

A Global Bibliometric Analysis of Injuries and Violence; Healthcare Perspective on Children in Street Situations

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Abstract

The bibliometric study aimed to examine the perspective of Children in street situations on injuries and violence. A total of 502 articles published between 2016 and 2025 from the Dimension scientific database were analysed by using VOS Viewer 16.20 software. After undergoing all processes of inclusion and exclusion only 5 publications were included in the review. The analysis aimed at establishing visualization based on publication trends, co-occurrence of keywords, the occurrence of titles from most productive countries, co-occurrence of co-authorship, and the occurrence of institutions with high publications. The results indicate that the social behaviour of Children in street situations results in injury and violence, outbreaks of violence lead female Children in street situations to involved in commercial sex for seeking food and protection, violence and increased disability, mental health and death while it is evidenced that substance use has the strong connection with violence and injury among Children in street situations. Ecological theory guides the study by indicating that all Children in street situations are exposed to violence, but the extent of suffering differs according to the level of exposure, age and peer pleasure. To enhance a

violence-free environment for Children in street situations the government and stakeholders should ensure shelter, nutrition and free healthcare for all Children in street situations without discrimination.

Keywords: Children in street situations, Violence, Injury, Substance use, Mental health

Introduction

Violence and injuries among Children in street situations have been the public debate as defined by World Health on violence and health is the international use of power against a person that results in injury and death[1] . The situation of violence and injuries is a normal terminology that surrounds their daily struggle. Injuries have been reported as a serious health problem that affects the well-being of Children in street situations while they are on the streets, the nature of their jobs increases the reoccurrences of injuries through scavenging, sleeping and sleeping in hazardous environments. Different injuries such as cuts from lacerations, burns from open fire and fighting among themselves. According to[2] Children in street situations are more exposed to violence and indicate higher preferences for sexually transmitted diseases than those in residential care or alternative families.

The marginalization status of children in street situations increases their chances of violence twice that children are found in family settings because in families are protected by their parents. [3]Violence against children in street situations is attributed to family background and prolonged exposure to street lives. Physical, emotional and sexual are the common violence prevailing among children in street situations community. The violence against Children in street situations escalates to different health problems such as trauma, substance use and suicidal behaviour.

Because Children in street situations are living alone in unsafe environments without adult supervision they are sexually abused by adults or among themselves. Children in street situations who are sexually abused mostly suffer from sexually transmitted diseases, they are at risk of becoming parents at a tender age, injuries to their reproductive organs and they are sometimes suffering from urinary tract infections. However, [4]report that Children in street situations' injuries are untreated due to a lack of access to health care and discrimination in health services facilities, Children in street situations in India have a high rate of untreated injuries because of neglect to access health services compared to other children who are in shelters.

The United Nations categorized Children in street situations are children who lack a permanent place of abode, some are permanently living in the street for their lifetime, others are coming to the street and return to their families while some are born in the street by the former

Children in street situations. This study objects to categories Children in street situations into three groups with established criteria of being vulnerable to violence and injuries[5].

Children in street situations have different levels of exposure to violence depending on their age, and gender and children in street situations with disability with limited ability to run, speak and self-defense. Girl children in street situations are less visible during day time but their prevalence tonight is due to commercial sex and some are deported for domestic work where they normally end up in violence from their employers[6]. Younger street kids are always asked by their older brothers to collect money and once they don't give money, the old children in street situations are injuring small boys with sharp objects. According to[7]children in street situations' violence levels are also compounded by trauma and social networks that are the results of experiencing adult violence, their networks also explain how violence originated within social structures and how internalized social norms revenge contributes toward the ongoing situation of violence.

Bronfenbrenner's human ecology theory is used in this study to analyze the impact of the environment on human development, particularly the lived experiences of children in street situations[8]. The theory emphasizes that interactions between various levels of society can lead to violence and injuries for these children. The theory provides a powerful framework for understanding how violence and injury affect children in street situations' health outcomes. Human ecology theory was utilized to decrease violence and injuries among children in street situations through multilevel interventions by establishing drop-in centres with trauma counselling services, and training community volunteers in trauma handling for street children[9, 10].

