Do Gated Communities Represent a Problem For Society?

A study of the impact of Gated Communities in Machala, Ecuador

Cristhian Hernández
Abstract

The effects of Gated Communities (GCs) were analysed. According to the literature, these urban artefacts are negative for society. They are blamed to provoking social segregation, social exclusion and undermining democracy. In a Latin American context the consequences could be worse. Latin America has the highest level of social inequality in the world and the rapid growth of GCs is making this inequality more visible. This study implemented the concept of Social Capital, in order to understand the urban problems in this urban geography. The study is based in Machala, a mid-sized city in Ecuador. It was found that GCs’ residents lack of trust of outsiders, residents are more distant from disadvantage groups, social networks are being homogenised and there is a stigmatisation of life outside the community’s walls. This study seeks to create awareness on the type of urban growth in Machala by exploring the consequences of fragmentation, privatisation and segregation via GCs.

Key words: Gated communities, social capital, segregation, fragmentation, social inequality, Latin America.
Summary

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the impact of gated communities (CGs) in Machala, Ecuador. The reason for this research is the global concern about the negative effects of GCs to society, even more in the context of a Latin America city. Machala is characterised by social inequality and poverty and the rapid development of GCs in the city is worrying. The Thesis work structure is composed of eight chapters. Chapter One is the introduction. Chapter Two describes the background of the city and the country and briefly the presence of GCs in Ecuador. Chapter Three reviews relevant literature that explains the origins and rise of GCs, the definitions, categorisation and the general consequence of GCs. Chapter Four is divided into two parts. Part one provides the theory in which the Latin American city models are explained and the economic changes that lead to the current urban geography. The next part introduces the concept of Social Capital, considering its measurement and uses. Chapter Five justifies the methodology used. A Case Study approach was used in order to get the depth required through mix methods such as triangulation. Hence, for this study observations, questionnaire and interviews were implemented. Chapter Six presents the results obtained with the observations, questionnaires and the interviews. Chapter Seven takes the results into discussion and finally conclusions are drawn in Chapter Eight. The main aim of this thesis is to shows that in Machala, a future urban growth based on GCs can enforce social division, negatively affected disadvantaged groups in the city and contribute to the homogenisation of social networks. I suggest that more work is needed based on Social Capital in relation to the urban growth in Latin America. For example, how this contributes to tackling poverty, inequality and other urban ills that are commonly experienced in such cities.
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1. Introduction

The modern city is divided in different spaces with different norms, structures and also control, indicating the loss of community and social responsibility under the new conditions (Borsdorf & Hidalgo, 2010). Gated Communities (GCs) play a fundamental role in constituting the new city, therefore this thesis studies the impact of GCs towards society. Most of the research done on this subject has concluded that these urban artefacts are negative for society. The general consequences are urban segregations, social exclusion, homogenisation of social networks by the fragmentation and privatisation of urban spaces in the city (Barnerjee, 2011; Landman, 2002; Caldeira, 1996; Roitman 2004, 2005, 2011, 2013; Svampa, 2011). This study continues along the lines of previous work on GCs, but taking it further by considering the Latin American context. Urban ills typical of this region are not overcome, but might be enhanced by the rapid raising of GCs. Hence, the purpose of this thesis is to find out the possible social impacts produced by GCs in a city like Machala, Ecuador. A city already with a society divided by class and high poverty rates before the introduction of GCs. The benefit of this is to create awareness of a pessimistic future under an urban growth via GCs. The methodology applied was a Case Study approach, using a mix methods for the analysis (triangulation) including interviews, observations and a questionnaire and considering the Latin American city models and the concept of Social Capital as the framework for this thesis. The findings indicated that GCs negatively influence social relations with outsiders. If this urban trend carries on, there will be a negative impact on the livelihood of disadvantaged groups specifically those in the informal sector. Additionally, GCs are encouraging the homogenisation of social networks, concurrently inducing to the stigmatisation of other neighbourhoods and its residents. This study first provides a background on the case study, continues with a literature review, followed by the theory, then the results and discussion, and finally the conclusion.

The aim of this study is to know the following:

- Do Gated Communities alter social relations? And what would be its impact on disadvantaged groups in Machala?

- Are social networks being homogenised?
2. Background on cases study

In section I summarised the socio-economic background of Ecuador since the failure of the Neoliberalism era, which is a point in recent history where poverty and unemployment levels rocketed resulting in a massive outside migration. These factors have shaped urban growth in Ecuador. In the same manner, the recent strengthening of the economy meant the appearance of a strong middle class, which like the elites are now capable of influencing the urban growth. Also a general description of Machala is presented and I provide a brief background on GCs in Ecuador.

2.1 Ecuador

The 90’s were a harsh time for Ecuador. The country was hit by El Nino, causing millions of lost dollars for the agricultural sector. However, it was the failure of neoliberalism that resulted in a terrible economic and social crisis. The government at that time first ordered a week-long bank holidays. Next, savings and checking accounts were frozen and finally the dollarisation of the economy was implemented at an exchange rate of 25,000 Sucres to the US Dollar. The dollarisation was a safety net that managed to bring some stability and economic recovery. Nevertheless, it was not a long-term solution and high inflation continued to affect the Ecuadorian economy (Larrea, 2004, p. 44-45). The aftermath of the economic crisis left many Ecuadorians in the new poor class. Real wages fell, provoking an increase in unemployment and pushing many into informal work and others to migrate to Europe and the USA (Ibid, p. 44-45).

From the years 2000 onwards there was an economic recovery. Ponce and Vos (2012, p. 15) claim that three factors made it possible: First, the increase in oil price and the construction of a new pipeline; Second, the remittance incomes of those Ecuadorian that migrated manage to give stability in the economy, representing 5% of the country’s GDP. This allowed Ecuador to pass the bumpy road during the 2008 crisis without inconvenience. Third, the role of the leftist government that from 2007 managed well the oil prices and the collection of taxes expanding the government budget used for social purposes. The Human Development Report of 2014 by the UNDP gave Ecuador a high human development rank, achieved by effectively reducing poverty and inequality (UNDP). Ecuador is the country with the lowest percentage of unemployment in the region and, for the first time, full employment is higher than underemployment. The data collected by SENPLADES (National Agency of Development and Planning) from 2007 to 2013 shows a part of the population now has work that gives them an income higher than the basic salary. About 1,136,000 Ecuadorians have gotten out of poverty. The difference in income between the most rich and poor decreased from 37 times to 24 in this period, thus making Ecuador the most effective in the region in reducing poverty and inequality (SENPLADES, 2014).

2.2 Machala

The canton of Machala (figure 2.1) is locate in the southeast of Ecuador and is part of the province El Oro. Machala is famous due to its agriculture industry, as it is a producer of banana, cacao and coffee (Enciclopeodiabritanica, 2014). It has a population of 245,972.00 inhabitants, which consists of different ethnic groups; Mestizo being the majority, but
also including Mulatos, Montubios and Afro-Ecuadorians (INEC, 2010). Economically, about 26.28% of the population is engaged in wholesale and retail, 11.96% work in the public sector, 13.78% in agriculture and 7.27% in the construction sector. With respect to poverty, there is a positive decline. The line of urban poverty (income) in Ecuador in 2013 was 15.74% and 4.08% for extreme poverty. The data taken was analysed from 2007 to 2013. For Machala, the line of poverty fell from 23% to 11.97% and for extreme poverty from 6.50% to 2.06% (Ibid, 2010).

During the last ten years, Machala experienced a major urban regeneration, driven by the local government, which favours urban growth led by the private sector (machala.gob.ec, 2014). The city now contains two shopping malls, hypermarkets and a commercial plaza (figure 2.2). These urban artifacts brought with them international brands. Now the city has its first McDonalds since the restaurant arrival in Ecuador in 1997 (mcdonalds.com.ec, 2014). The outskirt of the city is the place these urban artifacts are located. The real estate market also benefits from local conditions promoted by the municipality. The biggest private investment is 17.12 hectares with an inversion of 70 millions USD that comprises a business centre and residential towers (hoy.com.ec, 2008). The fact that the city agglomerates the main exporters and producers of banana, shrimps and mining creates room for this type of developments (ibid, 2008).
2.3 Gated Communities in Ecuador

There not many studies on GCs that solely focus on Ecuador, often is part of regional studies. Nonetheless the work by Espinosa & Ospina (2009, p. 6) is particularly relevant. Thus the authors argued three main elements that led to development of GCs in Ecuador: Developers, strong middle class and crime. Espinosa and Ospina explain that insecurity in Ecuador is used by developers taking advantage of it throughout publicity and creating fear. It is here that developers saw a way of making income by providing security via GCs. However, this would not have been possible for developers without the several factors that contributed to a strengthening of a middle class that now can afford to live in GC. Economic dynamics that contributed to a strengthening of a middle class that can afford GC living. The authors presented the following: 1) The lack of trust originated by the banking crisis in 1999 and the unfroze of resources of the financial sector. 2) The returns of capital from aboard which produced investment in properties and represented a better surplus value. 3) An increase in remittances which many Ecuadorians used to purchase properties, so increasing investment in the housing sector and benefits for developers.
3. Literature Review

3.1 Origin and rise of Gated Communities

Gating is not a new phenomenon. In fact, the process of gating has been used in different eras and places. For example, gating was necessary for protection against enemies in medieval times (Touman, 2004, p. 1). It was also used to restrict access to outsiders to cities in Europe (Atkinson & Blandy, 2009, p. 297). Similarly, in colonial times in Latin America residential buildings were constructed with an internal patio, which was closed with heavy doors to the main street, and with windows that were small and positioned in a way that provided privacy (Glasze, Webster and Frantz, 2006, p. 97).

In modern times, gating is very well appreciated in GCs almost everywhere. The rise of this urban development is regarded to be a response to the increase of crime in most cases around the world. However, the appearance of a demanding and growing middle classes and the inefficient provision of basic services by governments are also significant factors (Tanulku, 2012, p. 518–528). A search for higher status, prestige, exclusivity, privacy and property value lead to the growth of GCs as well (Damstra, 2001, p. 529-533). For instance, in Budapest, some people choose to live in GCs not because of a fear of crime and personal harm, but to indicate high economic status and social class (Csefalvay, 2011). Above all, globalization is often known to be the root cause of the growth of GCs. For Chumillas (2004, p. 52-54), globalization weakened national policies, increased inequality and poverty and, in this way, contributed to a new urbanism. Here the physical enclosure of GCs creates harmful social differentiation and fragmentation. Nonetheless, the rise of GCs is uneven around the globe, depending on the intensity of globalization and on the type of government arrangements (Glasze, 2004, p. 225-226).

Nevertheless, borrowing from Roitman (2005, p. 303–321), the rise of GCs around the globe can be summarised with two causes. 1) Structural facts these are related to economic, political, and social aspects; for instance, the increase in crime, inefficient governments, and the role of developers. 2) Subjective facts are mainly based on individuals’ interests and motives, for example achieving a better standard of life and security, which can involve getting away from the city or searching for a similar group.

