

PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY OLMOUC

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL
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Perception of safety in a chosen developing area

Diploma thesis

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Olomouc 2022

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně na základě zdrojů a literatury, které jsem uvedla v příloženém seznamu.

V Olomouci dne 12.12.2022

.....

Podpis autorky

Poděkování

Velké děkuji patří vedoucímu diplomové práce, panu Doc. Mgr. Jiřímu Pánkovi, Ph.D. Přestože jsem nevyhledávala rady často, Vaše komentáře a rady mi vždy pomohly se posunout dál. Děkuji za trpělivost, ochotu, lidský přístup a vždy rychlou odezvu.

UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLMOUCI

Přírodovědecká fakulta

Akademický rok: 2018/2019

ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení: Bc. Veronika ROJOVÁ
Osobní číslo: R190081
Studijní program: N1301 Geografie
Studijní obor: Mezinárodní rozvojová studia
Téma práce: Percepce bezpečnosti ve vybrané rozvojové lokalitě
Zadávající katedra: Katedra rozvojových a environmentálních studií

Zásady pro vypracování

Geoparticipace je způsob získání prostorových informací o dané lokalitě pomocí aktivního zapojení obyvatel. Mapování strachu a bezpečnosti patří mezi jednu z možností využití této metody sběru dat. Diplomová práce zpracovává data získaná v rozvojové lokalitě ze strany pocitů obyvatel se statistickými daty týkajícími se registrované kriminality. Diskuze je zaměřená na komparaci a interpretaci dat.

Rozsah pracovní zprávy: 20 – 25 tisíc slov
Rozsah grafických prací: dle potřeby
Forma zpracování diplomové práce: tištěná
Jazyk zpracování: Angličtina

Seznam doporučené literatury:

Giménez-Santana, A., Caplan, J. M., & Drawve, G. (2018). Risk Terrain Modeling and Socio-Economic Stratification: Identifying Risky Places for Violent Crime Victimization in Bogotá, Colombia. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*. doi:10.1007/s10610-018-9374-5

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Vedoucí diplomové práce: Mgr. Jiří Pánek, Ph.D.
Katedra rozvojových a environmentálních studií

Datum zadání diplomové práce: 9. dubna 2019
Termín odevzdání diplomové práce: 30. dubna 2021

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V Olomouci dne 9. ledna 2020

Abstrakt:

Diplomová práce zkoumá pocit bezpečí v distriktu La Candelaria, Bogotá, Kolumbie. Ke své práci autorka využila platformu pocitovemapy.cz, přes kterou sbírala kvalitativní a prostorová data. Zkoumány jsou především místa spojená s negativními pocity a viktimizací. Jako výsledek jsou prezentovány pocitové mapy, které ukazují místa, kterých se obyvatelé v daném distriktu obávají a místa koncentrace kriminality. Součástí diskuse a analýzy je komparace získaných dat s daty nezávislých médií a statistik poskytnutých kolumbijskou policií. Autorka dále rozvíjí příčinu nedůvěry mezi státními institucemi a obyvatelstvem.

Klíčová slova: Kolumbie, GeoParticipace, bezpečnost, pocitové mapy, nedůvěra v instituce

Abstract:

The master thesis examines the feeling of safety in the district La Candelaria, Bogotá, Colombia. The author used 'pocitovemapy.cz' platform for a collection of qualitative and geospatial data. The objects of examination are places connected with negative feelings and victimisation. As a result, mental maps have been presented that show the places feared by residents in a given district and the criminal hot spots. The discussion and analysis include a comparison of the data obtained with independent media data and statistics provided by the Colombian police. The author further develops the cause of mistrust between state institutions and the population.

Key words: Colombia, GeoParticipation, safety, mental maps, institutional mistrust

Table of content

Introduction.....	1
Theoretical background.....	3
Fear of crime.....	3
Crime and environment.....	6
Strategies to decrease fear of crime.....	6
Typology of violence.....	7
GIS, GeoParticipation and mental maps.....	10
Bogotá, Colombia.....	12
Change of political environment in Bogotá, D. C.....	13
Colombian National Police.....	16
Bogotá, current development.....	24
Perception of safety in Bogotá, 2018-2020.....	26
Protests in 2019 and 2020.....	27
Study area.....	29
La Candelaria.....	29
Author's view.....	33
Methods and data.....	39
Research questions.....	41
Results.....	44
Analysis and discussion.....	53
Legitimate fear of selected places.....	53
Mistrust of the police force.....	58
Cultural background as a cause of violence.....	65
Limits.....	66
Conclusion.....	69
List of references.....	71
Annexe A.....	81

List of figures

Figure 1 Feeling of safety in Bogotá Source: Chamber of Commerce Bogotá	27
Figure 2 La Candelaria with its highlights	32
Figure 3 Map of neighbourhoods in La Candelaria.....	34
Figure 4 Online survey, 2 nd part, feeling of insecurity in the area	40
Figure 5 Online survey, informative part, questions 5 to 9	43
Figure 6 The feeling of safety in La Candelaria	45
Figure 7 Feeling of safety in La Candelaria in comparison to other parts of Bogotá	45
Figure 8 Presence of police officers on the street (n=209).....	46
Figure 9 Trust in Police.....	46
Figure 10 Dangerous neighbourhoods of La Candelaria perceived by the respondents.....	47
Figure 11 Reasons why neighbourhoods are perceived as dangerous.....	47
Figure 12 Fear of certain social groups.....	49
Figure 13 Perception of insecurity in la Candelaria in 2019/2020, n=161.....	50
Figure 14 Hot spots of criminal activity in La Candelaria, n=100.....	51
Figure 15 Type of crime experienced or witnessed by respondents	53
Figure 16 Risk of the existence of sale point in Bogotá Authors: Escudero, José A., Ramírez, B.	56
Figure 17 Feeling of insecurity in La Candelaria in 2019/2020	56
Figure 18 Comparison of mental maps.....	57
Figure 19 Reported crimes to the police (n=117)	60
Figure 20 Criminal acts that people worry about happening to them, n=3.500 Source: The Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, 2021a	62
Figure 21 Data of reported crime in the district La Candelaria. The inner graph represents data from 2019 (n=1220), the outer graph represents data from 2020 (n=765). Source: Metropolitan Police, Bogotá.....	63
Figure 22 Reported crime in Bogotá in 2020. Source: Bogota Security Secretary	63
Figure 23 Armed robberies in Bogotá Source: Bogota Security Secretary	64

List of pictures

Picture 1 Typical street of La Candelaria with low colourful colonial houses, Carrera 2 heading from Chorro de Quevedo, barrio Egipto. Source: author	35
Picture 2 Calle 12, street heading towards Universidad Externado de Colombia, barrio Egipto. Source: author	35
Picture 3 Chorro de Quevedo. Source: author	36
Picture 4 Chorro de Quevedo with a speaker. Source: author	36
Picture 5 Palace of Justice, situated at the Bolívar square, Centro Administrativo. Source: author	37
Picture 6 Neighbourhood El Guavio, Santa Fé. Source: author	37
Picture 7 Intersection of Carrera 6 and Calle 12, La Catedral. Source: author	38
Picture 8 Carrera 1a connecting Chorro de Quevedo and market La Concordia, La Concordia. Source: author	38

List of tables

Table 1 Johan Galtung's typology of violence (1990)	8
Table 2 The Chosen and the unchosen.....	9

Introduction

Bogotá is Colombian capital that had the highest crime rates among Latin American capitals in the 1990s. The megacity, located 2,600 meters above sea level, inhabits over 8 million people. The city itself is very diverse, and the neighbourhoods vary intensively. The capital is Colombia's cultural, political, administrative, and educational centre. It is a crossroads between colonial and indigenous cultures.

Inequality has been presented visibly in Colombia. Colombian Gini index¹ reached the highest score among Latin American countries in 2020 (54.2) (World bank, 2022). The index has risen steadily since 2017, when the value was 49.7%. The rest of the Latin American countries obtained values between 40.2% (Uruguay) and 49.3% (Costa Rica) in 2020. Data on Gini indexes of the Caribbean and Belize, Guatemala, Guyana, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Surinam are unavailable. (ibid)

Colombian political climate has been unstable in the long term. Development and crime go hand in hand. Some places in the capital are known to be dangerous areas. Over one-fifth of the capital's residents have experienced victimisation (Barón, Meza & Ávila, 2019). With the implementation of the National Quadrant Policing Model (MNVCC) in 2010, the fear of crime and crime is supposed to decline. The author spent two months in the capital and examined the smallest district, known as the capital's founding part. Citizens' responses create mental maps of feared areas and places of witnessed criminal activity. The author processes collected responses using QGIS² to get possible hotspots and feared areas. The main questions of the work are 1. How is perceived the district of La Candelaria?, 2. Where are hot spots located and why?, 3. Is the fear of those places justified?, 4. How is the perceived work of the police force?

The thesis is separated into five main chapters. The first chapter, Introduction, is divided into four subsections. First, it familiarises the reader with the theoretical background. It introduces concepts of fear of crime, a connection between crime and the environment, the typology of violence and the concept of mental mapping. Secondly, the chapter follows with a description of the change in the political climate since the 90s in Bogotá and successful political approaches towards the community

¹ Gini index is a statistical measure showing economic inequality among the population. It is based on the distribution of income. The value ranges from 0 to 1. Zero value represents perfect economic equality; a hundred represents perfect inequality. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022)

² GIS software, freeware

and implementation of the citizen's culture. The next part explains the development of the National Police of Colombia since the 90s. The subsection then covers current capital development, describing an independent study on the perception of safety and background information on protests in 2019 and 2020. The final part of the introduction describes the study area, district La Candelaria.

The second chapter describes the methods used for data collection and data processing. Demonstration of the survey is also included.

The third chapter contains the results of the survey. Quantitative data is processed and depicted in graphs. Received spatial data was converted and processed into maps demonstrating feared areas and hot spots of criminal activities.

The fourth chapter, analysis and discussion, consists of four subsections. Firstly, there is an analysis of the mental maps and justification of the selected places. The following subsection focuses on the incredulity of the citizens towards the Colombian police and other institutions. The third subsection focuses on the cultural cause of political instability. Finally, the chapter is concluded with the limits. The final part of the work represents the conclusion, where are stated answers to the main questions.

Several studies have focused on crime and its variables in the Colombian capital. Escobedo et al. (2018) studied a connection between public green areas and crime distribution. Several Risk Terrain Modelling studies have examined the proneness of the environment to crime in relation to the illicit drug market (Escudero & Ramírez, 2018) and socioeconomic stratification (Giménez-Santana et al., 2018). On the other side, Blattman et al. (2019) studied the spill over effects of doubled police patrols on high-crime streets.

Independent studies on the perception of safety by citizens are done by the Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, or *Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá*, and by Network *Cómo Vamos*, or *Red Cómo Vamos*, which consists of 21 initiatives in 15 cities and districts. The Chamber of Commerce Bogotá has been examining the perception and victimisation among the residents of Bogotá since 1998. The results of their studies are available online. The survey consists of victimisation, perception, institutionalisation, and opinion on police work (The Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, 2021). The results of the studies are used in the analysis.

Theoretical background

Perception of the surrounding is based on many factors such as time of the day, crowdedness or emptiness of a place, unkemptness, socioeconomic condition, presence of authorities and more. The most natural emotion connected with unpleasant surroundings and crime is fear. The subchapter opens with the topic of fear of crime. Then, it follows a theoretical approach to how to tackle it. The last part describes the concept of GeoPartipation as a tool for measuring fear in specific areas through public involvement and creating a mental map.

Fear of crime

Safety on the streets affects the lives of citizens daily. This factor influences the overall satisfaction of people's lives and their surroundings. In this work, the perception of safety is considered the concept of fear of crime. It is not connected only with crime and geography but also with a range of social, economic (Pain, 2000), and psychological factors (Jackson, 2006), such as employment, education, social exclusion, and stereotyping. The concept started popular in the 1960s in the United States, where national surveys revealed that fear of crime was a widespread social problem (Baumer, 1985; Bannister, Fyfe, 2001; Jackson, 2006). Nowadays, fear is considered a more common problem than the crime itself; thus, much research and public interventions focus on it (Baumer, 1985; Hale, 1996).

There is no widely accepted definition since some individuals identify with different traits, which may also transform in different situations (Fattah & Sacco, 1989). Fear could be triggered by a specific social situation and location (Pain, 2000, p. 368). Different definitions lead to other approaches, measurements, implementations of policies and results. The subject of fear of crime obtained immense popularity, and according to Ditton and Farrall (2000), there have been more than 800 articles, books, papers, and reviews connected with the subject. Hale (1996) examined the fear of crime area literature and discovered some ground points. Early works on fear of crime connect fear with two main factors. The first is vulnerability, whether physical, mental, or economic. The second is experience with crime, either direct or indirect. Later research notes that fear consists of two factors: the notion of becoming a victim and the assessment of the consequences of the actual act. The latter point of view considers the environment and the community (Hale, 1996). Czech sociologist Vykopalová (2000, p. 231) defines the fear of crime as "*the perceived threat to personal*

safety in relation to the direct and indirect experience of victimisation, the way violence is presented in the mass media, the nature and possible victimogenic features of the location of residence, and, of course, the personal characteristics of the respondent.” Therefore, Vykopalová works with the characteristics of the individual, their previous experience with victimisation, and their response to the media narrative and the environment. British geographer Pain (2000, p. 367), in her study ‘Place, social relations and the fear of crime: a review’, concludes that many pieces of literature bypass the significance of place and community, which should be considered together. Participants mostly report unpleasant, neglected areas (Pain, 2000). Since the topic has been thoroughly covered, the impact on communities and individuals have been discussed from many views and strategies for reducing fear (Bannister, Fyfe, 2000).

Colombian political analyst Ariel Ávila Martínez (2014) emphasises four factors influencing the perception of insecurity in the book *Violencia Urbana* (Urban violence). The first is represented by common delinquency, which is done by small gangs. These gangs have a low level of control, and their criminal activity consists of minor offences and no serious crimes. However, they still affect the view of citizens considerably. Weaknesses in urban development depict the second factor. Those are shadow corners, bad routes or “zones of tolerance³”, which could be easily turned into zones under gang influence. Those two factors directly or indirectly affect individuals by hearing stories and experiencing them. However, the third factor relates to the malfunctioned system that Ávila called “social impunity”. As the state institutions have not proved equal to all citizens, some social groups might take justice into their own hands. Cultural changes characterise the last factor. Broad population sectors perceive new groups of adolescents as a threat. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu named this a phenomenon of class decadence. Various members of different social and academic groups have remanences over the past days of glory, and every social change skews their perception. Nevertheless, it must be noted that conflicts in the areas, such as bar brawls and neighbour fights, highly impact the perception of security. (Ávila Martínez, 2014)

Bannister and Fyfe (2000, p. 809) developed three theoretical approaches to building the fear of crime. All the approaches are on the same level of importance and may be combined. The first approach is drawn upon individual victimisation, either

³ The zones of tolerance, or also „zona roja“refer to parts where prostitution is allowed and regulated.

direct or indirect. The second is based on social control, which focuses on the inability to control surroundings and vulnerability to victimisation. The third position stands for the interpretation of the surrounding environment. City parts may be read regarding economic strata, which may be used to measure risk.

Fear of crime may cause dire consequences at both personal and community levels. It may cause public anxiety and paranoia (Barón, Meza & Ávila, 2019), which can lead to isolation (Jackson, 2006; Jíchová & Temelová, 2012). Instead of enjoying time, they become worried about their route from place A to place B (Moore & Trojanowicz, 1988). According to the neighbourhood, people tend to spend more money on their safety, buy extra locks and better insurance (Moore & Trojanowicz, 1988), attend self-defence classes, and use taxis or private transport companies (such as Uber, Bolt or in the case of Colombia app called Beat). Evidence from the USA shows that fear encourages more people to own and carry a weapon (Conklin, 1975).

Conklin (1975) identifies the indirect costs of fear of crime for society. Whilst fear of what might have happened outside, people change their habits and stay at home more. Skogan (1986) argues that fewer people on the street cause a rise in crime due to a lack of community surveillance in public spaces. Instead, they spend on alarm systems, better locks, and private security companies' services or move to another neighbourhood. People from lower economic backgrounds might be easily targeted as victims. Deterioration of community relations and neighbourhoods might transform places into no-go areas. Fear undermines community social control and mutual trust (Jackson, 2006). Neighbourhood patrols and private security companies could bring a sense of more extensive safety to the area.

However, it can similarly cause unwanted violent situations that could have been resolved peacefully. It can create “collections of isolated armed camps” that look similar. Nevertheless, it sends a message of possible hostility in the area, increasing the sense of insecurity (Moore & Trojanowicz, 1988, p. 4).

On the other hand, fear of crime felt within a community might lead to successful solutions. Gates and Rohe (1987) state that the collective may actively monitor the neighbourhood and come to assistance in case of victimisation. Such collective response strengthens the community and reduces the risk of victimisation (Moore & Trojanowicz, 1988, p. 4). In the case of ethnic diverse agglomeration, fear

could be produced within the ethnic community to be aware of the other (Matei et al., 2001).

Crime and environment

Some urban areas might attract a specific type of criminal activity. Urban planning is in the hands of a local government that should focus on the security of its citizens and therefore emphasise the creation of pleasant and safe spaces with natural surveillance. Stankevice et al. (2013) note that dense residential areas with green areas positively affect social lives and crime prevention. Green places fight crime when they are integrated into local centres. However, combining a dense residential area, green parts, “specialised areas and local centres, commercial and industrial areas, it becomes even more attractive to criminals, compared to dense residential areas alone, taken separately.”

Nevertheless, most of the research was done in high-income countries. Escobedo et al. (2018) noted that it is challenging to study this problem in low-middle-income countries since it is complicated to acquire additional socioeconomic variables and geospatial data to analyse further the relations between the urban environment and greenery crime. However, data from Bogotá shows that wealthy areas report mugging, burglaries and stealing of expensive vehicles and abandoned industrial sites attract drug dealers and muggers (Blattman et al., 2019).

Mape Guzmán and Avendaño Arias (2017) studied imaginary and topophobias⁴ in a location of Fontibón, Bogotá D.C. The results showed that certain places, especially parks, have become a territory of criminal actors and created centres that generate and sustain violence. Such sites justify and contribute to the creation of fear and topophobia. In case of no intervention from the part of the state, the topophobia gets stronger (Mape Guzmán, Avendaño Arias, 2017). Such zones of high criminality undermine the trust in authorities and police service (Skogan, 2009).

Strategies to decrease fear of crime

Many American studies focus on the quality of police work and the outcomes of fear of crime reduction among citizens. Confidence in police affects fear of crime to some degree (Skogan, 2009). People tend to blame the bad criminal situation in their neighbourhood on the police (Skogan, 2009; Nix et al., 2015). Fear of crime decrease

⁴ Fear of certain places or situations

contentment with the police. Therefore, people are suspicious of the abilities and willingness of police officers to fulfil their work (Xu et al., 2005). Moore and Trojanowicz (1988) conclude that higher visibility of patrols on foot in the neighbourhoods, making and sustaining contact, and increasing quality of the service have been more essential variables when tackling a fear of crime than quick response time and motorised patrols. Community policing consisting of visible patrols and personal contact increases confidence in the police and reduces concerns about crime (Skogan, 2009).

In this work, fear of crime is considered a negative feeling towards a place where they could become a subject of victimisation. The feeling could derive from many factors, namely previous experience of victimisation, the individual's vulnerability, rumours, and media, looking at the place's surroundings and abandonment. The concept of fear of crime is combined with mental mapping and GeoParticipation as data collection tools to seek hotspots in the district area. In the survey, respondents marked on online map places where they had not felt safe before the covid-19 outbreak with justification.

Typology of violence

In 1990, the founder of peace and conflict studies, Norwegian social scientist Johan Galtung introduced the concept of cultural violence, which followed on from his previous work on the typology of violence. Firstly, Johan Galtung rejects the narrow definition of violence that solely focuses on physical hurt. Violence can be done in the absence of physical form, in the form of emotional damage or in the form of stopping access to something. When an option exists to avoid unnecessary injuries and casualties that have not been used, it means that “*violence is present*” (Galtung, 1969, p. 169).

The opposite of violence is peace. Galtung (1969) differentiate negative and positive peace. Negative peace means an absence of direct violence. Positive peace is presented with social justice.

Galtung differentiates three types of violence, direct, structural, and cultural. Direct violence is an event or action. It happens at an exact time and location. The perpetrator of the violence and the victim(s) are present and visible. This violence is the fundamental comprehension of violence as such.