Environment affects Children in street situations and in turn children in street situations are injured and face violence from the social system in that they are born for example they are abused by the community members and the police who are entitled to protect them[11]. Bujumbura, children are exposed to different environmental determinants including poverty, parental conflicts, poor governance, rural-urban migration that increase children vulnerability to a street situation where they are sexually and physically abused[12].

Therefore, public health policies are designed in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal number three on Good Health and Well-being for all people including children in street situations and sustainable development goal 16.1 that declare on the reduction of all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere, including domestic violence and child abuse[13]. However, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has a global commitment to support Children in street situations who are working and living on the street through health education, mental health, and emergency but those intervention are not equally implement to all street

children. African government adopted child protection protocols such Convention on the rights of children still street girls lack protection from violence, as there are cases of early pregnancies among street children which are not properly reported[14].

Report on child Labouré indicates that the total 12 million Children in street situations are employed in hazard works that increase high level of violence and injury[15]. While considerable researches such as [16, 17] exists on street children and their vulnerabilities to injury and violences, several gaps remain, especially from a healthcare-specific lens, limited health access mental health and substance abuse are supposed to be mitigated through shelter and effective counselling in low- and middle-income countries.

Method

This study is conducted by retrieving research articles from the dimension database, which is the collection of recent articles published in the area of violence and injury among Children in street situations. A bibliometric analysis is a research methodology too that influences for the understanding of research landscape used to evaluate knowledge and identify research gaps. The analysis of this study was done by using bibliometrics that analyses different data outputs based on cooperation between universities that are publishing on the same area of Children in street situations and violence, and authors' collaboration between countries whose Children in street situations problem is prevailing. Bibliometric analysis health researchers to map out research trends on the emerging, key worlds clustering and identify hot topics in the emerging area of the study. It is also important due to the fact that is used to evaluate research impact by using author citations from scientific databases on the area under consideration in the empirical evaluation of the field,

Literature search approaches

The literature search was conducted using the Dimension indexing database on June 2, 2025. A Boolean search was performed with keywords related to "Children in street situations," "Children in street situations violence and injury," and "Children in street situations healthcare/services." The search utilized both OR & AND operators to retrieve all relevant articles for the bibliometric analysis.

English was employed as the main inclusion criteria to identify articles published from 2016 to 2025, the first search identified 502, after adjusting to the year of publication that is ranging from 2016 to the present the research result indicated 3,67 articles, then the research category criteria way employed by considering journals that were published in the category of health science that was 295. Limiting the research to articles, the total identified was 171. This search excluded book chapters, pre-print articles, edited books, proceedings, and monographs. After

searching for open access, a total of 159 articles were identified. Finally, 5 journal articles from the database were used for analysis data availability can be accessed through <https://app.dimensions.ai/exports>.

The final sample(n=502) articles were included in the bibliometric review; the process of literature search is summarized on the table number 1 below.