3.2 Definition and Categorisation of Gated Communities

It is difficult to find a single and universal definition for GCs, potentially due to the different approaches taken based on particular characteristics. In general, the most relevant definers are the physical features used to control access to a GC and its legal apparatus (Atkinson & Blandy, 2009, p. 209). The security and protection that GCs provide require the use of physical barriers to restrict access to non-residents, which at the same time are privatises public spaces and services. The administrative system of GCs differs from other secured communities such as throughout homeowner associations, which still allow for residents to share goods and services. Moreover, GCs involve restrictions and
rules that residents must follow as part of tenancy agreements (Damstra, 2001, p. 528). It is also worth mentioning the image of ‘exclusivity’ that differentiates GCs from other communities, which nowadays no longer relate to high-income groups, as there are also GCs (usually single family homes) for middle and lower income groups (Ibid, p. 528; Roitman, 2004, p. 9).

Blakely and Snyder (1997, p. 4-5) present perhaps one of the best-known categorisations of GCs in contemporary literature. They based their classifications on reasons behind the motivations of GCs residents (Table 3.1). There are three categories: the first is *lifestyle communities* where security and leisure are combined; the second is called *elite communities*, which residents seek for prestige and distinction; the last is the *security zone*, which, a consequence of fear of crime and outsiders, grew from residents demand to use mechanisms of security such as walls and fences. However, Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004, p. 917) recommend also taking into account other examples from around the world that could add more into the categorisation of GCs as most studies are based on the US experience. Therefore, in Borsdorf and Hidalgo (2008) present a categorisation of GCs for the region of Latin America (Table 3.1) where they divided GCs into three groups based on social classes and size. In their classification, there are urban GCs for middle and low-income groups, suburban CGs mainly for upper classes and also for some middle classes, and finally the mega projects for the rich that consist of walled towns with several services such schools and universities.

Table 3.1: The categorisations of gated communities in the USA and Latin America.

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<td>Categorization by social classes in Latin America</td>
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<td>security and leisure</td>
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<tr>
<td>elite communities</td>
<td>prestige and distinction</td>
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<tr>
<td>security zone</td>
<td>walls and fences</td>
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Source: Own elaboration with information taken by the two works mentioned above.

3.3 General Consequences

3.3.1 Privatisation of public spaces

Neoliberalism produced economic and political changes that in turn resulted in institutional changes, which allowed the private sector to freely manage physical spaces and to alter the legal system (Barnes, 2011, p. 3). For instance, the arrivals of GCs involve the enclosure of parks and public spaces making them exclusively under the governance of its residents. Thus, there is considerable reduction of public spaces with a negative effect on society. People coming from disadvantaged economic positions, classes and even races no longer have access to these places, thereby diminishing interaction between different groups (Banerjee, 2001, p. 12-13). For Banerjee, public life in private spaces is not
a right, but instead is becoming more of a privilege (ibid, p. 12-13). Corcoran (2012) believes that the public is underrated and is missing the potential the public spaces have to build up social relations, produce knowledge exchange and protect democracy. Thus, the significance and the necessity to keep public places alive and create new ones is essential to solve urban problems.

Further, Landman (2002, p. 7) enforces this argument and believes that the privatization of public spaces and governance could increase spatial and institutional fragmentation and that this could become an instrument that allows the privileged groups to avoid interaction with low income groups and to control the distribution of wealth. Hence GCs and other urban elements such as shopping malls and business centres are provoking the re-distribution of land by forming a parched urban growth. This fragmentation has a socio-spatial impact regarding the use of spaces in the city. With reference to Caldeira (1996, p. 303), the fragmentation produced by GCs has made it difficult to maintain the principle of openness, thus changing the way social group activities are distributed. Additionally, Garcia (2001, p. 1) describes the fragmentation caused by GCs as a ‘shot circuit’ that is represented by inequality in the spatial organization of cities.

3.3.2 Social segregation

The people that move into GCs are separating themselves from others and this has led to a segregation path. Roitman (2013) found a link between GCs and urban segregation, where GCs residents and residents of surrounding non-gated communities fail to establish social relations and communication. This does not mean that segregation did not exist before. What the author claims is that GCs can enforce existing segregation. Nonetheless, there are studies that prove segregation has a positive side, as is the case of the work by Sabatini & Salcedo (2007) who “understand spatial segregation to be a dialectical relationship between integration and exclusion, not just a synonym for exclusion” (p. 588). In this way, poor neighborhoods can benefit from basic infrastructure and job creation thanks to the arrival of a GCs in the area. Also, the wealthy residents of GCs are seen as ‘similar’ by the poor, sharing identity despite the class differences and producing pride and a sense of belonging among the poor (Ibid, p. 597). In the same stream, Manzi and Smith-Bowers (2005, p. 345-359) assert that GCs produce social cohesion between areas conformed by different social groups, which is positive for the sustainably of the communities in dealing with urban ills such as crime.

Although this might be true, these developments are often referred as instruments of social separation (Caldeira, 1996). Roitman (2010, p. 10) points a particular concern related to segregation referring to children being raised inside the walls amongst the type of people, race, social and economic status. This is manufacturing a generation of people that only seek to be with others similar to themselves and that see anything that is different as a threat or to be avoided. This negatively influences the perceptions people have on each other and at the same time promotes an individualistic social trend (Ibid, 2010, p. 10). Furthermore, any sense of community is lost, which disrupts social relations amongst neighbourhoods and the quality of life in these areas, thus affecting the whole city (Landman, 2000 p. 3). Despite the argument that GCs increase social cohesion, the issues of
security and property values are considered to be more important than establishing social relations. Even if social cohesion is achieved, it will not hoard the whole community since GCs tend not to be diverse (Barnes, 2005, p. 7).

### 3.3.3 Democracy

GCs are self-administrative bodies and are described as a democracy within a democracy (Glaze, 2005). Through homeowner associations, GCs principles are achieved, however homeowner associations are orientated towards an individualist trend. Therefore, the collective -the city- is not relevant to them. Cashing (2000, p. 1679-1680) shows the reason behind this attitude is that the owners of property’s interests lie is inside the GCs and not outwards to the city, consequently producing a relationship in which individuals act as private property owners and not as citizens. Thus, homeowners associations are neither participating nor contributing to local democracy and instead are accused to be corrupt, inefficient and illiberal (Mackenzie, 2005, p. 31).

This is apparent when taxation is rejected for the reason that GCs residents already are paying for services CGs provide. This matter has brought difficulties for the municipality. Less investment in sectors that require basic services and improvement in infrastructure. Garcia (2005, p. 2) questions whether it is fair for GCs residents avoid taxation, when for the residents of these communities commuting home requires to pass trough areas that have proper lighting and are clean and safe. Similarly, Damstra (2001, p. 538) highlights the social and legal harm, when homeowner’s associations are not participating and how this is affecting the sense of community in the whole community. The author argues that GCs residents are free to enjoy the benefits that exist outside the walls, however, it is impossible for an outsider to access and use the facilities inside GCs.

### 3.3.4 Fear of crime and the physical design

Crime, as previously mentioned, is an important driver in the development of GCs around the world. The distress that crime is causing on people produces another phenomenon known as fear of crime. Pain (2001, p. 901) has defined it as “the emotional and practical responses to crime and disorder made by individuals and communities.” The consequences of crime and violence make it difficult for the human development and activities, complicating economic livelihoods. People’s physical and emotional well-being is restrained by difficult access to education, work and public spaces (Whitzman, 2007, p. 2716). This situation has been become beneficial for developers of GCs, Dillon (1994a, p9 in D. Luymes, 1997, p. 192) argues that the vulnerability of citizens living in fear is facilitating developers to sell their projects as a solution to being safer than other communities. The problem here is that developers, in order to attract potential buyers, exploit the issue of crime by disrupting the reality of it, this is called the “discourse of fear” (Meseguer, 2011, p. 155), this means exaggerating the sense of insecurity in the city by using publicity.

GCs are well known to prevent crime and guarantee safety to it’s residents through their physical design, this known as Defensible Space. This technique seeks to transform the physical structures of living areas in order to allow residents to exercise informal social
control, a concept based on the work of Oscar Newman, who found a relationship between levels of crime and physical structure of buildings. Hence the separation of private space from public space is important to delineate territory in order to construct a sense of ownership, which can help to distinguish strangers from local residents (Newman, 1972). However, some evidence demonstrates the opposite. Doenges (2000) found that the security developers offer to people is not always achievable, so therefore they are selling a false sense of security. In Malaysia, the study of Abdullah A, Razak N, & et al. (2012) revealed that people who live in GCs fear crime more than those who live in non-gated communities. In Mexico City, GCs also proved to be inefficient in producing a sense of security among residents, according to Vilalta (2011), there is no relation between the physical design of housing and crime.

GCs portrays exclusivity and economic power their designs, breaking up the traditional architecture of the city, exposing even more the socio-economic differentiation in a city, especially that now the rich and the poor are sharing the same areas (Thuillier, 2005, p. 9-10). According to Touman (2004, p. 7) this can induce social envy from poorer social groups, which later can transform into hatred towards wealthy GCs residents. Luymes (1997, p. 188-189) stated that key actors such as civil engineers, architects and planners, despite being involved in the construction of these developments, remain silent with regard to the negative effects of GCs on society. Sennet (2006, p.1) mentioned a paradox when cities fail to deal with urban problems despite technological tools used in modern times and argues that technology is not used it in the right way. Modern buildings are producing segregation and homogenisation causing a restraint on the application of these technological tools.

To conclude, the literature explained the origins of gating and how in modern times it became an essential part of GCs around the globe. Also shown is the Latin American experience, which differs from the mainstream categorization and definitions of GCs, here depending on the type of social class the type of GCs. The literature helped me to understand some of the main issues surrounding GCs and depicted negative consequences towards society. I based my research on this literature that facilitated a theory that could be related and that could offer better insight into the impact of GCs in Machala.
4. Theory

The theoretical framework for this thesis makes use of Latin American city models to explain the particularities of this region in order to better understand current social problems. In addition, I considered the concept of Social Capital, normally used to study social problems in the urban system. Hence, the idea is to apply social capital under the new urban geography in Latin American in order to form a conclusion.

4.1 Latin America City models

Capturing the peculiarities of a Latin American City in a model begins with the contributions of European and American geographers from the 1970s. The model developed by Ford and Griffin in 1980 is the most used one. This model took as a foundation the traditional organisation of Latin American cities under the Law of the Indies during the Spanish colonisation. The law mandated many things regarding how cities should be built. For example, the higher a person’s social status, the closer they should live to the central plaza as main authority buildings and business were erected in the surroundings (Pacione, 2009, p. 466). Thus acting as a kind of social gradient, as distance from the centre increases, social status decreases. Originally, the Ford-Griffin model was composed of four essential elements: the central business district (CBD), here is were the majority of the jobs and services are concentrated; the commercial spine that is an extension of the CBD and follows the residential developments for the elite; three concentric rings of diminishing residential status, and sectors of disamenity normally characterised as the dangerous areas of a city (Ford, 1996, p. 439).