Structural violence is defined as a process. It can be interchanged with an expression of social injustice. The violence is indirect. Affected people are impeded from their full realisation than would be normally possible. Structural violence is a form of unjust social conditions put into practice by the group in power.

Table 1 shows the difference between direct and structural violence and the four basic needs classes. Even though the victim does not receive physical violence, the violence cannot be excluded from the forms that limit the basic needs of an individual.

Table 1 Johan Galtung's typology of violence

	Survival needs	Well-being needs	Identity needs	Freedom needs
Direct violence	Killing	Maiming, siege, sanctions, misery	Desocialization, resocialization, secondary citizen	Repression, detention, expulsion
Structural violence	Exploitation A	Exploitation B	Penetration, segmentation	Marginalization, fragmentation

Source: Galtung, J. (1990, p. 297)

According to Johan Galtung (1990, p. 291), the meaning of cultural violence stands on the cultural aspects “*that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence*”. Those cultural aspects hold symbolic value in the culture. It can be portrayed with things, symbols, songs, speeches, parades and more, in proven examples of six cultural domains, religion, ideology, language, art, and empirical and formal science (Galtung, 1990, p. 291).

To break down cultural violence from the example of religion, belief in a transcendent being, God, has caused wars since the beginning of human history. The first religion to worship a male deity was Judaism, 4000 years ago. Christianity, Islam, and other occidental and Semitic religions have taken over the vision of overwatching God and judgment over what is good and evil. The dichotomy was created to distinguish between the good, by God, and evil, by Satan, in human life and Heaven and Hell in the afterlife. (Galtung, 1990, p. 296-297)

Table 2 shows the dichotomy of religions believing in a transcendental God. Even though the Crusades were left in the past, the aftermaths of the so-called Chosen ones are still visible in the present. Since the Columbus era, the American continent

was under the influence of colonialism, segregation, and racism, which shaped history until today.

Table 2 *The Chosen and the unchosen*

God chooses	And leaves to Satan	With the consequence of
Human Species	Animals, plants, nature	Speciesism, ecocide
Men	Women	Sexism, witch-burning
His People	The others	Nationalism, imperialism
Whites	Coloured	Racism, colonialism
Upper classes	Lower classes	'Classism', Exploitation
True Believers	Heretics, pagans	'Meritism', inquisition

Source: Galtung, J. (1990, p. 297)

The three types of violence can be put into a triangle to explain the cause and legitimisation of one type on the others. Galtung (1990, p. 294) describes the triangle image as

“When the triangle is stood on its ‘direct’ and ‘structural violence’ feet, the image invoked is cultural violence as the legitimiser of both. Standing the triangle on its ‘direct violence’ head yields the image of structural and cultural sources of direct violence. Of course, the triangle always remains a triangle – but the image produced is different, and all six positions (three pointing downward, three upward) invoke somewhat different stories, all worth telling.”

Due to the different duration of the types of violence, the triangle can also be complemented with what Galtung called a violence strata image. The persistent cultural violence, which evolves slowly throughout time, represents the bottom, nutritious soil of the strata. From this stratum, structural violence gets a solid foundation to build on the discrimination policies due to the unequal distribution of rights and powers. The power hierarchy maintains patterns of exploitation *“with the protective accompaniment of penetration-segmentation preventing consciousness formation, and fragmentation-marginalization preventing organisation against exploitation and repression.”* (p. 294) The stratum of structural violence then creates a land on which examples of direct violence can flourish.

GIS, GeoParticipation and mental maps

Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc., shortly Esri, defines geographic information system (GIS) as

“a system that creates, manages, analyses, and maps all types of data. GIS connects data to a map, integrating location data (where things are) with all types of descriptive information (what things are like there). This provides a foundation for mapping and analysis that is used in science and almost every industry. GIS helps users understand patterns, relationships, and geographic context. The benefits include improved communication and efficiency as well as better management and decision making.”

GeoParticipation is a newer approach in Geographic information sciences. It seeks the active involvement of the public in data collection using spatial tools and possible decision-making (Obermeyer, 1998; Pánek, 2016). Whereas GIS shows spatial data attached to spatial control (Pánek, 2016), the citizens live the reality of the places. It brings the citizens' knowledge and GIS data together, which helps in the decision-making processes of the research of spatial areas (Dunn, 2007). Due to its simple usage, the public can easily contribute and express their sentiments and cultural backgrounds to the GeoParticipation (Pánek, 2016). There is no specific definition of GeoParticipation since this concept has been used with various tools and implementations. As Schlossberg and Shuford (2005, p. 15) note that when PPGIS, a type of consultative GeoParticipation, has been used in numerous studies and *“the more one looks to find a common thread or meaning about what PPGIS exactly means, one quickly realises that guiding definitions are not to be found and that utilising the term “PPGIS” is inconsistent across applications and uses”*.

In the past, GIS was a part of science mastered by mostly white males from North America and Europe (Obermeyer, 1998). With the later availability of the GIS, GeoParticipation has expanded (Pánek, 2016). Technological innovation and availability of software caused the democratisation of such software worldwide and in fields. GeoParticipation stands its ground as a tool for geographers, social scientists, humanitarian workers, psychologists, historians, environmentalists, and politicians.

Tom Poiker held the first academic discussion on GIS and Society in Friday Harbor, Washington, the US, in 1993 (Obermeyer, 1998). Three years later, the theory started to be implemented into practice, and the first workshop on Public Participation

GIS (PPGIS)⁵ was held in Maine, US (Pánek, 2016). Other academic activities and research partnerships followed soon after.

The activities of GeoParticipation might be observed from two levels. Those are global open-source platforms, such as OpenStreetMap (OSM) and Ushahidi, or local projects, that foster public participation through geospatial tools (Pánek, 2016). The projects cover themes from environmental issues, such as air pollution (CZmoudil/Čisté nebe, 2020), illegal dumping (Kubásek, 2013) to urban planning, such as Maptionnaire from Marketta Kytä and maintenance of urban spaces, projects such as Czech Zmapujto.cz or UK's FixMyStreet. However, some projects possess overlapping characters from global to local. A great example is a project called Missing Maps by Doctors without Borders which works on three levels. Volunteers from anywhere in the world help trace important geographical data on geographical images. Local workers and volunteers add specific information. Lastly, humanitarian organisations take the provided data to create plans to reduce risks and effectively respond to disasters (Pánek, 2016; Missing Maps, 2021).

Mental maps

Mental maps might be used as a tool of GeoParticipation which enables people to involve in decision-making processes in their surroundings. A map is never objective; thus, it represents power relations (Livingstone, 1992). The mental mapping process helps scientists and policymakers gain quality knowledge of the place from people's perspectives and gather ideas for future actions. Such mapping reflects the needs of the communities based on their backgrounds connected with the area (Corbett & Rambaldi, 2009).

Spatial perception is formed, adjusted, forgotten, and skewed according to subjective consciousness and priorities (Siwek, 2011). Every individual notices their surroundings differently. Therefore, the perception is almost always going to be slightly different from reality (ibid). People's mental image is shaped by many factors, such as their social status, education, rumours and news reports from specific areas, and opinions of the people surrounding them (Siwek, 2011).

Discussion about mental maps started long before the 1960s with philosophers such as Immanuel Kant. However, Kevin Lynch (1960) expressed the concept of a

⁵ PPGIS belong to consultative GeoParticipation, widely used term is also Participatory GIS (PGIS).

comparative, or *Lynchian*, mental map. When constructed, the mental map can be compared with the real world and evaluated based on the accurate composition of the place. This concrete mental mapping is in the nature of all people (Siwek, 2011). A decade and a half later, Gould and White (1974) developed a second concept of mental maps called preferential or *Gouldian*. The results of preferential mapping have qualitative values. Therefore, the results do not show reality but individuals' opinions (ibid). Finally, Norbert Götz and Janne Holmén (2018, p. 158) note that a mental map is not an object per se, more a "*theoretical construct not observable in its original repository – the human brain.*"

The author has chosen to make a negative preferential map where respondents mark places where they have not felt secure and were subjects of victimisation or witnesses. Such maps are connected with negative feelings (Siwek, 2011). Matei et al., in their work, argue that distrust and fear are a product of social interaction within communities. The specific narrative within the community causes bonding between people of the same ethnicity, residential area, or both. Members of those communities often create similar mental maps. (Matei et al., 2001)

Bogotá, Colombia

Located in the Cordillera Oriental on the Northern Andes, Bogotá, with 2,625 m.a.s.l., is the fourth highest-located capital in the world⁶ (Britannica, 2020; WorldAtlas, 2020). According to the 2018 Census of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), Bogotá, D.C.⁷ has a population of 7,181,469 (DANE 2018). Its area spreads to 1,587 km², making it its biggest city. Due to the physical geography, the city has a very narrow shape from south to north. Bogotá is a Colombian financial, political, administrative, and cultural centre.

Bogotá is considered a global city. In the last decade, it attracted millions in foreign direct investments. In 2020, the capital received 114 million USD in FDI through the investment promotion agency Invest in Bogota (Ramírez, 2021). In 2021, it was estimated that 481 million USD came to Bogotá and its region, Cundinamarca, which have created over 6500 jobs in communication and natural resources (Sánchez, 2021). However, there is a huge need for investments in the area of the infrastructure

⁶ The highest located capital is La Paz, Bolivia (3.640 m.a.s.l.), followed by Quito, Ecuador (2.850 m.a.s.l.) and Thimpu, Bhútan (2.648 m.a.s. l).

⁷ D.C. in the name refers to Capital District, or *Distrito Capital*

of Colombian cities to achieve an economy with diverse and innovative production, manufacturing, and service sectors. It was especially concerning Bogotá to connect it with the Atlantic and Pacific coasts (Taimur Samad et al., 2012).

The city areas differentiate extensively. Spatial segregation is noticeable in every Latin American metropolis, and Bogotá is no exception (Thibert, Osorio, 2014). The housing and neighbourhood conditions define socioeconomic stratification. According to those, the government spatially differentiates tariffs for public services (ibid). The wealthiest parts of the capital are located in the north and northeast. The poorest are primarily located in the south and the periphery. The socioeconomic conditions are classified into six socioeconomic strata: stratum 1, the lowest socioeconomic state, and stratum 6, the highest. Over 75% of households in Bogotá are in strata 2 or 3⁸(Gaviria et al., 2010).

In the 20th century, the country suffered from drug wars and guerrilla groups. The city has also been affected by the consequences of the disorder and lack of the rule of law. As a result, the possibility of getting assaulted is the highest in Latin America (Soares, Naritomi, 2010).

Change of political environment in Bogotá, D. C.

Colombia has struggled with illegal narcotics, organised crime, and internal conflicts. The drug narrative has dictated the country's view since the early '80s (Soares, Naritomi, 2010, p. 22). Until the late '70s, Colombia's crime rate was similar to other countries in Latin America. However, in the '80s, the violent crime rate increased more than three times compared to other countries in the region and became the most dangerous (Gaviria et al., 2010). In 1994, the homicide rate in Bogotá, D.C., was the highest among other Latin American capitals (Soares, Naritomi, 2010). The city was struck by one of the highest rates of kidnapping, terrorist attacks, and homicides globally (Beckett, Godoy, 2010). War and organised crime caused waves of internally displaced people to come to the capital. District Ciudad Bolívar has become the leading destination of internally displaced people and rural migrants since the 1950s, creating the most expansive and impoverished district in Bogotá (Pérez, 2016). The population of Bogotá increased tenfold, from 750.000 in 1950 (Davila, 2004) to a current population of over 7 million in 2018. Ineffective social services, inefficient

⁸ Neighbourhoods of La Candelaria also belong to strata 2 and 3.

transportation, and lack of urban planning nourished criminal activity (ibid). Different strategies were practised to decline crime rates and protect citizens (Llorente, Rivas, 2005). After implementing new public policies, the homicide rate dropped continuously, from 74 homicides per 100,000 people in 1993 to 19 per 100,000 in 2007 (ibid; Ruiz Vásquez, 2009). UN marked the successful implementation as a role model for other Latin American cities (Acero, 2005).

The political environment changed in the capital when mayors started to be elected and not appointed by the President in 1988 (Beckett, Godoy, 2010). The new National Constitution from 1991 established mayors as the highest position of authority in the police force, and they are held responsible for preserving public order in their municipality (Llorente, Rivas, 2005; Ruiz Vásquez, 2009; León, 2019; Godoy, Rodríguez, Zuleta, 2018). New structural changes in the police force help catch and incarcerate more than 500% more criminals with the same or decreasing number of police officers (Llorente, Rivas, 2005). The administrations of Mayor Antanas Mockus (1994-97, 2000-2003) and Mayor Enrique Peñalosa (1997-2000) have transformed the city into a better shape (Beckett, Godoy, 2010). Their policies included city planning, reformation and modernisation of the police force, social programmes, and preventive programmes such as limiting alcohol consumption and disarming the population (Llorente, Rivas, 2005; Beckett, Godoy, 2010; Pérez, 2016; Godoy, Rodríguez, Zuleta, 2018). In addition, both mayors focused on reclaiming public spaces for the citizens (Llorente, Rivas, 2005; Beckett, Godoy, 2010).

The security of the citizens of Bogotá became the most crucial point of the mayors' agenda. Mayor Mockus introduced in his administration healthy policies and a 'culture of citizen', or *cultura ciudadana*, which should be built around a foundation of trust and peaceful coexistence (Llorente, Rivas, 2005). The *cultura ciudadana* was based on minimal regulations of the people (Acero et al., 1998). Mayor Mockus was from a pedagogical background and created prevention campaigns targeting parents and juveniles. He often used symbols. He started campaigns against domestic violence, regulating citizens' behaviour in public spaces, and civil resistance against terrorist acts due to the rise of the acts in 2000. During his second mandate, he emphasised the citizens' security with the slogan "The life is sacred" or "*La Vida es Sagrada*" (Llorente, Rivas, 2005).

Mayor Peñalosa continued with the citizen's culture but focused on transforming public spaces and bringing order into those. During his administration, the public transport system⁹ was built, and roads, more parks, and safe public spaces were transformed. In addition, Bogotá's police force underwent new training, emphasising prevention in poor and marginalised communities through community work. He was also inspired by the broken windows theory, which Mayor Giuliani applied in New York during the '90s, and designed an action plan for rebuilding the problematic areas (Llorente, Rivas, 2005; Vedantam et al., 2016).

Two hypotheses were developed about the high homicides in Bogotá during the '90s. The first relates to ordinary people and increased consumption of alcohol during night hours, quarrels among drunk people, and high availability of firearms caused fatalities. In addition, many fatalities were also caused by traffic accidents caused by people driving under the influence of alcohol. The second is caused by domestic violence, especially child abuse, rooted in Colombia's so-called culture of violence (Llorente, Rivas, 2005).

Due to epidemiological evidence of homicides being committed in night hours on weekends by intoxicated people and with firearms, Mayor Mockus undertook specific steps. He created a 'Plan of disarmament' focused on controlling legal and illegal weapons. It was prohibited to carry a gun on weekends and during festivities. He organised a "Gifts for weapons", or "*Regalos por Armas*", exchange on Christmas 1996 with the church and various private companies to promote disarmament. He also implemented Carrot Law, or *Ley Zanahoria*, which prohibited the selling of alcoholic beverages from 1 am until sunlight (Llorente, Rivas, 2005) and limited the usage of private vehicles during rush hours in the city (Moser et al., 2005; Soares, Naritomi, 2010). The law reduces traffic accidents and violence caused by excessive alcohol consumption.

Mayor Mockus also created prevention campaigns. For example, in 1997 and 1998, a campaign called "Know before you drink", or "*Saber antes de beber*", was disseminated in schools to discourage young students from drinking and talking about its consequences. Another case of prevention, which was created with the cooperation of the Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Health, was a widely used motto saying,

⁹ In 2001, Transmilenio, a new bus system with fixed bus platforms was launched (Beckett, Godoy 2010)

“Hand over the keys”, or “*Entregue las llaves*”, which advised people to hand over keys of their vehicle to someone sober when drinking. (Llorente, Rivas, 2005). Nevertheless, Ruiz Vásquez holds that Mockus’s public policy had not directly reduced violent murders due to a lack of evaluations and further research (Ruiz Vásquez, 2009). Later, the leftist government criticised public space interventions and crime control (Peréz, 2016).

The administration of Mayor Peñalosa started a program called Mission Bogotá, or *Misión Bogotá*, to combat the sensation of insecurity among citizens and to retake public spaces. The program was based on three areas: police programmes and neighbourhood watch, the creation of orderly spaces, and coexistence programs (Alcaldía, 1998). To create orderly spaces, the town hall employed several civic guides to help regulate urban areas, such as traffic flow, security, and recycling. During the second administration of Mayor Mockus, the civic guides were still maintained. However, they were moved to other places, such as the public bus system called Transmilenio, university campuses, and entertainment events (Sáenz, 2003).

To foster coexistence, the town hall employed around 4000 vulnerable and marginalised people, such as homeless people, unemployed heads of families, displaced people due to violence in the rural areas, sexual workers, and others, as civic guides (Sáenz, 2003). Townhall also organised concerts and other social gatherings under the name *Tomas de Miedo* in the city places, which used to be perceived as dangerous zones, to show the positive transformation of the areas (Llorente, Rivas, 2005).

The next chapter focuses on the work of the National Police in Bogotá and the development of Community police to the National Plan for Community Surveillance by Quadrants.

Colombian National Police

From its foundation in 1891 until nearly 1958, the Colombian police was a tool of inter-party conflict between Liberal and Conservative political parties, causing purges and massacres. The police force was under the dominance of politicians, and the military members managed it. It was not until the '90s that the National Police was genuinely independent of the political influence and military, led by trained, high-ranked police officers and chiefs. In 1991, a new Constitution came with democratic,

participatory, and civil elements (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012). Nevertheless, the police had earned a bad reputation in the previous decades, which could not be erased easily. The cherry on top was a leak of information proving that the Chief of Police was cooperating with drug cartels and several low-ranked officers formed criminal groups (Llorente, 1999).

The national police lie within the Ministry of Defence authority (Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, 2022). However, as was mentioned in the previous topic, mayors were held responsible for maintaining public order in the city. Since the late '90s, the Colombian National Police has implemented various politics to enhance community needs and tackle crime more effectively. The first impulse supporting the reforms across Latin America can be marked by the signing of peace accords between the government and armed opposition in El Salvador in 1991 and Guatemala in 1996 (Frühling, 2007; Torres Reyes, 2020).

For decades, the National Police were at war with drug traffickers and armed groups. At the end of the '80s, the war weakened the people's morals in the police force (Frühling, 2007). The war against drug carters was devastating to police forces. Between 1990 and 1993, approximately 700 policemen were murdered fighting the war against the Medellín cartel (Pardo, 1996, p. 344). In addition, there was a high corruption and violation of human rights, known as assassinations at the hands of police agents (Llorente, 2004; Frühling, 2007). The policemen committing criminal activities pursued so-called "social cleansing", which constituted assassinations of selected socially maladjusted¹⁰ people (Camacho, Guzmán, 1990; Amnesty International, 1994; Llorente, 2004).

The '90s marked a significant era of democratisation in Latin American countries (Frühling, 2007). As a result, a new process of self-determination began for the police force with its institutional interests, which was difficult to control and independent of military influence, political parties, and local authorities (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012). Thus, it supported democratic changes and a fair and people-centric approach from many multilateral institutions.

Nevertheless, the police had an institutional crisis (Llorente, 2004). Generally, Latin American police focused more on the government's needs than on the general

¹⁰ Criminals, prostitutes, beggars and the mentally ill.

public's needs, and the Colombian police were no exception (Frühling, 1998, p. 39). According to a survey by the National Consulting Center (1991), only one-third of the Colombian population trusted the police in the '80s. Half of the population trusted the military (Centro Nacional de Consultoría, 1991). In 1993, the trust in Colombian police among the public hit only 20% (Llorente, 2004). Therefore, in 1993, reforms and modernisation started that would bring back a good image of the police (Frühling, 2004; Llorente, Rivas, 2005). In 1998, the Captain of the Police department put its new flagship, the community police (Frühling, 2004).

Since the mid-90s, an annual evaluation of police departments was initiated with an analysis of various indicators, such as homicide rate, vehicle thefts, and more, to consider institutional changes in security policies (Llorente, Rivas, 2005).