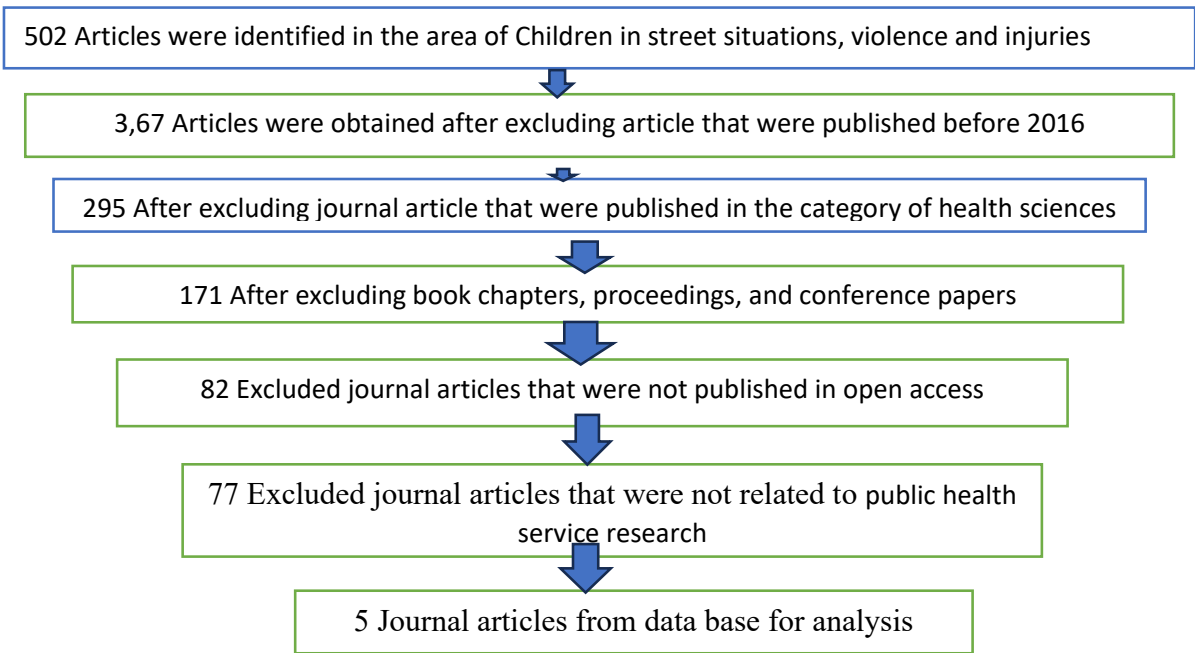


Table number 1; Search and exclusion approach

Quality assessment

This assessment is based on appraising the quality of the journal that published the journal articles that were included in this review, the quality appraisal includes the author of the jour articles, year of publication, area where the study was conducted/Index and the key findings. Journal included in the study ranked from quartile one and two for the year 2025, while the International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being H/INDEX ranged from 50 to 123 as the impact of reproductivity of the research published in international journal of qualitive studies on health and well-being health paediatrics, children and health services review, healiyon and in the journal Archives of Public Health.

Table 1: indicating the quality assessment of the selected journals

Journal Quartile	Author/Year	Journal Name	H/INDEX	Key Findings
Q1	Lucchini, R. and D. Stoecklin(2020	International Journal of qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being	51	Mental health, and prevention of violence
Q2	Chimdessa, A. and A. Cheire(2016)	MBC Paediatrics	50	Transactional sex for survival, drug use physical, verbal
Q1	Bromfield, N.F., et al.,(2023	Children and Youth Services Review	123	Time of street exposure, level of family poverty
Q1	Bajari, A. and E. Kuswarno(2020)	Heliyon	115	Street children are coming from very poor families. working as porters and junk collectors
Q1	Jarahi, L., et al.,(2021)	Archives of Public Health	51	Street children family factors, suicide history in relatives, mental disorder

Table 1 Presents the five journal articles examined for their suitability for inclusion in this review. It also provides the names of the authors, year of publication, the journal in which each article was published, and the journal's quartile ranking. Additionally, Table 1 summarizes the key findings related to factors influencing injury and violence among street children

Data analysis

The VOS Viewer 16.20 was used to present a visualization analysis of publications, including co-citation author networks, the most productive organizations, journals, countries, and the co-occurrence preferences of keywords.