However, Latin America experienced several socioeconomic transformations throughout time affecting the urban functionality and organisation of its cities (De Mattos, 2002, p. 5-10). The validity of some models were tested, especially the ones developed before the arrival of neoliberalism, which pushed for a needed review that captures new elements in the urban landscape. Thus Ford in 1996 offered an improved model (Figure 4.1). The improved model added six new urban elements: 1) The central area of the city is now divided by CBD and a market. Here is where offices, hotels and retail stores are concentrated, thus dividing the city into modern and traditional. 2) At the end of the commercial spine there is a mall, mainly for those that belong to the elite. 3) The industrial sector is relocated to a suburban industrial park due to the need for space. 4) The mall and the suburban industrial park are connected to the periferico (outlying district), which facilitates people and workers to commute. 5) Additionally, the middle class now shares land with the elite residents close to the periferico. 6) The final element is gentrification, which is the protection of the historical parts in the Latin American cities in order to attract tourism (Ford, 1996, p. 440).
Despite the popularity and acceptance of the model proposed by Ford-Griffin (1980) and the later model by Ford (1996), there are many critiques that degrade these works arguing that the Ford model omitted elements in order to avoid complexity. In response to the criticism, Ford’s replay was that previous models are too complex to the point of creating a mess, making them difficult to understand. What Ford is trying to present in his improved model is simplicity, in contrast to others that, from his perspective, resemble more train maps than city models (Ford, 1996, p. 439). Crowley (1998, p. 127–130) complains that Ford did not express the reality of the cities in order to maintain the simplicity. If the real city is not neat, but disorderly, these elements must be included and not suppressed. For example, fragmentation, an element that characterises contemporary Latin American cities, is not considered in the model (ibid, 1998, p. 127–130).

There are recent models that more accurately describe the current reality in Latin American cities, which capture the structural changes produce by globalisation and neoliberalism that transformed the urban landscape. These recent models bring elements that need to be considerate and not omitted, as expressed by Crowley (1998). The model proposed by Bähr, Borsdorf and Janoschka in 2002 (Figure 4.2) features the new urban trend in Latin America. To show how the actual model was constructed, the authors take a retrospective analysis of the city, thus showing how elements have been progressively added according to four periods of structural change within Latin American cities.
The four periods based on Borsdorf and Hidalgo model:

- **The Colonial City** or compact city, as it was mentioned before: the rules of indies mandate urban growth during the colonial times. In these cities, the distance a person lived to the main plaza determined the level of his/her status.

- **The Sectoral City** characterized by linear structures: here the elite found a place for their new homes and business. The industrial sector also settled in these sectoral patterns.

- **The Polarized City** was a result of the import substitution economy period and a mass rural to urban internal migration. This brought a rapid and uncontrolled urban growth, producing polarization of the city and in the end dividing the city between the rich and the poor. The polarised city was also characterised by ‘cell-type’ growth in the peripheries and illegal settlements in the suburban areas.

- **The Fragmented City (70s to now)** constitutes post-modernism urban growth. Relevant features include motorways developed by the private sector together with GCs, shopping malls and business centres. In this period, location is not important. The rich and poor share the same areas. These factors led to the fragmentation of space in the current Latin American city. This modern stage will be discussed next in more detail.

4.2 Neoliberalism in Latin America

Latin America experienced economic and political changes in the 1980s, with the introduction of neoliberal measures under the name of *Washington Consensus*. These measures were presented as panacea to a crisis provoked by an inefficient state, which based trade and economic policies on Import Substitution Industry (ISI). The Neoliberal path to economic development therefore required primarily minimal state intervention on the market, outward orientation and privatisation. The aftermath was negative, the gap between the rich and poor widened and there was an increase in poverty, inequality and political instability (Önis & Senses, 2005).

What Neoliberalism did, was labeled Latin America as the most unequal region of the world by reducing state participation in the market, causing many in the middle class to lose their jobs in the public sector. This also affected formally protected industries during the ISI period, which lead to unemployment, unprotected work and boosted in informal work (Hershberg, 2008, p. 62). The severity of the deterioration of the labour market
differed for each country. Nevertheless, throughout Latin America accentuated economic inequality, caused middle class groups to fall into poverty and only benefited the elite groups (Ibid, 2008, p. 62). Furthermore, the poor’s disadvantaged position forced them to seek to obtain the same services and facilitates as the elites by their own hand. This induced crime and violent activities (Portes & Roberts, 2005, p. 62-67).

### 4.2.2 Urban transformation

Neoliberalism produced a new urban geography in Latin America characterised by fragmentation and socio-spatial exclusion (Mancilla, 2013, p. 9). According to Borsdorf and Hidalgo et al. (2007, p. 365-378), the fragmentation of the urban landscape in Latin America resembles islands, where there is an archipelago of the rich in an ocean of poverty. Additionally, globalisation has induced cities to follow the “rule of the world” in which urban space is homogenised with new urban elements, such as GCs and shopping malls (Borsdorf & Hidalgo, 2008, p. 156). Moreover, the rapid urban growth that branded the ISI period concentrated the majority of the population in one of two major cities and produced an urban primacy that ended with the arrival of Neoliberalism, given a rise in middle-sized cities (Rodgers, Beall & Kanbur, 2012, p. 7).

Additionally, rules and regulations that once organised and controlled the cities changed in order to create room for the private sector (Borsdorf & Hidalgo, 2008, p. 155). According to De Mattos (2002) these new discourses and planning practices are now market orientated and private capital is behind the development of current cities. For instance, in Brazil space usage follows the principles of privatisation. Here, the municipalities stopped planning and financing the development of cities and instead have begun to encourage the private sector to lead urban growth by reducing taxes and increasing freedom in terms of building designs (Caldeira, 2008, in Huyssen p. 62, 63). The lack of state participation in urban growth demonstrates that space is no longer used for social motives. This fact has been confirmed by Harvey (1990) who discusses the use of space in post-modernisms as “independent and autonomous, to be shaped according to aesthetic aims and principles which have nothing necessarily to do with any overreaching social objective” (p. 67).

### 4.2.3 A new urban life

Urban life in Latin America is not as it use to be. Globalisation is pushing for a more homogenous lifestyle (Coy, 2006, p. 122) and control and power in cities has changed, affecting social relations while producing a new understanding of urban life (Borsdorf & Hidalgo 2010, p. 33-34). The elites influence urban decisions and construct cities based on their image in which the privatisation of public spaces is necessary. Even urban regulations and laws are accepting this measure as demanded by the elite and now by the middle class as well (Roitman, 2011, p. 9). In Roitman (2005) the privatisation of a street that still belongs to the municipality by the construction of an exclusive GCs is affecting the residents of a nearby low income neighbourhood, who now have longer commutes. Svampa (2011) explores the social life of this group that she calls the ‘winners’, which now also includes the middle class. The social life of these ‘winners’ is mainly realised inside the exclusivity of residential developments, colleges, clubs or any sort of walled place characterised by a homogenous social composition. This had provoked the lost of
interaction of different social groups. The disappearance and use of public spaces is upsetting the creation of networks necessary for poor groups, the ‘losers’. In short, Svampa argues that the ‘winners’ in Latin America are constructing highly homogenised social networks, a process refers to “upward integration” (p. 12).

The increase in waves of crime and violence since the failure of the Neoliberalism has converted Latin American cities into a synonym for insecurity. Public spaces used to be always crowded. People today do not frequent public spaces any more and instead prefer to avoid interaction with others (Rodgers, Beall & Kanbur, 2011 p. 43-44). There are many studies done on this subject, where urban poverty has a very significant role. Ayres (1998, p. 11-14) demonstrates a link between unemployment and underemployment and how the precarious conditions in the life of the urban poor make crime and violence a means of survival. Other studies have found a tendency of unemployed young men to often end up resorting to crime. Similarly, Koonings and Kruijt (2007, p. 8,11-12) talk about how social exclusion, informality and poverty that give the poor a “second class citizenship” has stigmatised them with crime. Insecurity has pushed the growth of private security companies, which is a lucrative business (Rodgers, Beall & Kanbur, 2011, p. 43-44). Caldeira (in Huyssen, A (ed), 2008, p. 64) discusses how private security, besides offering protection, is creating a “new regime of distance and boundaries in the city’s space.” Basically, private security is stigmatising and keeping people that cannot afford security away from the ones that can.

4.3 The recovery: falling inequality and a new middle class

The social structure in Latin America during the Neoliberal era, possessed a dominant and small social class that was the major beneficiary from this economic system, since they controlled the resources provided by the system. Big and medium employers and professionals and executives consisted only 1-2% of the economically active population (Portes & Hoffman, 2003, p. 359-360), earning over fourteen times more the average poverty-line income in Latin America (Portes & Roberts, 2005, p. 62). From the beginning of the 2000s, Latin American countries managed to considerably reduce inequality, even during the economic crises of 2008/2009 irrespective of a country’s economic structure or political regime. Nevertheless, left regimes governments achieved a much faster decline (Cornia, 2014, p. 60). Recent inequality levels are comparable to those before pre-liberalization. This has led to improvement in the life conditions of the poor and the middle class (ibid.,2014, p. 60). The people that were poor in the 90s are no longer poor and many have risen to the middle class (Ferreira et al., 2013 p. 3). Thus, the benefits of the decline resulted in a favourable reduction in poverty. Extreme poverty fell from 24.9% to 16.3% and total poverty fell from 41.5% to 29.6% (Lustig, Calza & Ortiz-Juarez, 2013, p. 4).

Most studies coincided in two potential reasons behind inequality reduction in Latin America. These can be summarised as follows: The first is an external cause, the economic stability from 2000 and after the crisis created a demand for goods produced in this region. The second is a reflection of the investments done by governments on
the social system increasing its scope (Gasparini & Cruzes, 2013, p. 52-53, 61). Latin American economies accomplished a growth that allowed them to make important breakthroughs. For instance, decreasing skilled vs. unskilled wages, which is related to the return to education and a better distribution of human capital. Additionally, the leftist governments improved trade and cut dependency form the North by promoting South to South trade instead of free trade policies. Avoiding foreign borrowing and tax reform policies that also indirectly helped decrease inequality (Cornia, 2014, p. 61-62).

4.4 Social capital

The concept of Social Capital has been around for quite long and it has become one of the most important concepts in social science. Furthermore social capital has an interdisciplinary character, which allows it to operate in different contexts: economic, sociological and political (Szreter, 1999, in Mohan & Mohan, 2002, p. 191). Social capital benefits can enhance social cohesion, incentive economic development, improvements in health and education and finally reducing crime rates (Tzanakis, 2013, p. 2). There is complexity at the moment of defining social capital, however there are several works of relevance worth mention.

For Bourdieu (in Richardson, 1986) social capital is the “aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of durable network of more or less institutionalise relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition,” (p. 51). So a person benefits from being part of membership in a group, this provides them with capital (economic, cultural and symbolic) that is exchangeable and mobilised (Ibid, p. 51). The roots of this definition is on the interest on how societies manage to reproduce, how the dominant class maintains its position in society and so justify social inequality as a result of social capital (Gauntlett, 2011).

In contrast to Bourdieu’s definition. Coleman (1988) social capital is essential for all groups in society event the disadvantage ones and it is based in two theoretical streams: Sociology, here actors are socialized and subject to norms, rules and obligations. This helps to understand actions in a social context and how actions are change, allow or constrain according to the social context. Economic theory, actors are more independent and self-interest in order to achieve their goals under a specific action that maximized the gains (p. 95). Accordingly for Coleman, social capital is defined by its functionality and “It is not a single but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitates certain actions of actor-whether persons or corporate actors-within the structure” (p. 98). Then, social capital is resource available to any actor and the way is use will depend on the actors.