During the administration of Mayor Peñalosa, investments in the Metropolitan police tripled from 16 million USD to 46 million USD. The new flow of investments from 1995 to 2003 was used for modernisation purposes such as buying better vehicles and constructing and reconstructing police stations and centres of immediate attention¹¹. (Llorente, Rivas, 2005)

In the past three decades, the Colombian police experienced four branding changes, from community policing to MNVCC (described later in the chapter). Evaluation and significant changes in the police help shape public views on the police and their safety. Rebranding is a powerful tool to gain support from the public in elections. (León, 2019)

The National Police implemented the National Quadrant Policing Model (MNVCC) in 2010, seeking to get together with the community and deter possible crimes with prevention programmes and good relations. Police used to have a solely reactive function. The strategy pushes active involvement with the communities. (León, 2019)

Community Police, *Policía Comunitaria*

In 1998, the Bogotan National police created a new division called Community police, or *Policía Comunitaria*, whose aim was to provide excellent services to the

¹¹ Centre of Immediate Attention or *Comando de atención inmediata* (CAI) is a small unit with smaller jurisdiction under the Colombian National Police. They are located in the city parts for immediate response and community reach. (Llorente, Rivas, 2005)

community, focusing on prevention, crime deterrence, and peaceful coexistence (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012; Torres Reyes, 2020). It was a separate division with police officers and commanders who underwent special training. They were quickly recognised since they wore special vests and rode bicycles (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012). The program received international support and support from the Colombian Chamber of Commerce (Frühling, 2004; Llorente, Rivas, 2005; Ruiz Vásquez, 2012). As a result, Bogotá was the first city to implement the program of community police on the continent (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012; Torres Reyes, 2020).

Two groups (21 and 10) of officials underwent special training in community policing and urban guard at Universidad de Barcelona and Toledo in 1998 and 1999, respectively (Frühling, 2004). Later, the community police officers took short courses at Universidad Javeriana. In 2006, the courses were offered at Universidad Nacional in Bogotá, which were compared to those at Universidad Javeriana (conflict resolution, leadership, ethics) more sociological and philosophical (the meaning of others, humanistic awareness, daily life, etc.). In addition, the educational exchange took place between Colombian community police and one from Great Britain (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012).

The reform needed to be better integrated into the working structure. Community police were perceived as an additional service. Trained officials wanted to adopt strategies from Barcelona, which allowed higher autonomy for the police groups in their working sector. Nevertheless, implementing the strategy would contradict the established hierarchy in the police force (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012). All in all, community police worked on previously implemented programmes (Llorente, 2006). Namely, the Local Safety Fronts (shortly LSFs) programme, from 1996, which aim is to organise a group of residents who would alert each other and authorities via alarms and phones on suspicious activities; the safe school programme, which aims to train residents in issues related to security and tasks such as protecting children, elderly, homeless, etc. Only eight per cent¹² of the police officers were part of the division and could not cover

¹² Only 1.049 police officers were part of the division. One of their tasks was also to make training meetings of the Local Safety Fronts. The LSFs grew significantly. In 2006 there was 9686 of LSFs. Nevertheless, the number of police officers in Community police has not grown in the same fashion. Each officer had to make from 36 to 73 training meetings per year. In 2006, Mayor Luis E. Garzon ordered stopping of formation of more LSFs and focusing on evaluation and strengthening of current fronts. Further investigation showed that one fifth of Fronts were inactive and 30% of alarm systems were unfunctional (Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá, 2007).

the whole capital (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012). Only a quarter of all households in Bogotá were aware of the community police (Llorente, 2004).

Compared to Latin America, Colombia had the most significant division of community police. However, the distribution of personnel was very uneven, lacking officers in densely populated cities. The ratio of community officers to population was one to six thousand in Bogotá, which was utterly inadequate and far from calling the model community policing. In addition, community police officers were often ordered by high-ranked officials to cover other duties. Others perceived the agenda of community policing as inferior. (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012)

Even though the coverage of the community police was low, the service has improved the image of the police in the neighbourhoods of their activity. According to a study by María Llorente and García (2000), the service of community police was perceived as significantly better (82%) compared to the service of the Metropolitan Police of Bogotá (36%). The positive image was the highest in neighbourhoods with community police officers and LSFs. Positive survey results could be achieved either by providing an excellent service to the selected neighbourhoods or by pre-selecting neighbourhoods whose inhabitants would accept and cooperate with policemen (Llorente, 2004).

Local Safety Fronts, Frentes de Seguridad Local

The LSFs programme was increasing fronts each year by nine per cent. In 2003, there were more than 6.6 thousand (Llorente, Rivas, 2005), and in 2006, more than 9.6 thousand (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012). Nevertheless, the program was not fully developed due to a low number of community officers (1049). In an ideal scenario, members of LSFs would have regular meetings and training sessions with police officers to learn about spotting suspicious activities and alarming neighbours and the police. In 2006, Mayor Luis E. Garzon (2004-2007) ordered the termination of the registration of new LSFs and decided to work with the already established ones to strengthen them (ibid). However, according to the Chamber of Commerce (2007), only 81% was still active, and over one-third had problems with the alarm system (Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá, 2007).

Ruiz Vásquez's (2012) research with the Chamber of Commerce Bogotá data shows that the increased number of LSFs has not prevented robberies or victimisation. However, LSFs helped decrease subjective fear of crime (Ruiz Vásquez, 2012).

According to resources such as María Victoria Llorente, the community police operated from 1998 to 2001. However, programmes such as LSFs have been in progress the whole time.

Strategy of Citizens' safety, La Estrategia de Seguridad Ciudadana

During the second administration of President Álvaro Uribe (2006-2010), it was decided to abandon the idea of community police due to the presence of higher threats, namely ELN and FARC. Acts of terrorism and criminality, in general, rose in previous years significantly. Police authorities suggested that illegal armed groups had moved their activities to cities. (Socha, 2013; Torres Reyes, 2020)

Community patrol, Vigilancia comunitaria

In 2007, a new service called community patrol, or *Vigilancia comunitaria* was initiated. The aim of the service reflexes the objective of the previous community police, namely, to reduce crime, be closer to the citizens, improve the feeling of insecurity, improve the image of the police institution, and build trust (Socha, 2013; Torres Reyes, 2020).

The results of the pilot programme from Bogotá were never published. The only thing known is that just a few uniform officers were dedicated to working with the citizens. Most of them fulfilled the demands of their commanders, who needed better indexes in crime and to get done traditional reactive tasks. The community patrol was in the same situation as the previous community police. (Socha, 2013)

National Plan for Community Surveillance by Quadrants, Modelo Nacional de Vigilancia Comunitaria por Cuadrantes

Ministry of Defence implemented a new comprehensive operational model called National Plan for Community Surveillance by Quadrants, or *Plan Nacional de Vigilancia Comunitaria por Cuadrantes*, shortly PNVCC¹³, in the Colombian National Police in 2010. The plan stands on four frameworks inspired by good practices from the Global North. Frameworks focus on hotspots, problem-oriented approaches,

¹³ National Plan for Community Surveillance by Quadrants, or *Plan Nacional de Vigilancia Comunitaria por Cuadrantes*, shortly PNVCC is also known as National Model for Community Surveillance by Quadrants, or *Modelo Nacional de Vigilancia Comunitaria por Cuadrantes*, shortly MNVCC.

community policing strategies, and procedural justice¹⁴. Police officers operate in small areas called quadrants to get acquainted with the surroundings and community. Even though police officers have not successfully connected with the community in Bogotá, police operations have improved (Torres Reyes, 2020). PNVCC is claimed to successfully reduce crime in “*all major cities where it has been introduced and implemented*” (FiP, 2012).

Theoretically, based on the model, police officers should gather the necessary information to conduct diagnostics and crime analyses. It determines risks, factors, and causes of problems in the neighbourhoods. One of the aims of the police officers is to gather information about the neighbourhood’s backgrounds – economic, political, cultural, social, and criminal. (García, 2015)

The police created Centers of Strategic information or *Centros de Información Estratégica Policial Seccional* (CIEPS) for every precinct. The CIEPS studies crime activities and their relevance to statistical data, georeferences and their causes. (García, 2015)

The PNVCC was implemented in the main cities of Colombia on trial. Authorities marked the pilot phase as a success, and in 2014, the strategy was elevated to a doctrine whose jurisdiction expanded from urban areas to rural ones. The PNVCC changed its name to National Model for Community Surveillance by Quadrants, or *Modelo Nacional de Vigilancia por Comunitaria por Cuadrantes*, MNVCC. (García, 2015)

León (2019) conducted a study on the crime control evaluations of PNVCC where he compares official evaluations from Fundación Ideas Para La Paz, shortly FiP, with his own and other independent research. The official narrative claims a continuous positive effect on ‘objective crime rates’ and ‘subjective citizen perceptions’, whereas other studies and analyses claim the opposite (Bogota Cómo Vamos, 2020). The official evaluation is based on selectively chosen data and a “difference-in-

¹⁴ The operational frameworks work on a mutuality. Hotspot framework addresses notoriously criminally indicated areas. On known data, more police personnel are directed to places more prompted to service calls and crime activity. Problem oriented policing comes in hand with hotspot one and investigate the sources of the problem. Community oriented approach direct on community involvement. Main aim is to implement prevention programmes and establish mutual trust and good relations between the police and community. Mutual trust can be raised only if the community believes in procedural justice. Police officers must respectfully address citizens. (León, 2019)

difference analysis that compares four months of post-treatment with the same four months of the previous year”. The analysis omits Cartagena, which experienced an increase in crime rates. Authorities justified the conflicting results by stating a possible decrease in crime with the proper implementation of the MNVCC (León, 2019).

The FiP (2012) evaluation states that it is incomplete, but it wanted to show the progress in the development of the methodology and the application process. The Metropolitan police of Bogotá was highlighted as one with the best performance in all crime categories, except homicides which remained at the same value. However, it is marked that those police officers are more visible on the streets, and access from the citizens' side is better. As emerged from the surveys, the safety conditions and the arrival time of police officers got better and quicker; therefore, the model PNVCC has been correctly implemented. The overall rates whilst proper implementation of PNVCC is described as declining from almost ten (in case of homicides) to 60% (in case of motorbike theft). (FiP, 2012)

However, the crime statistics might also be artificially altered by changing laws, such as passing the Law of Small Causes or *Ley de Pequeñas Causas*. The law was first implemented in 2007 to relieve overload in criminal courts from misdemeanours. In 2017, the law was modified and sanctioned by the President. These changes give an opportunity to easily misinterpret crime statistics (e.g., comparing the number of court cases over time). (El Tiempo, 2018; León, 2019)

César Torres Reyes evaluated the PNVCC in the neighbourhood based on timesheets of the community police officers and reported crimes in selected quadrants of district Chapinero, Bogotá, from 2015 to 2018. Chapinero has been the most affected by personal thefts compared to the rest of the districts. The research found that the PNVCC in Chapinero has not decreased the number of personal thefts. On the contrary, the following year number of these incidents increased (Torres Reyes, 2020). Kenneth S. León (2019) notes that official evaluations were not conducted with any public literature overview. He suggests that the provided official evidence-based evaluation inclines towards abstract empiricism¹⁵, due to which a framework of MNVCC might explain any direction towards a rise or decrease in crime.

¹⁵ Term abstract empiricism was first used by C. Wright Mills in his book *The Sociological Imagination* (1959). The terms denote inadequate correlations between statistical data and statistical analysis in sociological reasoning when, as Mills (1959, p. 68) notes, the research is “systematically a-historical and non-comparative”.

In 2016, the newly elected Mayor ordered doubled police patrol time, from 92 to 169 minutes. Studies have shown that increasing the intensity or quality of policing in high-crime hot spots reduces crime on those corners, streets, or neighbourhoods, as does tackling social disorder. The U.S. literature connotes positive spill over effects of place-based policing. Unfortunately, research has yet to prove the significant effect of increased patrol time and municipal service in reducing crime. (Blattman et al., 2019)

The Chamber of Commerce Bogotá (2021) focused on the perception and engagement with police by citizens in its annual survey. The survey revealed that only 24% of citizens knew which quadrant they belonged. Of those, 67% have encountered the quadrant police, 37% knew the phone number for calling police officers in their quadrant, and one-third have interacted with them. One quarter (21%) encounters the police in their neighbourhood every day, one quarter (27%) meets them someday per week, and half of the respondents encounter the police a few times a month.

Bogotá, current development

According to IISS¹⁶, in terms of security, after the successful peace negotiations with FARC in 2016, the capital stands against two threats: transnational illicit flows and micro-trafficking by local gangs or *pandillas*.

The first threat is highly connected with the character of a ‘global’ city, which attracts illicit networks. Bogotá is not an isolated unit, but a busy transport hub interconnected with surrounding villages. The city’s peripheries were shaped mainly by the flow of internally displaced people without proper city planning. The insufficient structure left many gaps for exploitation of the system, especially in the peripheral areas inhabited by the most vulnerable people. Those areas lack state control, which makes them suitable for creating and disseminating illicit activities, conflict, and violence.

No significant criminal network has not been directly operating in Bogotá (IISS, 2018). However, there might be loose alliances, or “criminal subcontracting”, between those and the small gangs (Ávila Martínez, 2014). The gangs often operate within a neighbourhood or some part of it (IISS, 2018). The environment in Colombia is changing in the field of the illicit drug market. Colombia changed from a solemnly producing country into a consuming one in the new millennium (Alvarado, 2013;

¹⁶ The Institute of International Strategic Studies

interview for IISS, 2018). The change causes a risk of addiction and a higher risk of violence. One of the tools to fight organised criminal organisations or gangs is the use of the kingpin strategy¹⁷.

Nevertheless, removing the leader of such a group might cause more violence, kidnapping, extortion and even homicides (Jones, 2013). In many cases, the organisation continues with a new leader who might have been appointed as a successor before, or the members start fighting over the new position (ibid). Thus, the problem in Bogotá, and so as in other Colombian cities, remains present.

Furthermore, the bifurcation of society in Bogotá is omnipresent. There is a massive gap between the wealthy and the poor. The Middle and upper class protect themselves in gated communities with private security (Felbab-Brown, 2016). The residents of peripheries easily find themselves in hotspots of criminal activities. Constant threat forbids them from investing in their personal development and assets. They might also restrict their socialisation with neighbours due to fear of victimisation (Muggah, 2012). The criminal activities in peripheries decrease community trust and damage social capital (Moser, Mcilwaine, 2006).

The authorities are concerned chiefly about areas around schools and public transportation. Those have the most security issues. In 2016, local authorities obtained information that 78 schools are surrounded by regular drug trafficking activity (NoticiasRCN, 2016). The presence of dealers and other criminals around pupils and students increases threats of violence and victimisation and might direct minors toward criminal activities. (IISS, 2017)

Even though the homicide rate in Bogotá belongs to one of the lowest compared to other Colombian cities, different crime rates are rising (Colombia Reports, 2021). According to Bogotá Como Vamos (2020), the security perception of the residents has been declining every year since 2016. Satisfaction with the police service is also falling, from 46% in 2012 to 29% in 2019 (Bogotá Cómo Vamos, 2020). The occurrence of armed robberies is the highest among other crimes. From 2005 to 2014, the numbers

¹⁷ Kingpin or also decapitation strategy is a tactic where the high-level leaders of narcotraffic or terrorist organisation is arrested. It is one of the main strategies to counter fight criminal activities in the USA and Mexico.

rose slowly from 11,751 to 27,500 (Colombia Reports, 2021). Later, the number of armed robberies rose significantly from 37,800 in 2015 to 125,847 in 2019 (ibid).

The illicit drug market also runs in Bogotá, D.C., causing increased violence, such as robberies, mugging, and homicides. Perceived growth of violent crime has been spotted clustered in peripheral areas; new neighbourhoods have been built because of unplanned population growth and migration (Escudero, Ramírez, 2018).

The penal and whole judicial system is ineffective. Capacities of prisons are over-reached, and hard criminals mostly do not receive the right punishment. Godoy et al. (2018, p. 25) comment, "Criminals who are a real threat often do not go to prison, even when they are caught in the act of committing an offence, recidivism is high and the cost of committing crime is low. The use of technological tools can increase the efficiency of security and justice systems."

Compared to other Latin American, U.S., and even the national Colombian average, Bogotá has low to moderate police officers per capita. For example, when we compare Bogotá and New York, both similar in size of area and population (Beckett, Godoy, 2010), Bogotá's estimate is 239 police per 100,000 people and 413 in New York (Blattman et al., 2019).

The town hall has again put Local Safe Fronts to the front in recent years. Since 2006, most of the LSFs have diminished. The district administration and police found out that only around 800 worked. In 2020, there were created another 150 LSFs, and the plan is to make more community organisations foster coexistence and secure the neighbourhoods. (Barreto, 2021)

Perception of safety in Bogotá, 2018-2020

Two independent sources have been reporting on the perception of safety and victimisation in Bogotá. The Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, or *Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá*, creates survey and reports annually on perception of security and victimisation in Bogotá. Network of cities *Cómo Vamos* creates surveys covering not just topic of security in cities, but also overall citizens' satisfaction in the city¹⁸. The surveys from *Cómo Vamos* are reported with special hashtag "my voice, my city", or

¹⁸ The survey covers these topics: general opinion, economic situation, education, health, first child's nutrition, security and coexistence, the neighbourhood, living situation, public services, public space, transportation, environment, culture, leisure and sport activities, citizenship and joint responsibility, and good governance.

#MiVozMiCiudad. The surveys, both from the Chamber of Commerce and *Cómo Vamos*, are focusing on the city as a whole with some bigger parts recognition. For Bogotá *Cómo Vamos* surveys, the district La Candelaria belongs to the central part of the capital with districts Puente Aranda, Los Mártires, and Santa Fe.

In Figure 1 perception of safety is depicted based on responses for Chamber of Commerce Bogotá. The results were almost identical with report by Bogotá *Cómo Vamos*. According to the report from November 2019, the citizens perception of safety increased by 12% to 27% and insecurity dropped by 20% to value of 37%. Nevertheless, the sample was also smaller (n=1.500).

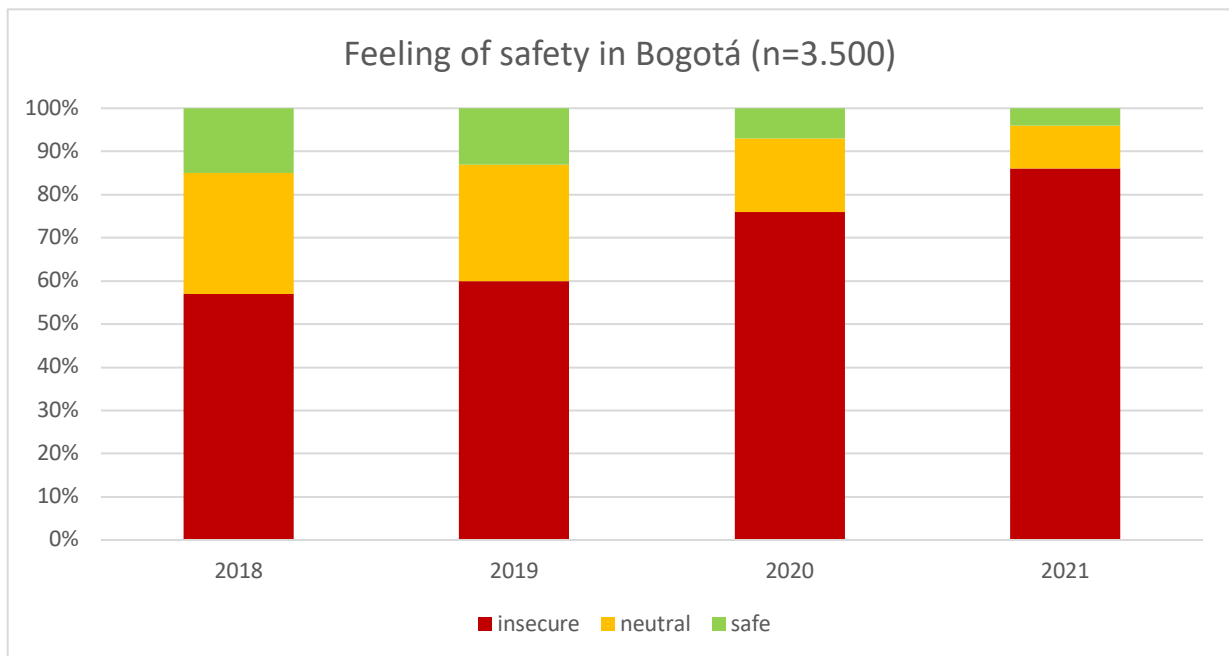


Figure 1 Feeling of safety in Bogotá
Source: Chamber of Commerce Bogotá

Protests in 2019 and 2020

From 21st November 2019, Colombia experienced a week of the largest protests after decades throughout the county (Grattan, 2019). More than 200.000 people went to the streets to express their discontent with the government of President Duque (BBC, 2019). The labour union members, students, indigenous groups, pensioners, women’s rights groups joined and marched in the streets together (Bunyan, 2019; Daniels, 2019; Grattan, 2019).