Number of publications per year

The figure below indicates the general trend in the number of publications related to Children in street situations' injury and violence, there is a sharp increase in publications from different countries, rapid urbanization and family separation have influenced the preferences of Children in street situations, where health systems have not expanded enough to include the visibility of Children in street situations in health facilities. Most of the life of Children in street situations is filled with violence, inherited from their families, and violence in the streets that increases more injuries

Figure 1: The publication visualization landscape per year

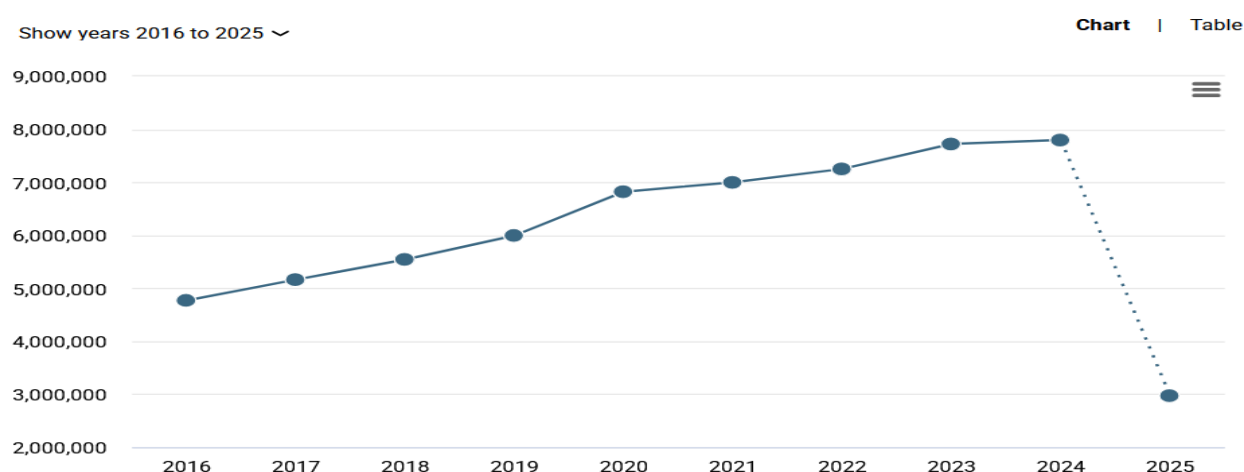


Figure 1. The publication visualization landscape per year (2016–2025). This figure illustrates the trends in publication output related to visualization across the specified years.

Publications trends indicate that there is a rapid increase of publications on the issue of Children in street situations violence and injury from the year 20016 to the year 2024 but in 2025 there are few publications. Figure number (1) indicates the output of the summary of the publications for 10 years. Globally, the summary of publications indicates the signs of increasing that creating awareness of the causes of violence and their impact on the future of children in street situations.

Co-occurrence of keywords about Children in street situations' violence and injury

The co-occurrence of keyword analysis was done to identify the area of key interest in the study of Children in street situations related to injuries and violence. The patterns of the related

Further, the last bibliometric cluster from the visualization map indicates the causes that increase violence and injuries among Children in street situations, are partner alcohol use, transmitted diseases and suicide attempts.

Occurrence of title from most productive countries

Bibliographic was done to indicate countries which have strong collaboration in producing high publication of Children in street situations healthcare in relation to injuries and valences.

Figure 3, indicates the pattens of relationship between those countries and their related journal titles.

