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## Feeling Unsafe in Urban Areas:

A Quantitative Study of Young People's  
Geographies of Safety in Mexico City

Student thesis in Master of Philosophy in Childhood Studies  
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## **Abstract**

In contrast to the adult and aspatial focus of much research on safety, this thesis examines the perspectives of safety amongst young people from three distinct areas in Mexico City within three contrasting urban locations; the general urban area of the city, the neighbourhood and the private home. My results suggest that various factors contribute to young people's sense of safety in different locations, and that young people's safety is dependent on the distinction between the local and non-local areas.

Parental restrictions associated with preconceptions of vulnerability seem to play an important role in children's varying levels of safety, where the unfamiliar, non-local general urban area of the city is associated with extreme levels of unsafety in contrast to that of the more local areas such as the neighbourhood and the home. Discrepancies are nevertheless found on the local level, where due to stark levels of socio-spatial segregation, young people from various socio-economic sectors live their everyday lives within distinct areas of the city and provides stark differentiation in their access to safety and exposure to crime.

Howbeit, my preliminary findings reveal a complexity in perceived safety amongst young people growing up in an urban context, and emphasises the need for more research on children's geographies of safety in order to increase our understanding of the ways in which children experience the local and non-local area of the cities they grow up in.



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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Problem Context

Violence and crime has long been recognised as chronic features of Latin American and Caribbean societies, and even though there has been a major shift in the nature of violence (from the more obvious manifestation in the political area, to delinquency and crime) since the beginning of the 1990s violence still remains the “social pandemic” of Latin America (Caldeira, 1996). In the context of Mexico, violence has also characterised as the nation’s cancer which continue to spread and inflict pain and suffering to the Mexican population (Desfassiaux, 2018). In effect, recent reports have shown a significant increase in violent crimes within both the country and its capital, whereof 2018 is recognised as Mexico’s most violent year since public recording was initiated in 1990 (OCMX, 2019; ONC, 2019a). Before the statistics of 2018 was available, 2017 reached a new peak, and was considered the most violent year in modern Mexican history while today indications are made that 2019 will furthermore surpass 2018 (ONC, 2019b). Over the past years, violence and crime has therefore come to be an object of both national and international concern, and indications have been put forth with regards to the effect violent crime has on several aspects of people’s lives, whereof the quality of life and the health of individuals, but also economic, political and social facets are considered to be highly impacted.

Violence is part of every community in the world, where alarming levels of violence experienced by children have been documented in relatively wealthy and stable societies, especially in areas with high levels of disparities (UN, 2006). A recent survey conducted in the United Kingdom also revealed unsafety as the most widespread issue amongst children between the age of 10 to 17, where one out of three girls report being afraid of being followed by a stranger, and one in four boys of becoming victim of assault while being in public spaces (The Children's Society, 2012). By furthermore looking to the US, children’s lives are believed to be characterised by high levels of unsafety within the generally perceived “safe” space of schools due to the increased prevalence of school shootings (Kupchik & Bracy, 2009; Rocque, 2012). Children and young people growing up in a variety of places are thus affected by high levels of unsafety, the risk of exposure to crimes is however believed to be considerable higher in regions with high levels of poverty, economic disparity and social inequality (UN, 2006), of which Mexico is a prime example.

There is a general agreement on the importance of security in the public agenda and on the need for effective measures to stop the growth of victimisation and violence as facts of daily life. However, despite this growing concern, and that perspectives on safety amongst adults being widely studied in psychological and criminological research for almost half a century (see Ferraro, 1995; Hale, 1996) research on sense of safety amongst children and young people is still very limited. Despite an upsurge in research with youth samples being noted in recent years, research tapping into children's perspectives of safety within different urban areas and locations are still scarce (Matthews & Limb, 1999; Roché, 2003). This lack of focus within research is particularly intriguing given the increased risk of crime victimisation experienced while being young (Cops, 2010; Cops & Pleysier, 2011; DeGroof, 2008; Goodey, 1994, 1997; Pain, 2001; Roché, 2003; Vieno et al., 2016).

One reason for the little attention sense of safety and its determinants among young samples has been given in research is argued to be the common consideration of adolescents as "sources" of unsafety rather than victims (Pain, 2001; Vieno et al., 2016). Seeing that young people's presence within the public space lacks a specifically productive goal (Vieno et al., 2016), the idea of them as threatening has been linked to the adult perception of young people's use of public places as potentially dangerous by relating it to other kinds of social disorder signs such as people on drugs, prostitutes, homeless and drunk people (La Grange, Ferraro, & Supancic, 1992). Children and young people nevertheless find themselves within one of the life stages characterised by the highest levels of perceived vulnerability, and therefore tend to perceive their chances of being victimised by crime as greater than that of adults (Pain, 2001). Lately, their objective risk of victimisation has also been understood to be more elevated than previously thought (Pain, 2001, 2003; Rader, 2017), and considering that research with adults suggests that those who are most likely to show high levels of unsafety are those who perceive themselves at risk, children and young people may be expected to demonstrate higher levels of unsafety than that found within the adult population (Ferraro 1995; Parker 1988).

Within the limited exception of research examining children and young people's sense of safety, some documentation is to be found on individual predictors related to socio-demographic characteristics, previous victimisation and crime-talk. Within these studies, those who have been demonstrated to have the highest levels of unsafety are girls (Cops & Pleysier, 2011; Deakin, 2006; DeGroof, 2008); young people living in low affluent families (Cops & Pleysier, 2011; Cops, Pleysier, & Put, 2012); and youths who have previously experienced victimisation (Deakin, 2006). Custers and Van den Bulck (2012) and DeGroof (2008) also claim that

insecurity amongst children and young people is boosted by media exposure, while Caldeira (2000) argue for the same affects though the allocation of victimisation and crime stories between people.

Provided that children's (and their parents') perceived unsafety is proportionate to their objective risk of victimisation, desirable consequences such as a derogation of the probability of becoming a victim are achieved (Fattah, 1993). Nevertheless, Vieno and colleagues (2016) argue that when disproportionate, the quality of life of individuals, communities and even societies may be dramatically impeded by unsafety. As an example, socio-spatial segregation has been demonstrated to be not only a consequence of, but also the cause for violence and crime, while it furthermore creates distance between both individuals and sectors of people. On the individual level, high levels of unsafety may lead to a threatening of children's wellbeing and state of health because their perceived unsafety may preclude them from performing social and physical activities outside their home (Vieno et al., 2016). This is sustaining Hale's (1996) claim that living with unsafety considerably reduce the quality of life. A further consequence may be the economic loss resulting from people feeling driven to use taxis instead of cheaper public transportation options and to spend money on buying alarm systems in preference to cultivating their hobbies (Anderson, 1999; Dolan & Peasgood, 2007). Moreover, it is also important to note the anger, aggressiveness, anxiety, disempowerment, loneliness, and even psychiatric consequences which follows from people's high levels of sense of unsafety.

Mexico is a country where insecurity pervades, and several studies and analysts have portrayed the various ways in which insecurity is present in the daily lives of Mexicans and the impact this generates on subjectivity and the national culture (Connolly, 2003; Desfassiaux, 2018; INEGI, 2014; Lynch, 1977; OECD, 2017; Saraví, 2015; Sheinbaum, 2010; Vilalta, 2010). However, national studies in Mexico looking into sense of safety and victimisation generally focus on the adult population (18 years and above) and is characterised by a systematic exclusion of children and young people, with as far as I could find, the solely exception of Saraví's studies (Saraví, 2004, 2015). Despite an acknowledgement of children and young people being a particularly vulnerable group of society, studies consulting children directly with regards to their perceptions of safety is scarce, and in particular in relation to distinct geographical areas within which they commonly spend their time. This study therefore aims to fill this significant gap by exploring theoretical predictors of young people's perceived safety within three distinct locations in Mexico City, Mexico, where criminal violence and insecurity has become part of everyday life.

Using a sample of young people from two public and one private school in Mexico City, this research examines whether children from three distinct municipalities in Mexico City experience similar or various levels of perceived safety within the general urban area of the city, their neighbourhoods and their private homes. This is particularly pertinent due to the reconfiguration of the city due to the insecurity discourse, where certain spaces are not only classified as “safe” (*seguro*) as opposed to other less “safe” (*feo*) spaces, but where socio-spatial segregation furthermore gives distinct groups of people access to particular areas connected to these classifications. A common division is that of the places considered less “safe” being abandoned or left to the use by the vulnerable socioeconomic strata, while those pertaining to higher socioeconomic brackets tend to make use of the “safe” places characterised by high walls, surveillance mechanisms and private security forces whose purpose is to keep “others” out.

Due to a significantly increase in crime rates and violence in Mexico in recent years, where 2018 was the most violent year in Mexico’s recorded history (OCMX, 2019; ONC, 2019a), there is an urgent need to better understand the experiences of young people living in a setting characterised by high levels of insecurity and fear of victimisation. Research capturing the everyday perceptions and experiences amongst young people growing up in Mexico City could contribute to a better understanding of the particular effects public insecurity has on this group of the population. Children’s sense of safety in the public sphere should however also be seen in relation to the increasing socio-spatial segregations characterising most major cities within the global South and the altering importance of public space, encouraging the emergence of a vast number of dissimilar urban childhoods and childhood experiences. These divergences are especially pertinent in context characterised by high levels of inequality such as that found within the Latin American region.