Citizens were angry with the lack of progress in the peace deal with Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 2016 from the previous administration. Even though the peace deal was signed, the lives of indigenous and social leaders have not been protected, and these groups still face a violation of human rights and killing (Bunyan, 2019; Daniels, 2019; Grattan, 2019). In the first week of November, a senator of an opposition party, Roy Barreras, leaked information about a military aerial operation against a criminal group hideout which caused the killing of eight innocent children (Bunyan, 2019; Rueda, 2019).

The protestors expressed concern about the country's economic situation and planned budgetary cuts. Students protested due to high corruption and cuts in the budget for public education. Union members joined the protest due to pension cut speculations and labour reform (Bunyan, 2019; Grattan, 2019).

The women's rights movement demanded gender equality policies. The latest Colombian history is filled not only huge migration wave of internally displaced people but also with sexual violence due to a half-century-long armed conflict (Wirtz, 2014; IDMC, 2022). The IDP and refugees belong to the most vulnerable towards the sexual gender-based violence (SGBV). The Colombian SGBV rates are among the highest in South America (Calderón-Jaramillo et. al., 2020). The risks of SGBV are higher for adolescents, kids, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people, and indigenous and afro-Colombian people (Wirtz, 2014).

In Bogotá, Cali and some other cities, there were violent clashes of protesters with security forces. The members of the security forces used tear gas and physical violence on protesters (BBC, 2019; Jenner, 2019). The week of protests resulted in four casualties, one of them being just 18 years old student Dilan Cruz, and over five hundred of injured people and another five hundred arrested (Jenner, 2019). People looted shops (Grattan, 2019) and vandalised Transmilenio stations and buses (BBC, 2019).

People showed their discontent with President Duque again on 21st January 2020 in Bogotá, Cali, Medellin and Barranquilla. There were violent clashes in two locations in Bogotá. However, the other 18 demonstrations were peaceful. All in all, 500 people got injured during the protest and police arrested approximately 200 protesters. (AFP, 2020)

The mass protests occurred again in the capital and other cities from the 9th till the 11th of September 2020. Citizens protested over the new tax reform bill. Numerous online journals (Al Jazeera, Washington Post, The Guardian) marked the protests as a massacre from the side of the national police. A total of fourteen people were killed during the protests in Bogotá and Soacha (El Espectador, 2021), and out of those, eleven deaths resulted due to police brutality. A viral video took over the media where police officers tased a 44-year-old man while choking and begging them on the street to let him be. The man succumbed to his injuries that night. (Al Jazeera, 2021)

The police were witnessed destroying private properties and brutally repressing the protests. As a response to the violent actions towards the public, the protesters torched seventeen police kiosks (Al Jazeera, 2021).

Study area

The chapter describes the examined district, La Candelaria.

Since the author describes locations in the area, terms such as *Calle*, *Carrera* and *Avenida* are used. Calle and Carrera both mean streets. However, Calle is a street from East to West and Carrera from North to South. Avenida means Avenue, and it is always specified whether it is Calle or Carrera.

La Candelaria

La Candelaria is the founding part of the capital. Its area expands to 206 ha (2.06 km²), which makes the administrative district the smallest one out of twenty in the Bogotá (Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá, 2020). According to the 2020 census, 21.830 inhabitants live in the area (ibid). The location received its name after a church La Candelaria, located in this area (Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá, 2019). The district is located in the centre east of Bogotá, surrounded by the administrative district Santa Fe. La Candelaria consists of eight neighbourhoods¹⁹, or *barríos*. From the east side, La Candelaria is surrounded by mountains, and many buildings are incorporated into the rising hills. Its population counts to more than 22 thousand. (IDPAC, 2019)

¹⁹ Belén, Centro Administrativo, Egipto, La Catedral, La Concordia, Las Aguas, Santa Bárbara, and Nueva Santa Fe

Even though it is the smallest district in Bogotá, approximately half the million people visit La Candelaria every day for tourist or labour reasons (IDPAC, 2019). La Candelaria is a historical, cultural, and educational centre of Bogotá, D.C.

A native settlement was discovered in 1536 when conquistador Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada and his retinue searched for Peru. They have discovered twelve huts on the place of the current Chorro de Quevedo of the indigenous people of Muisca²⁰. The conquistador noticed this part was abundant in gold and emeralds, and in 1538, a settlement was built in Santafé, which created the foundation of Bogotá. The population began to grow, and Santafé played a crucial role in trade and establishing governmental and educational institutions. In the 19th century, Santafé transformed into an administrative and business centre and, with the wave of independence, also became a centre for showing social disapproval. In 1819, Santafé was renamed Bogotá nowadays. La Candelaria was declared a separate neighbourhood in 1960. Later, in 1963, it was consolidated as a Historical centre and national monument. (IDPAC, 2019)

The district has a lot to offer to tourists and culture seekers. The history has been written in La Candelaria since the 16th century. Especially on La Plaza de Bolívar, the symbol of Bogotá, where on each side stand important buildings. On the northeast corner stands La Cathedral, the cathedral from 1823 (Lingea, 2019). On the north side stands the Palace of Justice, which faces the National Capitol, the Colombian congress. City hall, or *alcaldía*, stands on the west side of the square. Behind the National Congress, there are located National Astronomic observation and an official president's residence called Casa de Nariño. 10th Street, or *Calle 10*, which goes from the Plaza Bolívar to the east hills, is home to museums such as Colonial, Military, and Theatre of Colón (El Tiempo, 2019). Other museums stand in proximity, such as the Museum of Botero or Archaeological Museum Casa del Marqués de San Jorge.

Parque de las Periodistas serves as a meeting point for walking or cycling tours (Lingea, 2019). Bogotá Graffiti tour, among many other walking tours, is a popular tourist target. The whole district creates a canvas for street artists since many spots are painted with colourful public art. La Candelaria, especially neighbourhoods of Las Aguas, La Concordia, Egipto and Belén, is made of low colonial buildings with colourful walls and cobblestone streets. There are many opportunities to buy artisanal products,

²⁰ Muisca are indigenous people who live in the eastern cordillera.

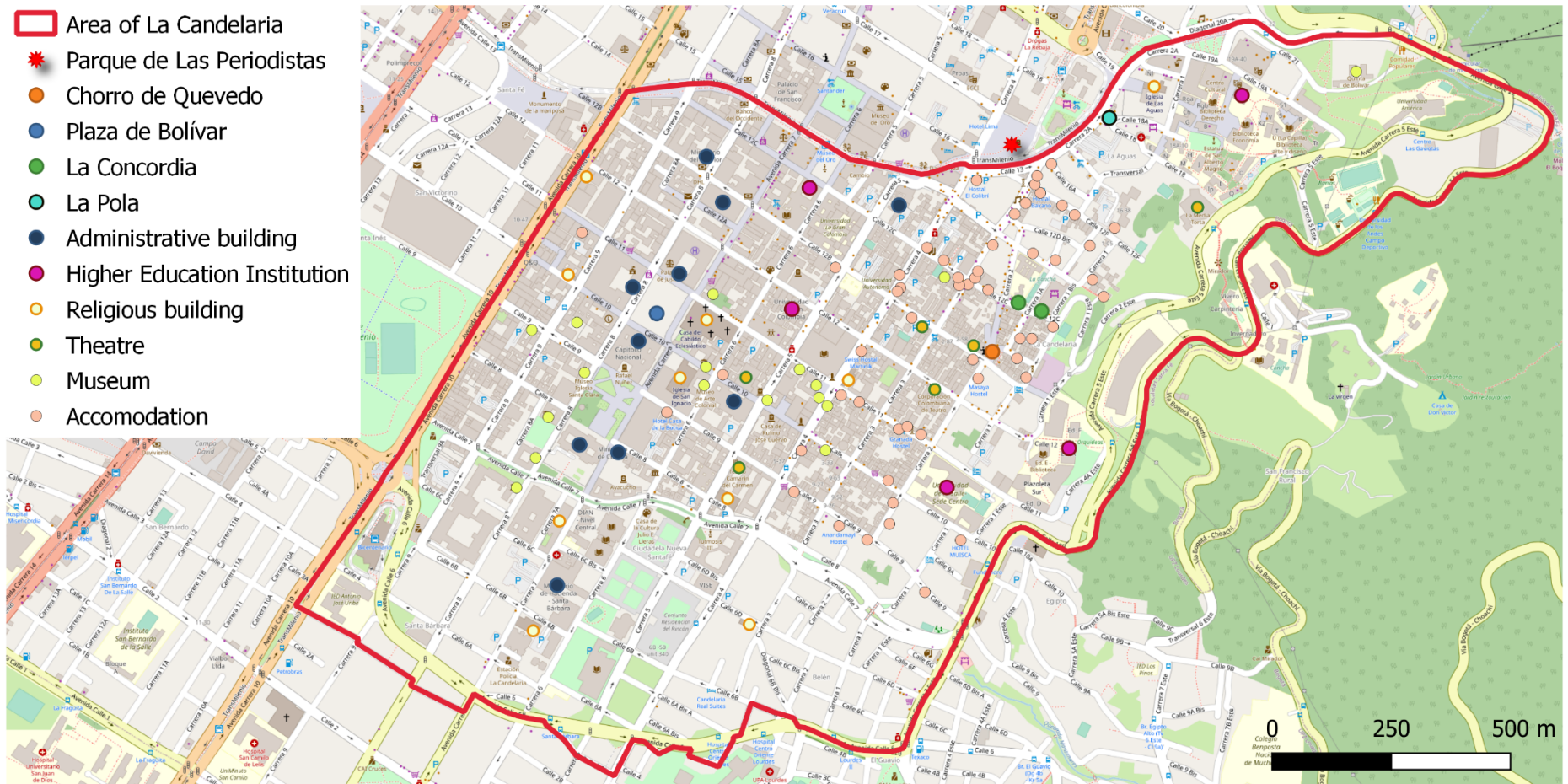
especially in the proximity of the square of Chorro de Quevedo, in shops, and directly on the street from a street vendor. Many people create their crafts such as jewellery, wallets, or purses from Venezuelan banknotes²¹ right on the spot.

Figure 2 depicts the area of the district and the locations of main motives. The motives are historical sights and accommodation, administrative buildings, higher education institutions, and popular places.

²¹ Colombia opened its borders and accepted over 1.7 million Venezuelans since 2018. Venezuela suffered financial crisis, high inflation and their bank notes turned worthless. Many Venezuelans use the money to create crafts. (Otis, 2021; BBC News, 2021)

La Candelaria, Bogotá, Colombia

- Area of La Candelaria
- * Parque de Las Periodistas
- Chorro de Quevedo
- Plaza de Bolívar
- La Concordia
- La Pola
- Administrative building
- Higher Education Institution
- Religious building
- Theatre
- Museum
- Accomodation



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Background map: OpenStreetMap.org

Figure 2 La Candelaria with its highlights

Author's view

The author lived in La Candelaria, Bogotá, for two months in 2020, from January 15th to March 24th. The purpose of her visit was educational since she was selected for an exchange study at the Universidad Externado de Colombia, where she studied International Relations. Therefore, the stay was supposed to be longer. Nevertheless, due to the global pandemic of covid-19, the author decided to return to the Czech Republic earlier. However, two months of living were sufficient for the author to form a picture of the situation in the area of La Candelaria.

Since the arrival in Colombia, many Colombians warned the author about specific areas in the city. Parque de las Periodistas was mentioned the most. Parque de las Periodistas is a neighbouring part of Santa Fe located on the north-western corner of La Candelaria. It serves many purposes; it is used as a meeting point for free walking or cycling tours; people also use this place as a market to sell their crafts or second-hand items. However, this place is known for its high crime rate. While walking through this part, a person should not show valuables such as cell phones or expensive jewellery that might attract pickpockets. This place is also known as a meeting place for indigent people and drug addicts. From the author's experience, there was always a group of beggars in front of the non-stop store Oxxo, situated on the corner of Carrera 3 and Calle 16A.

Close to the Parque de las Periodistas has situated a favourite meeting spot of students. The place is known as La Pola. In the centre of this place stands a statue of Policarpa Salavarietta, also known as La Pola, a heroine of the Colombian independence movement. Moreover, the place stands at an intersection of universities such as Los Andes, Rosario, Central, Externado, and many more. Thus, many students spend their free time socialising, drinking beers and eating empanadas.

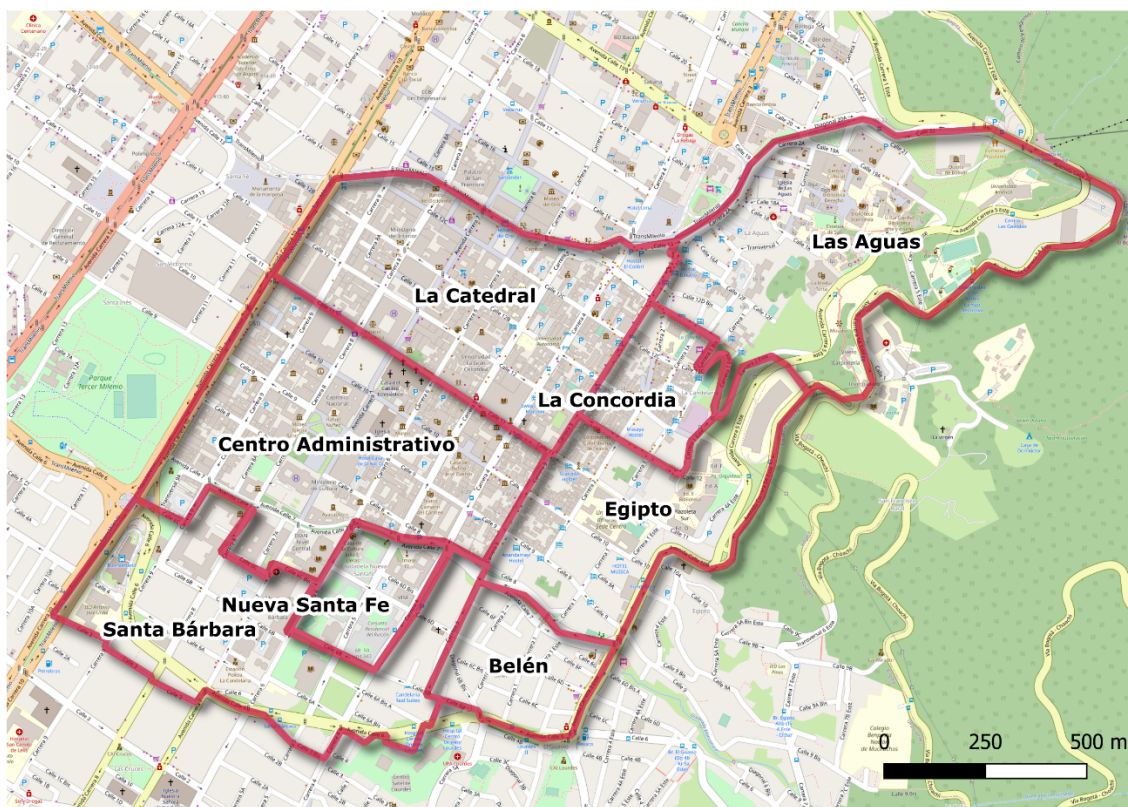
The proximity of the mountains causes some roads to be more separated from the rest of the city, which are not recommended for pedestrians. It had also been recommended to the author multiple times not to walk on these streets to avoid the risk of getting mugged.

Another popular busy place is Chorro de Quevedo, known as the "cradle" of Bogotá. On this square, the first houses were built. Those are portrayed by the wall with twelve windows on the side of the square. Restaurants and pubs surround the place.

Many promoters on the street attract customers to try *chicha*²² and spend some time in the bar they promote. The place in front of a white church is used by some entertainers and people who want to speak publicly. The whole place is always vibrant, and it is recommended to be extra cautious with personal belongings.

There are rumours and bad reputations about Egipto and Belén. From the author's experience, Belén was a quiet neighbourhood with low buildings. She had gone to this part only during the day to volunteer at Casa B, a community centre based in Belén. Therefore, Belén did not seem dangerous *per se*. However, the neighbourhood El Guavio, located above Belén, seems more dangerous. The author has not spent much time in Egipto, only at the Universidad Externado de Colombia, which is in this part.

Neighbourhoods of La Candelaria, Bogotá, Colombia



Olomouc 2022, Bc. Veronika ROJOVÁ
Background map: OpenStreetMap.org

Figure 3 Map of neighbourhoods in La Candelaria

²² alcoholic beverage made of fermented corn.



Picture 1 Typical street of La Candelaria with low colourful colonial houses, Carrera 2 heading from Chorro de Quevedo, barrio Egipcio.
Source: author



Picture 2 Calle 12, street heading towards Universidad Externado de Colombia, barrio Egipcio.
Source: author



Picture 3 Chorro de Quevedo.
Source: author



Picture 4 Chorro de Quevedo with a speaker.
Source: author



Picture 5 Palace of Justice, situated at the Bolívar square, Centro Administrativo.
Source: author



Picture 6 Neighbourhood El Guavio, Santa Fé.
Source: author



Picture 7 Intersection of Carrera 6 and Calle 12, La Catedral.
Source: author



Picture 8 Carrera 1a connecting Chorro de Quevedo and market La Concordia,
La Concordia.
Source: author

Methods and data

The author has used the concept of mental maps for data collection. Mental maps have been defined by social scientists, psychologists so as, geographers and cartographers. The mental map per se is multidisciplinary; thus, many definitions can be applied. Geographer Dušan Drbohlav (1991) defines a mental map as a “graphic (cartographic or schematic) expression of people’s mental image of a geographical space, most commonly of the quality or arrangement of that space”. On the other hand, historians Norbert Götz and Janne Holmén (2018, p. 157) state that “all maps, from those on classroom walls to fold-outs of city streets and subways to GPS on smartphones and aircraft screens, are “mental maps” whose design rests on the decisions of mapmakers.”

To obtain preliminary information, the author conducted an online map survey thanks to an online platform www.pocitovemapy.cz. The primary outcomes are mental and crime maps created with obtained data from respondents. To qualify as a sample group member, the respondent needed to have at least some knowledge of the district La Candelaria. In addition, the author got statistical data from the Colombian National Police on the reported crimes in the years 2019 and 2020 in the district of La Candelaria. The data are divided into special categories by the type of offence and the district’s location. However, police used special codes which the author does not receive more explanation for locations.

The survey was held from July 2020 to December 2020, and 210 responses were submitted. The questionnaire was shared through the author’s acquaintances from Bogotá via social media, namely WhatsApp, Instagram direct messages and Facebook Messenger. However, the snowball effect was not successful. The survey was also shared multiple times in a Facebook group of Students of Universidad Externado de Colombia, with over twelve thousand members. The survey was anonymous and divided into four parts. Two parts were based on marking on the map. All the questions and tasks were in Spanish. The author few times sought help at her acquaintances from Bogotá, asking for the meaning and context of some colloquialisms.

The first part contained nine questions affiliated with the respondent and the district as such. In the closing part, respondents answered questions regarding their gender, age, level of education, social status, and nationality with ethnic affiliation. See Annex A to view the first and last parts of the questionnaire.

The second and third parts contained mapping. The second focused on marking areas where respondents felt unsafe; the latter focused on places where they were either witnesses or victims of actual crime in the last 12 months. To maximise the precision of marking places, the respondents could zoom in or out into the map. The movement around the map was user-friendly. The user holds the left mouse button to move around the map. As depicted in Figure 4, respondents saw the whole area of La Candelaria in the middle of the map for both mapping parts.

Because the spatial data were collected in three features (points, lines, and polygons), the author decided to include all of them in the analysis. Points are spatially more accurate to the precision. However, the polygons and lines give respondents more freedom to express their truth. Therefore, a big polygon cannot be discarded from the analysis just for its size. On the other hand, polygons of bigger sizes might influence the map and mark areas as collectively significant even though they would not represent the collective opinion (Brown, 2012). For the mentioned reasons, the author decided to include all the variables in the maps. Nevertheless, all the variables were processed. The points were turned into heat maps to illustrate clustered points better. The polygons' transparency was tuned down to five per cent. Which allows us to see places with overlaid polygons and points better noticeably.

