Reclaiming the city by bike

A study about urban development in the city of Bogotá

Vanessa Remolina

Figur 1 (Source: Picture from fieldwork observation 2020, Bogota)

Stockholms universitet

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Abstract

This study looks at the capital of Colombia, Bogotá's mobility department, and how this institution is using the bicycle as a tool to brand the city. Bogotá has for several years had a remarkable increase in bicycle ridership, this duo to the city's implementation of bicycle lanes and politicians that have incorporated planning that favors the use of this transport method. Even so, the city still has challenges in making bicycle transportation inclusive for everyone. Research suggests that to make a city more inclusive, it is important to understand the struggles and dilemmas within the current planning. This study examines questions such as: *Which group or specific users are a dilemma when planning and developing Bogota as a bicycle city? Why is this group or user a challenge or dilemma in the planning?* And: *Does this group fit into the planner's vision of a cycling city?* Through interviews with important stakeholders, academics, and bicycle representatives, the study identified Bicycle messengers as a dilemma. Some representatives of this group are also interviewed. Together with field observation, the theoretical framework, and the found data, this study analyzes the three-research question and answers why bicycle messengers are a dilemma for planners, as they pose a security risk. This finding is further discussed in the paper along with the theories of place branding, the right to the city, and a southern theory approach. Exploring the fact that the mobility department's own vision and branding can be one of the causes of finding this group to be a dilemma.

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Acknowledgments

Introduction

If we look at what determines the quality of public urban spaces, one of the critical factors is a well-functioning, innovative, and well-planned transport system (Parkin, 2012). Urban mobility is undergoing massive changes to align with the sustainable goals required both globally and on a local scale to achieve more sustainable societies. Cities worldwide are actively promoting modes of transportation that are more sustainable and affordable (Balasubramanian et al., 2020). Urban cycling is one of the methods being developed and implemented in many cities worldwide. It has been shown to have multiple benefits, such as contributing to healthier communities being cost-effective and environmentally friendlier than motorized vehicles (Rodriguez-Valencia et al., 2019).

Bogota's authorities have a strong interest in modeling the city to fit with the global goals, especially the UN Sustainable development goal 11, which aims to make cities sustainable and improve urban planning and management in inclusive ways (Global goals (;) Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019). Bogotás mobility projects have significantly advanced in recent years, and great successes have been achieved in the mobility infrastructure within the city (Montezuma, 2011). Bogota has the vision of becoming the world's cycling capital, and considerable progress is made in promoting the city as a cycling city by implementing different place branding strategies (Bogotàs plan bici 2018 (:) Rosas-Satizábal, 2018).

The benefits that cycling gives have universally been studied and written about by many scholars and academic fields. In the last decade, cycling in the urban context has been given more space and participating in different public policy agendas (Rodriguez-Valencia et al., 2019). The administration of mobility of Bogotá has since these politics entered the stage in the late 20 century by the mayor Peñalosa, been tackling the daily mobility struggles that exist in the city and remodeled the city to be more accessible for other means of mobility than the motorized car (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019). Much literature indicates that the Ciclovìa (bicycle lanes that exist in Bogota) has proven to be an essential factor in promoting urban health in Bogotá (Becker et al., 2018 (;) Sarmiento et al., 2016). Despite the positive health outcomes of expanding the Ciclovía network, the city still has challenges in making bike transportation inclusive for everyone. The government of Bogotá is implementing a pro-poor public transportation analysis. They are also trying to increase cycling participation for women and children (Bogotàs plan bici, 2018 (;) Guzman et al., 2018). The development of the Ciclovía is also one of the three strategies the city has implemented, along with car use reduction and transit prioritization (Bogotàs plan bici, 2018 (;) BMPT).

Research on mobility planning in the global south has been relatively underdeveloped compared to studies made in the global north. Only in recent years has the focus on mobility studies started to gain power in the context of the global south (Miraftab 2009; Satgé & Watson, 2018 (;) Eriksen, 2015). Many cities in Latin America with significant social gaps and where social disadvantages tend to be high have had rapid growth in bicycle ridership since implementing different bicycle infrastructures. As bicycle travel costs are more cost-effective, many low-income groups tend to use this method for travel (Ríos et al., 2015). However, the transition from mobility to accessibility is slow in planning practices. The city of Bogota is still facing the challenge of making the planning more inclusive and accessible for everyone. Recent studies on mobility and accessibility show that one of the reasons may be the lack of consensus on how to operationalize the concept of accessibility, particularly as governments and planning agencies have different goals and priorities (Handy, 2020). That's why this study will try to look at how Bogota and its bicycle planning are being carried out and its effects. This study will undo different themes through documented field observations and interviews with other actors operating in close relation to the development of Bogota's bicycle mobility planning (officials, transportation experts, advocates, academics, and various bicycle practitioners). These themes are based on the questions formulated in the next chapter.

1.1 Research focus

The 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) confirmed that transportation and mobility are central to the development of sustainable societies. The global interest in fulfilling the Sustainable development goals (SDG) has given both local and national governments the need to seek new ways to achieve these goals (Giles-Corti et al., 2017). SDG 11 refers to making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable for everyone. Under goal 11, we also find the sub-goal "sustainable transportation" (Global goals (;) UN). This study will focus on SDG 11 and the transportation mode of cycling in Bogota, where the empirical data and field study was carried out.

As mentioned in the introduction, the planners and majors of Bogota are trying to develop the city with the help of SDG 11. However, some studies have pointed out that the transition from mobility to accessibility is slow in planning practices as seen in the case of Bogota, the development of the bicycle infrastructure is still not inclusive or accessible for everyone (Bogotàs plan bici, 2018 (;) Guzman et al., 2018 (;) Guzman et al., 2020 (;) Handy, 2020). The promotion of cycling within cities is often limited to the cycling infrastructure, where policies often focus on developing and improving the existing infrastructure, and no specific policies target accessibility and equality among cyclists

(Guzman et al., 2020). This study wants to examine challenges in the planning for inclusiveness and its effects on its users by looking at three questions.

1. *Which group or specific users are a dilemma when planning and developing Bogota as a bicycle city?*
2. *Why is this group or user a challenge or dilemma in the planning?*
3. *Does this group fit into the planner's vision of a cycling city?*

The second and third question connects more specifically to the vision of Bogota as a cycling city and how planners' vision in an international context may or may not be related to the outcome of a particular setting, where some groups are not prioritized or seen as a dilemma for the planning. These topics will be analyzed and discussed in later sections. By addressing the effects and the outcomes of specific issues within planning, this paper aims to give the reader a greater understanding of how inclusiveness and mobility are connected to different socioeconomic groups and unpack how the power of planning may affect different groups or individuals.

As planning is a powerful tool, it is essential to understand and show how it relates to mobility and mobility planning. The interaction between mobility and the power relationships created from this sort of planning is vital to understand and examine as it shapes our cities both now and in the future. If we want to create inclusive cities, it is then essential to understand how the existing planning is lacking in inclusiveness (Koglin, 2013 (;) Urry, 2011 (;) Urry, 2016).

This paper aims to contribute to the current debates around mobility planning, and the bicycle as a tool. It is crucial as it gives us a greater understanding of how mobility planning affects different social groups. This study concerns a specific place, the city of Bogota, but valuable information can be found around mobility planning and its effects. By bringing a different perspective to the mobility studies that have been made in the case of Bogotá, we may see how this kind of planning is interfering with the lived experience of the city and the vision of the planners. Transport planning and urban planning are often seen as rational sciences, which means that social aspects such as social relations, politics, and social impact are often excluded when looking at planning and transportation (Flyvbjerg, 1998).

1.2 Literature review

Planning and transport have been key development factors in many cities. The benefits of cycling have been well documented and reported in many different fields (Sarmiento et al., 2016 (;) Sonia C et al., 2019 (;) Koglin, 2013). Many sciences and fields such as the economic, environmental, social, and cultural fields have all studied the impacts of cycling and its effects on society. Urban cycling has, therefore, in recent years been central in public policy agendas and promoted as a cost-effective, healthy, and sustainable mode of transportation that gives both local and global benefits (Guzman et

al., 2016 (;) Rodriguez-Valencia et al. 2019). Bogota has a wide range of literature on establishing sustainable transportation. Many studies have been made on the local bus system Transmilienio and the Ciclovía phenomena (Tabitha S. Combs, 2017 (;) Ramirez et al., 2015 (;) Gamble et al., 2017 (;) Epting, 2016).