The work by Putnam “Bowling alone” (2000), is the most influential definition of social capital in recent times. Putnam accredits the falling of democracy in the USA to the withdrawal of people from each other. Using bowling as an example, Putnam portrays how the social structures are losing it capacity to incentive democracy. Putnam argues that if people is bowling alone there is not social interaction and civic discussion that could
happened at the game. In his research on the northern and southern regions of Italy, Putnam found that traditional participation in civic activities (soccer clubs, voter turnout, newspaper reading, etc.) was essential for the northern region to reach economic development and better governance than the southern region (Putnam, 1993, p. 2). The northern region as result presented high level of reciprocity, dense social networks that allowed people to trust each other and respect the norms. For Putnam these were civic communities “value solidarity, civic participation and integrity, and here democracy work” (Ibid, 1993, p. 3). In short, for Putnam social capital consists on networks, norms and trusts that can be transferable between social settings, thus making cooperation easily that benefits everyone.

There are two types of social capital. Bonding consists in homogenous and inwards social networks, for example family or close friends. The benefit of it is a solid social cohesion that contributes to increment support, solidarity and reciprocity (Osterling, 2008, p. 129). In contrast, Bridging is outward orientated and diverse, social networks extend beyond its borders. It is regard to help to connect disadvantage groups of people to information flows outside the groups networks, improving their well being (Ibid, p. 129). There is a dark side of social capital, appreciated when an imbalance is produce in both types social capital. For instance, Putnam gives an example of poor neighbourhoods with an imbalance in the USA. Latino and Blacks neighbourhoods have a lack social networks due that better off families flee the areas and this weakness social capital and as one of the consequently reduce job opportunities. Hence, Putnam believes that where you live and whom you know, the social capital you can count with and this define who you are and the future you will have (Putnam, 1993, p. 7).

4.4.1 Measuring Social Capital
Defining social capital has not been easy, this has led to complications and controversy at the moment of measure it. The main problem with this concept is its many dimensions, each one measures differently, thereby impossible to get a universal measurement (Web.worldbank.org). In the same stream, Narayan and Cassidy (2001, p. 63-64) highlights the gap between the concept of social capital and its measurements. The authors believe surveys questions are a valid measuring method for social capital, after comparing social capital dimensions across several studies, it was found that some dimensions of social capital keep repeating, for instance trust and reciprocity (Ibid, p. 64). Thereby, many studies on social capital replicate on established surveys, according to the world bank, this will change until the new surveys are able to produce a more concrete results (Web.worldbank.org). Examples are seen on several statistics studies around the globe. In the UK, The Office of National Statistic in order to analysis the national well-being, built on existing surveys set of standard questions to measure social capital (Office For National Statistics). In a similar way, The Australian Bureau of Statistics on the well-being integrates the concept of social capital into to existing surveys from different agencies of the government (Australian Bureau of Statistics).
In the interest of this study, the questions addressed are rooted in personal relationships and networks; essential for the well being, economic development and democracy of the city. Hence, this study uses 3 dimensions of social capital: trust, solidarity and networks structures. Like this, trying to have a more simplistic and general measure of social capital.

4.4.2 Social Networks
Social Networks are known to be a source of social capital, individuals invest on the resources embedded in social networks in order to make profit returns. Kadushin (2012, p. 162) explains it as “a trade off between the comfort and support individuals derive from dense networks of social relationships and the benefits achieved by going beyond the local circles and forging bridges to wider universe.” For Field (2003, p. 3) knowing many people and sharing with them means a resilient social capital. The return of the investment can be analysed in two levels: the individual and the group level, and the maintenance and reproduction depends on the interaction of members in both levels (Lin, 1999, p. 32-35). What is more, social networks are beneficial for problem solving, also to predict whether or not an individual can achieve their goals and to measure social capital (Golubovic, 2009, p. 214).

A relevant part of social networks is Homophily. It entails, in short words: likes attracts likes. This means that individuals that have more than one similar characteristic are more likely to connect. According to Kadushin (2012, p. 19) there are two causes that produced Homophily: the first, common norms can connect individuals that share same characteristics and this can happened in both way; common characteristics can produce common norms. The second, considerate locations, so individuals with same characteristics get together in a location in which they interact and the opposite can also happen. There are implications with homophily, homogenous social networks can constrain individuals’ lives by restricting information flow under specific locations, norms and dynamics, leading to a social division (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook 2001, p. 428-429).

In Johnston & Pettie (2011, p. 222) homophily is illustrated. When individuals seek to move in residential areas such as GCs with people similar characteristics, is demonstrated to whom they do want to be close. The authors claim that this put information flow inside a container, in which social networks are homogenous, hence changing the geography of behaviours and attitudes. For instances, a common conversation with a neighbour can change the political orientation of other neighbours and therefore influencing voting decision in political elections. The main issues here is there is not alternative information with no perspectives from the outside world what could affect the city.

4.4.3 Social capital in the urban setting
Social capital has been pragmatic in understanding social problems in cities and particularly at the neighbourhood level. The urbanisation of the 20th century transformed traditional urban life effecting negatively the production and distribution of Social capital. Thus, the strong community and social ties, the use of public spaces, shares of values and social order mutated to an individualistic and competitive urban life (Forrest & Kearns, p. 2125). Social capital under this physical environment is not capable to fully benefit individuals and the community. Instead, Blokland and Rae (2008, p. 24) manifest that
social capital is not helping to solve social problems to contrary is reinforcing them and argue that social capital now is part of privatised communities. Therefore, for the authors, “Bowling alone” is not producing the decline, what is affecting social capital in the city is people bowling but in exclusive circles choose by them.

For Atkinson (2008), the elites and middles class groups are using spaces in cities, in which a different meaning is implanted with the purpose to maintain their links. However the expansion and distribution of social capital in the city is negatively affect. Atkinson Suggests “In line with contemporary debates about and decline in levels of social capital, the apparent isolation of elite from the urban setting suggests a need to review how we look at the interaction between place and the stores of social resources inhering in social relationships “ (p. 43). This has brought social problems, such as crime and unemployment that keep concentrating in neighbourhoods that lacks of social capital, this is know as neighbourhood effects. Thus GCs operate as social containers, disadvantage groups are limited to socially economic opportunities, normally existing within networks of social groups living in GCs. The consequence is the continuum concentration of poverty in this areas (Atkinson & McGarrigle, 2009, p. 77).

The theory shows the several changes Latin Americans’ cities experienced throughout time, until the fragmented city, produced under the logics of neoliberalism and globalisation. The aftermath is a region characterised by social segregation and exclusion, homogenised social networks, lack of public places, extreme crime and violence as part of everyday life. The concept of social capital has many definitions, however it essence consist on the importance of social interaction and networks. Nonetheless, under this new urban geography, social capital is unable to work, instead social capital is privatised by GCs and now is part of exclusive circles. Thereby opportunities within strong social networks are not reachable for the disadvantage groups in society.

5. Research design

5.1 Introduction

The study purpose is to find out possible social problems produced by GCs in the city of Machala, Ecuador. The questions proposed are: 1. Does gated communities alter social relations? 2. Could gated communities have an impact on disadvantage groups in Machala? 3. Are social networks homogenised? Thereby, the concept social capital helped to understand the urban problems of the city by measuring; trust, solidarity and social networks. Thus this
chapter explains in order to address the questions, the used of a Case Study research, the sample selection and the instruments used for the data collection.

5.2 Case study research

I used a Case Study research as it provides the instruments necessary for gathering information while adding the depth required. According to Yin (2009, p. 17-18) a case study research takes a holistic and in-depth analysis of contemporary events and complex issues throughout many sources of evidence such as documentation, interviews, direct observation and triangulation. In principle this study was based merely on qualitative research methods, however there were difficulties in achieving the results necessary and as a complement to qualitative methods and also for confirmation purposes, I used quantitative methods research for the same study.

Therefore, by using case study research it was possible to gain much from the mixed methods sources of evidence. For instance, Triangulation. It provides a cross verification when using more than one research instrument, so giving confidence and validation to the results obtained (Bryman 2012, p. 635). Hence, observation, semi-structured interviews and a self-administrated questionnaire were used with the intention to fill the gap left by one method by the another and so be able to reach valid results. Nonetheless there is negativism on mixed methods regarding the incompatibility of combining methods since these are loyal to epistemology and ontology rules. However, Bryman (2012, p. 631) justified the advantages of the capacities of using both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments when combining, by claiming that the connection to epistemology and ontology ideologies is not definitive and inevitable, but instead of one completing the another.

5.3 Research setting

It was essential to make a comparison between a GCs and a non-gated one. Yin (2009) advises the use of multiple-case study over the single case study. For Yin a single-case study is vulnerable in contrast to the multiple-case study that provides robust results from two or more cases (p. 56-67). Subsequently the study was conducted in one GC, Ciudad Verde and a non-gated community, Las Brisas. The selection of the GC revolves around the aspect that it is the first community of its kind and still the biggest. In what concerns the non-gated community, the selection rests in its relevance in the city, on the grounds that here different social groups reside together and it is a major point for social encounters since it has several places of entertainment; a public school, church and restaurants and occasionally host several sport and social events.

5.4 The study population and sample

The study population is composed by residents and available participants from the both places this study focus on. The sample for the questionnaires includes 24 participants form Las Brisas, and 23 from Ciudad Verde. Additionally, for the interviews 13 residents were
considerate in both. Also, were taken into the sample 2 workers and 2 residents of Ciudad Verde and 3 informal workers/vendors in Las Brisas. The samples were based on purposive selection. Rudestam, Kjell, and Newton (2001, p. 106) claim that purposive selection intensifies the reach of information obtained than a random sampling, which in general omits or has a limited reachability. Thus individuals selected are able to provide the information necessary for the research.

Purposive selection uses many sample techniques and Snowball is one of them, which offer the best opportunities in particularly for small geographical areas (Olson, 2012, p. 24). Bryman (2014, p. 427) explains snowballing starts with a group of individuals relevant for the study that at the same time propose other potential individuals for the study with the same characteristic and experiences. Bryman also recommends snowballing when studying networks of individuals (ibid, 2014, p. 427). I managed to directly get more potential individuals, and also I received help from contacts (not potential individuals) that linked me to potential ones.

The selection of 16 years old individuals was for a practical reason. Individuals on this age can offer the best possibility to study social networks patterns as they have more independence from theirs parents, so are older and spend more time with friends and other people, so are constantly building new social networks. Importantly, some in this group are the first generation to have growth in a GCs in Machala, thereby essential for to the research. Thus, the group were divided in 3 groups and in 2 time periods. The groups of 16 years old in Las Brisas 1999 sample size is of 6 individuals that participate in the interviews. Furthermore, it was necessary to study the population before the arrival of GC’s in Machala, hence I added to the study individuals that were about 16 years old in 1999 that lived in Las Brisas, who were easy to contact, due to the fact that I am part of this generation and a former residents of Las Brisas. For the group sample of 1999 (figure 5.1), the researcher contacted 5 participants using a Facebook group, and later adding one extra participant proposed by participant 5. For the group of 2014 in Ciudad Verde and Las Brisas was necessary 3 contacts that recommended participants. Thus contact 1, added participant 1; contact 2 added participant 2 and 3; and contact 3, added participant 4, 5 and 6, this last one added a relevant participant for the study.

Figure 5.1: Snowballing, 16 years old sample
The general sample begun in Las Brisas with contact group 1, that provides participant 1 (1.1, 1.2) to 8. The remaining participants, the 9 (9.1), to 20, were contacted directly by the researcher, additionally 18 (18.1) brought a potential individual. In Ciudad Verde the contact 1 in Las Brisas also contributed with potential individuals, and added participant 6 (6.1, 6.2, 6.3) and 7 (7.1, 7.2). Similar participant 1 of Las Brisas added participants 2, 3 and 4 of Ciudad Verde, and participant 2 from Las Brisas added participant 1 (1.1) of Ciudad Verde. The researcher used contact 1 in Ciudad Verde to get participant 5; contact 2 to added participant 10 to 13. Additionally the researcher added participant 8 (8.1, 8.2, 8.3) 14 and 15.