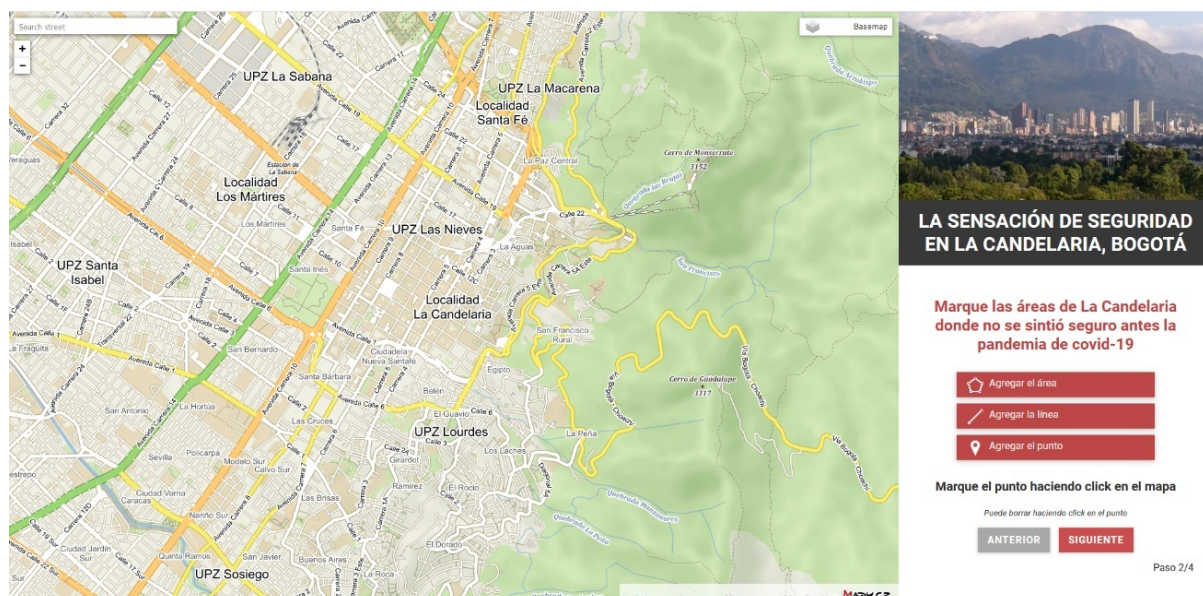


Figure 4 Online survey, 2nd part, feeling of insecurity in the area

Research questions

1. Questions of the first part

1.1. *In which part of Bogotá do you live?*

General question to find out where respondents live. This question serves for checking if a respondent is suitable for the survey.

1.2. *How often do you go to La Candelaria?*

Respondents could mark answers varying from “daily” to “almost never”. The question serves as a quality check-up if the other answers of a respondent are valuable.

1.3. *What is the purpose of your visit?*

Respondents marked the reasons why they found themselves in the location of La Candelaria. They could mark more than one reason varying from educational and labour reasons to entertainment.

1.4. *Do you find some neighbourhoods of La Candelaria dangerous? Justify your opinion.*

Respondents marked neighbourhood(s) of La Candelaria that they perceived as dangerous. They were writing their justification in an open paragraph.

1.5. *How safe do you feel in La Candelaria?*

Respondents were marked on a chart from one to five with their feeling of security in La Candelaria, where one represented the lowest value as the least secure and five as the safest value. In addition, there were two charts, the first symbolising their feeling during the day and the second symbolising their feeling during the night.

1.6. *Do you think that in comparison to other districts of Bogotá, La Candelaria is either much more dangerous than others or much more secure than others?*

La Candelaria is situated in the centre east of the capital. As the city is generally divided into “rich” north and “poor” south, La Candelaria represents the clash of both worlds.

1.7. *The presence of the police force in La Candelaria is either sufficient or insufficient.*

Respondents marked either “sufficient” or “insufficient”. La Candelaria is

a livid district, full of people. Many landmarks are situated in the district as well as administrative buildings, museums, theatres, and universities, which attract both tourists and locals.

1.8. *Do you trust the police force?*

As a country, which suffered, or still suffers, from drug lords and terrorist groups, accountability and trust in the police force might not be the best.

1.9. *Are you afraid of some group of inhabitants? If yes, please write down which one.*

Respondents wrote down group(s) of people they feared. Some prejudices and stereotypization might be present, so as personal or acquaintances' previous bad experiences.

2. *Mark place(s) in La Candelaria where you have not felt safe before the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Respondents marked the places on the map. They could mark the place as a point, a line, or a polygon. There was also blank space to justify why they perceived the marked location as dangerous.

3. *Mark place(s) in La Candelaria where you were a victim or a witness of some kind of crime in the last twelve months.*

Respondents marked the places on the map. They could mark the place as a point, a line, or a polygon. In this part, respondents were supposed to mark if they were either the victim or witness, what kind of crime it was and if it was reported to the police. There was also blank space to write more details about the crime.

4. *Final part*

4.1. *Gender*

4.2. *Age*

4.3. *Highest approached education level*

4.4. *Current status, personal characteristics*

4.5. *Nationality, ethnicity*

5. ¿Qué tan seguro se siente en La Candelaria? (elija una opción de 1 a 5, donde 1 = no me siento seguro en absoluto, 5 = me siento absolutamente seguro)

	1	2	3	4	5
Por el día	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Por la noche	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. ¿Cree que La Candelaria en comparación con otras partes de Bogotá es... (elija una opción de 1 a 5, donde 1 = mucho menos segura que otras partes, 5 = mucho más segura que otras)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. La presencia de los oficiales de policía en La Candelaria es...

- Suficiente
- Insuficiente

8. ¿Confía en el cuerpo de policía? (elija una opción de 1 a 5, donde 1 = absolutamente no, 5 = absolutamente sí)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. ¿Tiene miedo de alguno grupo de habitantes? (Si sí, escriba de cuál)

- Sí
- No

SIGUIENTE

Figure 5 Online survey, informative part, questions 5 to 9

Results

Two hundred ten respondents submitted the questionnaire. Out of 210, 137 women, 70 men and three respondents did not define their gender. The majority of respondents were Colombians, three were from France, three were Venezuelan, and seven were from other countries, namely Belgium, Britain, Canada, the Czech Republic, Mexico, the Netherlands, and Perú. The biggest group of respondents comprised people younger than 30 years, with 172 respondents. Students create the biggest group of 109 respondents, and the second largest group comprises employed people.

Respondents were abiding in 17 districts. There were no representatives of the district Bosa located on the west side, and of the most south districts, Usme and Sumapaz. Instead, 34 respondents lived directly in La Candelaria, 13 in the surrounding Santa Fé. Over 50% of respondents were from the northern districts, Usaquén, Suba, Chapinero, Engativá, Teusaquillo, Fontibón and Barrios Unidos.

Almost 85% of respondents visit La Candelaria once per week, and over 70% visit it more than two days per week, mainly for educational purposes. More than a quarter of the respondents visit La Candelaria for the purpose of entertainment. Over 20% work in the district. Other reasons mentioned include volunteering, shopping, visiting a partner, gastronomy, and sport.

Figure 6 shows responses to the feeling of safety in La Candelaria by day and by night. Over half of the respondents feel safe in the district during the day. However, during the night, the results are reversed. The result shows that men feel safer than women in the area. Even during the night, over 50% of men feel insecure compared to almost three-quarters of women. Due to the lack of older people in the survey, it is hard to state whether the night data would change negatively or positively. Nevertheless, many research studies prove a positive correlation between getting older and fear of crime and a negative correlation between getting older and victimisation rates (Garofalo, 1979).

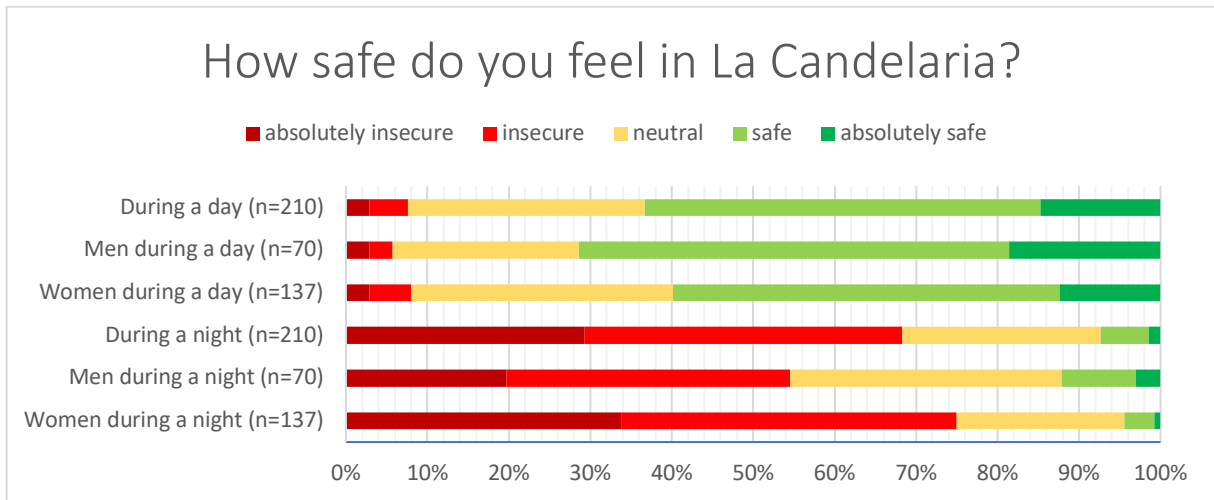


Figure 6 The feeling of safety in La Candelaria

Figure 7 shows a comparison of La Candelaria with other districts of the capital. Compared to other districts, La Candelaria seems to be placed in the middle and worse side of other districts. One-third of the respondents marked it more dangerous; almost half of the respondents marked it neutral, and a quarter of respondents found La Candelaria safe.

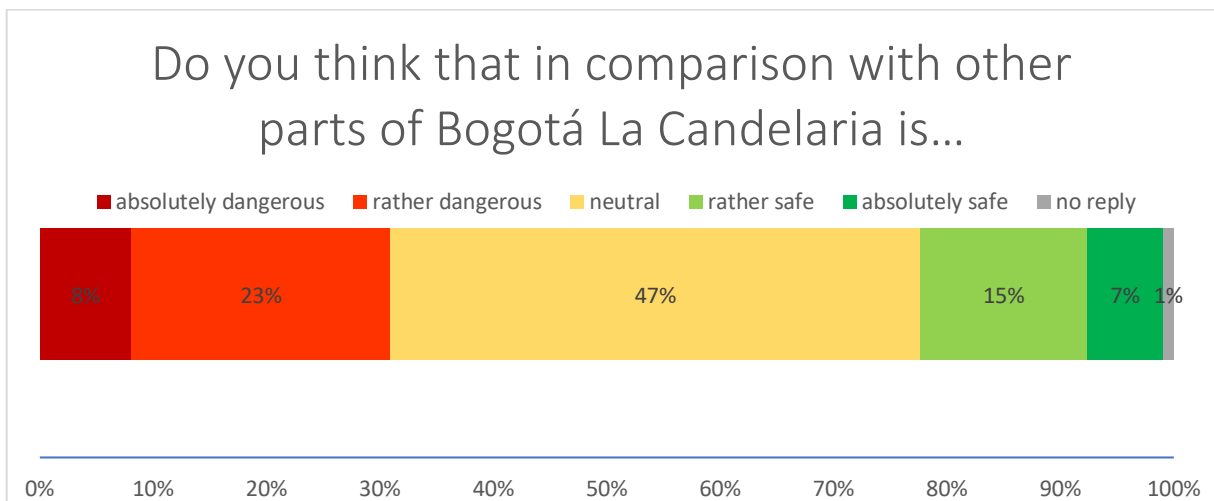


Figure 7 Feeling of safety in La Candelaria in comparison to other parts of Bogotá

The respondents lack the presence of police officers on the streets. Figure 8 shows that 4 out of 5 respondents feel that the presence of the police officers is insufficient.

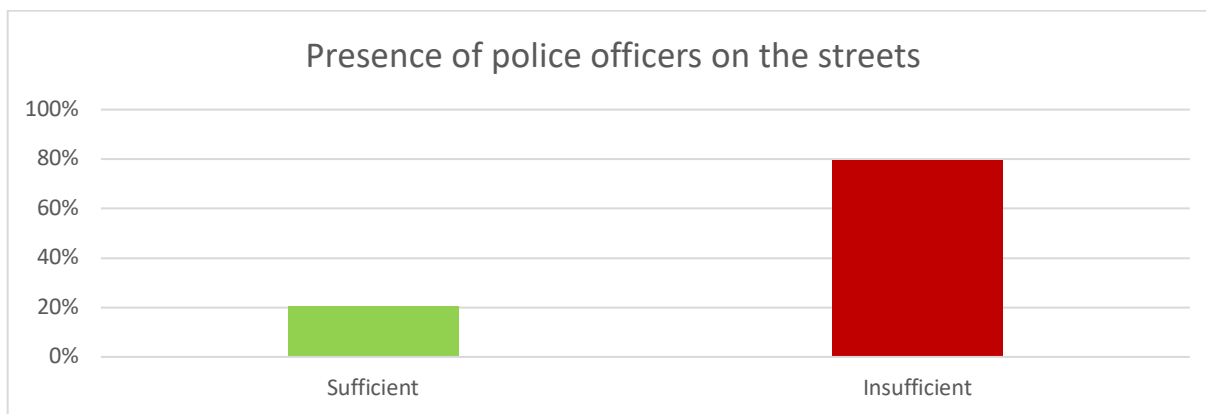


Figure 8 Presence of police officers on the street (n=209)

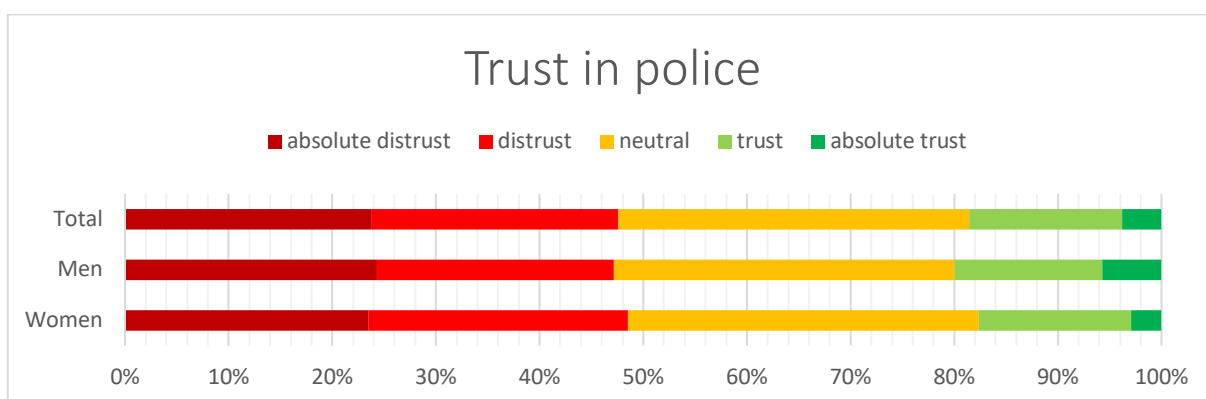


Figure 9 Trust in Police

Figure 9 shows that 48% of the respondents do not trust the police force in Bogotá, Colombia compared to 19%. Over 30% chose a neutral answer. There is only a one per cent difference between the opinion on the police by gender. The results show us that there is lack of personnel in the police force but most importantly, lack of trust in the public security force.

Over 70% of the respondents marked the neighbourhood Egipito as dangerous as shown in Figure 10. Its eastern part, which is mainly embedded in the hills, is known as an impoverished neighbourhood. According to 40% of the respondents, Las Aquas is the second most feared neighbourhood. Its area sprawls from the west in Parque de Las Periodistas and continues further to the east hills, with many abandoned corners. Belén and Nueva Santa Fé were marked by over one-third of the respondents. La Concordia was marked by almost 20%. Santa Bárbara and La Catedral got around ten per cent, and Centro Administrativo was perceived as dangerous only by six per cent. Only twelve per cent of the rest perceive the whole district as safe.

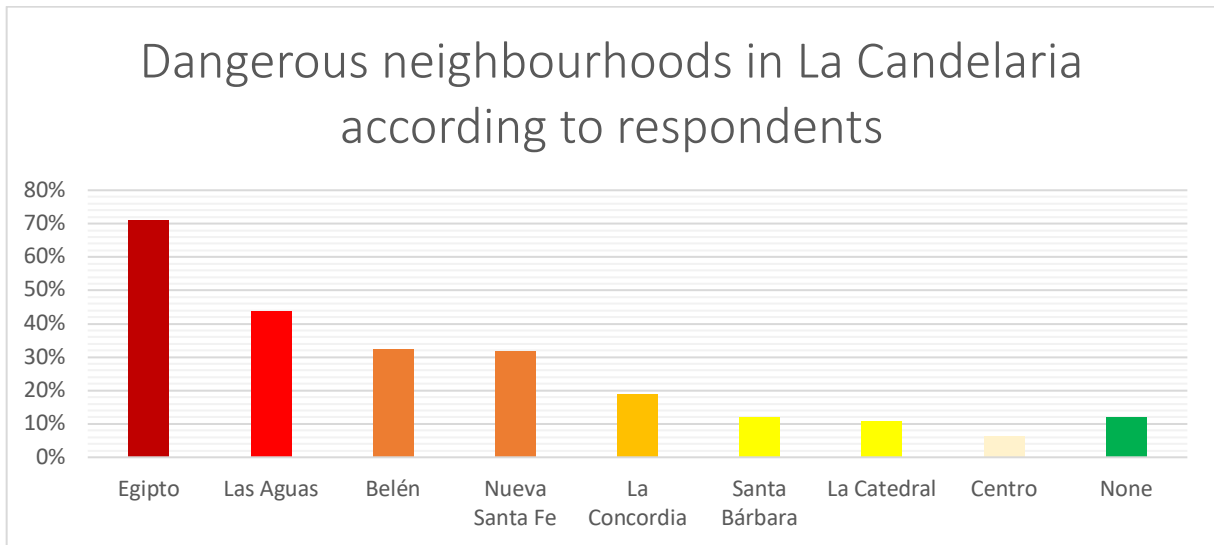


Figure 10 Dangerous neighbourhoods of La Candelaria perceived by the respondents

The principal mentioned reason was the occurrence of thefts, robberies, and organised crime shown in Figure 11. Neighbourhoods have a particular reputation, and the word is spread among people about these places, especially Egipto. The social conditions and hostility were also mentioned, such as homeless people, drug abuse, and prostitution. The presence of organised crime groups, or *pandillas*, was mentioned four times. Two respondents put emphasis on the lack of job opportunities for people living in Egipto and Las Aguas. A few respondents also mentioned that they are afraid of deserted areas. The lack of police control was mentioned a few times.