However, less research has been found regarding accessibility and inclusion among cyclists and the existing cycling planning in Global South cities. A significant body of research examines the link between travel behavior and transportation access also the connection between the limitations on transit for low-income households in Bogotá (Guzman & Oviedo, 2018 (;) Guzman et al. 2017 (;) Tabitha S. Combs, 2017). Studies show that bike ridership has increased in the city since the expansion of the cycle infrastructure (Rodriguez-Valencia et al., 2019). Various studies also show that the Ciclovia and Ciclorutas have improved the image of the bicycle as a more sustainable means of transportation. It has also created a bicycle culture in the city (Becker et al., 2018 (;) Satizábala et al., 2018 (;) Rodrigues-Valencia et al., 2019).

Some studies suggest that a city's urban structure is vital in the opportunities it gives its people. The literature highlights that the way a city's transport system is organized generates essential economic, environmental, and social effects (Becker et al., 2018 (;) Cresswell, 2016 (;) Guzman et al., 2018 (;) Urry, 2011). In the case of Bogotá, a quantitative study that analyzed mobility, spatial and socioeconomic data found that the city has a geographical distribution of transportation that benefits the wealthier areas of the city, where people and households from more deficient zones experience unequal conditions in access to transportation and mobility. High-income groups make 150% more trips than low-income groups, resulting in fewer social and economic opportunities for the lower households (Guzman et al., 2018). Another quantitative study in Bogotá, which used the dif-dif method comparing data from two different periods, shows that living near bicycle infrastructure affects people's travel behavior. The study also indicates that travel behavior will change depending on individuals' socio-economic characteristics. Low- and high-income groups living near the bicycle infrastructure are the most likely to use the bicycle as a transportation option (Rodriguez-Valencia et al., 2019). A study measuring transport accessibility and social equity in the region of Bogota found that the opportunity distribution and the distribution of the transport system were more beneficial for the high and wealthier groups in the area. Where most of the low-income population had significant disadvantages. The accessibility results from medium and high-income groups resulted in 11% and 31% more accessibility than the average. This study measured the equity in transport accessibility to work and study, using an origin-based measure and a mathematical accessibility equation to get the results. These indicators suggested a negative effect of the spatial distribution of opportunities and transport within the city on equity, particularly concerning the low-income population (Guzman et al., 2017).

The international research on Bogota focuses on mobility politics, the city's specific bicycle culture, and planning. How it came into existence during the Peñalosa Mockus mandate period. Research on mobility studies in Bogotá has, on the other side, not been producing many studies on how bicycle mobility politics and planning are related to power relations that affect the structure of the city and the effects it has on its users (Guzman et al., 2016 (;) Boschmann et al., 2008).

There has been significant concern around mobility and the social consequences that have led to increased research connecting the links between transport, poverty, welfare, and sustainability (Guzman et al., 2017 (;) Handy., 2020). The lack of mobility has resulted in social disadvantage and exclusion for the groups not being included or less prioritized in the planning for mobility. (Handy., 2020 (;) Handy., 2005). One of the most well-known definitions is the one of (Hansen. 1959), defining accessibility as the potential of opportunities available to an individual or group within a specific place for interaction. Accessibility can also include the capacity of a place to be reached and accessed from different locations through the transport system (Guzman et al., 2017).

Moreover, a growing number of research is connected to accessibility measures for cyclists in global south cities (Pritchard et al., 2019 (;) Guzman et al., 2020). The existing literature has not fully addressed how accessibility and inclusive planning are distributed in unequal bicycle societies nor its implications for the current users. To understand how planning and power are interconnected, looking at the research field within planning is necessary. Especially the theory-building dominant in the global South. Richard De Stagé and Vanessa Watson (2018) argue that it is crucial to have a southern approach when studying urban planning in the global South. The process refers to understanding the specific places, history, and context when developing different planning systems or projects. Watson also points out that urban research should consider that there are various global networks that link cities, places, and phenomena together worldwide. At the same time, I see the importance of understanding the specific development areas from a more postcolonial perspective. In this theory, the geopolitics of knowledge production acknowledges every place's understanding as central to our world knowledge. De Stagé and Watson (2018) also discuss how the research in urban planning is small in southern theorizing. On the other hand, different disciplines such as anthropology and sociology have contributed to the expansion and understanding of southern theorizing by explaining and creating different concepts and themes related to the knowledge of places in the global south. For example, various anthropologists often described how informal systems from specific areas in the global south were affected by the urban planning in that place, drawing insights from a global south context (Miraftab 2009; Satgé & Watson, 2018 (;) Eriksen, 2015).

A short story about the field

Bogotá, the Andean capital of Colombia, has around 8 million inhabitants (NE, 2017). It is a city that has been internationally recognized in recent years for its advancement in implementing sustainable transport systems (Becker et al., 2018 (;) Satizábala et al., 2018 (;) Cervero et al., 2009). Bogota has also become a common city in urban development studies in the Global South. This is because of the efficient urban management that some local administrations have performed. (Dávila, 2009 (;) Montezuma, 2011). The innovations that have been made in urban infrastructure and services have been internationally recognized and are often described as effective ways of managing urban mobility. Bogotás local bus system, Bus Rapid Transit (Transmilenio), is one of the projects that have been raised internationally together with the development of the city's bicycle infrastructure (Montezuma, 2011 (;) Gilbert, 2008).

The city has an extensive bike lane network and infrastructure, giving its citizens the option to implement a more environmentally friendly and health-beneficial transport system into their lives (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019). The city council also arranges specific street space for recreational cycling and pedestrians every Sunday and holiday, this is called *Ciclovía,* and consists of closing around 126 km of main car roads for a cyclist, runners, skaters, and for everyone who want to enjoy a walk or stroll on the streets for some hours during the day (Montezuma, 2011 (;) Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019).

Figur 2 (Map of bicycle network in Bogota. Source: Secretaría Distrital de Movilidad Bogota)

Bogota's additional bike lane infrastructure is called *cicloruta* and consisted of 448 km of dedicated bicycle paths (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019). Bicycle facilities are spread around in the city. Some bicycle

lanes are even found in open agricultural fields and rural areas outside of Bogotá, connecting the outside regions of Bogota with the more urban areas (Cervero et al., 2009). Bogota's mobility department has launched various campaigns to get people to bicycle in the city. It has invested in multiple projects to improve and widen the bicycle culture in the city (Montezuma, 2005).

Despite the significant progress made in urban development and urban structure in Bogotá, the city has been facing different challenges related to mismanagement, corruption, land invasions, and urban poverty (Gilbert, 2008). This has led to considerable difficulties in urban transport and mobility development (Guzman et al., 2016).

Bogotás has a clear social and economic segregation, where the city's north consists of economically wealthier areas. The city's southern parts are often economically poorer and marginalized (Skinner, 2003). Due to Colombia's specific history and previous civil war, many neighborhoods in the city were created based on land invasions, which have become low-income settlements. Today, these areas are neighborhoods that are geographically far from the city's center, where most companies and universities are located. Many businesses and financial sectors are also found in the northern areas of Bogotá (Skinner, 2003). The city's lack of public transportation and mobility options has made it difficult for many marginalized groups to move around (Guzman et al., 2018 (;) Epting, 2016). This problem hadn't been addressed politically until Bogota got their mayor Peñalosa. Peñalosa strived to change the city's mobility infrastructure and promote social equity by implementing different urban planning in mobility through improved sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and the world-famous Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, "TransMilenio" (Epting, 2016). Urban planning is still being implemented in the city of Bogotá today.

2.1 The history of cycling in Bogotá

Bogotás bicycle planification took off when Enrique Peñalosa was elected as mayor in Bogotá during 1998-2000. He had a clear vision of how the previously car-oriented city could be transformed into a more walk and bicycle-friendly city, with more open public spaces, parks, and sidewalks (Werner et al., 2013). Public areas around Bogota were transformed, and the Ciclovía concept was created. Peñalosa implemented 304 km of bikeways throughout the city which got the name Ciclorutas (cycle routes) exclusively for non-motorized transportation. While making all these changes to the city, he employed exports from other countries to develop a cycling master plan for Bogotá. This plan consisted of bicycle infrastructure plans. This task was given to the newly formed bikeway management team, that became part of the local department of transportation. This section of the local government department is the one that oversees the development, implementing, and sustaining of all the cycleways, plans, and policies in the city. Peñalosa also created a car-free day. During a whole day

every year, all motorized transportation that isn't public as school buses or public buses cannot be used in the city. This is still an event that is taking place every year (Werner et al, 2013 (;) Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019).