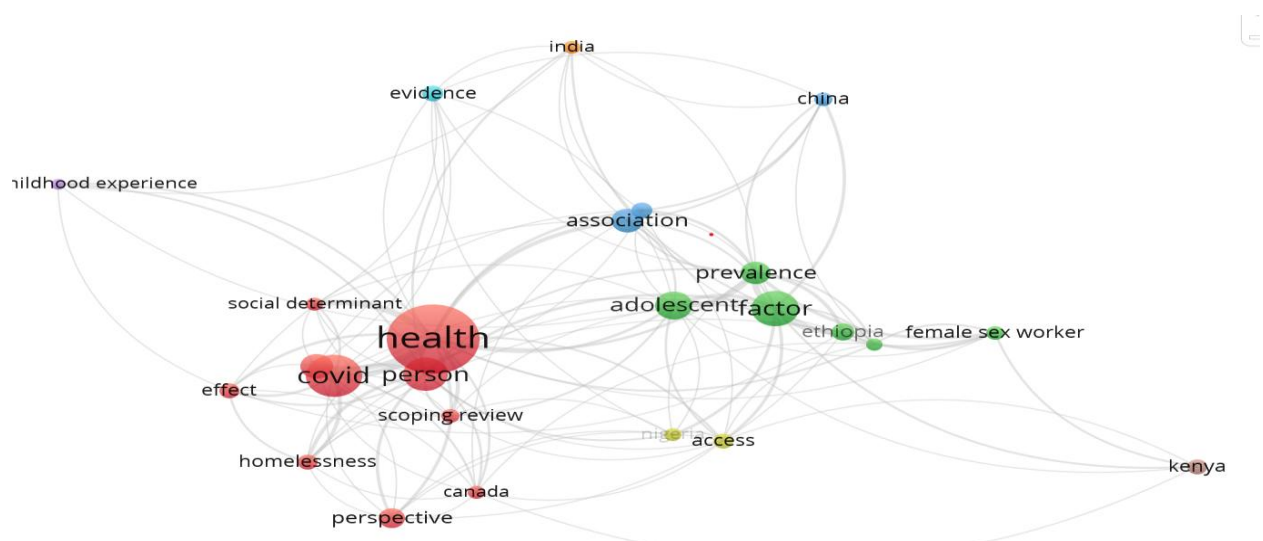


Figure 3. Occurrences of the title from the top producing countries.

Countries identified as India, China, Canada, Ethiopia and Kenya have high publications related to Children in street situations violence and injuries. Studies on childhood experience with strong reasons for the prevalence of Children in street situations, studies on homelessness and social determinants of health condition of Children in street situations indicate that Children in street situations have low access to healthcare despite their prolonged injuries that need to be addressed through health systems. However, the available studies from Ethiopia indicate a preference for female sexual workers who are street girls, and there are strong association between sex commercial workers and girl's Children in street situations. The findings indicate that the problems of Children in street situations in Ethiopia do not make a significant difference with Children in street situations found in Kenya and India despite the geographical location.

The red cluster, which signifies the impact of COVID-19, indicates that Children in street situations were particularly affected during this time. Their living conditions significantly influenced their lives, and they faced serious health challenges. Access to essential health services, such as decongestant medications, was often limited, despite the urgent need for medical attention among these children.

Bibliometric analysis and visualization of co-authorship

The bibliometric analysis indicating the co-authorship on the topic of the violence and injuries challenges affecting Children in street situations. Figure 4 authors who are collaborating to write on the same topic as it is indicated in visualization map