Figure 5.2: Snowballing, general sample.
5.5 The sample criteria
The individuals that form part of the sample were selected had to meet the following criteria to be included in the sample.

For the general sample was important to:

- live in one the neighbourhoods selected in this study
- work in the area of the study
- be willing to participate
- be of either sex
- homeowner or be tenant

For the group sample was important to:

- be about 16 years old (in 2014 and 1999)
- live in one the neighbourhood selected in this study
- be willing to participate
- obtain the consent of their parents
- be of either sex

5.6 Data collection procedure

5.6.1 Questionnaire
A self-administrated questionnaire was used (see appendix). Participants were alone while filling the questionnaires and later when finished these were collected by the researcher. Bryman (2014, p. 233) consider this type of questionnaire as an advantage, the interviewees are not affected by the presence of interviewers as with interviews, here the participant can answer when they want and the speed they think is convenient. Moreover, Bryman claims that questionnaires are good in analysing individuals attitudes and opinions on a particular issues, however is not practical for achieve depth and for complex issues (2014, p. 231). This is where the use of interviews in this research filled the gap left by the questionnaire.

One questionnaire was used for both places with exactly the same questions, which consisted in its majority on close-ended and an open-ended question. The last was required to be writing, whereas the closed-ended questions had the option of thinking for the answer. The reason behind this research and the instruction on how to answer the questionnaire was specified at the beginning of it. The questionnaire was in Spanish and it consisted in 3 dimension of social capital: section A, is on Trust on neighbours and outsiders; section B, is built on Solidarity among residents and outsiders, the open questions was also used; section C, is based on social networks, here the participants distribution of relatives and friends was examined.
The distribution of the questionnaires involved personal contact to potential participants that were reached through snowballing and it took one week in Las Brisas and 12 days in Ciudad Verde. The participants prefer to answer the questionnaires later, hence not being there was not an issue. The problem was that questionnaire distribution was affected by norms and rules that guarantee the privacy in Ciudad Verde, however after discussing it with the administration office, the distribution and collection could be completed. The collection lasted for the course of three weeks more than expected in Ciudad Verde, in Las Brisas was much faster, just 10 days.

5.6.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were carried. According to Ritchie & Lewis (2003, p. 180) interviews flexibility allows the interviewer to lead the interviews and deal with unexpected situations. Alone these line, using interviews was key in exploring attitudes, behaviours and perception of the participants. The questions asked to groups of 16 years were about their social activities, places frequently visited, who were their friends, opinions on outsiders and on the area where they live. The interviews done to the informal vendors/workers were based on experiences since coming to Las Brisas. In Ciudad Verde, the security guard, the administrative staff and the 2 resident’s interviews were done while explaining the questionnaires to residents in Ciudad Verde, whom provide essential information that could not be dismissed. The use of open-ended questions produced new knowledge of the issue being study, Hancock, Windridge, & Ockleford (2007, p. 16) stated that open-ended questions offered more opportunities for the interviewer and interviewee to discuss issues in more depth.

The interviews for the groups of 16 years old were done in Spanish and throughout the use of social media applications such as: WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. The reason why this was done was because I was not capable of arriving in Machala on time to have face-to-face interviews, so the research began before visiting the study area. This could be viewed as a limitation, however at the same time could be argued that doing interviews completely using the internet gave confidence and control to the young interviewees to answer the questions. Valentine (1997, p. 112-113) explain this by highlighting the weightiness of who you are as a researcher and who are interviewing, basically the power relations during the interview, how can this influence the whole process and the outcome. By using a cell phone and social media apps it made the interviewees comfortable, especially considering that they were realised from home and at the most convenient time for them. Roller & Lavrakas (2015, p. 68) talks about the advantages of mobile phone and capacity to reach anyone in todays era, and willingness to participate in interviews under these devices where information can be in the form of text, visual and voice. That being so, the use of the mobile phones facilitates an easy come back for the interviewee for more information. Another issue that could represent a problem normally with interviews is that they are time consuming. Again the use of the social media applications meant written questions and answers saved the workload of making a transcription each interview.
The other interviews were done normally, face-to-face in the place of study. In Ciudad Verde the security staff helped with a short interview. The information obtained consisted the social status of residents and social activities. In Las Brisas informal vendors/workers were willing to participate and be recorded for the interview. The 2 residents of Ciudad Verde that provide extra information while discussing the questionnaires, was also considered and notes were taken.

5.6.3 Observations
The direct observations were carried out in both neighbourhoods. Pauly (2010, p. 301, 302) argues that observations are very common in case study research and can contribute for a development strong case study and it provides the opportunity to know what happened in a social setting. I visited both places during the school holidays season, the month of February 2015. I did walks for a period of a week in each place at different times of day, so the observations were done in the mornings, afternoons and nights. The focus of my observations were mainly on the physical environment and on people, however as it was for the questioners, it was not possible to walks around without looking suspicious in Ciudad Verde before a security guard stopped me. In Las Brisas, the different is that the openness, the lack of security mechanism and being former resident make this task much easier than in Ciudad Verde. The observations were documented, I took notes of the characteristic of the physical environment, the actions of the people and also considerate the times these were done.

5.6.4 Secondary data
Secondary data used consisted of photographs and maps. There are photographs taken by the author of the research and others taken from the internet, some maps were provisioned by the national statistic centre. This data was collected within a period of 3 months.

5.7 Data analysis
After the data was collected, it was organised and analysed descriptively. For the questionnaires the questions were analysed using NUMBERS (equivalent to Excel) processor in frequency and percentage of responses given by participants. It was taken one variable at a time and the use of diagrams, these are easy to interpretative (Bryman, 2014, p. 337). Therefore, this thesis uses bar and pie charts. For the open-ended questions it was necessary to identify them in order to extract a relevant analysis. The interview analysing process was simplified thanks to text interviews, the other interviews were face-to-face, recorded and transcribed. Transcribing allows coding by highlighting the important elements and following social patterns and finally analysing it (Olsen, 2012, p. 35).

5.8 Ethical considerations
Carrying on this research was responsible to provide anonymity and confidentiality. This is to secure the rights of the participants and achieve ethical considerations. The participants were informed of the motives of this study before being part of any interview and completing the questionnaire (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen 2008, p. 99). After
confirming their agreement to participate in the study participants knew the duration of interviews and could retire at any time form research. Their anonymity was guaranteed by not divulging the participants name on the questionnaires and in the interviews. Their confidentiality was ensured by not asking names in the questionnaires and for the interview participants names are nor mentioned in the research, even the researcher does not know who filed the questionnaires.

5.9 Conclusion
This chapter describes the methodology applied for this study. A Case Study approach offers a depth due to its capability to mix quantitative and qualitative research tools, making it the most appropriate approach for this study. Therefore, interviews were done of residents and key informants; questionnaires solely focus on residents in both places and direct observations on each area. Importantly, mixed sources of evidence provide a cross verification. The study took place in a GC and a none-gated one, the population sample were mainly residents and other available participants relevant for the research, ethical considerations were also taken into consideration: anonymity and confidentiality, and the data was analysed by using bars and pie charts for the questionnaires and interviews were transcribed, coded and later analysed.
6. Results

6.1 Observations, the neighbourhoods

6.1.1 Las Brisas

The observation as it was mentioned focused on the physical environment and on people in it. Therefore, it was necessary to walk around and observe Las Brisas for the course of a week in February, when school holidays begins. Therefore I did mornings walks, from 7:30am for 15 minutes approximately, where I managed to perceive beside the morning hustle of residents going to work, the presence of informal vendors and in some cases informal workers. These outsiders shout what they sell or do, and the presence of informal vendors is constant throughout day. The most common ones are the bakers, they sell bread and pies on a basket while riding bikes around the neighbourhood in the mornings and returning in the afternoons. The gender of the informal vendors is predominately male of ages over 30 years old, there are very few women and children (figure 6.2). It is more common to see women accompanied by a child doing waste picking every morning before the trash collector arrives.

Figure 6.1: Locations of Las Brisas and Ciudad Verde. Source: googlemap.com
The observations at night during the week were from 19:00pm. what drew my attention was the social and economic activity that exists. This was also appreciated during the weekend, in particular on Saturday nights. Las Brisas appears to be a place to socialise, specially for the youth. Loud music from car stereos is very usual, added to this is the consumption of alcohol in public spaces. Figure 6.3 shows a message written on the wall of a public school that says, “Consumption of alcohol forbidden.” In general there is a dynamic atmosphere, there are a variety of businesses, public services and institutions. In Las Brisas one can find restaurants, bars, small grocery stores, public and private schools, a catholic church and also the city’s main bus station, which is located nearby.

Furthermore, Las Brisas is divided in blocks with walkways that connect these, and in each block there is central area for recreation purposes (figure 6.3). For instance, in one of
these areas, at night from Monday to Friday it is very common to see men of all ages playing basketball and women doing aerobics classes (promoted by the municipality). In another block, during the afternoons at the weekends it is use for Ecuavolley games. This is an Ecuadorian version of volleyball and it is a game played by all social classes, part of the Ecuadorian culture (Wikipedia, 2015). The stuffs, the net and the poles, are stored in one of the nearby houses after the game, and a fee is paid to a resident by the players to do so. These places are open to the public and people from other parts of the city come and use these facilities.

Another characteristic of Las Brisas is the notable socio-economic differences of residents. On one end is the lower middle-class and on the other is the high-class, however most belong to the middle-class. This difference is expressed very well by looking at the houses, there are some large in size, with fancy design and security mechanisms that contrast with the other small and decaying houses (figure 6.4).
The effect of insecurity and crime is reflected in the appearance of the physical environment. In my observations I could perceive that most of the blocks have a metallic gate, to make the walkways private for security reasons (figure 6.5). I was forced to take alternative and longer routes to move around in the neighbourhood, only residents of this block possess the key to enter. Nevertheless not so long ago some of the doors remain unlocked in some blocks. The walkways in Las Brisas besides facilitating mobility foster social interaction. I learned that these are places, besides the recreation areas, where most of the people socially interact with neighbours and also with outsiders as is the case of informal vendors.

![Figure 6.5: Fences used for security in each walkway in Las Brisas.](image1)

### 6.1.2 Ciudad Verde
The observations in Ciudad Verde were done in similar way and during at the same period of time as in Las Brisas. In all the visits to Ciudad Verde I walked from Las Brisas; it took me about 20 minutes towards the route to the outskirts of the city, where the new urban developments had landed such as the piazza, a business centre, GCs and two shoppings malls. Once arrived in to Ciudad Verde the first thing one can see is entrance at with securities guards doing control checks on people at all times and cars coming in. Inside just by the entrance there is a church, and a few stores (figure 6.6).

![Figure 6.6: Main entrance and the stores in Ciudad Verde.](image2)

The fact that Ciudad Verde is located outside the city, the use of automobiles is more than necessary. It is possible to take a bus, the issue however is that Ciudad Verde residents must cross the highway with no proper walking path to the bus stop, it is very risky...
The people that I saw doing it were the domestic workers and staff of Ciudad Verde. In addition, another well appreciated factor on the physical characteristics of Ciudad Verde is that lack of sidewalks, are they are used for parking cars not for people (figure 6.7). The streets are not wide enough to have cars parked on the sides, so sidewalks are used to leave some space on the streets for cars to drive through.