With this in mind, this research seeks to generate knowledge about sense of safety amongst young participants representing various socioeconomic sectors within Mexico City in an attempt to identify the ways in which their sociodemographic characteristics and previous exposure to crime may be influential factors. Due to the tendency for research on young people to focus on low-income youth, which is particularly representative for this part of the world, this study focus both on low- and upper-middle class participants, represented by the two public and the private school. This is especially relevant considering the extreme social inequalities found within the Mexican context. Schools within three municipalities with varying levels of marginalisation and crime were therefore chosen to participate in the study (Álvaro Obregón –

School 1, Xochimilco – School 2 and Cuauhtémoc – School 3). Considering that each of the schools were located within one of these areas, school area belonging is therefore used in order to refer to these municipalities.

## **1.2. Study Objectives and Research Questions**

The central aim of the study is to explore the everyday perspectives on sense of safety within three distinct locations, *the general urban area (the city)*, *the neighbourhood* and *the private home* amongst young people aged 12 to 15 years in Mexico City. The study also intends to explore whether sociodemographic characteristics (gender, family's material wealth and school area belonging) and experiences with crime (talk of crime, indirect and direct victimisation) have an impact on the children's sense of safety within these three locations. The main research question driving the thesis is:

*“How does school-area influence sense of safety amongst 12 to 15-year olds in Mexico City?”.*

A further objective is to emphasise that children and young people understand and experience safety differently from adults. A recognition of this fact may improve our knowledge of what safety mean to children and which factors these feelings are depending on, and thus better enable us to act as a response to their unsafety. It also acknowledges that children as young as 12 years old have firm opinions and perceptions regarding their own safety and that the only obstacle found in them sharing these perceptions is the lack of adults choosing to listen.

Equally important is it that this study, by accounting for some of the multitudes of childhoods existing in Mexico City, attempts to nuance the understanding of childhoods in the global South. By doing so, this study furthermore challenges the false dichotomy existing between the childhoods in the global South and North. By soliciting information from child participants from the lower and upper middle-class sectors within the city, the study thus prospects to fill an important gap in knowledge about children whose lives and experiences does not necessarily fit into the stereotypes assigned to the childhoods in the global South.

In order to fulfil the objectives of the study, some pertinent research questions were posed and answered;

1. Will girls report elevated levels of unsafety in relation to boys?
2. Does the socioeconomic position of the children's family have an influence on their sense of safety?
3. Is children's sense of safety affected by their school area belonging?
4. Does talk of crime have an influence on children's sense of safety?
5. Does indirect victimisation lead to elevated levels of unsafety?
6. Will children having experienced direct victimisation report higher levels of unsafety?

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

Feeling safe is to be recognised as a basic human need (Maslow, 1970) which needs to be fulfilled in order for individuals to be able to realise their full potential (Marmot, 2004). The improvement of our knowledge on how children and young people conceptualise and relate to safety in their everyday life is therefore crucial. A review of the literature reveals an increased recognition of children's experiences with varying levels of safety and unsafety (Matthews & Limb, 1999; e.g. Pain, 2001; Pantazis, 2000; Roché, 2003; Vieno et al., 2016; Wallace & May, 2005). Despite this upsurge, research on this topic remains limited, and even more so, research focusing on the geographies of young people's sense of safety. In its attempt to fill this gap, this study focusses on young people between the age of 12 to 15's perception of public safety in Mexico City. The effect of school area belonging has been of particular interest because it represents not only three various municipalities within the city, but also the divergence between the public and private sectors.

The study aimed at contributing to the already existing body of knowledge on sense of safety, but with a distinct approach to that of the trend within this type of research. By soliciting children and young people representing various socioeconomic sectors' perspectives on safety within the general urban area of Mexico City, the neighbourhood and the home using a questionnaire, this study may also be innovative in its investigation. This is due to the limited body of research looking into children's perceptions of safety in general, where even less studies incorporate various urban areas and differentiate between sense of safety within the three locations. Various socioeconomic sectors are furthermore included in the study and belonging to various geographical areas are made central. Childhood studies is furthermore

commonly conducted with the use of more participatory methods, where surveys are conducted through extensive face-to-face interviews, and not self-reported questionnaires such as in the case of this study.

The theories of childhood as a social construction and that of children as social agents who are shaped and being shaped by their circumstances (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998), have played a pivot role not only in the choice of methodology but also in my own understanding of children as social agents and informants on their own lifeworlds. Through recognising children as central informants of their own life worlds, the study is in compliance with contemporary childhood research conducted *with* rather than *on* children through positioning them as social actors who are subjects, rather than objects of enquiry (Christensen & James, 2017). By drawing on a sociocultural perspective in the exploration of children and young people's geographies of sense of safety within the city of Mexico, I further draw on concepts from social geography, cultural studies and youth transitions.

#### **1.4. Personal Motivation of the Study**

During the time I spent living in Mexico City between 2015 and 2019, I became intrigued by the highly visible socioeconomic differences existing within the country of Mexico, and in particular within its massive capital, Mexico City. I had the privilege of working at one of the most prestigious private schools within the city during the schoolyear of 2015-2016 and took notice of how children as young as 2 years old and up until they graduated lower secondary school were accompanied by chauffeurs and bodyguards when arriving and leaving school premises. However, while moving around the city, I was surrounded by contrasting the contrasting reality of numerous of children at the same age either offering to wash someone's windshields, performing some form of entertainment or selling small objects or pieces of food in heavy trafficked intersections at any time of the day.

These contrasting realities affected me on a professional level as a woman with a background in social welfare services, but also on a personal level where I became exasperated due to the starkly contrasted realities of these children. Albeit, I also became intrigued by the encounter with a boy on approximately 6 years old offering to sell me some *mazaapan* (a Mexican marzipan made out of peanuts and corn starch) while I was waiting for the local bus back to my home one day. The boy sat down next to me after I had politely declined his offer of buys some, and we engaged in a conversation leading to a sense of him not being afraid of neither heavy

traffic, the public space, nor strangers. This experience was in such a stark contrast to that of the children I met and conversed with on a daily basis through my work, and it led me to question whether these perceptions were representative for these two vastly distinct social classes or not, and thus resulted in the elaboration of this thesis.

## **1.5. Strength and Weaknesses of the Study**

With regards to the study's delimitations, the study was centred on children and young people receiving either public or private formal education within the city of Mexico. Children who are not receiving formal education, which are believed to be the most deprived socioeconomic sectors of the population, and those receiving formal education abroad, representing the highest socioeconomic sectors, were thus excluded. A limitation to the extreme variations in material wealth within the sample is thus accounted for. Considering the immense span found within the Mexican middle-class (as will be presented in chapter 2), it is believed that the sample represent the lower- and upper-middle class in the city.

Another important limitation to the present study is that of the statistical modelling of sense of safety. Although observable, it is neither spontaneous nor arbitrary, however by making use of direct questions and a five point Likert scale, it is expected that the thesis managed to tap into the perceived safety amongst its participants.

Important to notes is also the limitations related to the location of the general urban area, or "the city", as Mexico City is a megacity representing a vast variety of areas which may both be characterised as "safe" and less "safe". A more suitable restriction would therefore perhaps have been to specify the location to the city centre, ensuring that the sample had the same understanding of which location it was referred to, but also facilitating for a better understanding of which area the children referred to while presenting their levels of safety within this location. This specification would also provide a more relatable place for the children, as it is believed that most, if not all of the children have spent time in the city centre. However, discovering that the sense of safety is so low within the general urban area of Mexico City is an interesting finding itself, especially due to the various levels of "safety" diverging areas of the city represent.

Even though this study sets out to explore young people's safety within the *public* sphere, an important factor which must be recognised is how public manifestations of violence associates with private forms of child maltreatment. World Health Organization (WHO) (2002) and The



United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2010) have documented that domestic violence against women and children frequently increases in stressful situations. Singh and Fairholm (2012) have also contended that violence in the home and at school may be a factor which triggers and shapes the incidents of collective violence on the street. The linkage between public and private forms of violence is therefore central to a comprehensive understanding of the ways children view, experience and act upon their own (in)security. This master's project will thus take this into consideration by also exploring the adolescent's experiences in their home and family in order to get a holistic picture of their notions of (in)security and what it involves.

Due to data analyses not finding any significant differences within safety-levels based on age, which probably reflects the narrow age range of the participating children (12 to 15), age is not made a central point in the study. The interchangeable terms *children*, *young people* and *youth* will therefore be used in reference to those people under the age of 18.

Of importance is it also that a vast number of Mexican sources are affected by either political or personal agendas, urging a caution in the use of sources. Due to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI) (the National Institute of Statistics and Geography) being considered one of the few national, impartial and reliant sources, this study has committed to an extended use of this source when referring to empirical studies in Mexico.

## **1.6. Organisation of the Thesis**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters whereof **chapter one** captures the introduction of the study by amongst others, presenting the problem context and the aim and objectives of the study research questions. **Chapter two** provides a presentation of the study context with an emphasis on Mexico as an unsafe country and the characterisations of the study area(s). In **chapter three**, a review of the definitions and interpretations of key concepts of the study is portrayed while it also covers the major theories of the study – the social studies of childhood and children, young people's use of public space and their varying perspectives on safety within this space. Subsequently, **chapter four** captures the quantitative research methods and techniques applied and adopted in the study while **chapter five and six** talks about detailed analyses of the data, and discussions of findings. Finally, **chapter seven** presents the summary of the work by presenting the study's conclusion.

