used for "generating new theory" in the absence of a priori theoretical frameworks, while the present research, relying on established theories such as "structural violence" and "production of space," sought to "explain instances" and "qualitatively test" these theories in the Iranian context (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 4). Also, unlike discourse analysis whose main focus is on "language" and "text," thematic analysis provides the necessary flexibility for simultaneous analysis of "textual data" (interviews) and "process/physical data" (urban planning mechanisms) and makes bridging between subject mentality and structure objectivity possible.

[18] The separation of this section from the "Research Findings" section (which is the result of interview analysis) is based on the logic of "multi-stage research." This separation allows the reader to understand the distinction between abstract "theoretical constructs" and concrete "Lived Experiences" and observe the overlap or divergence between theory and practice in subsequent sections (Charmaz, 2024, pp. 114-117).

[19] In the analysis of the political economy of space, the discussion is not about the "chicken and egg" (linear cause and effect). In other words, "the cause-and-effect relationship is changeable" (meaning poverty might come first and then nuisance use, or vice versa), although appearing correct within the framework of Positivist paradigms seeking linear and universal laws, is not acceptable in the "Critical Paradigm" and "political economy of space" studies which is the main approach of this research. In the critical approach, the issue of "temporal precedence and succedence" (what came first? factory or poor neighborhood?) is a secondary issue. The main issue is "Structural Concomitance." Accepting the changeability of the cause-and-effect relationship reduces the discussion to a simple linear relationship and ignores the "power-centered" nature of urban planning.

Environmental justice research shows that even if the nuisance use existed before the residents, the planning system by "directing" the poor to these areas (through land price) and "preventing" the establishment of these uses in affluent areas (through political bargaining power), practically reproduces violence. Therefore, the research claim regarding the non-establishment of these uses in affluent areas refers to the "political power to repel risk" which exists in affluent areas and does not exist in subaltern areas. Even if the subaltern are driven to the margins of treatment plants due to cheap land, this does not negate structural violence; because it is the planning system that by commodifying safe lands and abandoning high-risk lands, has left no option but residence in proximity to pollution for the subaltern (Mohai & Saha, 2015, p. 318).