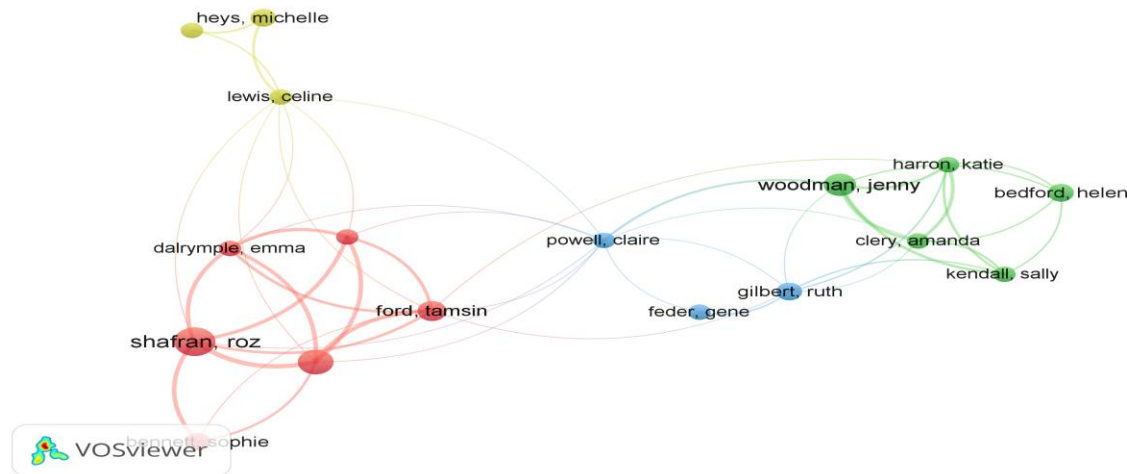


Figure 4; Authors collaboration

The analysis shows that authors with a significant number of citations in the area of violence and injuries among Children in street situations include "Woodman and Jenny" and "Lewis and Celine." These authors are highly ranked in terms of citations. The findings indicate that collaboration was high in 2024 compared to other years.'

Co-occurrence of Institutions with high publication and collaboration

Bibliometric analysis was carried out to show a visual representation of global universities with collaboration, high publication and high citation in the area of Children in street situations violence and injuries as shown in Figure number 5



Figure 5; showing the university with high collaboration and high citation index

The universities highlighted in bold which are “University college London”, “University of British Columbia,” “University of Toronto” and University of California San Francisco were found to have the strong collaboration and high citation in the studies related to Children in street situations violence and injuries. Other Universities have collaboration but they don’t higher citations compared with the bolded universities. The study found that in, Tanzania only TUMAINI University has shown strong patterns of collaboration with global University to publish more articles based on children in street situations violences and their related injuries.

Discussion

This bibliometric analysis highlights different themes from several publications with ten years, co-occurrence on keywords about children in street situations injury and violence, where sub-themes emerged were related to the keywords were Covid, health professionals, suicidal behaviours, and partner alcohol use, The third themes related with co-occurrence of the countries high citation, forth is co-occurrences of author collaboration and Universities with large number of co-occurrence in the in the publication indexes.

The bibliometric of co-occurrences of keywords in this review indicates that social behaviour, health professional, health equity, crime concepts, suicidal attempt and literacy most listed keywords from different publications on children in street situations injury and violence. The findings on social behaviour underscore the behaviour of children in street situations which is based on fighting while their daily livelihood activities such as scavenging and stealing increase their likelihood of injuries. This is supported [18]who found that children in street situations’

have adopted social behaviour that leads to self-injuries are hitting and cutting which is closely related to environmental violence and trauma.

However,[19].added that children in street situations' violence increases their risk of mental and physical health because of family neglect and abuse, while further disclosed that in Spain street children are experiencing discrimination and violence associated with mental health. Kidnapping, rape and sometimes death due to the experience of suicidal events. The health professionals from health facilities have the role of providing treatment for the related injuries it was argued by [20]that violence should be treated as a health problem and mental health support should be provided for the Children in street situations through culturally appropriate interventions that assist them in health accessibility that increases health equity for all including children in street situations. Suicidal behaviour has been reported by[21] that 42 per cent of Children in street situations attempted suicide following the violence arising from histories of physical abuse, early violence exposure and disability while there in the streets. [22] highlighted that the high rate of suicidal is due to the risk of drug use, drinking problems and experience of sexual violences

The discussion focuses on the co-occurrence of various titles related to violence and injuries among Children in street situations in prominent countries such as Canada, India, and China, as well as African nations like Ethiopia and Kenya. The emergence of female Children in street situations in sexual activities has been influenced lack of adequate protection, however, the studies that were conducted in Kenya and Tanzania by[2] Indicate that female Children in street situations engage in commercial sex under cohesion of missing basic needs like food and shelter and the previous history of sexually abused from their childhood. A study by[23]from South Africa highlights that street violence increases the probability of sexual violence among female street girls that is compounded by drug use and yet there are no demonstrated strategies for reducing violence.