# CHAPTER TWO: COUNTRY AND STUDY AREA CONTEXT

## 2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents background information on the country of Mexico as well as the study area, Mexico City and the three *alcaldías* (municipalities) the participants are attending school within.



Map 2.1: The country of Mexico. Source: INEGI (2018a)

## 2.2. A Brief Description of Mexico

Describing a country like Mexico has proven challenging due to the extreme diversities existing both on a national and local level. Amongst a vast selection of disparities, some are bound to geographical distinction between the north, south, east and west, while others are connected to urban and rural life. Moreover, the extreme social inequality linked to regional, gender, age and ethnic conditions exist within every corner of the country and has a great impact on the entire population through widely spread socio-spatial segregation and discrimination. The increasing public insecurity in Mexico has additionally been suggested to exacerbate the already existing historical social inequalities within the nation by having deeper consequences for the lower-socioeconomic sectors of the population (Parra Rosales, 2017). Contrasts in the population's access to even the most basic needs such as safety, food, shelter and health care are therefore found at varying levels, resulting in numerous of distinct childhood experiences.

Some of the stark social and spatial divisions can be observed by the increasing fortification of the well-to do sectors in every urban area (Vilalta, 2011). A small percentage of children thus grow up within the protection of high walls, private transportation, surveillance cameras and private protection forces, measures considered unattainable to the majority. A further division between socioeconomic sectors is therefore created through the development of homogeneous areas where both the privileged and underprivileged are subjects to high levels of social and spatial segregation (Beall, 2002; Bollens, 2006; Caldeira, 2000; Robins, 2002; Swanson, 2007a, 2007b). It is however not uncommon for characteristics related to the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> world to be seen, experienced and lived within one and the same block within certain neighbourhoods. A separation is however made by high walls with barbed wire or broken pieces of glass on top, surveillance cameras and private security forces, causing social tension and suffering, but also opportunities and optimism. In addition to the well-recognised childhood of poverty, a small, but not insignificant number of children therefore also grow up in a highly protected, luxurious environment, leading Mexico to accurately be described as a junction of opposite worlds.

As impossible it may seem to provide a full understanding of the Mexican context, this chapter is nevertheless an attempt to give a quick introduction to some of the many existing realities relevant for the study in order to justify the research topic as well as the research sample. In the following sub-sections, a focus on the demographical characteristics of the country will be presented before turning to a further exploration of the abovementioned inequalities, and finally give a presentation of Mexico's perhaps most difficult challenge, crime and victimisation. The chapter will then shift its attention to the local context of Mexico City, where attention equally will be given to the demography of the city, before inequalities and crime statistics are presented. Due to the participating schools' geographical location within the city, only the first section will include statistics referring to the metropolitan area of the city. And finally, the chapter concludes with relevant information about the three participating municipalities.

### **2.2.1. Demography**

Covering an area of 1 964 375 square kilometres (hereinafter: km<sup>2</sup>) with a population of 132 million 160 thousand 725 people, Mexico has a calculated population density on approximately 67 people per km<sup>2</sup> (World Population Review, 2019). Almost two-thirds of the country, however, consists of plateaux and high mountains, where the most important geographic

features are the three mountain ranges located in the east, west and south (see Map 2.2). Mexico also contains one of the most desolate territories in North America along its 3 200-kilometre-long desert border with the United States. And in addition to this, a dominating jungle territory hosting a vast amount of floral- and wildlife make up most of the landscape in



Map 2.2: Map of Mexico and its three mountain ranges and the Mexican Plateau

the south. Due to these geographical features, only a small and limited core territory of the country is left habitable, with a congregation of the population living in urban areas. As many as two thirds of the population are living within urban zones, whereof close to sixty-three million Mexicans live in metropolitan zones around the country (INEGI, 2014). Most of these zones are in the south centre of the country, close to the capital which also is Mexico's most inhabited zone, being home to more than 26% of the total Mexican population (INEGI, 2018a). One third of the population, however, reside in rural areas with less than 15,000 inhabitants. These areas are largely constituted of the marginalised poor, many of which living in indigenous communities and others involved in subsistence agriculture (Connolly, 2003; INEGI, 2010). The divisions between rural and urban life are characterised by a strong contrast in terms of access to basic healthcare and infrastructure, where many of the inhabitants of rural areas have to make long journeys in order to find both formal work, education and medical aid.

The country is divided into 32 states with varying population density, income distribution, poverty rates as well as crime rates, making the state within which you live highly influential on quality of life. Each state additionally has its own governor representing an independent political party from that on a federal level, and in some ways its own ruling laws, further increasing the discrepancies found within each state.

The country is geographically located in North America, howbeit, Mexico is often referred to in relation to Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean due to its proximity in both location and culture. The country's geographical location has nevertheless on numerous accounts been argued to bring with it a vast number of implications due to being the southernmost country of North America, boarding to the United States in the North and

Guatemala and Belize in the South. Its national frontier with the United States may be considered to be of critical importance because it positions Mexico as a component of linkage between Central - and South America and the United States with of which the most pronounced consequences are argued to be those related to drug- and gun- trafficking.

During the 1990s, Mexico became ground zero for drug smugglers bringing cocaine from Colombia into the United States with the shutdown of direct air and sea traffic between the two aforementioned countries (UNDOC, undated). As a result of the shutdown, the drug traffic shifted to terrestrial routs through Central America and Mexico, and Mexican organised crime groups began acquiring a much larger portion of the drug money (UNDOC, undated). This has brought devastating costs for Mexico as a country, and in particular its population and lead to the initiation of the war on drugs in 2006 by the Mexican president Felipe Calderon. The war on drugs has however been argued to only have an intensifying effect on the national and local crime and violence rates, leading the two previous years (2017 and 2018) to be the most violent years in Mexico's history, putting the current child population in a particular situation of insecurity.

### **2.2.2. Social Inequality**

As insinuated earlier, the Mexican population is to a very high degree diverse and has been for an extended period of time. A series of famous painting from Nicolás León (Mexico, 1859-1929) found in Museo Nacional del Virreinato in the State of Mexico (*Estado de México* or just *México*) addresses ethical inequality following the ruling colonial caste system imposed by the *Peninsulares*<sup>1</sup> in the 15th and 18th century. The paintings portray 16 different ethnical mixes representing distinct socioeconomic positions linked to the socially recognised hierarchical racial identity of the mixture of races; the Peninsulares, who were Europeans, Native Indians, and then Africans. Even though this cast system was embolised in 1821 when Mexico regain its independence from Spain, a vast number of the country's inequalities are still often related, but not limited to, a strong consciousness of ethnic origins. Various forms of stigmas against races has furthermore kept the current population of indigenous ancestry within the lower-middle and lower socioeconomic sectors and are in many aspects considered inferior to those

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<sup>1</sup> Mixed-race children between the soldiers and sailors from the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) and Amerindian and African slaves were generally identified by the Spanish and Portuguese colonist as "Castas" while the "Peninsulares" refers to a minority of increasingly exclusive sovereigns of European origin, the "white race", which settled as a colonial aristocracy and submitted to the statutes of blood purification.

who largely claim European ancestry and represent the wealthier and superior class (Márquez, Chong, Duryea, Mazza, & Ñopo, 2008). Few Mexicans will publicly acknowledge the existence of racial discrimination, nevertheless, the European ancestral population still to date have better paying jobs and enjoy a higher standard of living than the vast majority of the country’s inhabitants on a general basis (Parra Rosales, 2017). This may also be observed in the separation of attendance in public and (good) private schools, where on the latter generally can find an overrepresentation of children of European descent.

Latin America is the region with the highest levels of social inequality in the world, and an example is the contrasting recognition of Mexico as the world’s 11<sup>th</sup> largest economy in 2016 (OECD, 2017), while it during the same year had a national poverty rate on 44%, resulting in 53.4 million people living below the poverty line (CONEVAL, 2016). During 2016 Mexico was furthermore estimated to have a GINI index of 43.4 by the World Bank (the World Bank, 2016). The levels of poverty varies greatly between the 32 Mexican states, whereof Chiapas (77%), Oaxaca (70%) and Guerrero (64%) (all states located in the south-west of the country) demonstrate the highest rates of poverty, while Nuevo Leon (14%), Baja California Sur (22%) and Baja California (22%) (all states located in the North) are presiding the opposite side of the scale (CONEVAL, 2016).

Map 2.3 demonstrates the population density and income distribution in each of the 32 Mexican states. As may be observed, the average income varies between 8 to 13 thousand Mexican pesos per month. The gap between the rich and the poor is however enormous, and Figure 2.1 demonstrates that in 2016, 30% of the households with the greatest levels of income (decile VIII, IX and X), occupied 63% of the total national income. In contrast, the 30% of the households with the lowest levels of income (decile I, II and III), occupied only 9% (INEGI, 2016). The indications in Map 2.3 may therefore be considered to be highly skewed, but still demonstrates an accurate geographical division between the richer, agricultural North, and the poorer South.