After Peñalosa, Antanas Mockus became the new Mayor of Bogotá. He continued to develop and maintain the public space reforms that Peñalosa had initiated. Bicycle promotion policies were implemented, resulting in the bicycle becoming "appropriated" as a mode of transportation by the government and later by civil society. In 2002 the department of IDU (The institute of urban development) published the JICA survey showing that bicycle use had grown from 0.58% in 1996 to 2.2% in 2002 (Werner et al., 2013 (;) Montezuma, 2011).

Civil society and bicycle advocacy groups started to emerge along with city reforms and the creation of the bicycle infrastructure. Before the reformations, few groups had raised the issue of the city and its lack of adaptation for the bike. Still, the development of different bicycle-related groups increased significantly under the Mockus mandate and created the beginning of civil society support for cycling in the city (Montezuma, 2011 (;) Satizábala et al., 2018). These groups have, over the years, been growing in composition, number, and importance, as they were the ones shaping the bicycle culture that exists today. Many groups joined the Secretary of Mobility and helped with different projects related to improving bicycle use in the city. Over the years, the citizen-led bicycle organizations and civil society movements promoted the use and development of bicycle use in the city, together with the municipality. When the mayors haven't prioritized the bike, the organizations have then stepped in and carried out or pushed for more effective and pro-bike actions (Pardo, 2013).

Theoretical frameworks

This chapter aims to explain the theoretical framework that this study will explore. The academic outline described in this chapter is all frameworks that will help us understand and analyze the collected data. They all bring up the importance of studying different power dimensions. They also highlight other problems that exist within planning and planning dynamics. Therefore, it is necessary to consider that this study examines some specific frameworks within more prominent theories. All the frameworks are social-theoretical, whereas the southern approach has its roots in postcolonial theory. The right to the city comes from a more western Marxian tradition. It is vital to remember that these frameworks also contribute to creating different power dynamics; they also illustrate how the city is shaped based on these perspectives. Therefore, it is essential to clarify that this study is just a field study that analyses these frameworks and does not represent Bogotá.

3.1 Place branding and the creation of the global city

"The city is a huge production machine; cities produce knowledge and industrial goods and unique ways of organizing their inhabitants in the form of laws, markets, and cultures. Cities produce images and stories of the realities they engender" (Schipper 2014: 21–22).

How you move into a city also shapes the identity one has in it (Schipper, 2014). The city is a social creation imagined and produced by different societal groups. The city is a product of lived experiences but the way a city is represented can always relate to different visions around "*the perfect city.*" The study of urban theory has often explored the relationship between the lived town in contrast to the imagined one (Cinar et al., 2007). A common phenomenon today is the branding of not only products but also places. When seeing how a city or place is presented, one can find that areas sometimes have brands. Place branding can be described as "the management of place image through strategic innovation and coordinated economic, commercial, social, cultural, and government policy. Competitive identity is the term to describe the synthesis of brand management with public diplomacy and with trade, investments, tourism and export promotion". (Moilanen et al., 2009, p 7).

The way a country or a city presents itself, the services, or the experiences it promotes. It influences the way it develops. A place may offer many things, such as a culture, business opportunities, a destination or residence, and a history. A place offers politics; it provides economics and diplomacy. All these factors may influence the brand creation created around a location. Studies show that brands have the power to attract investments, workforce, and businesses and can, strengthen national identity, and tourism, and promote public diplomacy. That's why all sectors contributing to the brand also benefit from it (Moilanen et al., 2009). Branding different places worldwide, such as countries and cities, is not new. The most famous branding model is the one that many companies use when branding their products. When branding a place, other factors need to be presented, such as the multidimensional entities and different lived realities that exist in one place (Moilanen et al. 2009 (;) Cinar et al., 2007). Place brands usually are developed to fit in with many fields such as tourism, businesses, investment, technology, innovation, and the environment. This resulted in the attraction of companies, investment, and tourism, giving the place or city an upbringing economically and may also concentrate that wealth in a specific area or market. From a market perspective, creating a national and regional brand is seen as a good investment, giving economic benefits, and strengthening the national or regional identity (Moilanen et al., 2009).

Transnational corporations have become more common all over the world. Both cities and regions are more interconnected today, economically, and culturally. This has also created new networks where different concepts, companies, businesses, and cultures are spread and interconnected, creating a

globalized economy. Allowing places to market themself to attract different investors (Huyssen, 2008).

The city often uses an experience or a historical context for the brand itself. This gives the city an image of how the promoters want the city to be represented to the world. This either invites or permits a sense of association, where only a tiny part of the city's lived experience is described. By branding the city, the city creates a market around the object, cultural practice, or history. This branding may also create inclusion and exclusion. It can also marginalize specific citizens or groups that do not share or belong to the imagined or branded city (Cinar et al., 2007).

In many cases, the branding of a global city forms a collective identity. There exist many examples of how Latin American scholars have described cities as "lettered cities," which means that they belong to an elite who are the ones in power to control the image of the place. Brazil is an excellent example of a county with many cities that have been imagined and created from megaprojects, where clear branding has been used to promote the cities to attract a certain market and investment. One example is the Brazilian capital Brasilia which was strongly branded as a modern and political capital (Cinar et al., 2007).

3.2 Urban planning and a southern approach

"Power and knowledge are interrelated: power produces (what counts as) knowledge, and in planning, the framing of knowledge as 'technical' or 'expert' can be viewed as an exercise of power. Above all, power-knowledge-rationality in planning needs to be understood in a particular context or place rather than through the application of any kind of abstract and universal model or theory. "(Satgé & Watson, 2018: 26).

Planning is a tool that gives governments and planners the power to define territories and manage the populations living and acting inside these spatially defined spaces. Therefore, understanding power in these processes is highly linked to the knowledge of planning systems. Many planning systems that have emerged in the global South have been seen as systems lacking in quality or insufficient compared to those from the global North. Different global agendas have been giving planning primary importance in recent years. The UN-Habitat also recognized that urban planning as a profession must structurally review itself to understand and manage the rapidly growing issues many global South cities face (Watson, 2008). The planning systems that have been dominant in the global South are usually systems adopted from cities of the global North. This kind of planning is often based on assumptions that match the socioeconomic and institutional context that global North regions acquire and are then seen as valid to be implemented on the rest of the world (Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Different planning systems have been lacking in addressing some of the issues growing in the global South cities, and the strategies used are often outdated. That's why it is essential to understand why planning has developed in that way. One aspect is that planning systems are often inherited from previous colonial governments with clear political, economic, and ideological agendas (Watson, 2008). The theory that examines this aspect has its roots in postcolonial theory. The postcolonial approach seeks to give another picture of the dominant hegemonic discourses created by the global North. This approach problematizes and challenges the different ways the world is known, generally by the various European and American disciplines (McEwan, 2014). In Postcolonial planning theory, the view is put on every city's cultural perspective. Its history, especially its colonial history, is essential to examine as it has shaped how cities have developed. The distribution of knowledge in most disciplines has often favored the global North and been developed in English-speaking territories. The structural factors created and set during the colonial area have also enriched the dominance around planning from a more Northern Perspective (Satgé & Watson, 2018). The demand for a more nuanced way of thinking around urban planning is vital as the rapidly urbanizing cities in both the global South and North often are out of date. The approaches used in many parts of the world are also planning practices that emerged in the western world in the early 20th century; these approaches are still relevant but are in other forms based on government systems and urban conditions that have highly changed. A big part of the urban plans carried out in many cities of the global South is also connected to the planning ideology of "the modern city" or "the good city," reflecting the modernist era. Master plans with the architect and urban modernism influenced Le Corbusier's popularity during the 20th century. This planning style advocates order, harmony, formality, and symmetry with much space for traffic flows and slum removal. The Modernization and zoning era of urban planning has been highly criticized. Many critics have later pointed out that the "public good" and "modernization" objective of planning has benefited the wealthy in the cities and been used as a tool to exclude the poor by creating cities with apparent profiling that suits the more affluent classes in a city (Watson, 2008).