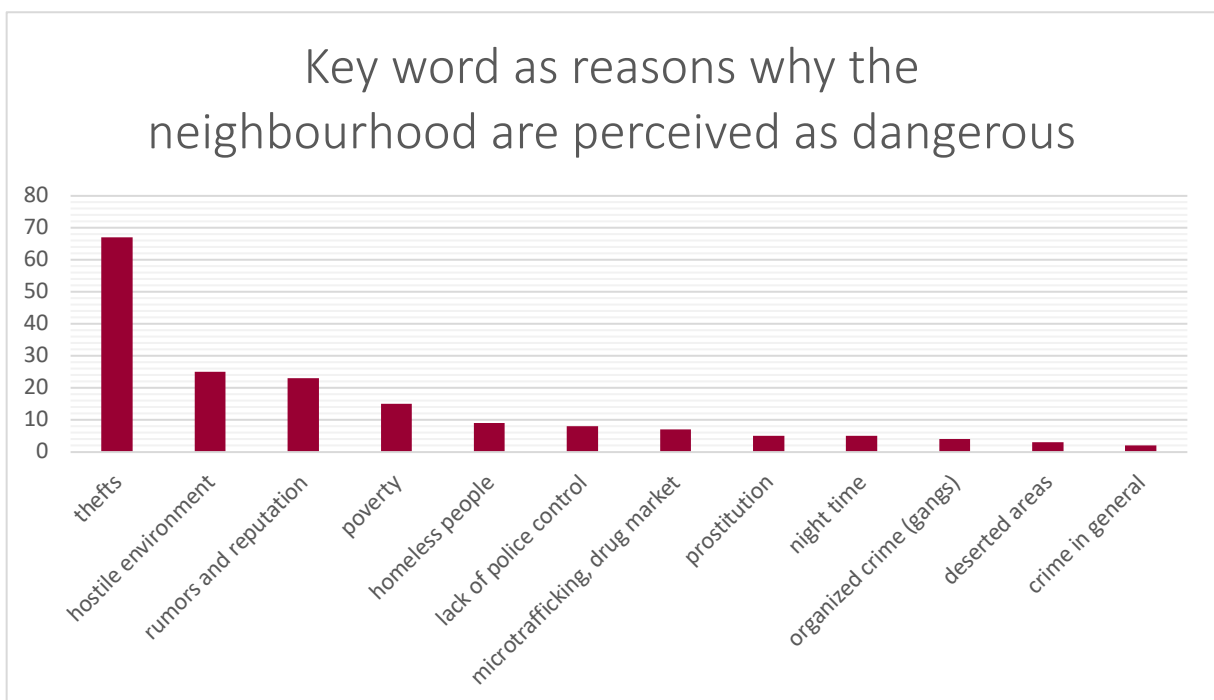


Figure 11 Reasons why neighbourhoods are perceived as dangerous

Respondent (36) stated, *“These neighbourhoods [Egipto and Belén] are poor and do not always meet the basic needs of the inhabitants, and for that, these places might seem more dangerous. Maybe it is a prejudice. These are the places where I go the least because there is nothing interesting for me.”*

Due to the highly frequented characteristic of La Candelaria, a respondent (27) stated, *“Because it is a commercial place, and these places are commonly unsafe in the city. Many people transit in this part of La Candelaria, risking their integrity and exposing themselves to the thieves during the day or night.”* Another one mentioned that *“Even though there is the presence of policemen in crowded places (such as station of Transmilenio) there are many robberies during the day.”*

A respondent (20) poetically compared their experience with neighbourhoods Belén and Las Aguas to a famous quote from Julius Caesar’s “Veni, vidi, vici”, as they stated *“I have heard about it, I have seen it, and I got robbed,”* or as they wrote in Spanish *“He escuchado, he visto y me han robado.”*

Another respondent (21) stated that the *“Problem is not with the neighbourhoods but during events such as protests and during the times when streets are empty.”* The Plaza Bolívar, with the National Capitol, housing the Congress of Colombia, and Lievano Palace, Bogotá’s city hall, marks the main scene for anti-governmental protests. In 2019,

The fear associated with the certain social group is depicted in Figure 12. Over 40% of respondents (n=90) answered positively about whether they are afraid of certain social groups. For more than one-third of the respondents, fear is directed chiefly towards street dwellers who live on the street and mostly beg for money. Nine cases mentioned *ñeros*, who, as respondent Manú described, are *“people from a low social class, who sometimes are dangerous (mugging), sometimes they only have an awful taste on clothes and mistreated the language in the way they speak.”* The presence of people under substances or drug addicts, dealers, and thieves on the streets also causes fright. Four respondents fear people from Venezuela. The presence of gangs was mentioned five times. Fifteen respondents who responded positively to the question of whether they fear any specific social group did not elaborate on the question further.

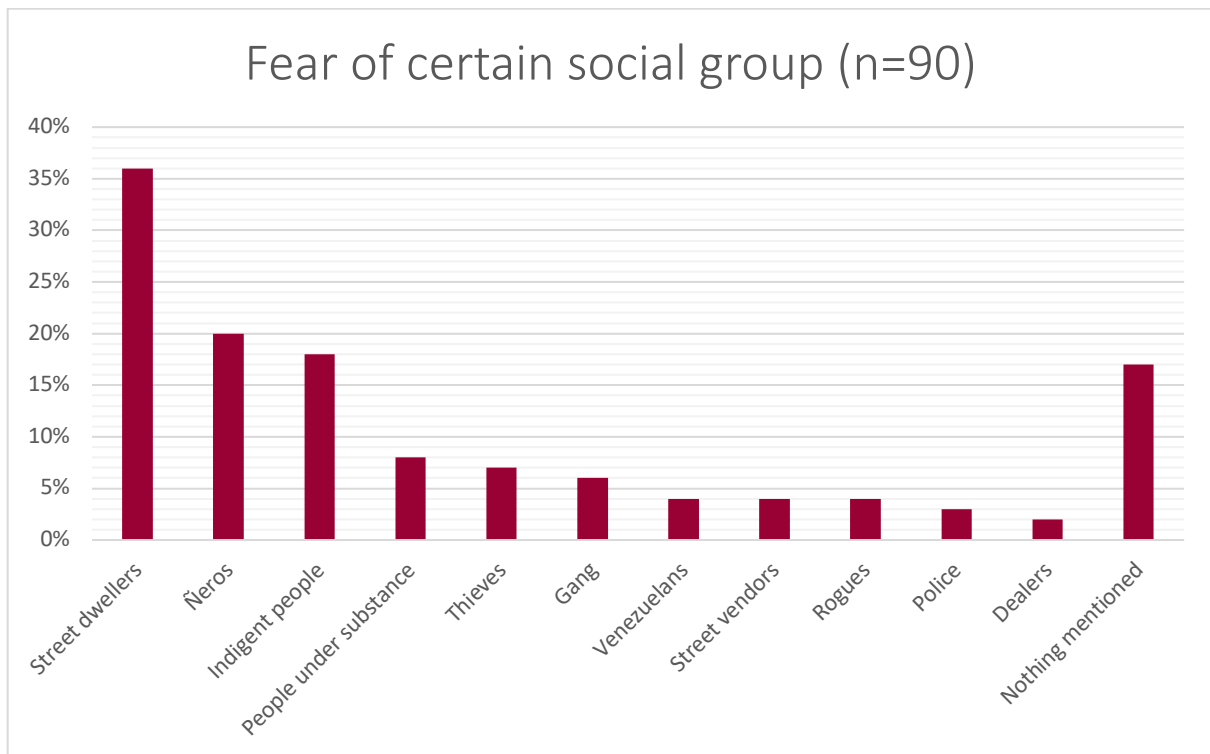


Figure 12 Fear of certain social groups

Respondents marked hotspots in La Candelaria, shown in Figure 13. The map represents 178 points, 10 lines and 44 polygons marked by 161 respondents. As respondents also marked bigger areas, the author decided to include those but changed transparency to five per cent. Lines' transparency was also modified to 20%. Points were changed to the heatmap.

Many places were located directly on the borders with Santa Fe or outside the district. As suspected, the Parque de Las Periodistas has received much attention with Chorro de Quevedo, the surroundings of Egipto's church, *Iglesia de Egipto*, places in proximity of La Pola and the Parque de las Periodistas.

Huge flows of people cross through the Parque de las Periodistas every day. It is also one of the most feared places by the respondents. The reasons were the presence of dealers, thieves, drug addicts and homeless people. They state many occasions of pickpocketing, but also extortion with a knife or a gun. One student (20) stated, "*In the park, there are many drugged people, and many of my friends have bad experiences there.*" The place is dangerous, especially during night hours. Using the city bus system, Transmilenio, is not recommended during the dark.

Perception of insecurity in La Candelaria, 2019/2020

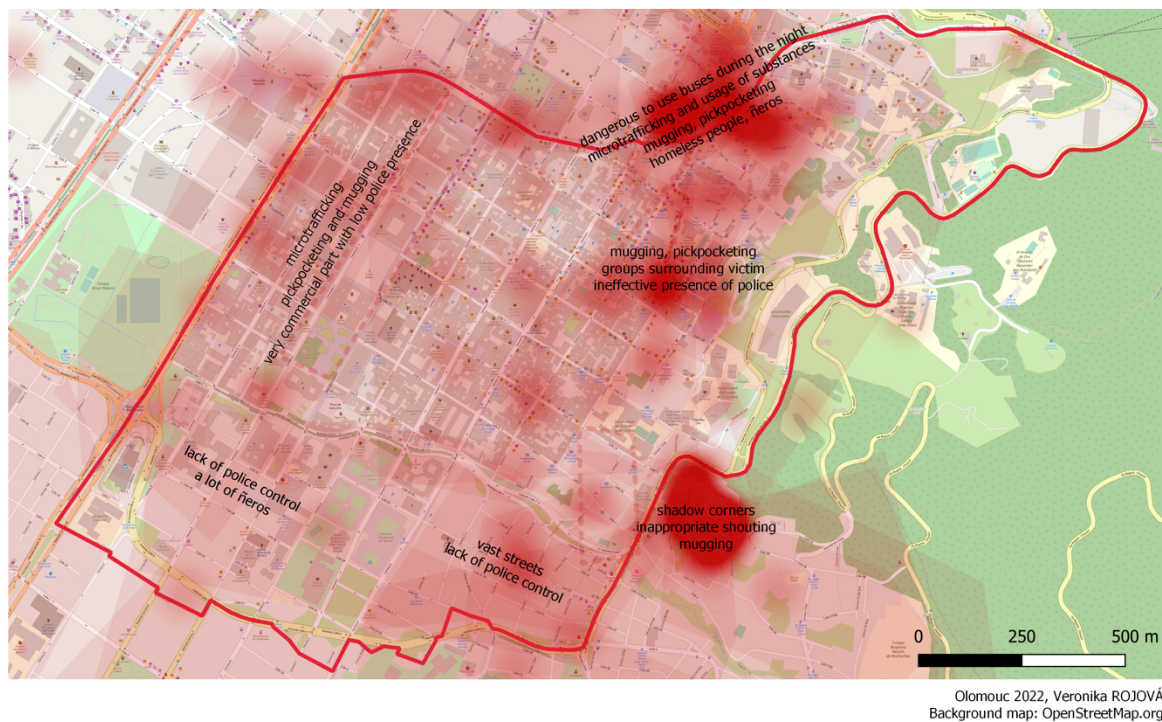


Figure 13 Perception of insecurity in La Candelaria in 2019/2020, n=161

Egipto's church received colossal attention, located on the right-down corner of the map. The area has many shadow corners. French student (21) stated, "*the police do not let foreign people in the area. You need to be accompanied by a local person.*" Colombian respondents described the area as dangerous, lacking police control with many thieves, homeless people and ñeros, where mugging occurs often.

The famous foundation of the capital, Chorro de Quevedo, has been marked as a feared location. Even though the place is crowded during the day, it is famous for thieves. Student (18) has written, "*a couple of my friends got mugged at Chorro, even though police officers were present at the place*". There are narrow streets, and as another respondent (25) wrote, "*as the streets are narrow and the shops close by are not that abundant, it is difficult to ask for help in case of mugging*".

An area from pedestrian 7th Avenue, *Avenida Carrera 7*, to 10th Avenue, *Avenida Carrera 10*, also received attention as a busy area with many commercial activities which attract many thieves. On the side streets, micro-trafficking was seen. A respondent (35) described 10th Avenue as where "*robberies happen to passers-by and in the public transport*". Parque Tercer Milenio, a huge park located on the west of 10th Avenue, bordering the avenue between La Candelaria and Santa Fe, was described by

the student (22) as a “*place with the biggest illegal drug market in the city. By the same token, people sell things they had stolen, and there is a huge presence of homeless people.*”

Neighbourhoods of Santa Bárbara and Belén both lack police control. Respondents also mentioned the presence of ñeros in Santa Bárbara. Belén and Egipto are two neighbourhoods which are mostly inhabited with people of lower class.

Hot spots of criminal activity in La Candelaria, 2019/2020

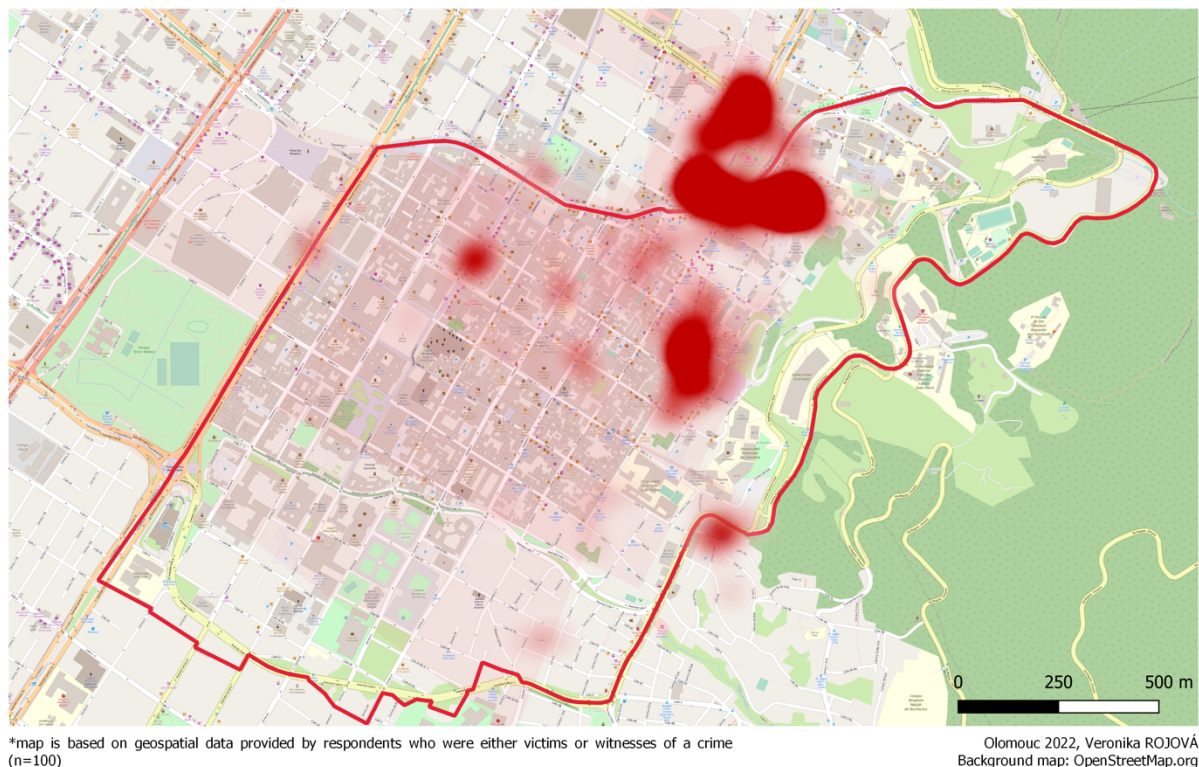


Figure 14 Hot spots of criminal activity in La Candelaria, n=100

All in all, a hundred respondents marked 117 crimes on the map. Out of 117, 101 were points, one line and 15 polygons. To include polygon answers, the author has removed the frame from polygons and changed transparency to five per cent. Line's transparency was lowered to ten per cent. In 27 cases, the respondents were victims.

Many crimes were marked out of La Candelaria in Santa Fé. The main hotspots outside La Candelaria were the surroundings of Parque de Las Periodistas and the 19th Avenue, *Avenida Calle 19*. One respondent (18) marked an accident from 19th Avenue where a projectile fired by ESMAD²³ hit pupil Dilan Cruz (18) in the head during an

²³ ESMAD, *Escuadrón Móvil Antidisturbios*, is a Mobile Anti-Disturbances Squadron of Colombian National Police.

anti-government protest on November 25th, 2019, which resulted in his death. One student (24) witnessed mugging at the roundabout of Calle 19. He described the situation: *“A man came to another guy and moved a knife around his back. Then he put it on his neck to intimidate him and took his suitcase. I don’t know if the victim reported it.”*

Many muggings happened in proximity of the Parque de Las Periodistas, at bus stops of Transmilenio and behind a parking lot, between Calle 17 and 18 and Transversal 1 street. Respondents were left alone after handing over their phones and money.

At Parque de Las Periodistas student (23) was a victim when a *“guy asked me ‘nicely’ for money while having me at gunpoint”*. Two other respondents (20, 21) were tricked by unknown people who stole money, a phone from the first and a laptop from the latter. The respondent (20) described the situation as, *“it wasn’t unusual theft. An unknown person came close to ask for money and not too long after he asked for my friend’s phone.”* Another respondent (20) wrote one scene where *“thieves attempt to ‘trick’ people by getting very close to them and stealing without them noticing.”*

Third hot spot is the Chorro de Quevedo. Crime happens there often, even during the daylight and with the presence of police officers. A student (18) stated, *“my friend and I were talking with the police officer for more than 20 minutes. When we left, we realized somebody had taken my friend’s phone from her jacket pocket.”*

Whilst marking points on the map where respondents were either witnesses or victims, two-thirds (64 out of 97) of marked crimes were not reported to the police. One male respondent (31) wrote, *“They have robbed me with a dagger in hand. While one robber was holding me and threatening me, the other searched through my body. Police do not serve a s**t, they know who the delinquents are, but they are useless.”*

Most of the crimes were theft, either mugging or pickpocketing, as shown in Figure 15. Nevertheless, in 40 cases, the respondents did not give any details concerning the nature of the crime they had either witnessed or were subjected to.

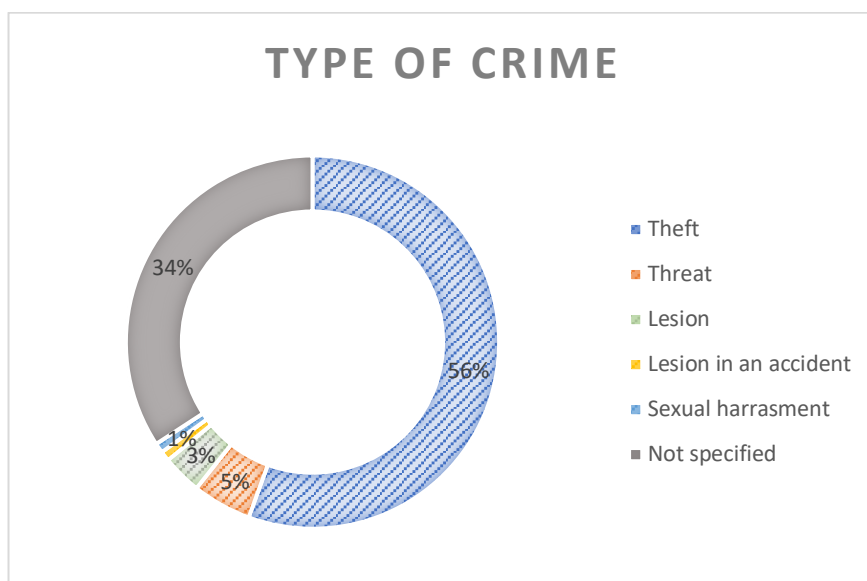


Figure 15 Type of crime experienced or witnessed by respondents

Two respondents described a bad experience with police officers. One student (22) saw a situation where “some pigs [police officers] used a baton on a boy when they searched him.” Another respondent (38) wrote, “I was tricked and unfairly fined by the police”.

Analysis and discussion

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first part focuses on the discussion of the results from the survey and other sources. The second part analysis the trust between police and citizens. The last part focuses on the limits of the thesis.

Legitimate fear of selected places

The number of crimes happening on the capital’s streets daily is astonishing. In 2019, it was reported the highest number of armed robberies in Bogotá in years, a total of 125,847 (Colombia Reports, 2021). That equals an average of 345 armed robberies per day. Most of them are allocated in the centre, districts Los Martires and La Candelaria (ibid). As mentioned in previous chapters, one-fifth of the citizens have experienced victimisation, and just in 2020, 17% were victims (Chamber of Commerce, 2021).

According to the Chamber of Commerce Bogotá (2021), the feeling of insecurity has risen yearly since 2016, when the value fell to 42% from the previous year’s 51%. In 2017, the value increased by 13% to 55%. The perception grew slowly in two years to 60%. Then in 2020, the value skyrocketed to 76%.

Micro trafficking and drug dealing²⁴ immensely change the security on the streets. The catalyst of the crime is not the crime organisation *per se* but the competitor market presented on the road (Alvarado, 2013). From March 2007 to March 2009, the highest concentration of narcotic consumers was in La Candelaria, especially in the southern neighbourhoods of Santa Bárbara, Belén, and Santa Fe (ibid).

The most profound spot for illegal activities was Bronx²⁵. Even though it is not located in La Candelaria, it is less than a kilometre away. In 2016, the City hall of Bogotá, or *Alcaldía de Bogotá*, decided to intervene on 28th May 2016. The operation incorporated 2,500 public forces members, police, and the army to clean and dissolve the Bronx and establish the rule of law in the sequestered place in the middle of the capital (Garzón et al., 2017). However, the intervention in an area of considerable complexity bears risks and challenges. There was only a little information about the place and the nature of the operations happening there. The intervention was ill-prepared (ibid). The site was the headquarters for many criminal organisations and a haven for homeless people, drug addicts and delinquents. To achieve successful intervention in a place of such complexity, observation, analysis, and diagnosis of every single offence would have to take place (Gómez, 2016). Sole preparation would take from 5 to 10 years (ibid). Due to factors such as “*a) known corruption of the police officers operating in the area, b) information about infiltration of the criminal fractions which were informed in advance of police operations, c) possibility of violent revenge, d) concentration of homeless people and the risk transferring to other zones and e) the presence of minors,*” the case was marked with the high-risk operation, and the intervention happened after a year of preparation (Garzón et al., 2017, p. 24).