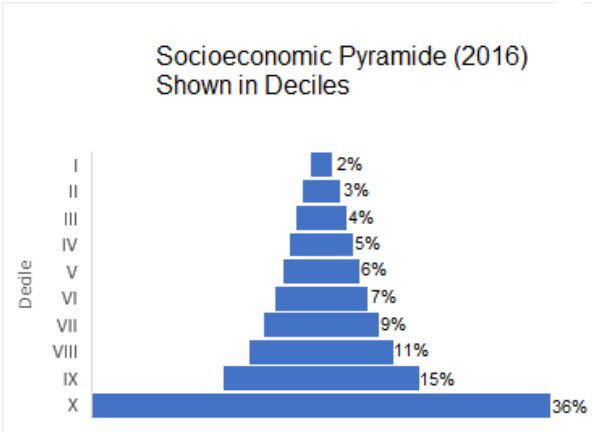
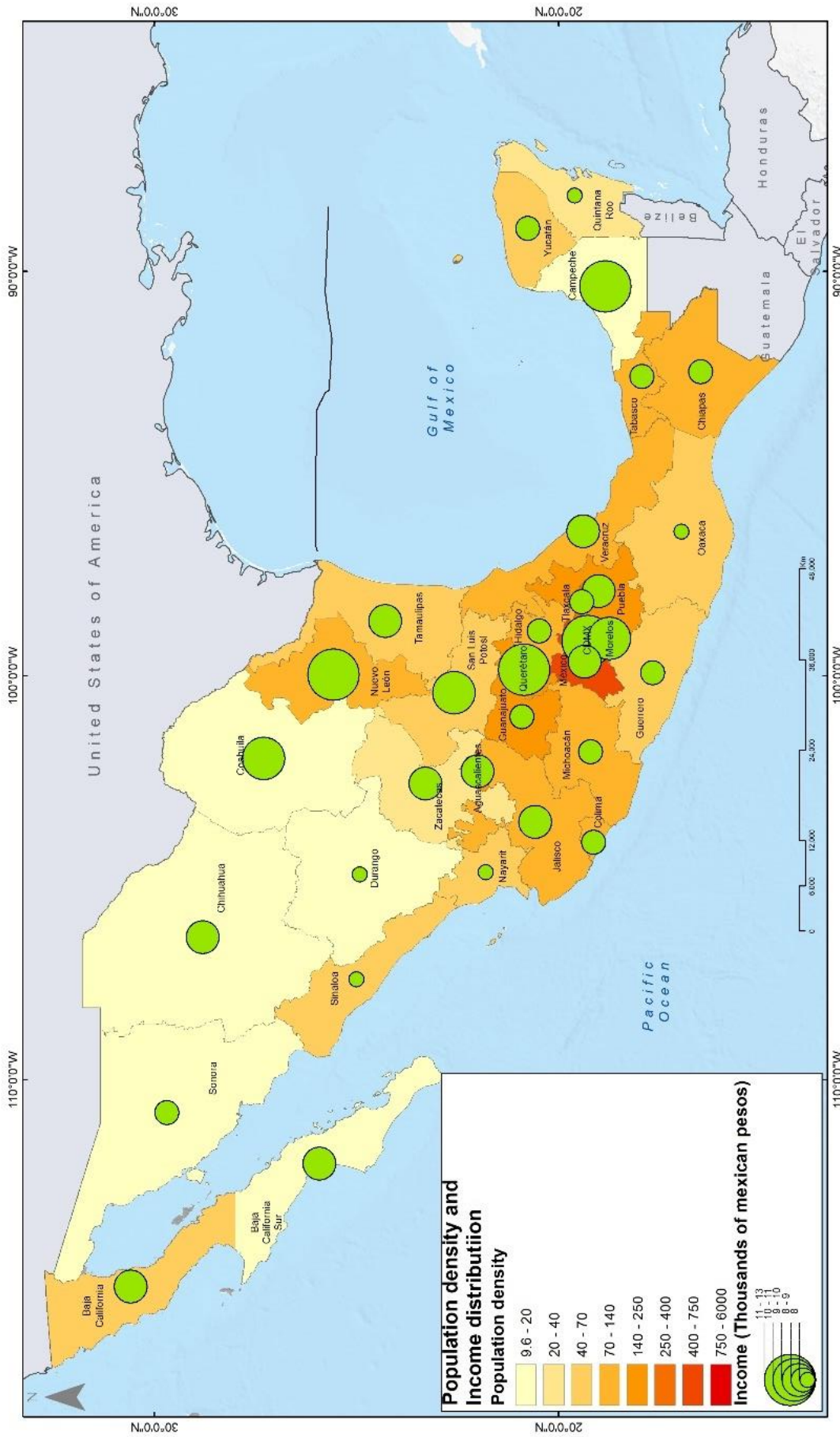


Figure 2.1: Distribution of National Household, 2016 (percentages) (own elaboration based on information from INEGI, 2016)





Map 2.3: Population density and income distribution within each of the 32 Mexican states. Note: Average income values are measured in moths. Source: IMMS (2018); INEGI (2018a); Suárez Urrutia (2018)

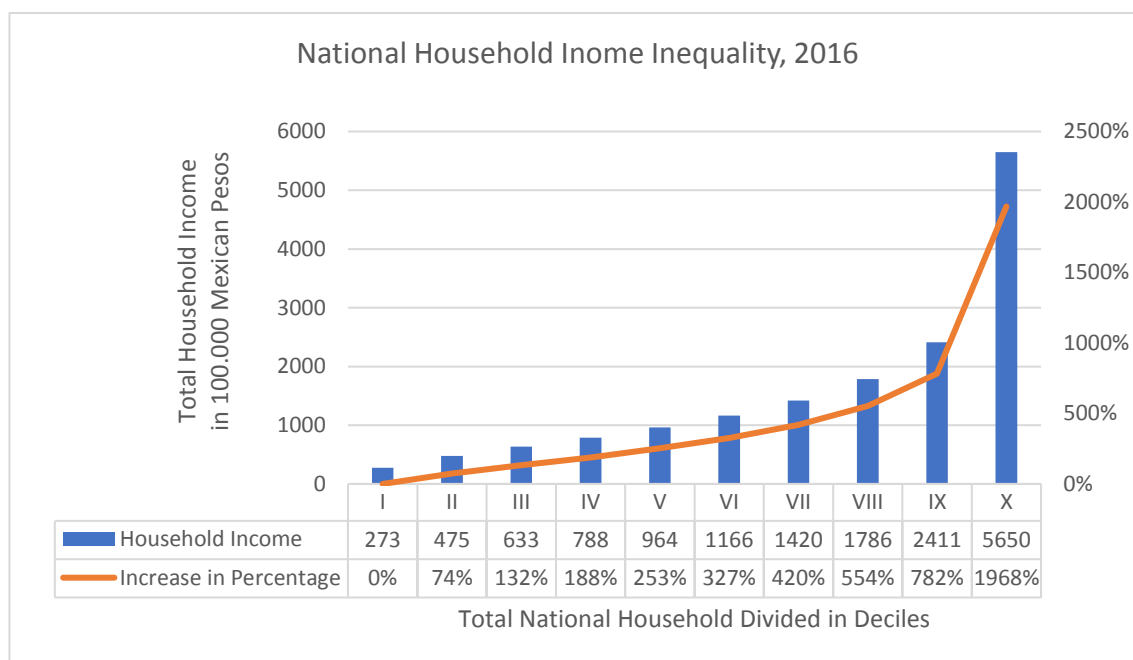


Figure 2.2: National Household Income Inequality, Mexico, 2016. (own elaboration based on information from INEGI, 2016)

As demonstrated in Figure 2.2, the income disparity between decile I and decile X was an alarming 5 million 377 thousand pesos a year (280.151 USD)<sup>2</sup>. In percentage, this represents a differentiation of 1968% between the poorest and the wealthiest part of the population. The starkest income inequalities can arguably be found between the urban and rural population, but are also highly visible on the state, city, municipal, and even local (neighbourhood) levels.

UN Habitat (2014) has moreover argued that the fast and consistent growth of gated communities within urban Mexico further generate inequality in urban areas, and is thus in addition to being understood as a consequence of, also the cause for extreme levels of inequality. The International Institute for Environment and Development (2002) has furthermore argued that due to gated communities being located close to low-income settlements, urban inequalities become more perceptible, fostering contradictory relationships between the two extremes of the socioeconomic pyramid and a process of "micro-fragmentation" of the city (p. 149).

The abovementioned situation of children from various socioeconomic sectors growing up side by side is to a high degree representative within the country's capital, whereof an example is the municipality of Álvaro Obregón's neighbourhood Santa Fe. The photo below is taken while

<sup>2</sup> 1MXN = 0,05210 USD (oanda, 14.05.2019)



passing a bridge into the area, providing insight to a neighbourhood characterised by low-income housing with a pronouncedly well-to-do area located in the very centre. Apart from the highly visible distinction in colours (where the wealthy homes are painted white with red roofs), one may also notice the difference in housing size and the perceived quality of the constructions. The well-to do area also seem to have access to a private green area within their own community. Green areas are in stark scarcity within the Mexico City, and having access to this is thus a further sign of wealth. The same characteristics may however be found in other states, whereof one of the wealthiest neighbourhoods in Latin America, San Pedro Garza García located in Monterrey in the state of Nuevo Leon, is located just in front of the more impoverished neighbourhoods of the city centre, only separated by a small river.