The global South has a long history with urban planning models, processes, and policies transferred from the global North to the rest of the world. As Watson put it, many cities worldwide are experiencing rapid urbanization within economies and everyday living conditions that don't match many planning projects' visions. For example, many cities undergoing mass urbanization often have weak economies, with urban planning systems that cannot organize the incoming urbanization. This has led to urban insolation and an increase in urban "slums" (areas with unacceptable living conditions both physically and environmentally.) (UN-Habitat, 2003 (;) Watson, 2008). The UN-Habitat implies that big cities will become the center where poverty and inequality will be concentrated. Urban growth occurs in the towns with governments that have been unable to cope with the increasing expansion of informal urban settlements, which generates other implications for the people living in these

conditions, such as inadequate housing, health issues, and poverty. All forms of urban planning need to consider this when planning different systems and infrastructures that will affect all people living in them (Watson, 2008 (;) Satgé & Watson, 2018).

The term Global South is not exclusively referred to the geographical South of the world. Instead, a critical perspective challenges and reconstructs our understanding of what is typically seen as the world's dominant knowledge. Using this point of view, we can get insight into a brother picture of how the world works and see the lack of understanding between the global North and global South (Watson, 2008 (;) Satgé & Watson, 2018). The struggle for distinct views and understandings of the world has always been a global phenomenon related to the dominant paradigms around knowledge. Southern theory and southern planning strongly believe in case studies' art, giving rise to an in-depth picture of the space and place being analyzed (Watson, 2008 (;) Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Planners always must put forward the critical questions and approaches that illuminate "which norms" are important and think about the norms in different places. As many values and standards differ between areas and groups, this shows how values and norms can create different beliefs about how a city should be planned or considered a "good" city (Watson 2006). Informality is one example of this. The concept of "informality" is something that many cities deal with, especially in the global South. The informality system comes about as people "step outside of the law" to provide for themselves and their families; it also includes ways to find shelter and transport outside the formal and regulated system sustained and created by city managers, planners, or politicians. When informality is presented, it is usually viewed as disorderly behavior or a violation of the formal system. Having these two combative systems and norms taking place simultaneously makes even collaborative planning difficult. Many development planning processes and projects are also highly political as the ideas are attached to those with the power to decide, finance, and shape these ideas. This creates domination of one group over others. It is also customary to find people who use both systems to get benefits, where corruption is included (Satgé & Watson, 2018). One strategy that planners frequently use is to borrow approaches and ideas from other places, also called the "best practice" approach. The criticism often raised here is that this approach doesn't see the specific site, its norms, and its history. It may solve short-term issues but has, on the other side, also contributed to the creation of different or new issues (Satgé & Watson, 2018). Satgé and Watson bring up Healey's (2012) suggestion on "traveling planning ideas," where every "best practice" idea or concept should be accompanied by an in-depth narrative of the origin. The local context is carefully described and analyzed based on its context and regional success. The hypothesis is that all transnational plans and projects should go through a process of in-depth case studies with a straightforward narrative of the local social, economic, and cultural aspects instead of copy-pasting "best practice" ideas without having much knowledge of the origin or context of the basis of the place (Satgé & Watson, 2018 (;) Healey, 2012).

3.3 The right to the city

"The right to the city is, therefore, far more than a right of individual access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city more after our heart's desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right." (Harvey, 2008; 1).

In the urban context, the term "The right to the city" has been internationally recognized and discussed (Koglin, 2013). Henri Lefebvre introduced the idea *of the right to the city* as a reaction to the privatization that took place in cities and people's everyday lives. The concept of daily life is referred to as how people live their lives within the city, what opportunities they get, and how free they can be within the space. Lefebvre wrote about socio-economic segregation and how the "tragedy of the *banlieusards*" forced people into residential areas far away from the city center—resulting in collective reclamation of the urban space by marginalized groups living within the city (Lefebvre, 1991 [1958]). Lefebvres' idea of "the right to the city" was later introduced and adopted into the fields of urban planning, geography, and social movements. To claim the right to the city reference to have a right to the public spaces (Harvey, 2008). The increasing privatization of the city may progress in self-improvement for companies or residents living or acting within the privatized space but creates an exclusion for those who cannot participate. The increase in privatization shapes the desire for wealth and power for some people. At the same time, other people's basic everyday desires get undervalued, such as freedom, sociability, means of subsistence, and mobility. This puts the poorest in a society in a problematic seat as it is the poorest who become most vulnerable when their freedom disappears or diminishes through the city's privatization (Lefebvre, 1991 [1958]).

Henri Lefebvre later developed this concept and meant that "the right to the city" also is a form of "claiming a shaping power in the process of how the city is being shaped." It is a theoretical framework that analyses urban conflict and connects to the creations of power and power relations in different contexts, such as planning (Lefebvre, 1996 [1968]). In many cases, within cities, inequality and wealth exist, consented to some groups or an elite. Even when cities get significant investment or money from an elite or the state to improve the public space, it often gives back to the economy. This results in urban areas that serve an "exchange value" instead of a "used value." This generates what Lefebvre called the "generalization of commodities, where the public space loses its creativity of everyday life when the cities are mainly built for production and consumption. The planning put into cities comes from the idea that technology is the one that improves the city. That creates city models that are based on the technological concept. For example, when the car was presented, planning around mobility changed and became car-based in many cities worldwide (Lefebvre, 1996 [1968]).

Lefebvre's works bring up the question of the distribution of rights and assets. If one examines a city's public spaces, one can see the power relations in it. He expanded the idea of space and how its

planning should not only be limited to the planners and administrations; it should also be shaped and planned by the inhabitants and those using the lived space (Lefebvre, 1991 [1958]). The concept of the city's right also claims for the inhabitants' right to be part of the city's planning where everyday life and everyday activities should shape it.

Moreover, space is something physical; it is a socially produced phenomenon that can give meaning to people. By creating the built environment, different purposes will be shaped around the public space where everyone will interpret space differently and use it differently. This generates other power relationships between the urban context, the city, and its planning process as some will have more rights to areas. Planning projects often consider certain people and specific ways of living and acting within the public space. The physician structures are then connected with the social structures that generate different power dynamics. One can say that a city's structure may produce and reproduce spatial power relations, which gives its citizens additional rights to it. Some citizens will then have urban planning, favoring them more than others (Harvey, 2008). Lefebvre points out that these processes are realized because of capitalism. The capital determines how the city is built as it often has been constructed to benefit the ones with the means (Lefebvre, 1991 [1958]).

As seen today, the market-centric city creates new forms of segregation and exclusion where there is an absence of participation in the city's shaping process from those who have been excluded from economic development. Other social theorists such as David Harvey and Margit Mayer outline how essential the Right to the city is as a human right. The right is not only an individual but rather a common right since the changing and reshaping of the city inevitably affect the collective. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves in them creates dynamic and more inclusive cities (Harvey, 2008 (;) Margit Mayer et al., 2012).

Research design

This section will describe the methods used in collecting the empirical data for the study and how it was analyzed. The research design for this study was developed through a mix of different qualitative methods. To answer the research questions, the analysis needed a great understanding of the field and the people, the culture, and the history of the place. The study, therefore, had to take on various qualitative methods to gather this diverse situated perspective. The main three methods used to collect the empirical data were *participant observations, field documentation,* and *semi-structured interviews*, together with an analysis of various documents and reports, such as information about the bike infrastructure and public space safety. Together with all the gathered empirical data, this information has been analyzed and assessed to get a deeper picture and understanding of how Bogota's urban spaces have been developed through cycling and its effects on society and a specific group.

It is significant to not look at cycling and cycling planning from a purely engineering or urban planning perspective, as this type of planning is deeply rooted in other areas of society such as politics, economics, city health, urban environment, and opportunity making (Becker et al., 2018). Therefore, the variety of methods used has given the study a broad description needed to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2003).

Participant observation, field documentation and interviews, and plan-policy analyses are part of the ethnographical and anthropological research tradition (Daves, 2008). Inspired by critical realism and ethnographic research, this study took this qualitative methodological approach to understand the power relations and their effects on the studied subject (Daves, 2008). Critical realism recognizes that the researcher can only gain insight and knowledge within a, limited part of society. However, this does not mean that the researcher cannot say anything about the phenomena or culture being studied. In this case, the bicycle mobility planning in Bogotá and the specific groups described as a dilemma within the planning. Therefore, to study society with all its dimensions and structures, power, and interpretations, appropriate methods are needed to gain access to the relevant knowledge, in this case, the practices of participant observations and semi-structured interviews (Daves, 2008). These methods, together with the theoretical framework that is described and discussed in later chapters, give the study the tools to make a deep analysis of the collected data as well as provide an understanding of the different power dimensions that exist within planning.