²⁴ Difference between micro trafficking and drug dealing lies in the position on the value chain. Micro trafficking is part of illicit drug distribution where a producing organisation supplies organisations that are dealing with operations on the ground and distributing low quantities to individual sellers or dealers. Drug dealing is done by dealers who commercialise the consumption of illicit drugs and create their selling spots. (Alvarado, 2013, p. 5)

²⁵ It was a “law-free” area of the size of 0.9 ha in district Los Mártires, in the proximity of Santa Fe, located a bit more than half a kilometre from La Candelaria. The Bronx was home to between 800 and 1,100 homeless people, and the number of people staying there would go up to 2,500. The place was under the influence of criminal organisations, so-called “ganchos”. The main reasons for intervention were the illegal drug market and consumption of drugs, illicit arms trade, violation of human rights, exploitation of minors, money laundering, and homicides.

Most importantly, the illegal activity will move somewhere else, and so will the people who used to occupy the place. The links between criminal organizations were ruptured and destroyed. Around a thousand homeless people, most of them addicted to *basuco*, dispersed, and moved to other parts of the capital. The whole illegal market is dispersed and camouflaged around the city (Escudero, Ramírez, 2018). Criminals exploit demographic density for their benefit (Alvarado, 2013). Small-scale drug dealing is not that apparent. All in all, the intervention moved, fractured, and dispersed problems.

From research based on risk terrain modelling on the illicit drug market in Bogotá by Escudero and Ramírez (2018), the authors identified 405 retail sale points of illegal drugs, namely marijuana, cocaine and *basuco*²⁶. The points tend to be allocated closely, making clusters and hot spots of unlawful market activities. Many are in districts with rich nightlife to fulfil the high drug demand (ibid). The zones of high demand cause disputes between members of the criminal groups. The city has to fight many small gangs which tend to operate in areas of the size of a neighbourhood or part of a neighbourhood (IISS, 2018). These territorial disputes often end with violence. In 2015, 55% of homicides in Bogotá were linked to places with a high presence of drug trafficking (Gómez, 2016).

However, the sale points, shown in Figure 16, copy the outer border of La Candelaria with Santa Fe. Figure 17 shows that many respondents placed polygons around the borders, describing the reason to fear because of the presence of illegal drug markets and delinquents.

²⁶ Crack, impure coca paste in a mix with, e. g. tobacco or heroine. It is called as cocaine of the poor. (Long, 1989)

Risk of existence of retail sale points of illicit drugs

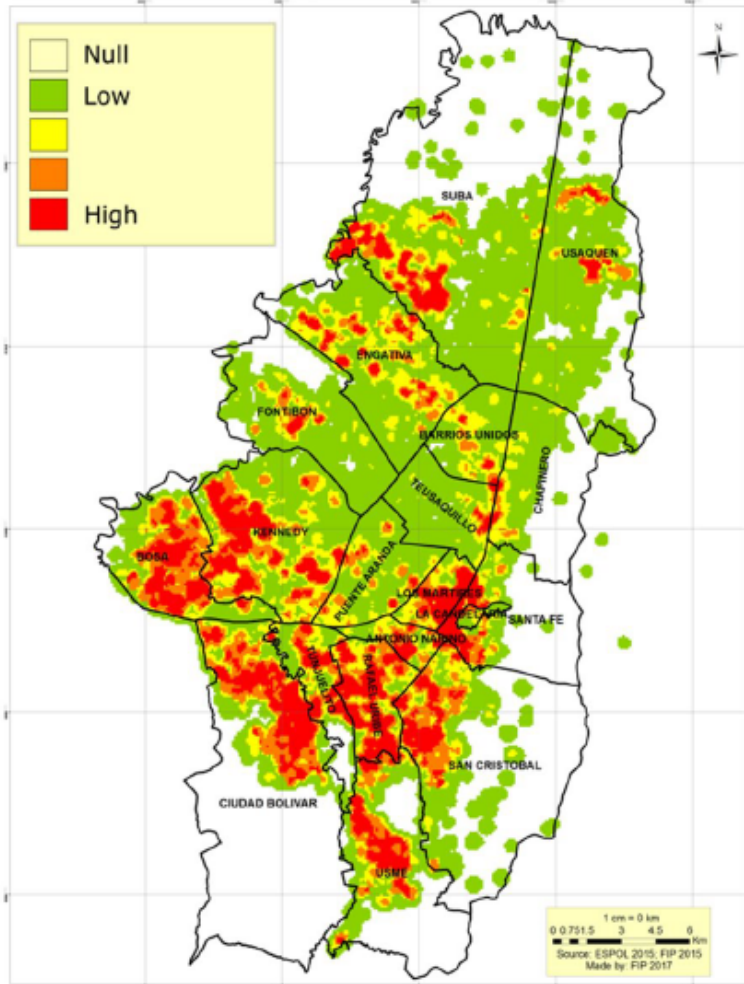


Figure 16 Risk of the existence of a sale point in Bogotá
 Authors: Escudero, José A., Ramírez, B.

Feeling of insecurity in La Candelaria



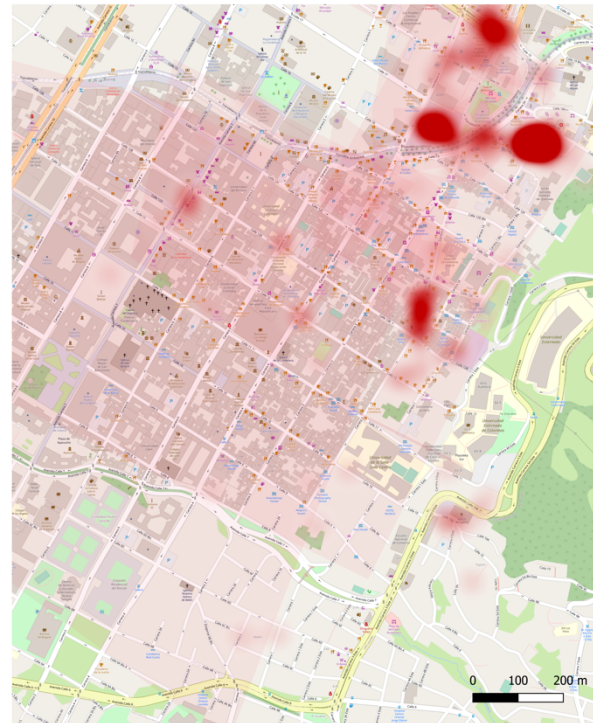
Olomouc 2022, Veronika ROJOVÁ
 Background map: OpenStreetMap.org

Figure 17 Feeling of insecurity in La Candelaria in 2019/2020

Feeling of insecurity in La Candelaria



Crimes in La Candelaria



Olomouc 2022, Veronika ROJOVÁ
Background map: OpenStreetMap.org

Figure 18 Comparison of mental maps

When the mental maps of the feeling of insecurity and marked crimes compare, there are some similarities, as shown in Figure 18. The Parque de Las Periodistas was marked by many respondents on both occasions, justifying the fear of the place and standing its reputation. Surroundings of Egipto's Church and Chorro de Quevedo also received attention both times, causing justified awareness of the area.

The visible difference is seen in the proximity of the students' favourite meeting point, La Pola, in the street behind the parking lot. As La Pola has been the meeting point for many young people, they do not fear the place *per se*. For them, the site is associated with positive feelings, such as fun and joyful interactions. However, in the side streets, the thieves, or muggers, took advantage of young students.

Another difference between the mental maps shows the crimes being mostly done or witnessed in the inner part of the district than in the outer part, which was perceived as more dangerous. Nevertheless, people tend to avoid the feared places if they have that option as a safety mechanism. As discussed in the theoretical part on

fear of crime, the respondents have specific direct or indirect experiences about those places. Stories about gang activities, mugging, vast streets with shadow corners, and lack of surveillance and indigent people. Some respondents argued that they “*do not belong the neighbourhood,*” making them feel like easy targets. As Matei et al. (2001) discuss, specific narratives within ethnic communities in LA which keeps members of those communities aware of one another could be applied to members of neighbourhoods of La Candelaria. As a community pass stories of other communities, they create their own mental map of places they should be aware of (Matei et al., 2001).

Respondents mentioned crime activity at the bus stops of Transmilenio. In the survey of the Chamber of Commerce Bogotá (2021a), in the years 2019 and 2020, 81% and 78% of the respondents consecutively said that they consider Transmilenio unsafe (n=3.500). In ordinary pre-pandemic conditions, the public system was used by 4 million people daily (Arias Calvo, 2021). As the construction of the metro system started in 2022, and the completion is planned for 2028 (Metro de Bogotá, 2022), the Transmilenio remains the main mean of transport for its citizens. Specific steps and investments must be made to improve security and protect the citizens (Godoy et al., 2018).

When the areas are not under the control of authority but the violent actors, the fear, or topophobia of the place, grows more (Guzman, Arias, 2017). People living in everyday threat and fear situations learn to “minimise, avoid and mitigate risk and fear” (Berents, Have, 2017, p. 114). Individuals must act and judge situations quickly to continue their lives as peacefully as possible. The judgement is based on the experience of their own and their acquaintances and on stories and rumours they heard (ibid). Avoidance of the places that people associate with the feeling of fear is reasonable.

Mistrust of the police force

General justice should not stand on class or race. People generally respect and obey the law when they feel that the institutions are competent to solve issues and provide support. The people’s trust in the police is a crucial point in procedural justice (León, 2019). As Maguire et al. (2017) conclude, people are prone to cooperate when they encounter a police officer who treats them “*with fairness and respect and make decisions that are free from bias.*” (p. 20). According to Kang (2016), trust in the

police force could be divided into patrol, dispatch, and arrest. Trust should drive from the expected behaviour according to social norms and, secondly, from satisfaction and evaluation of the work. Lastly, it should originate from their overall mission as members of the police force (ibid).

Nevertheless, Colombians feel treated unjustly when interacting with the police. As shown in the author's survey, only 19% of respondents trust the police and 48% distrust the police. In a study examining drug consumption in Bogotá and Medellín from 2017 by the Center of Studies on Security and Drugs, or *Centro de Estudios sobre Seguridad y Drogas* (CESED), researchers dedicated one part of the survey on the examination of the police and citizens' perception on the police (Godoy et al., 2018). Only a quarter of the respondents stated that they believe that police justify their decisions and actions. Less than a quarter believe that police make fair and impartial decisions and treat people respectfully. Massive inequality is felt in the justice system. Eighty per cent of respondents believe that poor people are treated worse than rich, 16% believe that rich and poor are treated equally, and three per cent believe that the rich are treated worse. The survey clearly shows that citizens suspect police of biased and unfair work. (ibid)

Public opinion on Colombian police work remains bad even though, as described in the previous chapter Colombian National Police, there have been tendencies to reform and rebrand since 1993. In 2019, only three out of ten people qualified the police service as good (Chamber of Commerce, 2021).

According to Godoy et al. (2018, p. 25), there is a twofold causal relationship between the trust and effectiveness of institutions. They describe it as the *“low confidence and high crime rates are two sides of the same phenomenon, and to improve insecurity and the lack of legitimacy of institutions, it is necessary to confront these two problems. To do this security and coexistence policies must be continuous, with stable resources and a long-term strategy.”* An information system must be created to improve the relationship between institutions and the public. It would be a communication tool between citizens and the town hall. The information provided must be transparent and supported by statistical data and independent studies by CSOs (ibid).

Figure 19 represents the data provided by respondents. Only one-third of the crimes were reported to the police. However, many of the witnesses did not know

whether the crime was reported or not. The low report rates could mark a direct link between citizens not trusting the institutions and the jurisdictional system (Godoy et al., 2019). According to Bogotá Cómo Vamos (2019), 42% of victims reported crime in 2019. That is four per cent less than in 2016. According to research by Blattman et al. (2019), most petty crimes are left unreported. More extensive damages are more likely to be reported. Therefore, the highest reporting rates are in vehicle thefts because the police report is needed for the successful settling of insurance (Blattman et al., 2019).

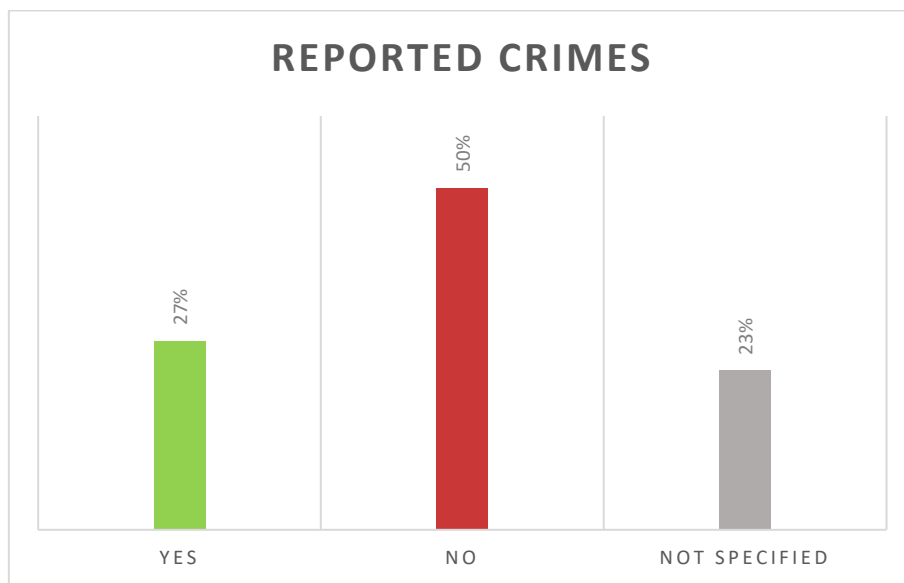


Figure 19 Reported crimes to the police (n=117)

From 2019 to 2021, one-third of the respondents were satisfied with the service received by the police. Almost half of the respondents, precisely 48%, who used the service in 2021, marked the experience as bad or very bad. (Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, 2021)

From the answers to the question ‘Which actions should be prioritised to improve in the security sector?’ in the survey by the Chamber of Commerce Bogotá (2021), there is a strong sense of corruption among the police. In 2017 and 2020, 43% of respondents said that they should focus on ending police corruption. The second most mentioned priority was an improvement of the justice system. Its peak was in 2016 at 31%; later, it falls to ten per cent in 2020. Around ten per cent answered the need to hire more personnel for the police force. Since 2018, people also express the need for higher penalties and sentences (8-12%) and establishing more prisons (5-8%).

The current judicial system does not provide the right service. Criminals who repeatedly commit crimes and are being caught are not being imprisoned. Penalties for recidivism remain low. According to the prison census from 2019, the capacity of the prisons was overpassed by 53,58%, a total of 123.434 inmates in capacity for 80.373 (Colprensa, 2019). Plus, a credible evaluation of the defendant and whether they are prompt to repeat unlawful acts could be done by a Machine Learning technique (Godoy et al., 2018). Usage of this technology would easily relieve the distribution of inmates and increase security in the state (ibid).

The citizens in Bogotá are mainly worried about being robbed. In a published report on the 2020 survey from the Chamber of Commerce Bogotá (2021a), the 49% are worried about being robbed, ten per cent are worried to be killed, four per cent are worried about being a victim of a burglary or drug dealing. These worries from mentioned criminal acts declined by a few per cent over from 2015 as shown in Figure 20, with the exception of the robbery. Over those five years, some other heavy issues got higher visibility. In 2020, 8,4% of respondents were worried about femicide and 4,8% about violence on women.

Colombia, as a country that suffered for decades from the armed conflict that displaced an estimated 7,6 million people by the March 2018 (UNHCR, 2022), is one of the countries in South America with the highest number of sexual gender-based violence (SGBV)(Calderón-Jaramillo, et. al., 2020). The internally displaced people and refugees are more vulnerable towards the SGBV (ibid). From 1995 to 2011, 2,7 million of women were internally displaced in Colombia, those were 51% of all IDPs in Colombia and six per cent of the Colombian population (UN Women, 2022). Over 15% of them reported to be a victim of SGBV. Subjects of the SGBV, including femicides, were mostly women of the indigenous and Afro-Colombian ethnic groups due to the locations of the conflicts. In the total of 3445 homicides on indigenous and Afro-Colombian population connected with the conflict, 65,5% of the victims were women (ibid).

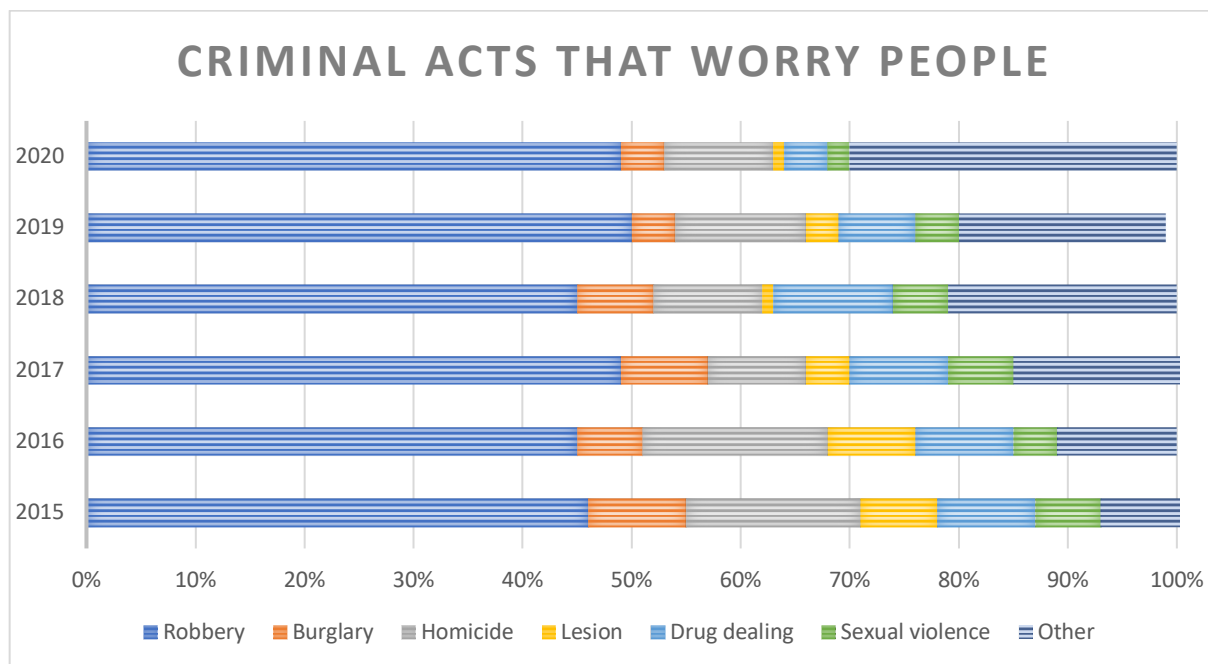


Figure 20 Criminal acts that people worry about happening to them, n=3.500
Source: The Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, 2021a

Over half of the citizens, 58% in 2019, did not report a crime to the authorities. Citizens consider sanctions towards criminals low, 70% in 2019. Ten per cent consider them high (Bogotá Cómo Vamos, 2019).

Despite lacking official data, the independent studies work with estimates. The highest amount of misconception would be about extortion. The Metropolitan police reported three extortion cases in La Candelaria in 2019 and six in 2020. The Bogota Security Secretary shows 1.010 reports of extortion in 2020 in the whole of Bogotá. However, extortion occurs mostly in the peripheral areas with the presence of gangs and, therefore, higher criminal activity (Moser, Mcilwaine, 2006).

Out of 210 respondents, 100 were subjects of either direct (n=28) or indirect (n=72) victimisation in the district La Candelaria and its proximity.

Figure 21 shows data provided by the Metropolitan Police Bogotá in 2019 and 2020. The most reported criminal act in La Candelaria was theft. The most stolen item was a cell phone, with 328 and 218 reports consecutively. Unfortunately, the provided data does not specify whether the theft from a person was in the form of mugging, which tools the abuser used or pickpocketing. However, according to a survey from the Chamber of Commerce Bogotá (2021b), in the years 2020 and 2021, the most frequently used instruments of intimidation were knives or clasp knives, 42% and 40%,

consecutively. The second most frequently used tool was a firearm, 17% and 23% consecutively. Other ways were also used by physical force, some other objects such as a log or a rock (Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, 2021b).