*Photo 2.1: A wealthy gated community in the centre of a poor neighborhood in Santa Fe, Álvaro Obregón. (Private photo)*

### **2.2.3. Violence and Unsafety**

Mexico has been characterised by an increasing criminal violence and insecurity which is believed to be linked to the national as well as international war on drugs launched by the Mexican president Felipe Calderón in 2006. News and journalism sources portray cartel fracture as the leading cause of the rise in violence in Mexico, and stress the splintering of the Sinaloa Cartel, the Gulf Cartel as well as various other organisations. A further review done by the Institute for Economics and Peace (2018) have also linked cartel conflicts to the states representing the highest crime rates (see Map 2.4). However, the media account for several drivers of violence, and policy and juridical failure is similarly recognised as one of the main causes. The war on drugs, through targeting cartel leadership is therefore thought to have rather contributed to raising levels of violence, instead of providing more safety due to the imprisonment and killings of several pronounced cartel-leaders, leading to a fragmentation of

big drug cartels into smaller, warring factions and thus augmenting the rivalry and intra-cartel violence. Even though Mexico was characterised by an environment heavily affected by organised crime with blurred lines between federal- and criminal activities even before this was on drugs, the levels of violent crime of lately has escalated. As an alarming reminder, a new peak of crime and victimisation within both the country and its capital was set in 2017, before 2018 turned out to be the most violent year in Mexico's registered modern history, with indications of 2019 to further surpass these record high numbers (OCMX, 2019; ONC, 2019a, 2019b).

Violence and crime is however not something new within the Latin American and Caribbean region, and although numbers indicate that only 8% of the global population lives there, the homicide rates are four times higher than the global average, with this region representing more than 30% of the global homicides in 2015 (The World Bank, 2015). Even though drastic variations are found between and within countries, national states, municipalities and neighbourhoods, there is no doubt that most cities in the Latin American region represent vulnerability and danger, making every urbanite a potential victim (Goldman & Rotker, 2002).

Within the Mexican context, state authorities are furthermore accused of providing discriminative public security to different sectors of its population, resulting in multiple organised and unorganised, legal and non-legal responses within the various socioeconomic sectors of the population (Parra Rosales, 2017). Consequentially, crime and unsafety exacerbate the already historical, ethnical, gendered and socioeconomic inequalities existing within the country and increase the demand of private security. Socioeconomic belonging thus becomes a central factor in people's access to security, aggravating also the socio-spatial segregation and discrimination through fast-growing areas (gated communities) constructed to protect those who can afford fortification.

In addition to stark levels of social inequality, Mexico is also characterised by extreme levels of unsafety and violence. In 2017, 76% of the total adult population reported feeling unsafe within the country (no such register exists for children), while in the capital, this percentage was 86 in 2017, and has augmented to 88 in 2018 (INEGI, 2017, 2018c). These traits are however found within the entire Latin American and Caribbean region, giving it the pronounced reputation of being the most violent region in the world (Vilalta, Castillo, & Torres, 2016).

According to The World Bank (2015), homicide rates within this region are four times higher (22 intentional homicides per 100,000 people) than the global average (5 intentional homicides

per 100,000 people). Last year, 43 out of the 50 cities in the world with the highest murder rates was also found within this part of the (Dillinger, 2019). The empiric information on rates of violence collected in different contexts of the region presents evidence of a clear, regional phenomenon, and what is important to note in this relation is that none of the Latin American countries are officially at war, but still demonstrates murder rates as if they were. The rates are nevertheless highly variable between and within countries, states as well as cities and neighbourhoods (Vilalta et al., 2016), and affects different parts of the population distinctively (Parra Rosales, 2017).

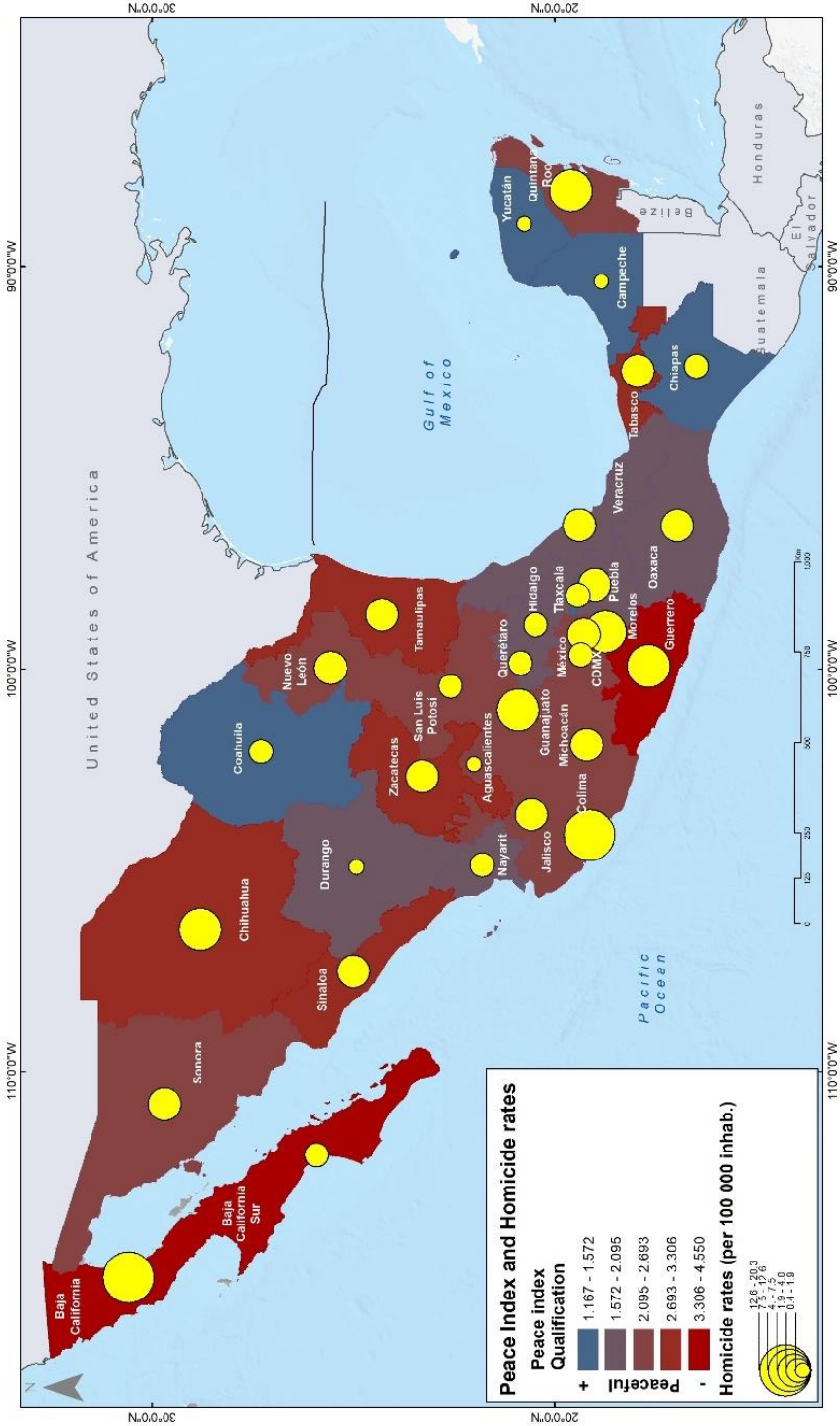
Sources rank Venezuela (32 million 779 thousand inhabitants in 2019) as the country with the leading homicide per 100,000 inhabitants statistics in Latin America in 2018, with alarmingly 81.4 intentional homicides, followed by El Salvador (6 million 455 thousand inhabitants in 2019) with 51 intentional homicides (Dalby & Carranza, 2019). Last year, the most violent in Mexico's history, positioned Mexico on a 7<sup>th</sup> place on the same list, with 25.8 intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (Dalby & Carranza, 2019; OCMX, 2019; ONC, 2019a). These numbers indicate that when compared to the rest of the region, violence in Mexico is far from the most extreme, even when on its worst. However, the Institute for Economics and Peace (2018) has positioned Mexico (2.64)<sup>3</sup> as the third last peaceful country in the Latin American region, indicating that even though homicide is considered the best recorded crime, it does not provide full account of other forms of violent crime and its effects

One of the most relevant findings in the literature on violence in the region is the identification of a clear correlation between its presence and inequality (e.g. Agostini, Chianese, French, & Sandhu, 2010; Arriagada & Godoy, 2000; Jütersonke, Muggah, & Rodgers, 2009). In this respect, a study conducted by the World Bank (2006) demonstrated that a one point increase in the GINI coefficient of a country leads to a nearly one point increase in homicide rate. The high level of violence within this region may therefore be considered a symptom of its high levels of inequality and may moreover explain the vast variation between and within different geographical locations.

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<sup>3</sup> The peace index from the Institute for Economics and Peace is based on 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from each country grouped within three areas: level of public insecurity; existence of domestic and international conflicts; and the degree of militarization. Based on these indicators, each country is provided with a peace index ranging between 1 (most peaceful) and 5 (most conflictful). (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2018).