4.1 Observations and documented studies

The first step was to get a feeling of the field. To get this understanding, I cycled everywhere in the city. I participated in all the *Ciclovia events* and the *day without a car* to better feel the surroundings and Bogota's cycle culture and infrastructure. On specific days, I collected photographs and documented observations made in different places in the city. The observations made in Bogota were conducted between January 2020 until April 2020.

The observations, together with the gathering of photographs and written documentation, are all part of the accepted methods in the geographical and anthropological field. This method gives a better understanding of the place and context as it gives the research an inside perspective that participatory research requires (Gehl & Svarre, 2013). The observations took place in various places around Bogota. These places were primarily areas with high bicycle traffic and where different socioeconomic groups commuted during the day.

The collected data from the observations and photographs proved helpful in the conversations and interviews with the planners and bicycle messengers. This information gave me a better understanding of the city, the vision the planner has, and how the people that were interviewed experience the city

and their role as bicycle users. It also provided insight into the whole panorama of Bogota's bicycle infrastructure and how it affects its users. The documented study has also helped illustrate what was found as well as in the analysis of the other documents proposed by planners and academics. This additional document consists of plans and strategies for future or ongoing projects in the city.

4.2 Interview studies and the analysis approach

Interviews were conducted with three different groups; the first group consisted of planners and stakeholders involved directly in the development of Bogota´s bicycle infrastructure and politics. The second group consists of leaders in bicycle advocacy groups and academics. The third group interviewed were bicycle messengers as this was one of the most prominent groups commuting every day and where the group that I found to be considered a dilemma within the planning. To get different perspectives, I chose to interview these three groups; this also meant that other groups were left out of the study, such as the daily commuter, skaters, and the people working with the trash movement, as well as the ones that used the bike lanes for transportation of goods or commodities. To respond to the first research questions, I primarily needed information from the decision-makers in bicycle planning. That's why planners and transport officials were prioritized during the findings for the first question and advocacy group leaders and academics, as they could give the perspectives that I needed on the subject. The bicycle messengers were later involved in the study, as I later found out by the observations and the interviews with the stakeholders that they had a central role in creating the space and place and were conceded as a dilemma for the planners.

DESCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWEES

Interviewed	Sector	Occupation
6 Group 1	Consultant/bike advocate	Advisor on issues of mobility and Urban Sustainability in several Latin American countries. Worked with entities such as the World Bank, UN (Habitat, UNDP and PGU), PAHO, IDB, CAF, the Paris Urban Planning Workshop and the French Agency for Development.
6 people were interviewed in total from group 1	Consultant/bike advocate	Project coordinator at Ciudad Humana. Since 2001 Ciudad Humana has carried out multiple campaigns, citizen actions, consultancies, publications and meetings to promote the development of priority topics for urban sustainability.
2 people were interviewed in total from group 2	City official	Transportation and Infrastructure Director at Bogota´s City Hall.
	Mobility engineer	Engineers working in city council, focused on bringing safe and suitable transport solutions for Bogota´s bike infrastructure.
5 people were interviewed in total from group 3	City official/bike advocate	Director for Bogota's bicycle transportation, in charge of leading projects in the Transportation and Infrastructure division.
2 Group 2	Academic/advisor	Associate professor at Universidad de los Andes working in the department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.
	Bike group representative	Representative from an 'online' radio station that offers bicycle users and non-users in Bogotá an informative option for those who wish to learn more about this vehicle.
5 Group 3	Bike courier	Bicycle messengers working for the companies Rappi and Uber Eats.

Figur 3: (Table 1)

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The Semi-structured interview method was chosen as it gives the participant the freedom to express their terms. It also allows the researcher to understand the participant's topic of interest, leading to relevant and meaningful data for the study as it creates reciprocity-based communication (Galletta & Cross, 2013).

The interviews were then processed and analyzed with the qualitative content analysis method (Bergström et al., 2012). The discussions have been transcribed and read until finding a pattern. The discovered patterns consist of similarities and differences in the material and specific themes. These themes were seen by removing irrelevant information, which was outside of the interview focus questions. The remaining data were then divided into four main content themes. These themes were the subjects that stood out most during the interviews and consisted of the data and base to answer the research questions. The themes are the following:

1.   The vision of Bogotá as a cycling city.

2.   Bogotá, the world's bicycle capital.

3.   Findings from field observations.

4.   The dilemma with bicycle messengers.

The two first categories; *"The vision of Bogotá as a cycling city" and "Bogotá, the world's bicycle capital."* Examens Bogota as a branded city. It consists of the planner's vision in creating and shaping the city. I chose this categorization because this was the order, I found to be most similar to how I found the answers to the research questions. By first interviewing the stakeholders and hearing about the vision of the bicycle city and later what group has been the most challenging in the planning.

The last two categories: "*Findings from field observations" and "The dilemma with bicycle messengers".* Connects to the first research question: (*Which group or specific users are a dilemma when planning and developing Bogota as a bicycle city?) The* specific group of bicycle messengers where the group described as a dilemma. These two chapters also raise why this specific group is a dilemma answering the second research question: (*Why is this group or user a challenge or dilemma in the planning?)* I later answer the third research question: (*Does this group fit into the planner's vision of a cycling city?*) in the analyses by incorporating this paper's theoretical framework and analyzing the connection between branding a city in a way that excludes a group, which is also seen as a dilemma.

All interviews were conducted in Spanish and transcribed in Spanish. The parts that were then translated into English were the quotes used in this study. All the found data and the results have then

been interpreted and discussed concerning the research question and the theoretical framework found in Chapters 3, 5, and 6.

Findings

5.1 The vision of Bogotá as a cycling city

"Our capital is a bicycle city; it is a dense and compact city. We have our mobility and traffic problems such as heavy traffic jams, air pollution, an overloaded bus system, and no metro or subway system. But in all of this, we have managed to create a wonderful bicycle network: ideal for getting around the city" (Interview with city official at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

The mobility department of Bogotá has submitted a plan for how they want the city to develop whitin cycling. This plan is part of a bigger project called *Bogotá mejor para todos* (BMPT) "A better Bogotá for All". A project that has been carried out from 2016 until 2020. The Mobility department has its own development plan that extends until 2030 and focuses solely on planning and developing the city's bicycle infrastructure. As addressed before, the city of Bogota has constant urbanization, which generates a continuous population increase, which in many cases becomes a burden on the city's already overcrowded car roads and bus systems Transmilenio. In relation to the larger city project BMPT, the mobility department aims to help guide this new urban development around the bicycle as a mobility solution that contributes to people's quality of life, where the planification can contribute to all its citizens and give them a more sustainable, environmental, and social city (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019).

The department's primary work is to improve the city's cycling infrastructure, which they do in three different ways. The first one is building bike lanes in the city and developing the infrastructure. Today, they have Latin America's largest bicycle network, something that the mobility department is very proud of. The second one is to increase bike parking around Bogotá. The third is connected to a project called *Visión Cero (zero vision), an awareness campaign developed by the Peñalosa mayor's office to denature deaths on the road,* which consists of a zero vision of traffic deaths. Between January and March 2020 where 1.455 people killed in transit, of those were 6% cyclists (Agencia nacional de Seguridad vial, 2020 (;) (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019). Two of those interviewed from the mobility department also added that they are trying to improve "cycling etiquette," which they thought could save lives. This has been carried out in several projects. They hire actors to educate different groups in society on the importance of the use of security essentials such as helmet, hand signal use, cycling rules, and the way to cycle safely.