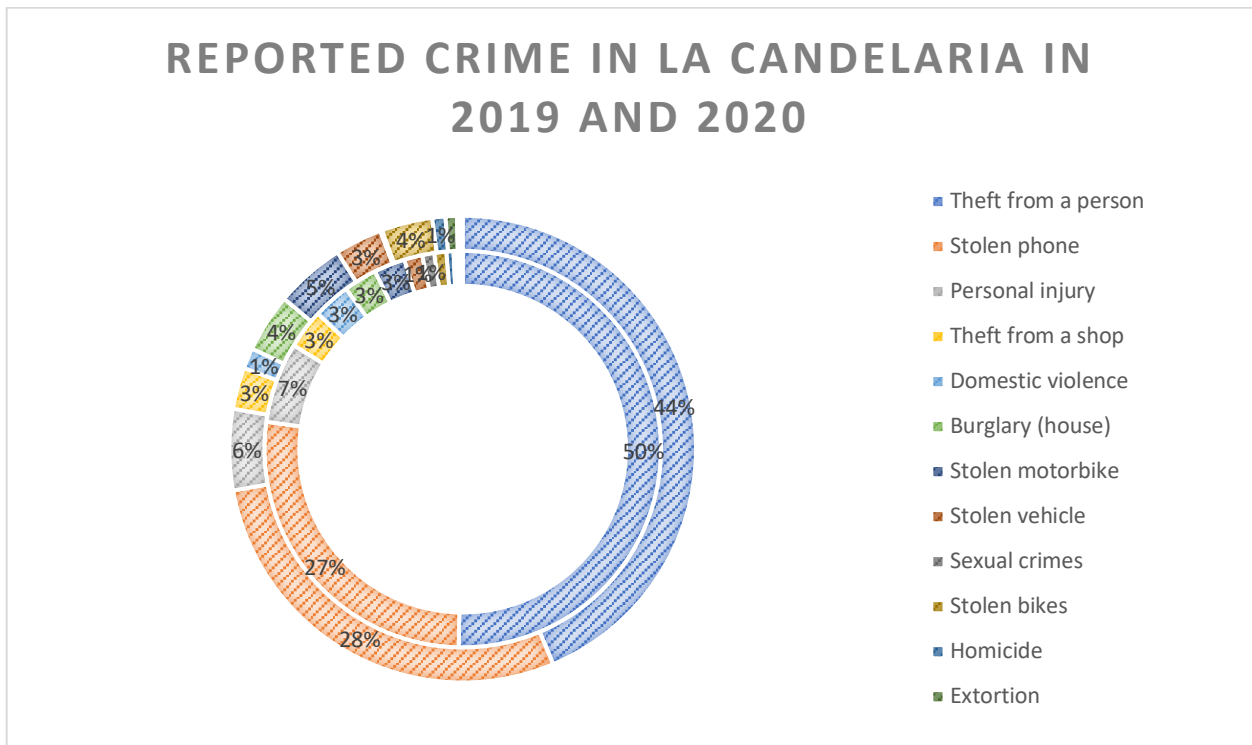


Figure 21 Data of reported crime in the district La Candelaria. The inner graph represents data from 2019 (n=1220), the outer graph represents data from 2020 (n=765). Source: Metropolitan Police, Bogotá

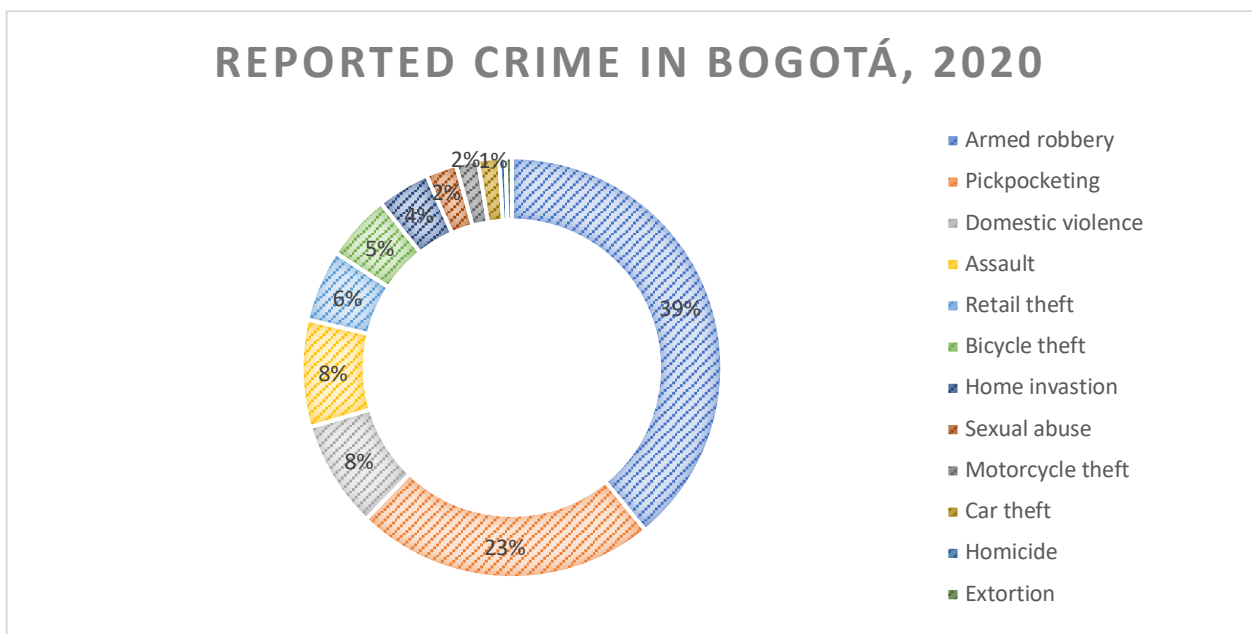


Figure 22 Reported crime in Bogotá in 2020. Source: Bogota Security Secretary

When comparing data from 2020 in Figure 21 and Figure 22, the robberies dominate both in La Candelaria and the whole capital. It was reported 1038 homicides, 7 of them in La Candelaria. However, there is an uneven number of extortions. The data provided by the Metropolitan Police reported only 6 cases of extortion in the district. Nevertheless, according to the data from Bogota Security Secretary, the total rate of extortions was 1010, 130 out of those that happened in La Candelaria (Colombia Reports, 2021).

The number of armed robberies around Bogotá significantly rose from 2016 to 2019 as seen in Figure 23. In the year 2020, the number decreased to a similar value in 2018. The lower value could be explained by the outbreak of Covid-19 and the higher presence of security forces on the streets.

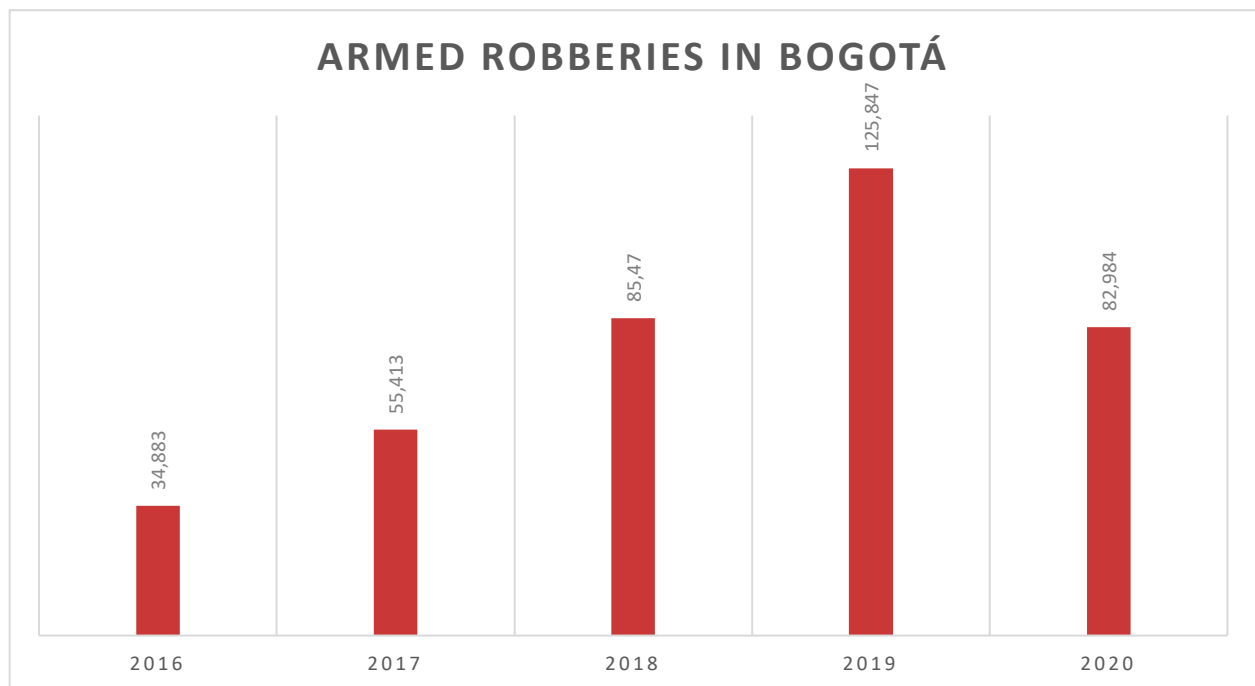


Figure 23 Armed robberies in Bogotá
Source: Bogota Security Secretary

In 2020, the Security Secretary of Bogotá shared on Twitter statistical data comparing criminal acts from January to September 2019 and the same period in 2020. The data presented an overall decrease in thefts by 37%; those include thefts of cars, motorbikes, cell phones, shoplifting and burglaries. The only theft that increased was bike theft, by 35%. Injuries dropped by 35%. Sexual offences dropped by the same percentage. However, homicides increased by one per cent. (Barreto, 2020)

In the first weeks of the quarantine, the majority of crimes fell dramatically in the whole Colombia. The restriction of mobility reduced opportunities between potential victims and perpetrators. There were changes in the daily operations of the police officers, whose priority was to oversee the compliance with quarantine measures. (Alvarado et al., 2020)

The Security Secretary also reported a decline in domestic violence (Barreto, 2020). Nevertheless, domestic violence *per se* is likely to worsen due to imposed nationwide lockdown in from the 20th of March to the 30th of August 2020 (Alvarado et al., 2020). Family members, and in case of domestic violence, those who were also victims and perpetrators, had to stay close together in a limited space with no escape. The lower number of reported cases of domestic violence might lead to false conclusions (ibid).

Cultural background as a cause of violence

The result section and analysis show many examples of direct violence happening on the capital's streets daily. Those are robberies, thefts, physical brawls, threats, and gender-based violence. Therefore, is there a rooted cause?

Colombian political situation is unstable in the long run. Even though the peace agreement from 2016 with FARC gave a huge hope to the citizens, the slow implementation and overgoing military operations against other armed groups keep Colombian society worried. The peace agreement is still raw and was not implemented to the full content. There are still active armed groups, rebels and gangs which focus on drug trafficking, extortion, murder, and extraction of natural resources, such as illegal gold mining (Reuters, 2022). The people address the social injustice, or the structural violence, used over them and demand change. The protests from 2019 to 2021 serve as evidence of social injustice. Minorities express that their fundamental human rights are violated. People from the lower class address the major effects of tax reforms on their cost of living. Women's rights groups demand to narrow rights between men and women. Young people address the need to end corruption and make education more accessible.

The history of oppression of the native population and African descendants has left racial policies and prejudices. Multiple studies have shown that Afro-Colombians are more likely to get low-quality jobs (Arroyo et al., 2016). Active discriminatory and

racial policies still prevent the full realisation of the indigenous (CNTI, 2022). These groups tend to be more vulnerable because in their areas operate illegal armed groups.

The culture of machismo, the Hispanic patriarchy, is tightly connected with violence. The whole Hispanic history is filled with male dominance and their leaders, *caudillos*. The leader is a macho, a true example of masculinity who can lead and command other men and women (Wolf, Hansen, 1972). In the Hispanic family, the division of roles of husband and wife is clear. The wife takes care of the household and raises the kids, and the husband is the head of the family with dominance. This culture restricts possibilities for men, and especially women, to grow. The macho culture is also associated with the crimes of passion because its discourse views women as men's assets (Quiñones Mayo and Resnick, 1996).

Women's rights movements point out the issues caused by machismo and more. The change within Colombian society is ongoing. More than 54,4% of college graduates are women. However, there are fewer opportunities for women in the job market by 20%, and the gender gap in pay is 17,5% (UN Women, 2022). More time and effort are needed to enforce policies that would support women.

The vast gap is also visible in society. The GINI index is one of the worst in South America, showing society's uneven distribution of wealth.

To conclude with cultural violence theory, Colombia suffers from racism and machismo, which represent examples of cultural violence. Prejudges, historical developments and varying roles of men and women caused disparities within society by creating discriminatory policies and unjust systems. The social injustice prevents affected citizens from moving out of their economic class to fulfil their full potential.

Limits

The author recorded some limits, such as the small diversity of the respondents, the availability of the online questionnaire, and the nature of the unstable Colombian political situation.

Due to quite a low number of respondents and the questionnaire form, the presented outcomes might not be generalised. Certain groups were probably not reached, which might lead to biased generalising estimates (Berg, 2005).

Firstly, the questionnaire was disseminated only online. This was because the author had already returned due to the covid-19 outbreak. Resources to share questionnaires were restrained to social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp groups and contact through the phone.

Secondly, through online dissemination, the questionnaire naturally reached students and alumni of most likely Universidad Externado de Colombia, who submitted half of all responses. Even though the author has some contacts with students from other universities in Bogotá, the questionnaire was shared primarily on students' WhatsApp groups and the Facebook group of the university. Higher education is predominantly private and expensive in Colombia. Unfortunately, the survey result most likely lacks representatives of an indigent, lower-income group. Furthermore, representatives of specific age groups are imbalanced, with 172 respondents under 30 years on one side and nine respondents older than 40 years.

Thirdly, even though the respondents could zoom in and out, some could still mark different places than they had thought. Furthermore, many marked parts were out of the district La Candelaria. As shown in Figure 4 in the Methods and data chapter, the map included all the surroundings, not the sole district of La Candelaria. There were also some points located outside of Bogotá. Only assumptions about the map literacy of the respondents and their precision on the map can be made. (Brown and Pullar, 2012)

Fourthly, the map results do not reflect whether the places are perceived as dangerous only during the night and the day. Daylight significantly affects the perception of places, as shown in Figure 5 in the Results.

Fifthly, data provided by the Colombian National Police concerned the area of district La Candelaria. The data obtained coded additional geographical information. However, the additional information about the location within the district was not explained. Therefore, any visual component depicting a comparison between marked data by respondents and police data could not be done.

Lastly, the development of the political situation in Colombia is characterised by its rapid action and vulnerability, especially in times of global pandemic. Outcomes that were discovered in this research might be different with time passing. Remarkably, the situation escalated in the spring of 2021 when the Colombian government

presented tax reform and commenced a wave of protest across the whole country starting on the 28th of April (OHCHR, 2021). Protests were brutally suppressed, causing over 46 people dead, 800 to be injured and over 89 to go missing (Rueda, 2021). The UN Human Rights Office investigation proves that police officers were responsible for at least 28 casualties, ten of those by the hands of members of ESMAD. Sixty cases of sexual violence executed by police officers were reported. Due to the allegations' seriousness, the UN Human Rights Office published a report recommending reforms on securing human rights during the protests. The analysis shows that the “Colombian State failed to maintain a safe environment for protesters on numerous occasions.” (OHCHR, 2021)

Conclusion

The feeling of insecurity gradually rose from 57% in 2018 to 86% in 2021 (Chamber of Commerce Bogotá, 2021). The rate of victimisation is high. Two out of ten of Bogotá's residents have experienced victimisation. The fear of some places is justified, especially during night hours. People are mainly afraid of homeless people, impoverished, gang members, and intoxicated people.

The researched district La Candelaria is considered moderately safe. The district has a high influx of people due to the location of higher education institutions, administrative buildings, tourist attractions and entertainment in the area. Respondents identified neighbourhoods Egipto, Las Aguas, Belén and Nueva Santa Fe as dangerous.

The author was able to identify three hot spots. First is the area surrounding La Pola, the favourite meeting spot for students. Allocated in proximity to the other hot spot is Parque de Las Periodistas, located between districts La Candelaria and Santa Fé, which can be marked as the meeting point of socially pathological people. The presence of people of such nature is also noticeable in nearby streets, especially between Calle 17 and 18 and Transversal 1. Pickpocketing and mugging often occur in these places. The third hot spot is the Chorro de Quevedo. Even if police officers are present in the area, thefts still occur.

Is the fear of those places justified? A short answer would be yes, especially during the night hours. Half of the respondents had an either direct or indirect experience with victimisation in that area. The borders of the district La Candelaria and Santa Fé demarcate an area of dealers and homeless people. Many Transmilenio bus stops are located in these areas. According to independent studies, three-quarters of the citizens feel insecure neither at a bus stop nor on a bus.

Only 19% of respondents trust the work of the police force, and 48% distrust it. Even though the Colombian National Police has been working on rebranding in the last decades, the people see the police as a useless institution. Moreover, the distrust is directed toward the political system as a whole. The current juridical system is ineffective. Citizens have expressed their discontent with high corruption rates, the shortage of prisons and police brutality. The level of dissatisfaction with the work of

the police force is also visible from the rate of reported crimes. Over 50% of cases are left unreported to the police.

The author used the responses connected to the years 2019 and 2020. However, there is a high chance that the perception of the Colombian national police worsened with the violent reaction during the protests in 2021. These protests are associated with the term 'police massacre due to severe violations of human rights, and at least 28 casualties proved as police victims (OHCHR, 2021)

The state is supposed to represent the role of a protector over the citizens. However, the current Colombian state does not fulfil it. There is a need for structural and cultural changes within Colombian society to create safer and equal space for its citizens.

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Annexe A

First and last part of the questionnaire

In total 210 respondents

Gender						
Male		Female			Did not answer	
70		137			3	
Nationality						
Colombian	French	Venezuelan	other per respondent	no reply		
196	3	3	7	0		
Age						
>=20	<20-25>=	<25-30>=	<30-40>=	<40-50>=	<50	no reply
23	116	33	28	7	2	0
Highest approached education						
Primary education	High school	Undergraduate	Masters/postgraduate	PhD	Without answer	
3	35	121	48	2	1	
Current status, personal characteristics						
Unemployed	Employed	Student	On maternity/paternal leave	Pensioner	Without answer	
16	80	109	2	1	2	

1.1. Current address in Bogotá, D. C.					
La Candelaria	Usaquén	Suba	Chapinero	Kennedy	Engativá
34	26	22	20	18	16
Santa Fe	Teusaquillo	Fontibón	Puente Aranda	San Cristóbal	Barrios Unidos
13	13	12	7	6	5
Doesn't live in Bogotá, D. C.	Los Mártires	Tunjuelito	Rafael Uribe Uribe	Antonio Nariño	Ciudad Bolívar
5	3	3	3	2	2
1.2. How frequently do they visit La Candelaria?					
Daily	On working days	On weekends	Once a week	Once a month	Almost never
56	96	10	16	14	18
1.3. Why do they visit La Candelaria? (More options allowed)					
For educational purpose	For entertainment	For work	They live here	To volunteer	Other (shopping, culture, gastronomy, partner, tourism, sport)
143	60	45	33	15	9
1.4.1. Which neighbourhoods of La Candelaria do they perceive as dangerous and why?					
Egipto	Las Aguas	Belén	Nueva Santa Fe	La Concordia	Santa Bárbara
.	92	68	67	40	25
La Catedral	Centro Administrativo		None of them		
23	13		25		

1.4.2. Reasons why respondents view marked neighbourhoods as dangerous.					
Thefts or robberies	Hostile environment	Rumours and reputation	Social condition	Homeless people	Lack of police control
67	25	24	15	9	8
Drug abuse	Prostitution	Dangerous during night time	Organised crime	Deserted areas	Crime in general
7	5	5	4	3	2
1.5. How much secure do you feel in La Candelaria? (Scale from 1 to 5 where 1 represents absolute insecurity and 5 represents absolute feeling of security)					
	1	2	3	4	5
During a day (out of total 209 responses)	6	10	61	101	31
During a night (out of total 204 responses)	60	79	50	12	3
1.6. Do you think that in comparison with other parts of Bogotá La Candelaria is... (Scale from 1 to 5 where 1 represents very dangerous part and 5 represents very secure part of the city)					
1	2	3	4	5	Without answer
17	48	98	31	14	2
1.7. The presence of police force on the streets is...					
Sufficient		Insufficient		Without answer	
43		166		1	
1.8. I trust the police. (Scale from 1 to 5 where 1 represents distrust and 5 represents absolute trust)					
1	2	3	4	5	
50	50	71	31	8	

1.9.1. Are you afraid of some social group? If you answer yes, please state which one.					
Yes		No		Without answer	
90		118		2	
1.9.2. Social groups which were mentioned after answering yes in the previous question.					
Homeless people	Indigent people	Ñeros	Drug addicts	Thieves	Gangs
33	16	9	7	6	5
Street vendors	Venezuelans	Dealers	Police	Stalker	
4	4	2	2	1	