Below, the varying presences of crime on a state level in Mexico is presented in Map 2.4, giving further support to the importance of residence within the country on the quality of life. Map 2.4 may also be seen in relation to the previously presented Map 2.3, showing some correlation between crime rates, population density and income.



Map 2.4. Peace index and homicide index within the 36 states of Mexico. Source: Institute for Economics and Peace (2018); Semforo Delictivo Nacional (2019)

When reading Map 2.4 it is important to note that it is based on *reported* levels of crime, while the *actual* levels should be expected to be greater than suggested by official statistics due to the dark figures. These numbers refer to the number of actual crime and those reported and are estimated to lie somewhere between 70 to 90% on a national level (Vilalta, 2010). These high levels are correlated to the population's lack of trust in the police and the judicial institutions as well as the high costs (both economically and emotionally) associated to initiating a criminal process (Vilalta, 2010). According to Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP) (2017) Mexico was positioned as the 4th country with the highest rates of impunity<sup>4</sup> in the world in 2017, with a score of 69.21 points, surpassed only by Cameroon (69.39), India (70.94) and the Philippines (75.6). These high levels are furthermore connected with the high levels of unsafety found within the country, as the trust in the police and the justice system has eroded, where at present the marine and army are the considered most trustworthy, while the federal and local police, judges and the justice system in general receive very little trust (INEGI, 2018b).

### **2.3. A Brief Description of Mexico City**

Mexico City, the capital of Mexico, is located in the east-centre of the country with a population of 8 million 918 thousand 653 in 2015, whereof 22% are under the age of 15 years (INEGI, 2015a). Counting for the metropolitan zone, the population number increases to 19 million 768 thousand 740 inhabitants in 2014, representing 17.8% of the total Mexican population (INEGI, 2014). The differences between what is characterised as Mexico City (*CDMX*), and the metropolitan zone of Mexico City (*ZMCDMX*) is demonstrated in Map 2.5 below.

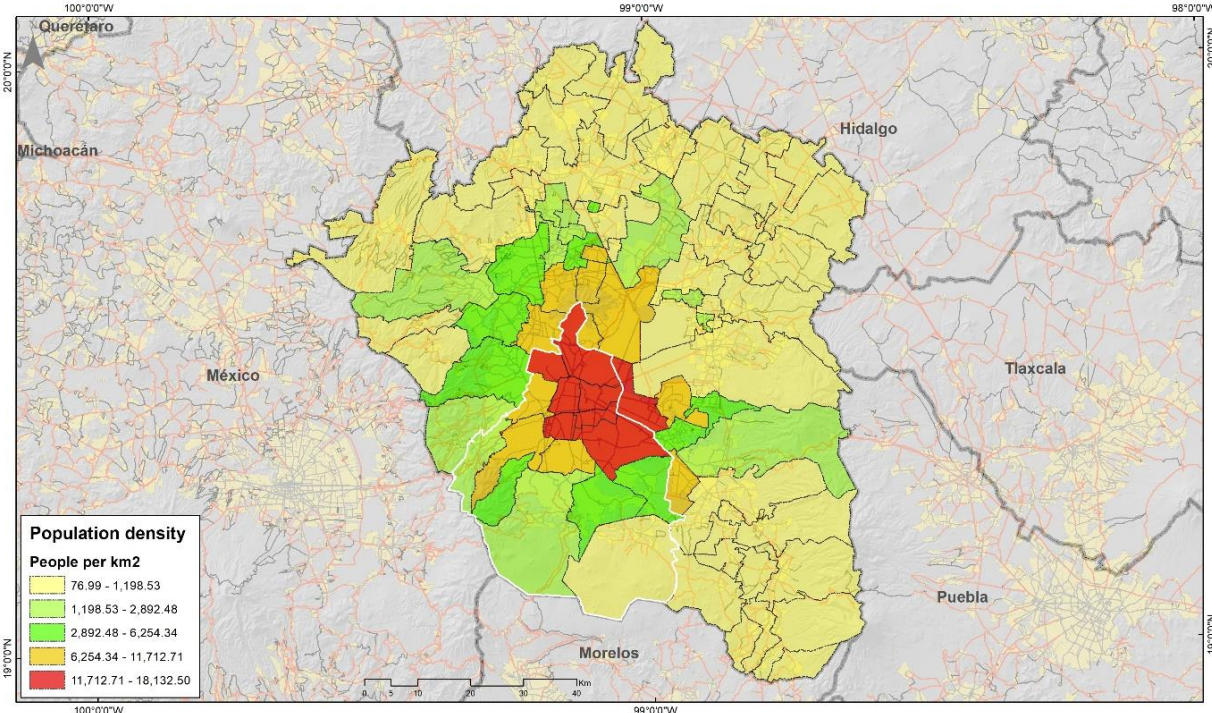
With its metropolitan zone, Mexico City is the most populous metropolitan in the Western Hemisphere and is well recognised as a megacity (a city with more than 10 million inhabitants). The beforementioned terrestrial characteristics and congregation of population density in urban areas furthermore makes Mexico City, the country's smallest state with 1,494 km<sup>2</sup>, the state with the highest population density on overwhelmingly 5 thousand 967 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (INEGI, 2015). This is in stark contrast to the beforementioned national estimation of 66

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<sup>4</sup> The impunity index from UDLAP is based on the three major dimensions of security, justice, and human rights and was measured by the functionality of the security and justice systems, and the protection of human rights and, the structural and existing capacity of the countries analysed (UDLAP, 2017).



inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (World Population Review, 2019), and is the result of both international and national migration.

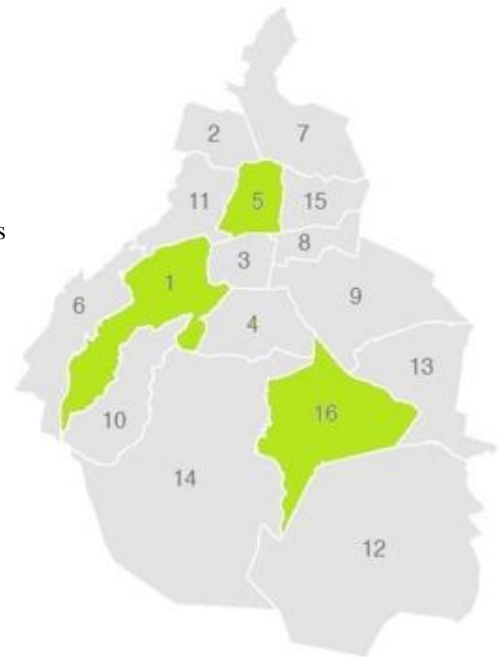


Map 2.5: Population density within Mexico City and Mexico City Metropolitan Area. The white line indicates the boarder between Mexcio City and the metropolitan area. Source: CONAPO and SEDESOL (2010); INEGI (2018a)

### 2.3.1. Demography

Mexico City (officially *Ciudad de México*) is both an independent state and the capital of Mexico and hosts the seat of the federal powers of the Mexican Union. The city has been recognised as the largest city in the country for almost 500 years and is one of the oldest continuously inhabited urban settlements in the Western Hemisphere. It was founded by Spanish conquistadors in 1521 on top of the raised island-capital Tenochitlán, a cultural and political centre of the Aztec empire which just before being destroyed, had a population of between 200,000 and 300,000 people or more (Rincón Mautner, 1998). Today, the population varies vastly between the city and the metropolitan area (see Map 2.5), resulting in stark diversity between the municipalities as well as within them. Below, Map 2.6 demonstrates an alphabetically order of the Mexico City’s 16 municipalities, with the municipalities included in the study highlighted.

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <b>Álvaro Obregón</b> | 2. Azcapotzalco         |
| 3. Benito Juárez         | 4. Coyoacán             |
| 5. <b>Cuauhtémoc</b>     | 6. Cujimalpa de Morelos |
| 7. Gustavo A. Madero     | 8. Iztacalco            |
| 9. Iztapalapa            | 10. Magdalena Contreras |
| 11. Miguel Hidalgo       | 12. Milpa Alta          |
| 13. Tlahuac              | 14. Tlalpan             |
| 15. Vensustiano Carranza | 16. <b>Xochimilco</b>   |



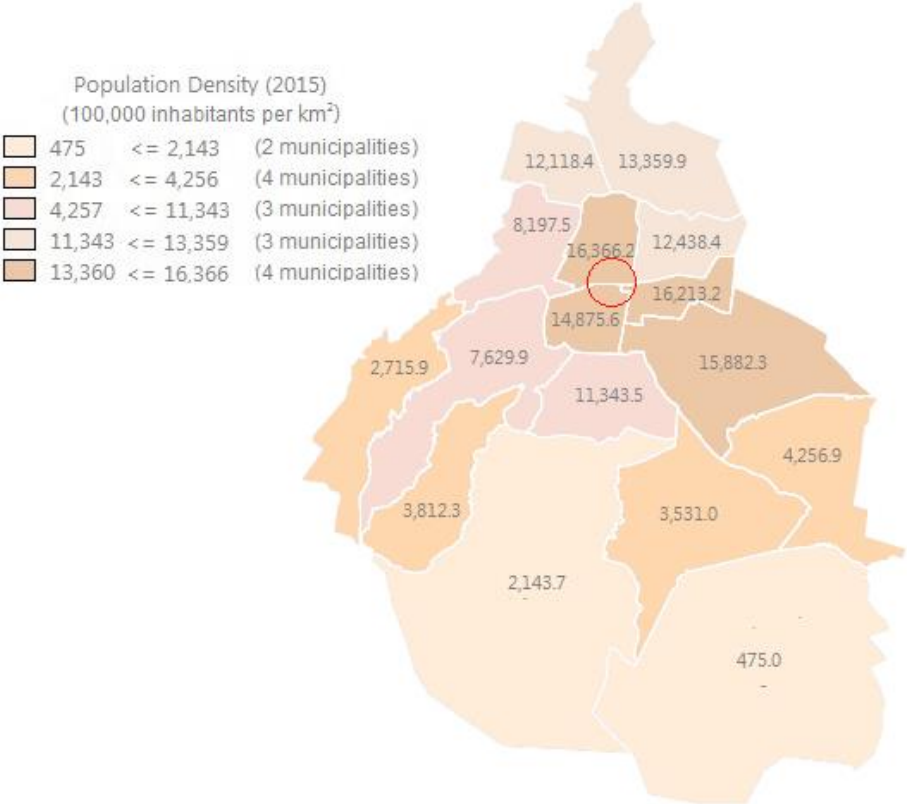
Map 2.6: Mexico City's 16 municipalities alphabetically ordered by name, with the municipalities included in the study highlighted.