"By improving the cycling etiquette, we can save lives as people learn how to cycle the right way, which we believe will reduce deaths." (Interview with city officials at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

The future of Bogotás cycling planning contains many projects in addition to those mentioned above. The vision described in one of the city's future planning projects describes the street of the future. It is described as a street that has the ideal conditions for transportation at different times and needs each of these elements to the urban form in such a way that each step in the mobility pyramid obtains the best and most innovative designs: as wide sidewalks and platforms for the daily walk, with benches for rest, cycle paths with standards suitable for the growing number of cyclists, with frequently used detention areas and bike racks. Connection to the most massive transportation systems and a city with a cyclist-friendly navigation system. One of the engineers at the department of mobility highlights the importance of the street as follows:

"The street is an essential part of the public space of a city, and as such, it is essential that it is a vibrant place with all the important qualities. The integration of urban dynamics between pedestrians, cyclists, and other users is ensured." (Interview with mobility engineer at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

The importance of the public space was something that the engineers at the department of mobility mentioned. One of the city officials also highlighted the importance of the streets and how the street is what determines an ideal public space. When asked what he thought was the ideal street, he answered:

"The best-designed streets provide a feeling of enclosure, as well as openness. It's why we love European cities. That's the shift we want to achieve". (Interview with city officials at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

Many of the projects realized and planned in Bogotá have been inspired by cycling culture from other grand bicycle cities such as Amsterdam, New York, and Copenhagen. This was something that both city officials confirmed. At the same time, as they may see other leading bicycle cities, they believe that the development of Bogotá as a cycling city lies in the development of the city's infrastructure to give its citizens good and sustainable roads to cycle on.

"Cycling is going to be a part of a modern, integrated public transit system. We want Bogotá to be on par with Copenhagen. So, we need to develop the infrastructure from multiple angles". (Interview with a mobility engineer at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

The bike paths are a constant ongoing project. Many segments of the bicycle paths are still not connected to the leading network. In some parts, they are placed on the sidewalk, putting pedestrians and cyclists in competition (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019). In terms of infrastructure, the Personería de

Bogotá states that 17% of the bicycle routes are in poor or regular condition (Personería de Bogotá, 2018). Naming that this deterioration is mainly because previous administrations had made little effort to recover the bicycle routes (Alcaldía de Bogotá, 2019). This was also documented under the observation made in the city. Many bicycle paths are in regular conditions and, at times, nonexistent. The administration is constantly working on expanding the network where their biggest challenge is redistributing public space. One of the engineers describes it like this:

"Public space is the scarcest resource in any city. There are always competing interests – pedestrians want nice wide sidewalks, restaurants want more outdoor seats, buses want dedicated lanes, drivers want more parking, and cyclists want more space." (Interview with mobility engineer at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

One of the bike consultants also addressed the existing battles that exist within the space planning in the city by expressing it like this:

"Bicycles are simply one of the actors in this ballet, but they're the most controversial actors because they take space away from the most vocal ones – car owners. Car owners are a minority, but their cars take up the most space, and they don't like giving it up." (Interview with bike consultant within mobility planning and urban sustainability).

Bogotá's cycling vision is linked to its infrastructure and various projects. Several interviewees point out that the city still has a long way to go to achieve its goals/vision and that the existing mobility within cycling in the city is not yet complete. Many of the engineers, as well as the decision-making planners, referred to cities such as Copenhagen and Amsterdam and believe that they are cities where great inspiration can be found for the development of Bogotá and its bicycle development. It is also important to point out that a recurring theme in the conversations was how the city's development as a cycling city is also linked to the city's built-up, especially to how planners still see streets and the notifiable space in the city as limited. For example, many planners feel that there is a constant battle over who gets access and the resources to design the space so that it fits their vision. Several decision-makers were also concerned that it is challenging to plan the city according to the European standard as Bogotá is governed by several different structures that are not like those of European cities. On the other hand, they expressed that those European cities serve as an inspiration.

5,2 Bogotá, the world's bicycle capital

"We want to consolidate ourselves as the world capital of the bike because the citizens of Bogotá have achieved very important goals: there are more than 800 thousand trips made daily by bicycle and

more than two million people who go out on the bike path every Sunday. We have had problems related to road safety and bicycle theft. However, we work every day to improve this situation. There are many achievements that have been achieved with this administration." (Interview with, city official at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

The Department of Mobility in Bogotá emphasizes marketing itself as a global cycling city, especially in the global south and Latin America. Marketing in the form of advertising could be found in newspaper inserts as well as at bus shelters. Below we find an advertising image on one of the city's bus shelters. With the text: "540 km of bicycle paths, the most extensive network in Latin America, that will make Bogota happier."

Figur 4 Source: Picture from fieldwork observation 2020, Bogota

All those interviewed from the Bogotá Mobility Department agreed that the marketing that is made around the bicycle and infrastructure is essential and that it also helps in achieving their goals and

visions. I spoke specifically to one of the project managers from the department, and she put it this way:

 "Marketing is a big part of how we work. By constantly marketing ourselves as a cycling city, we also create and pass on this vision to the city's citizens. In this way, we also reach a more global audience, which we see as a positive thing. The more we are seen and heard, the better; we strongly believe we can become one of South America's cycling capitals. Through marketing, we not only inform our citizens about our progress, but we also create a place for us in the global context." (Interview with, city official at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

Bogotá, the world's bicycle capital, is a slogan that the department uses to reinforce its image as a cycling city both locally and internationally. When I spoke with the bicycle groups' representative and one of the bicycle consultants, they expressed some criticism of the department's slogan as a vision by describing it like this:

"The cycling fever in Bogotá is a product of the hobby generated throughout the country by the Tour of Colombia. The popularity that the bicycle has reached in this city is more of a means that people use to avoid the chaos of the transportation system in this capital. That has forced the mobility department to generate public policies around its use. They have also reduced the stigma about the person who rides a bicycle. But this doesn't mean that Bogota is becoming the bicycle capital of the world. We lack years of culture, not infrastructure, and that's what the mobility department is focusing on." (Interview with bike consultant within mobility planning and urban sustainability).

The more critical voices from the interviews often pointed out how the mobility department, with their marketing, was creating a certain image around the bicycle that they meant didn't correspond to their lived experiences within the city. Pointing out that the city lacks a cycling culture, not infrastructure.

A Bike group representative also confirmed that the branding created by the mobility department may look good and sound compelling to the international scene, but that the lived experience was different in the city. She was also clear to point out that Bogota faces different challenges around cycling compared to European cities; that don't have to face the same issues with robbery and street harassment. She explained:
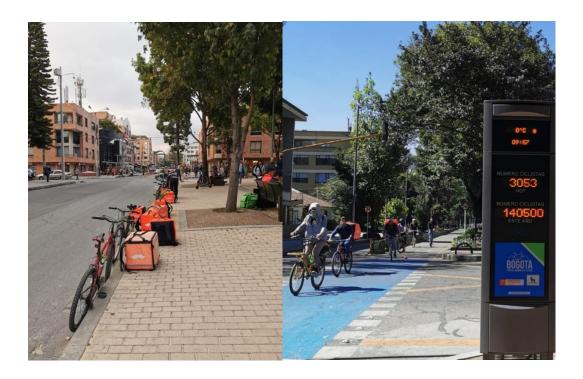
"Today, there is 541 km of bicycle lanes in the city. Two million people go to the Sunday bike path, and 800,000 bicycle trips are made daily. Despite a scenario that seems ideal for Peñalosa to decree that Bogotá is the capital of the bicycle, many of the roads and the network for bikes are

in fair or poor condition, the increase in thefts in the last three years is 429%, and women who travel by bike are harassed. There are also thousands of bicycle users who do not identify themselves with the bicycle culture that the bicycle groups and the mobility department try to create" (Interview with bike group representative).

5.3 Findings from field observations

During the field observations, it was evident that a specific group of cyclists used the city's cycle lanes more than the daily commuters. In local terms, this group was referred to as "Rappi riders" or "UberEats riders." This group consists of people who work as bike messengers in the city. The trend of requesting addresses through mobile applications such as Rappi and Uber Eats has unleashed a new phenomenon of mobility in the streets of Bogotá: new homes appear every day linked to these platforms that provide different services by bicycle. This phenomenon of bicycle messengers can be found today in several cities worldwide. The company Rappi offers a range of products and services. Delivery of groceries, food, or drugstore medications is the most common.

This study has mainly focused on Rappi cyclists. It is the largest company with the most users linked; it is also Bogota's fastest-growing bicycle messenger company. What distinguishes a Rappi rider is their connection to the company. The cyclist who works for Rappi or Ubereats must wear the company logo either on the backpack they carry or on their clothes. The logo consists of a white mustache with the words Rappi on the side and a bright orange color as the logo's color. In addition to Rappi, it was also possible to see the Ubereats logo on some cyclists, consisting of green color with white text.