The co-occurrences of co-authorship networks in bibliometric analysis on children in street situations, injury, and violence revealed sparse collaboration, with most authors publishing in isolation or small, localized groups. However, several clusters, primarily from regions which are heavily affected by the street child phenomenon in both developing and developed countries, suggest the emergence of collaborative hubs. Key authors such as "Heys and Michelle", Bedford and Hellen formed a central visualization landscape, suggesting leadership in cross-national research initiatives. The publications on violence and injury among children in street are critical areas in public health and children's rights for example studies by[6]from South Africa and San Francisco indicate the situation where younger children in street situations are losing their lives from gunshot wounds and other weapons-related violence in urban environments.

Other literature indicates the determinants of violence and injury among Children in street situations are linked with domestic violence and lack of parents which increase violence to the children when they are in the streets. Parental absences because of death, migration, or neglect are key factors contributing to children in street situations' exposure to injury and violence. Additionally, substance use, particularly alcohol, along with peer pressure, increases risk-taking behaviours such as stealing and fighting, which, in turn, leads to higher instances of injury and violence among these children. The study conducted by [24] confirm their strong association between drug use such as alcohol, cannabis, glue, and tramadol and violent behaviour. On these bases, the violence and injury among Children in street situations is a serious problem that needs to be addressed effectively by providing them safe shelters, health and psychological support for trauma-informed care.

Conclusion

Violence and injury phenomena remain serious health problems among children in street situations that need not be addressed by social welfare departments but also by other stakeholders such as government agencies, Civil organisations, community members, and international organisations. Several scholars have outlined different factors that lead to injury and violence among Children in street situations which are contributed by poverty, lack of parental support and inappropriate health support when they are injured. The negative consequences of injury and violence for the future of Children in street situations are related to sexual abuse through sexual violence, increased disability due to lack of access to health services and drug use such as glue and petrol sniffing which are commonly used as a coping mechanism.

The bibliometric review shows that more knowledge on violence and injuries is published by universities which are found in developed countries than in developing countries. Tumaini University was the only university that had a strong connection with other Universities in publishing studies related to children in street situations injury and violence articles, this is influenced by the availability of funds for research and publication and the lack of interdisciplinary collaboration in researching Children in street situations.

Limitations

This bibliometric review was based on one database which is a dimension, other data were not included in the search of articles that were included in the review. This limits the generalization of the findings because other databases were not considered, potentially overlooking relevant studies for inclusion. Future bibliometric analyses on Children in street situations should use multiple databases for broader generalization. Second, the bibliometric

analysis was redistricted to the empirical studies of Children in street situations based on injury and violence. Consequently, problems affecting Children in street situations, such as educational dropout and nutrition, were overlooked. Future reviews should address these neglected aspects. Lastly, the bibliometric analysis covered publications from 2016 to 2025, focusing on Children in street situations affected by violence and injuries. This approach limits the understanding of publication trends prior to 2016. Fourth, the bibliometric analysed only secondary sources which are already published studies leaving behind primary data that are collected directly from study participants on the topic of Children in street situations injury and violence. Lastly, the area of injury and violence regarding health accessibility has not only gained a prominent position in the field of medical sociology but also in social work and public health domains, therefore, conclusions and interpretations should be made through multiple lenses to gain a comprehensive understanding.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This bibliometric review study received approval from the Institute of Research Review Ethical Committee (IRRE) at the University of Dodoma, Tanzania.

Ethics approval Committee

The Institute of Research Review Ethical Committee (IRRE)

The University of Dodoma

Consent for publication

The study has received the consent for publication because it is the fulfilment of PhD studies from the University of Dodoma, the research permit letter was released, from the University, the Ministry of Local Government and Local Administration and Dodoma City Council.

Identifiable images/data

Not Applicable

Availability of data and materials

<https://app.dimensions.ai/exports>

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no commenting interest.

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Authors' contributions

The corresponding author is student based on the department of the University of Dodoma, the first and corresponding author (Projest Bernard) prepared this manuscript under the guidance of supervisors who added their valuable knowledge.

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