![Figure 6.7: cars parked on sidewalks and the insecurity when crossing the street outside Ciudad Verde.](image)

I went to Ciudad Verde several times in the mornings and afternoons, and one night during the weekend. Between 9:00am to 11:00am, the streets were quite empty, the only people outside were the maintenance personnel doing some gardening and cleaning work, and the security guards patrolling on motorcycles around the neighbourhood. The recreation areas were also empty (figure 6.8). The times I visited Ciudad Verde in the afternoons was around 17:30pm, I sat by the entrance and I could see many people leaving the neighbourhood on foot, theses were domestic workers and staff. Residents instead, I figured out were the ones arriving by cars from work or somewhere else. I just could see children playing on the streets, which seems very common there, since I spotted signs warning drivers of children playing (figure 6.9). On Saturday I visited Ciudad Verde at 21:00pm, I noticed that social and commercial activity happens outside Ciudad Verde, in restaurants and bars in a shopping mall next to it.

![Figure 6.8: The pictures shows the empty park and similarly the basketball court.](image)
In comparison to Las Brisas, there are many amenities and its physical environment seems to foster social and economic activities. Ciudad Verde seems to be a more complicated place to foment social interaction between resident and outsiders. In las Brisas anyone can come in regardless of their social background; In Ciudad Verde the majority fit in the high-income category, some of these are friends of mine that once were former residents of Las Brisas who are business owners, miners, etc. Despite being a GC with security 24/7, the houses have protection bars installed on windows (figure 6.10), the same way as in Las Brisas. Finally my experience of my visits to Ciudad Verde was often a hazard specifically to get in, as the control was intense. The names and address of the residents I was going to visit were required at all times, and I had to leave my ID card with them until I left the neighbourhood. The situation was even worse when I did not have a resident’s name.

Figure 6.9: A precaution sing warning drivers of children playing on the street and the main way in Ciudad Verde in the second picture.

Figure 6.10: Houses are using protección on windows in Ciudad Verde.
6.2 Questionnaire

6.2.1 Trust
The level of trust was analysed and compared between Ciudad Verde and Las Brisas. The data collected through a questionnaire took the following variable into account: Trust in neighbours and outsiders. By doing this, it is possible to figure out whether or not living behind walls decreases the levels of social capital, if it does, it complicates the flourishing of social capital in Machala. It is worth noting that social capital works under social interaction and it must be transferable in different social settings to achieve benefits for the city (Putnam, 1993, p. 3).

The first question (figure 6.11): How much do you trust your neighbour? Shows that the majority or participants in both places ‘more or less’ trust their neighbours. 16 people in Ciudad Verde and 19 in Las Brisas, the minority 6 in Ciudad Verde and 4 in Las Brisas said to trust ‘much’ on fellow residents more than distrusting them. None of participants responses was ‘nothing’. The next question (figure 6.12) take trust into a particular situation, and the the following was asked: Would you let your neighbour look after your house in your absence? Residents of Ciudad Verde were the ones that mostly agreed, 10 participants disagreed against 13 that agreed. The opposite occurred in Las Brisas where 12 participants disagreed against 9 that agreed and 2 were neutral.
The results on trusting outsiders (figure 6.13) shows an attitude of discomfort by residents of Ciudad Verde. Participants were asked, *How much do you trust outsiders?* 10 participants almost half, answered ‘nothing’ in Cuidad Verde and 5 in Las Brisas. The majority, 14 in Cuidad Verde and 17 in Las Brisas 17 answered ‘more or less’. Only 2 participants said ‘much’ on trusting outsiders. In another attempt to analyse trust towards outsiders (figure 6.14), the respondents answered the next question: *When you visit the centre of the city, do you trust the people around you?* In Ciudad Verde, 13 participants answered ‘more or less’ and 10 ‘nothing’. Residents in Ciudad Verde are less keen to trust outsiders than the ones in Las Brisas, where 5 participant answered ‘nothing,’ 16 ‘more or less’ and just 2 answered ‘much.’

The Overview perspective (figure 6.15) presentes the percentages of the results of the level of trust in the nearby neighbourhoods. The respondents in Ciudad Verde do not trust most of the places mentioned. 67% said ‘none’ of them and merely 33% trust residents of Las Brisas. Remarkably the neighbouring GC, Santa Inés, was not even taken into consideration. This concede with Caldeira (1996), who described GCs as instruments of separation, and Roitman (2013) that link segregation and GCs with reduction of social interaction. On the other hand in Las Brisas were more diverse in their responses. A greater sense of trust in residents of Ciudad Verde exists in Las Brisas than any other neighbourhood in the list which is 50%, 20% for La Cuatro Mil and just 10% for Santa Ines.
6.2.2 Solidarity

Solidarity as it is for trust says a lot about people’s relationships. So caring for each other, being able to rely on and help others, contributes to distributions and production of social capital. The argument here is that people that live inside GCs became careless with the rest of the city and are induce to an individualistic behaviour (Forrest & Kerans, 2001 p. 2125).

Figure 6.15: Trust on nearby neighbourhoods

The participants respond to the next question: Do you get help from your neighbour? In both places the result (figure 6.16) demonstrated that residents do get help from neighbour. 13 in Las Brisas and 16 in Ciudad Verde responded that ‘sometimes’ received help from a neighbour. While a considerable amount of participants, 7 in Las Brisas and 6 in Ciudad Verde said ‘always’ got help. Just the minority, 2 participants in Las Brisas and 1 In Ciudad

Figures 6.16: Do you get help from your neighbours?

Figures 6.17: Do you offer help to your neighbours?
Verde responded ‘never.’ The data obtained from the question: Do you offer help to your neighbours? Was very similar to the previous one. Participants attitude demonstrates to have a sense of solidarity with a neighbour and that can relay on a neighbour when is need. 14 participants in Las Brisas and 12 in Ciudad Verde responded ‘sometimes’ offer their help and 6 said ‘always’ in Las Brisas and 11 in Ciudad Verde. The minority of participants who answered ‘never’ were 3 in Las Brisas and 1 in Ciudad Verde.

With respect to the sentiment residents feel on each others as community, participants were asked the following question: Do you think people in your area take care of each other? The data obtained (figure 6.17) shows the majority, 41% in Ciudad Verde of responses was ‘agree.’ The 36% ‘disagree’ and the 23% remaining are ‘neutral.’ However there is just 5% difference between the participants that are agree and disagree, and a high percent of resident, 23% are neutral. In contrast, Las Brisas have 63% of responders who responded was ‘agree,’ which double the ones that disagree a 30% of responders, and a very low 7% are ‘neutral.’

An open question was asked in order to test solidarity levels towards outsiders: Are you satisfied with the presence of informal workers/vendors in your neighbourhood? If you live in a GC would you like them to get in? There is a mixed feeling regarding informal vendors in both communities.
places. In Ciudad Verde, they are not allowed in even though the streets inside are still public. Some think that allowing them to come in will violate the privacy and tranquility that all resident want. In Las Brisas the reason against them is related to crime (Koonings & Kruijit, 2007, p. 8,11-12). In several cases criminals had pretended to be vendors. Some other negative factors brought up by the residents involved destroying the area and yelling when selling their products. However, there are also some positive factors. It was mentioned in Las Brisas that vendors are necessary, because they offer food at the doorstep without the need to leave home. In both places residents believe that they have right to work, this is the way they make the living, but it should be regulated, in this way controlling robberies. The acceptance of informal workers was analysed (figure 6.18). In Las Brisas 52% disagree with having informal vendors or workers, nevertheless an important percent of 43% agree with only 5% with neutral response. In Ciudad Verde the picture looks different here almost all the residents, 88% disagree, just 6% agree and 6% are neutral.

6.3 Networks patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distributions of Friends and Relatives</th>
<th>Ciudad Verde average result</th>
<th>Las Brisas average result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends living in the same neighbourhood</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends living in a non-gated community</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends living in (other) gated community</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives living in the same neighbourhood</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives living in non-gated community</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives living in (other) gate community</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of social networks can provide information, which can be analysed in order to check the distribution of social capital. The table above illustrates the social network pattern of Ciudad Verde and Las Brisas, by considering the average distribution of friends and relatives. Friends living in the same neighbourhood in Las Brisas have an average of 40.6 much more than in Ciudad Verde where the average is 15.7. Friends living in non-gated community in both places have similar amounts. Ciudad Verde has an average of 28.1 this is much more friends outside, and Las Brisas has an average of 30.9, slightly less friends outside. Friends living in (other) GCs, in Ciudad Verde the average is 12.6 a result
that added to the amount of friends living in the same neighbourhood is almost the same amount of friends living in non-gated communities, thus half of friends live in a GCs. In Las Brisas the average is 12.7 much less friends living in GCs. Concerning Relatives living in same neighbourhood, Las Brisas has 5.9 while Ciudad Verde has 5.2. Comparing this result to relatives living in a non-gated community, it shows that in Ciudad Verde the average is 10.3, more than in Las Brisas, which is 7.1. Finally relatives living in (other) GC, Ciudad Verde has 6.72 less than the 8.2 of Las Brisas.

The results showed no significant differences between Las Brisas and Cuidad Verde's social network pattern. Nonetheless, the participants in Cuidad Verde already lived in a non-gated communities almost all their life, thus explaining why there is not much difference in the results. However, the future of Machala is a concern. Hence Roitman’s arguments on people being raised in GCs was taken into account here. Therefore the participation of a youth group from Cuidad Verde was studied in the interviews section. At the same time comparing it with counterparts from Las Brisas from two different periods of time, so staying patterns before and after the arrival of GCs in Machala.

6.4 Interviews

6.4.1 Las Brisas and Cuidad Verde

Las Brisas as an open community allows anyone access, therefore residents are in continual contact with outsiders. Hence, the role of physical environment come into play, which is elemental for making the social resources residing in social relations available and reachable. The participation of informal vendor and workers in the interviews are key in understanding social interaction with different groups of society. In the case of Cuidad Verde, resident expressed their life experiences under the norms and rules that govern Cuidad Verde and additionally the staff also contributed with information that helps to understand life inside walls.

Informal worker 1: A man around his late 60s, who has been working in Las Brisas since 1999. He does gardening and also works as security guard in of the blocks with his brother. He mentioned that the reason why he came to Las Brisas for the first time because of work, his boss, a resident of Las Brisas that owns a shrimp farm where he used work asked him to come a do gardening work. He lives in El Bosque, a humble sector of Machala that neighbours La Cuatro Mil and comes to Las Brisas riding a bicycle. He only works in Las Brisas, and claims that everyone knows him, and also that resident treat him well and help him with work every-time. He has never been in Ciudad Verde, he knows that they already have maintenance personnel, in one occasion a resident of Ciudad Verde and former of Las Brisas asked him to come and do some work for him but he did not accept it.

Informal vendor 1: A fish vendor, who has becoming to Las Brisas about 10 times a week for the last 30 years. He started working as security guard in different sectors of Las Brisas.
He said that everyone knows him in Las Brisas and they are all his friends. During Christmas residents give him some clothes and other things. I asked him if he has been in Cuidad Verde, to which he replayed that he had been there twice to give fish to a former resident of Las Brisas. He expressed that coming inside Cuidad Verde was not a problem for him, because he has many friends from Las Brisas living there and also the security guards that works there. He concluded by expressing that everyone knows he is an honest person.