Figures 5 & 6 Source: Pictures taken during fieldwork observation 2020, Bogota

In the left picture, we see some bicycles and Rappi bags standing by a street. In the right image, we see some cyclists cycling on the bike path at street 11 in Bogota; two cyclists are wearing Rappi bags on their backs. In the same picture, we can also see one of the bicycle meters placed around the city, which tells us how many cyclists crossed the street cycling that day and throughout the year.

During the field observations, it was not uncommon to see Rappi cyclists all over the city. Especially when the Covid 19 pandemic broke out in Colombia, it was one of the only groups in Bogota still visible around the city. This study will focus mainly on the observations made just before the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic in Bogota.

Rappi cyclists were not only seen on the bike lanes but could often be found around parks waiting for an assignment or cycling on major car roads or other public places that were not explicitly marked for cyclists. It was not uncommon to see Rappi cyclists cycling on bus routes or alongside major motorways or waiting outside shops, supermarkets, and restaurants.

Figures 7 & 8 Source: Pictures taken during fieldwork observation 2020, Bogota

In the picture above, we first see a public place, where various Rappi bike messengers are waiting for assignments or taking a break, at the Chapinero area in Bogota. In the second picture, we see a parking area for the bike and motorbike messengers in a nearby restaurant in Chapinero.

The term Rappi rider is also something that stood out. After talking to people from different cycling associations, planners, and people who used the bicycle as a means of transport, it was clear that they mostly identified themselves as cyclists. However, they most often referred to people who work as bike messengers as Rappi riders. Something that the interviewed bicycle messengers who worked for the company also did. When I asked the interviewed bicycle messengers what they identified as, most of them answered that they saw themselves as Rappi riders or as bike messengers. Therefore, I have also chosen to use both terms bicycle messengers and Rappi rider in this study.

Most people I spoke to who worked as bike messengers were originally from Venezuela. The success of the Rappi company has also been due to the Venezuelan refugee crisis, where more than 1.7 million fled to Colombia at the end of 2019 (El Pais, 2021). Many people have since been taking jobs in apps like Rappi or UberEats, allowing them to find quick jobs within the growing Gig-economy (Apnews, 2019).

I have chosen to focus specifically on bicycle messengers like Rappi because it is such a large group in the city that both reside in and make extensive use of the bicycle infrastructure in the city. However, when I interviewed various stakeholders, I quickly noticed that it was considered a problematic group

for urban planners, engineers, and cycling groups. The academics interviewed for this study also voiced their opinions about bicycle messengers. More on this is described in the next section.

Another group that stood out in the interviews as creating a dilemma within the planning was street vendors. This group was also noted during the field observations. It was not uncommon to encounter vendors who used the bike lane as a transport route to carry their merchandise, causing traffic stops and even accidents for bicycle users. Around the bike lanes, there are clear markings with bicycles indicating that they are bike lanes, but the lack of good roads and sidewalks usually makes it difficult for street vendors with large freight carts to transport their goods on sidewalks. In many cases, large freight carts could be seen on car roads as well as on bike lanes.

Figur 9 Source: Picture from fieldwork observation 2020, Bogota

Due to the circumstances and the outbreak of the Corona 19 virus, I did not have time to interview any street vendors and therefore chose not to focus so much on this group. Thus, the next section and discussion will mainly discuss the city's bicycle messengers and why they are seen as a dilemma in planning.

5.4 The dilemma with bicycle messengers

During the interviews with group 1, it came up in several conversations how the bicycle messengers were a significant dilemma in the city. They argue that many people who work as bike messengers do not follow the traffic rules or the bike rules that the Department of Mobility is trying to implement to reduce traffic accidents in the city. As part of the initiatives that seek to protect the lives of the most vulnerable road actors, the District Mobility Secretariat has organized a road safety day for cyclists, especially for those who carry out work on bicycles. This activity aims to encourage self-care, safe pedaling, and citizen coexistence to avoid severe accidents from these actors in the mobility system and other cyclists.

But establishing rules for their operation is still a challenge for the authorities since it is impossible to know how many people are working for these platforms or how many traffic violations they commit daily. Nor is there a legal tool to hold digital companies responsible for the traffic violations their employees commit.

"We've tried to partner with companies like Rappi and UberEats. We have organized information meetings and given them lectures on how to transport yourself safely in the city. But we don't see that it has yielded many results. We've partnered with the companies, and they are now using different reward systems in the app that informs the users of the importance of road safety in the city.".
(Interview with, city official at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

When I asked why they thought this was happening, I got slightly different answers from the different actors:

"We have noticed that operators who are transported on the bike lanes to transport services start from completely different premises than those of a daily commuter or cycling for pleasure. A person cycling to transport service on time will try to shorten their transport time to carry out more missions and thus earn more money. Since Bogota is still a car-dominated city with major traffic problems, it is not uncommon for these cyclists to sometimes take other roads that are unsafe for cyclists or to cycle with red lights and squeeze past buses and motorists." (Interview with, city official at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

"We have seen a lack of cycling etiquette concerning safety. Many people who acquire bicycles do not know how to transport themselves on them safely. For example, most people who work as bicycle messengers and transport themselves by bicycle do not use a helmet nor have lights and reflectors on their bicycles. This is a major problem as it makes them extremely vulnerable to road accidents. The companies they work for do not provide their workers with these necessities. We have also distributed free helmets and reflectors on several occasions, but only a minority use the helmets they receive." (Interview with a mobility engineer at the district mobility department of Bogotá).

"At all times, there are traffic accidents involving cyclists. In Bogotá, and in general, in Colombia, a person who rides a bicycle is not necessarily a cyclist. He is an improvised driver who ordinarily does not respect traffic regulations and jumps down the arterial roads, violating the basic roles. There's a nice narrative about the romance of cycling and how it reduces air pollution, but really, most people just want to get to places faster. Not everyone has a love affair with their bicycle itself. Everyone has a love affair with their time. Especially Rappi riders." (Interview with bike consultant within mobility planning and urban sustainability).

After listening to several interviewees from group 1, I chose to interview some people who worked as bicycle messengers in the city to understand better how they experience the city and themselves as cyclists. I quickly noticed that many interviewees in this group did not identify as cyclists but as Rappi workers who used bicycles as a means of transportation. Antoher factor that stood out during the interviews with the bicycle messengers was the fact that they usually had to buy all the equipment themselves to work at the company such as Rappi. For example, 2 of the interviewees had taken out loans to buy the transport bag and their bicycles.

Further, when we came to questions about road safety, I got some different answers from the interviewees. Out of the five interviewees, one person thought it was essential to follow the traffic rules, not exceed red traffic lights, ride on the bike lanes, and stress the importance of using a helmet as knee protection:

"For me, it is very important to follow the traffic rules as they exist to create order so that accidents do not happen. I have been in several traffic accidents myself. Most have been with other cyclists on pavements and with mopeds. Fortunately, I have never been seriously injured, but I know many Rappi riders who have been seriously injured." (Interview with bicycle messenger working for the company Rappi).

When I asked why he though so many Rappi riders dident use helmets or other bike safety tools, I got this answer.

"It has almost become a trend among Rappi riders not to wear helmets. Many people I know own a helmet but never use it. I think it may have to do with the fact that there is no law that says you must wear a helmet. It's much more comfortable to ride without having to take off and put on a helmet constantly. Also, many of us wear a cap to protect us from the sun. So, wearing a helmet, I think, becomes cumbersome for many." (Interview with bicycle messenger working for the company Rappi).

When I asked Jose-David (bike messenger who has worked for Rappi for three months) the same question, I got a different answer: *I think it has almost become the norm for us Rappi riders not to wear helmets. We usually get information that we should wear helmets from the Rappi company, but many works for minimum wage, so wearing helmets is not our priority."* (Interview with bicycle messenger working for the company Rappi).

Elise, who has also worked at Rappi for almost a year, said that working on the streets is exceptionally unsafe and a high risk of theft, so getting much extra equipment for the bike usually leads to it being stolen. I also found it interesting that almost all of the bike messengers interviewed said that all of the actors on the bike paths are doing what is best for them. What I often heard was the phrase: "No one here respects bicycle users or Rappi riders." This was heard from the bicycle messengers and almost all the actors using the bicycle lanes or transporting themselves on bikes in the city.