The city consists of the 16 municipalities presented in Map 2.6, located in what was previously known as the Federal District (Mexico City), while the metropolitan area additionally includes 59 municipalities in the State of Mexico's cocurated area (see Map 2.5). In the east, north and west, Mexico City is surrounded by the State of Mexico, while it in the south borders to Morelos. The metropolitan area however, additionally borders to Hidalgo in the north, Tlaxcala in the east and Puebla in the south-east.

The city has varying levels of infrastructure, and as mentioned, a scarcity of green areas where the well-planned, green zones almost exclusively are reserved the wealthier parts of its inhabitants. Great divergence may be found between and within the 16 municipalities, where Miguel Hidalgo is well recognised for its great villas, excellent infrastructure and green characteristics. Its inhabitants are consequentially overrepresented by those of European descent together with wealthy foreigners. Iztapalapa on the other hand is well renowned for its brick houses, low infrastructure, high crime and victimisation rates, and is thus the home of a vast number of poor people. The discrepancy between (but also within) the municipalities have made the importance of your postal code pertinent, as it reveals not only which area you come from, but also which socioeconomic sector you belong to.

As demonstrated by Map 2.7, the population density ranges from 475 to 16 thousand 366

inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, indicating vast differences between the municipalities. The highest rates of population density are to be found within the centre and the north of the city, while the lowest rates are found in the south. The beforementioned municipality of Miguel Hidalgo (8 thousand 197) and Iztapalapa (16 thousand 213) further demonstrate the beforementioned characteristics of the areas as either being the home of the wealthy or the poor parts of population. The characteristics for the three municipalities participating in this study will be presented individually in sections 2.4 to 2.6 of this chapter, worth mentioning however, is that the municipality with the highest population density is the participating municipality Cuauhtémoc (school area 3 belonging).



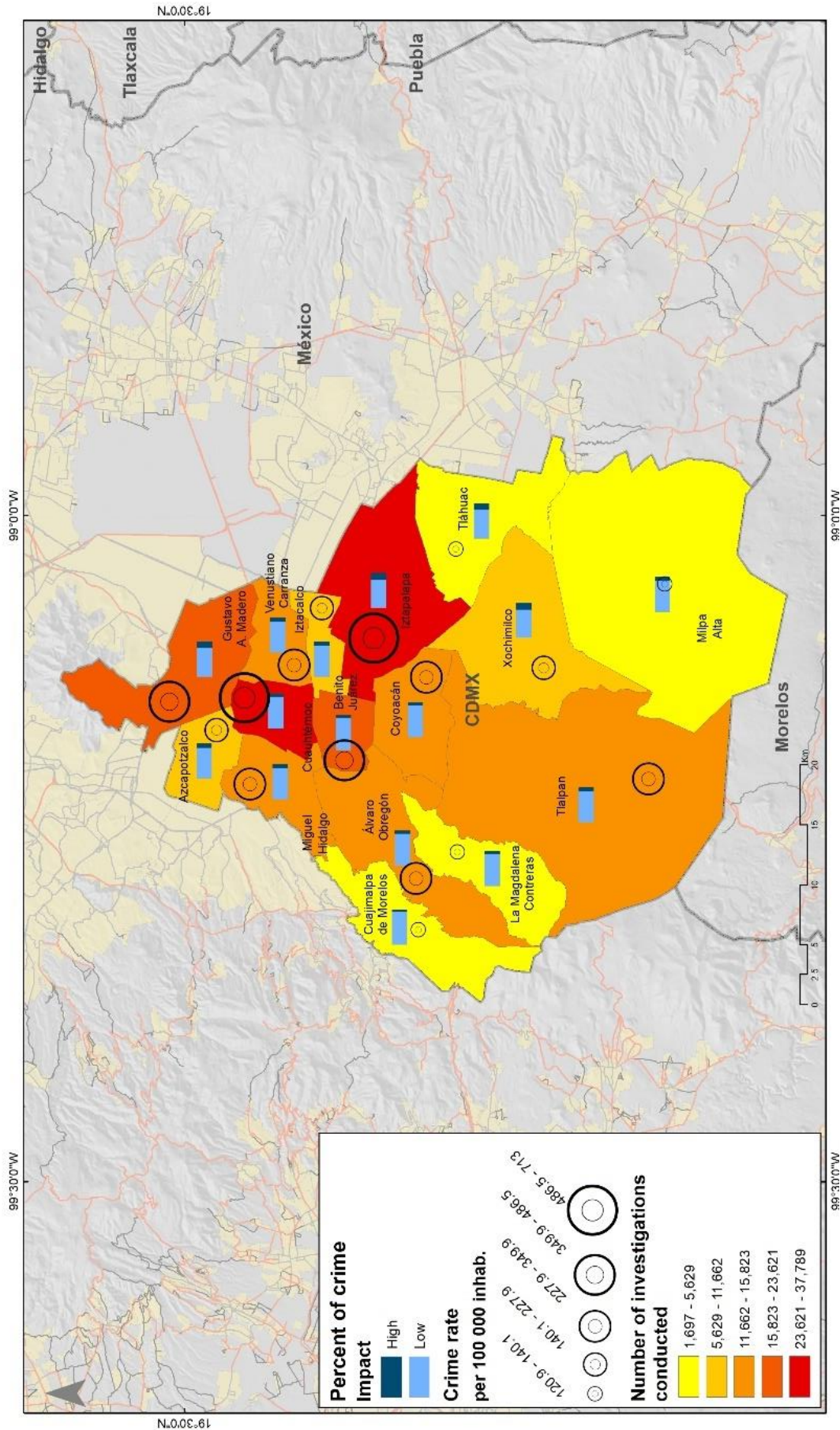
Map 2.7: Population density within the 16 municipalities of Mexico City. The red circle indicated the location of the city centre (Own elaboration based on numbers from INEGI (2015c))

**2.3.2. Violence and Insecurity in the City**

According to the Mexico City Observatory (hereinafter: OCMX) (2019), 4 intentional homicides and 117 violent robberies were on an average committed on any given day during the year of 2018. These numbers left the city ranked as the 28<sup>th</sup> out of 32 national states with regards to intentional homicides, while it is ranked second in violent robberies, only surpassed by the state of Tabasco in the north, which is well recognised for its high levels of crime.



Considering the ranking, Mexico City is not to be perceived of as a city representing any high numbers of intentional homicides within the nation, OCMX (2019) still refers to an increase of 16.9% in registered homicide investigations from 2017 to 2018. The total number of registered homicides in Mexico City in 2018 was therefore an all-time high, with 14,39 intentional murders per 100,000 inhabitants (OCMX, 2019). 70% of these homicides were committed with the use of a fire weapon, where Iztapalapa, one of the municipalities located south-west of the city centre, was registered as the delegation with the highest number of killings. Map 2.8 furthermore shows the distribution of crime and crime investigations within each of the municipalities in the city. The indicator of high impact crime refers to crimes defined to have a high impact on the victim and general society by *the Gabinete de Seguridad de la CDMX* (The Security Cabinet of Mexico City), and are related to intentional and negligent homicide including feminicides, extortion, robbery with use of violence, car theft, break-in and theft in the home and of enterprises, robbery in street, drug trade, kidnapping, human trafficking and rape (OCMX, 2019). Low impact crime is however related to those crimes where the information about the crime is not necessarily accurate, as the information generally tend to come from hospital notifications (OCMX, 2019). From Map 2.8 we can further see a congregation of crimes within the city centre and the north of the city, following much of the same trend as that demonstrated in Map 2.5.



Map 2.8: Crime and opened investigation rates in each of the 16 municipalities in Mexico City. Source: INEGI (2018a); La Dirección General de Política y Estadística Criminal (2019); Procuraduría General de Justicia de la CDMX and PGJDF – DGPEC (2019).