Informal vendor 2: Sells bread riding a bicycle in Las Brisas and other sectors of the city with his brother-in-law who takes a different route, and his father-in-law who is the baker. He described his work as a family business. Las Brisas for him is important because he has had customers for many years and they do not buy from any other baker. He mentioned that he could not get into the walkways because of the closed fences for a couple of months (figure 6.4), however his customers were willing to open the doors to let him in until the locks got broken, now he can freely come in anytime to sell.

It is clear that in Las Brisas public spaces are not exclusive for its residents, people from different backgrounds can have access, and interaction between different social groups is possible here with positive results. Thus, the openness fostered social relations between residents and informal workers and vendors, these became familiar with each other, creating a bond with residents and even with former residents. This brings benefits to disadvantaged groups by giving them the opportunity to make a living either by working or selling, or at least improving their well being. It should be emphasised that the use of space was altered temporarily only when residents closed the walkways, making them exclusive, this suggests as consequence an economic impact as was the case of informal vendor number 2.

In the case of Cuidad Verde it is about ‘enclosure,’ which is visible on walls that separates residents from the outside world. Also accompanied by rules and norms, making it impossible for random outsiders to come inside and use any recreation areas and amenities. While visiting Cuidad Verde, I had the opportunity to talk to a security guard at the main entrance. I asked him about the Church, if the mass was exclusively for residents, he replied that “There are also outsiders, but these are already known for the security guards, these are relatives and friends of residents.” After, I asked what would happen if a person they do not know wants to come to the mass, “It would depend on the physical appearance, if the person looks like they are from a poor neighbourhood we will not let him come in.” (anonymous, security guard, Interview 3). Furthermore, sports courses for children run during holidays season in Cuidad Verde (managed by a private party) and it is also possible for children from the outside to subscribe, for instance, children from the neighbouring Santa Ines. Nonetheless the attendance is very weak, according to ASOVERDE (the association of residents of Cuidad Verde), only between 15% to 30% attendance by the residents of Cuidad Verde (anonymous Cuidad Verde employee, interview 4).

The enclosure also has a negative effects for insiders. A resident of Cuidad Verde and a former member of the residents association board, commented on his discomfort with the
fellow resident and the administrative staff of Cuidad Verde. “We planned to build a Ecua-volley court, and we talked to a resident who is an engineer to help us, but the administration stopped us from doing so.” The motive according to interviewee was that a current member of administration lives in front of the construction site. He was afraid of people yelling during the games, but instead claimed that a park, a skating rink and a kindergarden were supposed to be built in the site. The administration in response dumped a truck full of stone to stop the construction. Two years had passed and there is nothing there, just weeds. The interviewee thinks people are selfish in Cuidad Verde, they do not know how to live in community (Anonymous Cuidad Verde resident, interview 1).

Another case was residents participating in charity. The interview narrated the process that involved the collaboration of any sort, for example, food or clothing for a homeless shelter. This was the idea of a family father whose company normally does charity work and though that it was possible to do it in Cuidad Verde. Thought his daughter he gathered schoolmates that lived in Cuidad Verde. 70% of residents collaborated the remaining 30% did not help and 10% of them complained to the administration office of Cuidad Verde (Anonymous Cuidad Verde resident, interview 2). The residents that complained thought that it was not ethical to have children asking dos to door for cloth and food, emphasising that this is a gated community and this not supposed to happen.

The social spatial impact occurs when public space is privatised, producing social exclusion; people that are different from the ones inside Cuidad Verde. Access to Cuidad Verde is only acceptable for friend and relatives of residents, and children whose parents can afford the sport courses. Normas and rules are changing the traditional way of life, for example, Efua-Volley was not allowed and also restricting residents from connecting and participating with the outside world, as in the case of charity.

6.4.2 Las Brisas 1999 and 2014
The Interviewees were asked about how and where socially interaction happens in Las Brisas. Public places and recreation areas/parks were mentioned often. An interviewee described his daily routine and how he socially interacted with others. “I waited for my friends to come out and play football and sometimes we were challenged to a football game by people from La Cuatro Mil” (Anonymous resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 2). Another interviewee responded regarding his social network as a resident of Las Brisas: “I was spending more time with middle-class people, because of where I live, but I met people from other parts of the city of different social classes through the church” (Anonymous former resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 1). Las Brisas was described as point of encounter, many students from the nearby educational institutions gathered in Las Brisas after classes. According to an interviewee, “This happened every day after classes, students met and sat on benches particularly by the bus stops around the neighbourhood for a couple of hours before going home.” This involved many students from Las Brisas and other neighbourhoods taking the opportunity to chat before going home (Anonymous former resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 8).
In general, life in Las Brisas for the interviewees was a good experience, without restrictions that could complicate theirs lives. For instance, walking and playing at any time, meeting friends and eating in restaurant were the most common routines mentioned by the interviewees. “I had the liberty to go out feeling secure anywhere at any time, I could play, walk and shop in the mini-markets inside Las Brisas, many times was not necessary to leave the neighbourhood to have a good time.” (Anonymous former resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 3). In a similar way, another interviewee recalls Las Brisas as; “one of the safest places in the world to live, you could walk until midnight with friends and people used to take care of each other and never felt scared to walk at any time” (Anonymous former resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 4). However, insecurity was mentioned once by an interviewee. He was robbed by a couple of guys riding a bike, his NBA hat was stolen. Within a month his father caught the thieves in Las Brisas and beat them. This made him distrust people raiding bikes in Las Brisas. “I was so afraid to go out, it took me time to step again on the football field again” (Anonymous former resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 5). This event also caused the stigmatisation of residents from the poor neighbourhood La Cuatro Mil, where these thieves came from. Although, this was not a good experience, the interviewee still believes that Las Brisas at that time was a safer place in contrast to what it is now.

The interviewees enjoy friendships with their neighbours and others. An interviewee was very happy to grow up in Las Brisas, he meet good friends that still are even today, “My relationship with my neighbours was good, to the point that all of us knew each other’s houses” (Anonymous former resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 6). The environment in Las Brisas contributed to build social relations according to an interviewee. He recalls that there was no stress and explained that there was a felling of friendship around. “I was even friends with the owners of the small grocery stores around Las Brisas” (Anonymous former resident, Las Brisas 1999, Interview 7).

For the group of 2014, their experiences have not changed much to the one in 1999. Regarding insecurity, some of the interviewees seem to somehow learn to live with it. An interviewee believed that being out at night until 11pm and 1am in the weekends is not a problem. The commercial activity in Las Brisas gives him a sense of security. “Security is not the best thing, but in comparison to the rest of the city, this is not a dangerous place” (Anonymous resident, Las Brisas 2014, interview 1). Another interviewee expressed her concern about security. “Now there has been more crime for the last couple of months, it is no longer safe.” She finishes by explaining that her life, despite the insecurity, has not changed much (anonymous resident, Las Brisas, interview 2). In the next case, an interviewee who lived in two GCs beforehand, describes living in Las Brisas as unpleasant experience. “My mother does not let me go out, I don’t have friends here” Do you think it is dangerous? “My mother and brothers were robbed here, that is why I don’t go out, particularly from 2pm onwards” Where did you live before? “In Ciudad Verde, and how was your life there? “I used to go out all the time” (anonymous resident, Las Brisas, interview 3). Social events such as the Las Brisas anniversary is no longer celebrated. The interviewee remembers this event when he was child, and how this gathered many people, now he thinks that there is disunity. “The only thing that still happens is the football championships, me and my friends have been the champions for the last three years” (Anonymous resident, Las Brisas 2014, interview 1).
The experiences by this group reveals that the physical environment of Las Brisas fosters social relations between outsiders and residents. Moreover, social relations were encouraged in the main social events that happened in Las Brisas. For the residents, living in Las Brisas was easy despite insecurity; they managed to carry on with their social activities with no restrictions.

6.4.3 Cuidad Verde 2014

Searching for a better life and a more secure home, are the reasons why the 16 years old interviewees of Ciudad Verde believe their parents moved to Ciudad Verde. The effects have been positive: discussing life in previous areas, the interviewees described it as bad. They could not go out because of insecurity, and they did not have many friends around. Since moving into Ciudad Verde, their social life has improved. Now they say they have the chance to meet people, to use the recreation areas and overall feel secure.

Hence, interviewees were asked about their lives since moving in. One interviewee was living in the city centre close to the stadium and his friends/class mates were spread around the city. “Before I could not go out much, I was afraid of being robbed, now it is easy to go out without feeling afraid, I feel good here, I find people that I can do things with, like playing football.” Now, meeting friends from the outside for this interviewee is possible but not practical. With respect to receiving friends in Ciudad Verde, “In this case I have to plan it in advance, in contrast with friends living in Ciudad Verde it is spontaneous.” Going out to meet friends, “It also depends of the day, for example Wednesdays I cannot meet my friends from the outside to play, because sometimes there is no one to take me back to Ciudad Verde. In Ciudad Verde I can just walk to meet friends” (Anonymous resident, Cuidad Verde 2014, interview 1). Another interviewee expressed rejection to the security measures in Ciudad Verde. “There is problem for people (outsiders) to come in because all the questions by the security guards, it is too much control” (Anonymous resident, Cuidad Verde 2014, interview 2).

The places where they normally socialise with others is in other GCs. “I go out to parties in San Patricio and Ciudad del Sol,” adding that all his friends are from GCs. Another interviewee said that he only meets with friends from CGs. “My friends that I go out with, are from Santa Ines and San Patricio, these are from high-school, and when we go out with girlfriends we just go to the mall or stay in Ciudad Verde” (anonymous resident, Cuidad Verde 2014, interview 3). When the interviewees were asked opinions about Las Brisas and its people, the perceptions were negative. An interviewee that lived almost 8 years in Ciudad Verde, one of the first residents and former resident of Las Brisas, was asked if he would like to live in Las Brisas again? “I feel secure in Ciudad Verde, because of the security guards, I know everyone inside, and Las Brisas is an insecure place because of the thieves, and I would not like to live there again. Here in Ciudad Verde I already have friends” (anonymous resident, Cuidad Verde, 2014, interview 4). A different interviewee was asked the same question, answering it in a derogatory manner. “Anyone can go there it is exaggerated. Because is an open neighbourhood and is not closed like mine.” The interviewee concluded, preferring people in his neighbourhood rather than those in Las Brisas (anonymous resident, Ciudad Verde 2014, interview 5).
The group in Ciudad Verde presented improvements in their social lives since moving in, however, it came with a price. This group’s social network is mainly based within the Ciudad Verde limits and other GCs, and contact with outsiders is minimal. Thus, social networks are homogenised, the enclosure of Ciudad Verde includes norms and rules which make it difficult for outsiders to visit participants and the fear of crime prohibits resident from leaving Ciudad Verde and meeting others outside. Nevertheless, this is not the case for Las Brisas. Residents are not as constrained as in Ciudad Verde. The exception is interviewee number 3, who lived before in GCs, so he had a different perception than fellow residents. Another issue is stigmatisation of outsiders, the negative image that residents in Ciudad Verde have on Las Brisas and its residents, and also anyone that goes there, are portrayed negatively.
7. Discussion

7.1 Openness Vs Enclosure

The urban problems of the current Latin American city will not go away if an urban trend that produced fragmentation and social segregation keeps going. Despite the economic recovery of Ecuador and the rapid reduction on poverty levels, the strengthening of the economy that put many in the middle class is now creating demand for more GCs. For Machala an urban growth via GCs is very worrying. There is not a concern from the local authority of the problems related to this type of urban growth, instead letting the city be lead by the private sector. By privatising public spaces, interaction between different social groups is not possible. Banerjee’s argument is correct; public life in private places is more a privilege. The opposite happens when public spaces are open for anyone, as was the case of Las Brisas. According to an interviewee, the football pitch in Las Brisas brought together locals and residents of La Cuatro Mil. Similarly, the local church congregated not only locals but outsiders from different social backgrounds. Therefore, public places must exist and be open to everyone in order to undermine the urban ills in Machala by gaining from the exchange of resource in social relations.