Each impact of a bicycle with a car, each undue crossing of a pedestrian when a bike comes from the front, each taxi or motorcycle or motorcycle-taxi that filters into the bicycle lane, add to an extensive number of reasons to understand that everyone is just trying to get where they have to be in the shortest period. Even if that time gets reduced by taking other roads or infrastructures that are not made for that specific vehicle, another person interviewed also expressed the importance of understanding that the bicycle not only as a means for sport but in the context of Bogota, something that people must start to see as a means of transportation.

"The bicycle cannot be understood as something that defines people, but rather as a means of transportation. That is what has not been so clear. In Bogotá, they want to sell us the idea that riding a bicycle is to do sport but riding a bicycle in a city as polluted as Bogotá is to survive, not to do sport. When people understand that riding a bicycle is moving, the whole chip changes because then it is no longer a person who does sport for five kilometers, but the one who is moving to work by bike. And the people in the cars also begin to realize that both are moving to work in different means of transportation." (Interview with academic advisor).

Discussion

Although there is an incredible diversity of groups that are grouped around the theme of the bicycle in Bogota, their struggles are not common because while some develop their identity from the bicycle, for others, it is only a vehicle to carry out other agendas. We see from the interviews that the planners and the decision-making parties are striving to create and develop Bogotá into a globally recognized bicycle city by using clear place branding strategies (Cinar et al., 2007). In creating Bogota as a global bicycle capital, we see how cycling and the city's infrastructure have become the central pillar of its international marketing. As found in the place branding theory, we know how this also leads to creating a sense of belonging within this vision where a certain group is more represented, while other groups may be excluded. A significant group (bicycle messengers) that uses the bicycle in the city doesn't seem to identify themself as cyclists but rather as workers. The same group is also the most problematic group in the planners' eyes because they don't follow the rules and, to some extent, don't seem to fit into the global vision of a bicycle capital (Cinar et al., 2007). The media and the mobility department's marketing of bicycle use also represents a forceful problem since it does not recognize the nuances of bicycle culture or its users. Or not everyone is gathered around the bicycle the same way the administration is promoting and pushing for (Cinar et al., 2007).

We also see that the Ministry of Mobility takes its inspiration from existing so-called bicycle cities. This, of course, generates a certain standard for how a bicycle city should be, where daily commuting, leacher, and sports activities are the standards when riding a bicycle. However, these cities are often cities in the global north, such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen, which don't face the same problems with bike theft or safety issues, where their populations use the bicycle more for commuting or leacher. The planners are aware of the differences and know that Bogota is a city based on entirely different premises. However, visions are being created that primarily seek to emulate the planning of European cities. Creating a standard image with certain norms that mismatch the lived experience. (Satgé & Watson, 2018).

As found in the Sothern approach theory, we see that Bogota is a city experiencing rapid urbanization within economies and everyday living conditions that don't match the planning project vision. Rappi and UberEATS are companies providing work to a group that, in many cases, are marginalized refugees within a space that hasn't been able to organize its incoming urbanization, generating other implications when the companies don't provide the best working conditions. This forces the users in this group to find alternative ways to create norms that, in many cases, may be problematic and dangerous for themselves and others. For many of the bicycle messengers riding a bike is a question of getting food on the table; if these companies create apps and systems that force the employees to

deliver in a particular time or to deliver a high number of services in a short period, norms and patterns will be created to fulfill this goal—resulting in risk taking to be able to deliver and get paid. This is what we see in this case, where the bicycle messengers' interview showed that their struggle lies in the work they are carrying out. It's different and, of course essayer to fulfill the mobility department norms if you ride a bicycle only for leisure or to get from point A to B. Bicycle messengers both transport themselves but also perform the task of delivering, which means that to get more money, they break the rules that exist because they want to be able to serve as many tasks as possible in the shortest period, thus becoming a security threat to the other actors on the bicycle lane and their self. Bicycle messengers are not dangerous, but a bike lane can reflect a city's problems. Bogotá is still a Latin American city. It's segregated between rich and poor, and that tension plays out in all its social dynamics (Satgé & Watson, 2018). The cycling etiquette that the Department of Mobility is trying to implement is something good that can help people understand how to ride a bicycle more safely.

On the other hand, it is also understandable that if a person doesn't see themselves as part of that plan, they will not try to follow it. For most bicycle messengers, time and money are more important than following specific safety rules set by the government on how to cycle safely within the city. When planning for a more inclusive city, it is essential to see why the existing users may be causing a dilemma for the planners. All forms of urban planning need to consider this when planning different systems and infrastructures that will affect all people living in them (Watson, 2008 (;) Satgé & Watson, 2018).

As Harvey and Lefebvre argue, it is possible to see what power relations look like through a city's planning. In this case, one of the most vulnerable groups in society, both economically and socially, are those who, for economic reasons, work for companies like Rappi or Ubereats, companies within the gig economy that don't provide their workers the safest working conditions. This, together with being able to carry out their work by transporting themselves in a city, whose urban planning favors those who fit best into the department's image of a cycling city, continues to create an exclusion for the users that don't fit in that picture and becomes a dilemma as they find other ways or informal ways to be able to carry out their agendas. The bicycle messengers in Bogota have more to do with, how a marginalized group is getting around the city without getting killed or causing an accident while working in poor conditions and using the city's bicycle structure as a means of transportation.

This study chose to focus on bicycle messengers as this was the group that stood out the most from the interviews as well as from the field observations. Due to time limitations and an outbreak of the covid 19 virus. I didn't get the time to interview more bicycle messengers. It is important to mention that this study is limited to the opinion of the ones that participated in this study and doesn't represent the opinion or lived reality of all bicycle messengers. Other groups that were mentioned as causing a

dilemma for the planners were street vendors and recycling groups, these groups were also noticed during the field observations. It is also important to mention that the findings from stakeholders and academics also is limited to the experiences and lived realities of the persons being interviewed. This doesn't mean that it doesn't exist other groups that are considered to cause a dilemma in the planning.

Conclusion

Already in 1995, the bicycle began to be proposed as a means of transport from the municipalities of Antanas Mockus and Enrique Peñalosa, a significant advance for a city that, at the turn of the century, suffered from chaotic mobility. The construction of the bicycle routes, the Night Ciclovia, and the first experiments of the day without a car point to the physical and cultural transformations that Bogotá began to experience due to a new transport model. There are many reasons why people decide to ride a bicycle in Bogotá. The economy, the independence of public transport and the time that can be saved, or the adrenaline involved in getting around the city. These are some of the engines to which people use this medium. However, even if the bicycle has many benefits and unifies many people in the experience of riding a bicycle, the causes of why everyone chooses to ride a bicycle are different. They can, in some cases, even collide with each other. In this study, we found that the way planners and stakeholders vision the city may affect the groups that are using this tool. How Bogota is branding itself as a bicycle city may cause exclusion for one of the groups that are daily user of this means of transportation. The planners try to achieve a more global standard of what is globally considered to be a "bicycle city," while some groups are being left out, as they don't fit into this image. The bicycle messengers interviewed for this study did not identify themself with the cycling city that the administration and planners try to achieve— as they don't see themself as cyclists but rather as workers. These groups that are already hugely materialized in society remain sidelined. Instead, conflict arises as they are seen as a dilemma within the space by not fitting into the planners' visions. This can be discussed consequently that occurs when planners develop infrastructures that are based on existing models that are taken from western or global standards and can, in many cases, lead to even a more considerable exclusion, or turn existing groups into a planning problem as in the case in this study with bicycle messengers.

There is no doubt that Bogotá has advanced by leaps and bounds on the subject, all this thanks to the users who have given themselves the task of getting on the bike, and to the municipalities that have supported it. However, many things still must be tackled, for example, high theft rates, street harassment, the expansion of bicycle infrastructures, and the relationship of cyclists with drivers of

other means of transport. Given this panorama, it is worth asking ourselves, how does the mobility department create a bicycle capital that all the existing and future users will feel part of?

In summary, it is essential to understand the context of a specific place in borrowing ideas and shared learnings, plans, and projects across different localities (Healey, 2012). A southern theorizing view in planning develops a critical perspective on existing theories and practices. It should not be seen as an established theory but rather as a framework that helps to know how ideas and concepts are highly connected to their origins and history. It draws the attention that everything has been developed within a place and a context where understanding its place is vital to creating an inclusive city. (Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Source: Figure 1: Map from secretaría Distrital de Movilidad Bogota.
https://www.movilidadbogota.gov.co/web/sites/default/files/Paginas/2019-02-06/Mapa%20ciclorrutas%20urbano.pdf)

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