Trust is an element of social capital, and it depends on social relations. Trusting a fellow resident was not an issue, from what was observed and experienced in Ciudad Verde, residents are homogenous in what refers to the socio-economic background and the security mechanism are important facts to consider. Ciudad Verde congregates many that work in the agricultural and aquaculture sectors, this group is the well-off of the city, which make sense as they are the ones that can afford to move in (Kadushin, 2012 p. 19). Unfortunately, the results showed that residents of Ciudad Verde distrust outsiders. Their attitudes reflected concern, the residents in Ciudad Verde are less likely to trust an outsider than in Las Brisas. Therefore, in Ciudad Verde social relations are constructed within walls, here social capital is privatised (Blokland & Rae, 2008), additionally norms and rules make it even worse. In Ciudad Verde the outsiders that attend mass are basically people with similar characteristics to the residents, therefore socially excluding those ones that are different.

The spatial use in Machala for the poor segment of society is primordial. In this thesis it has been demonstrated that informal workers and vendors use the space in the city for survival. Caldiera talked about the importance of principle of ‘openness,’ which give social groups activities and distribute them in the city. However, this is jeopardised with the entry of urban artifacts such as GCs in Machala, which is helping the ‘winners’ (elite and middle-class) to retrieve from the city and at the same time given space a different meaning by privatising it, in order to keep their networks and achieve their needs. Social capital will not be spread in the city, Solidarity was analysed in the same way as trust and again the result showed the Ciudad Verde residents to show less solidarity with outsiders. Informal workers and vendors cannot come inside Ciudad Verde and make a living, therefore the consequence is mostly seen in the urban economy, by minimising social and economic opportunities for this group (Landman, 2000, p. 4). The acceptance of informal
workers in Ciudad Verde was minimal, only 6% agreed with the presence of them in Ciudad Verde, 88% totally disagreed. In contrast to Las Brisas, almost half, 43%, agreed with the presence of informal worker and vendors. Therefore, Las Brisas is more feasible for an outsider to establish social relations with residents, which can end up in labour opportunities as was the case of the informal worker. So, this enforces Corcoran’s (2012) argument on the potential of public spaces for the welfare of society.

The interviewees’ experiences indicated that Social Capital in the form Bridging facilitate their life, even building relationships with former residents of Las Brisas, which are still intact after moving out. Residents in Las Brisas get familiar with these workers that have been coming for years, which creates mutual trust and reciprocity. As it was appreciated in Las Brisas, these resources are available for informal workers and vendors. It was more obvious when the walkways were fenced and residents opened the doors for the baker to continue selling. Thus, in a major scale GCs can complicate the livelihood for many living in poverty and who see informality as a survival alternative. The rapid growth of GCs in Machala can in the future influence the distribution of social capital and weaken the probabilities of disadvantaged groups gaining from the resources of stronger social networks. Instead, the worrisome part is the likely enforcement of neighbourhood effects. The concentration of poverty in disadvantaged areas, leads to the increment on crime and violence (Atkinson & McGarrigle, 2009, p. 77).

According to Roitman (2013) there is link between GCs and social segregation. After analysing trust in Ciudad Verde, 67% don’t trust residents of nearby neighbourhoods and only 33% trust residents of Las Brisas. Here, Roitman’s point is visible when none of residents of Ciudad Verde trust residents of it closest neighbour Santa Ines, the walls between these two reduces any chance of communication and interaction. The trust experienced with Las Brisas is due to the fact that some of the residents of Ciudad Verde were former residents of Las Brisas, who still have connection and interaction. Thus, the social network pattern of Ciudad Verde is not drastically different than in Las Brisas. The respondents of the questionnaire already lived in a non-gated communities almost all their lives and already have strong networks outside Ciudad Verde. Because the urban future of Machala is in my interest, the issue of having more people growing up inside GCs is worrying. The youth group of interviewees in Ciudad Verde and Las Brisas provided information on their social networks.

The fear of crime and the measures of security used by GCs are important factors that induce social relationships to happen within walls and with similar people. Seeking security in GCs is homogenising social networks, or in terms of social capital there is an imbalance, more Bonding is happening than Bridging, which could have a negative impact for those of weaker networks (Putnam, 1993, p. 7). Social interactions with others is mainly done inside, the sense of insecurity arises when leaving Ciudad Verde, hence social interaction with friends from the outside is not practical and is insecure. Therefore, the interviewees prefer to stick with fellow residents and go to other GCs to meet similar friends (Svampa, 2001, p. 12). The consequences of growing up inside with similar people, in this case with the same social economic status, is making residents in Ciudad Verde feel
afraid and avoid others that are different (Roitman, 2010, p. 10). Social networks are homogenised producing the stigmatisation of outsiders and in a general a negative perspective of what exists outside the walls. The perception of Las Brisas and its people was negative, like this, in a place such as Machala it could enforce social division even more.
8. Conclusion

This study was set to continue with the problem surrounding Gated Communities and has identified issues and concerns with the focus on Machala, a mid sized city of Ecuador. GCs origins is divided in two reasons. 1) Structural factors: these are economical, political and social aspects, for example the increase in crime and social inequality. 2) Subjective factors: these are motives, interests of individuals, for instance involving getting away from the rest of city and moving in with similar individuals for a better life and security. The problems surrounding GCs generally consist in the privatisation of public spaces, public life is done in private places and the public is no longer important; the fragmentation of the city had changed the way social groups activities are distributed; and the segregation makes the contact between different groups in society difficult, promoting an individualistic behaviour and careless feelings towards outside. Furthermore, the design of GCs besides offering security, are making the social differentiation in the city more visible while separating and stigmatisating outsiders in order to solve the problem of insecurity. These are some of general consequences found in the literature produced by GCs around the world, however some argue that not everything is negative, others believe there is not always exclusion but inclusion for those disadvantaged groups that live close to a GCs, nonetheless the evidence is not enough, more studies need to be done to prove the opposite.

The importance of this research is to create awareness of the type of urban growth experienced in Machala. In recent times the city experienced a fragmented urban growth caused by new urban artefacts like business centres, shoppings malls and GCs that are spreading rapidly in different forms depending on the social class of the individuals. In Ecuador GCs are mainly the response to the high level of insecurity, adding to this is the role of developers using the fear of crime and the new middle-classes strong purchasing power. Thus, the concern is on the negative reputation of GCs and in the context in which these are arising. Thereby, in a city with the background of Machala already with a society divided by class, having GCs could make thing worse. This thesis tries to create awareness in local authorities and developers to rethink and guarantee a better future for the citizen of Machala, especially the disadvantaged groups. This thesis applied a Case Study research by mixing qualitative and quantitative tools. Observations, interviews and a questionnaire were used in Ciudad Verde, a GC, and a non-gated community, Las Brisas, these were based on social capital dimensions. The main empirical findings demonstrated that GCs have a negative impact on society.

The results showed that residents of Ciudad Verde have a higher level of distrust in outsiders, this means also a lack of social interaction with other social groups. It is essential to comment on the physical environment of Ciudad Verde in contrast to Las Brisas, where sport areas and amenities facilitate social contact and encourage social relations between different groups. In contrast, within Ciudad Verde’s walls, norms and rules complicates social interaction with outsiders. Machala is beginning a path that is changing the social spatial organisation of the city. The enclosure of Ciudad Verde can affect the poor and in particular the ones in the informal sector who depend entirely on
informality to subsist. The data showed that residents in Ciudad Verde demonstrate less solidarity to outsiders than in Las Brisas. Both places believe tranquility and privacy can be threatened by informal workers and vendors, however in Las Brisas the presence of these groups is not yet a worrisome issue and can bring benefits to both sides. Having open neighbourhoods such as Las Brisas, informal workers and vendors can besides making a living, establish relations with residents. Thus, social capital in the form of bridging is possible. In Ciudad Verde this cannot happen, thereby the rapid growth of GCs in Machala can contribute to concentrate poverty, less opportunities for this group to work and interact with strong social networks that can impact their life positively. Moving into Ciudad Verde meant an improvement for the youth interviewees. The problem is that this generation is growing up with similar individuals in terms of socio-economic background and social interaction happens in exclusive and private places. So, the social network pattern is becoming homogenised which can complicate the spreading of social capital in the city. There are aspects that influenced this, the insecurity in the city and the security measures of Ciudad Verde. This had created a stigmatisation of outsiders, in this case of Las Brisas and its residents, which is often is described negatively.

More work is required based on social capital in relation to the urban growth in Latin America, how it can contribute to tackling poverty, inequality and social exclusion in this region. Studies that focus on social problems and from there create a more sustainable urban environment that allows social capital to reach everyone, understand the importance that physical environment has for those in poverty and exclusion. In recent years Latin America has made some impressive improvements in the reduction poverty, however there still a lot to do.

9. Bibliography


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10. Appendix
10. 1 Questionnaire for residents in Ciudad Verde and Las Brisas

This survey is part of my thesis that studies the social impact of gated communities in Machala. Your participation is voluntary and the information given is anonymous and confidential, only for the exclusive use of this thesis. Put an X and write the answers when necessary.

**Section A: Social Trust**

1. **How much do you trust your neighbours?**
   Much ___1. Not at all___2. A little___3. Nothing___4

2. **How much do you trust outsiders?**
   Much ___1. Not at all___2. A little___3. Nothing___4

3. **Are you agree in letting your neighbour look after your house in your absence?**
   Agree___1. Neutral___2. Disagree___3

4. **When you visit the city centre, do you trust the people around you?**
   Much ___1. Not at all___2. A little___3. Nothing___4

5. **Can you indicate where could you trust more people?**
   Las Brisas___1. Santa Inés___2. La Cuatro Mil___3. None___4

**Section B: Solidarity**

6. **Do you get help from your neighbours?**
   Always___1. Sometimes___2. Never___3

7. **Do you offer help to your neighbours?**
   Always___1. Sometimes___2. Never___3

8. **Do you think people in your area take care of each other?**
   Agree___1. Neutral___2. Disagree___3

9. **Are you agree with informal vendors in you neighbourhood?**

10. **Are you satisfied with the presence of informal workers/vendor in your neighbourhood? If you live in a GC would like them to get in?**

**Section C: Social Networks**

11. **How many friends live in your neighbourhood? (approx.)**

12. **How many friends live in a non-gated community? (approx.)**
13. How many friends live in a (another, if you live in one) gated community? (approx.)____
14. How many relatives live in your neighbourhood? (approx.)____
15. How many relatives live in a non-gated community? (approx.)____
16. How many relatives live in a (another, if you live in one) gated community? ____