## 2.4. A Brief Introduction of The Tree Municipalities Participating in the Study

The three municipalities participating in the study will in the following sections mainly be referred to as school area belonging due to the school's geographical locations within these municipalities. School area 1 belonging thus corresponds to the municipality of Álvaro Obregón, School area 2 belonging will be used in reference to Xochimilco, while Cuauhtémoc will be corresponding to School area 3. There is no other reason for the order of the schools than that of my own access to them, where I first conducted the survey in school 1, then in school 2 and finally in school 3. The brief introductions to each municipality will also follow this structure.

### Álvaro Obregón - School Area 1 Belonging

As will be demonstrated in Map 2.9, Álvaro Obregón borders to the municipalities of Tlalpan, La Magdalena Contreras, and the State of Mexico in the south, Cujimalpa de Morelos in the west and Miguel Hidalgo and Benito Juárez in the north, and Coyoacán in the east.

The municipality has a population of 749 thousand 982 inhabitants, and a population density of 7.63 (INEGI, 2015a). 287 thousand 912 children and young people under the age of 20 were furthermore registered residing within the municipality in 2010, whereof 287 thousand 912 were under the age of 15 (INEGI, 2010). Map 2.8 further indicates that despite its high population density, it demonstrates relatively low levels of crime which will be further presented in Table 2.1.

The gender distribution in Álvaro Obregón is 47 to 53% in the favour of women, and 50% of the total population lives in a privately-owned home (INEGI, 2015b). 21% further rent the place within which they live, while 25% lives with or have borrowed their home from other family members (INEGI, 2015b). The remaining 4 percent are characterised as either having other or none specified housing arrangements.

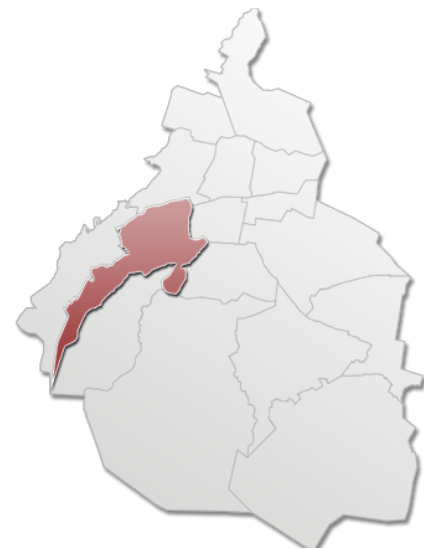
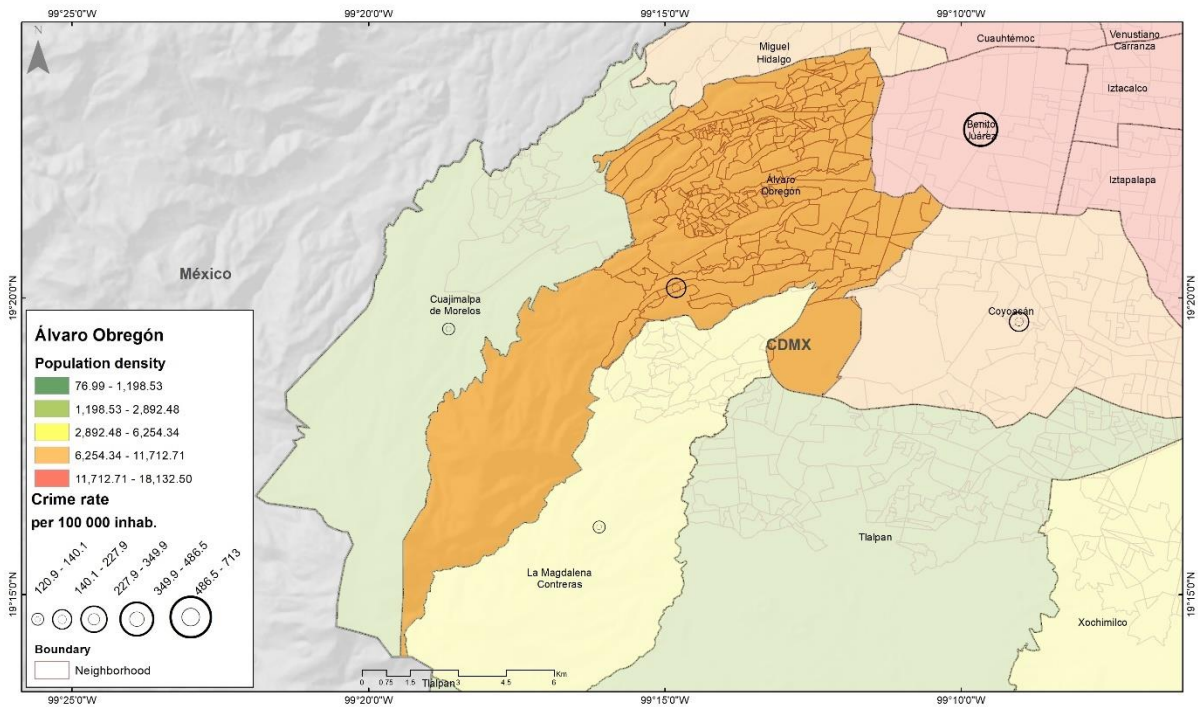


Figure 2.1: Mexico City area with the municipality of Álvaro Obregón highlighted.  
Source: SEDESA (2016)



Map 2.9: Population density and crime rates within the municipality of Álvaro Obregón. Source: (INEGI, 2018a; La Dirección General de Política y Estadística Criminal, 2019; PAOT, 2019)

## Xochimilco - School Area 2 Belonging

Xochimilco was in 2015 calculated to have a medium population density on 3.53 and being the home of 415 thousand 933 inhabitants (INEGI, 2015a). In 2010, the total young population under 20 years was 176 thousand 234, with 98 thousand 671 being younger than 15 years (INEGI, 2010).

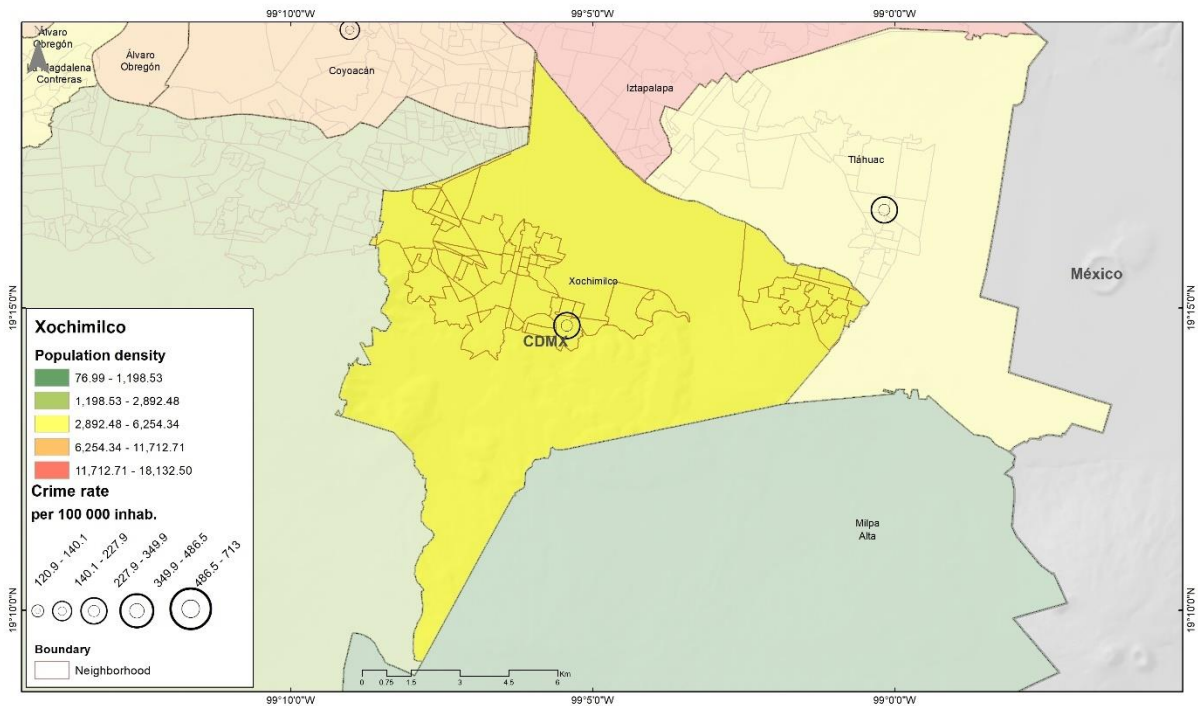
52% of the people inhabiting Xochimilco are women, and the ownership percentage of a housing unit is 65%, showing slightly higher percentage than Álvaro Obregón, where this percentage is 50 and indicating a variance in the economic levels within the population in the two municipalities. Moreover, 17% are renting their home, while another 15% share their home with or have borrowed it from family members (INEGI, 2015b).

Xochimilco borders to the municipalities of Milpa Alpa and Tlalpan in the south, Coyoacán and Iztapalapa in the north, and the Tlahuac in the east.



Figure 2.2: Mexico City area with the municipality of Xochimilco highlighted. Source: SEDESA (2016)





Map 2.10: Population density and crime rates within the municipality of Xochimilco. Source: (INEGI, 2018a; La Dirección General de Política y Estadística Criminal, 2019; PAOT, 2019)

### Cauhtémoc - School Area 3 Belonging

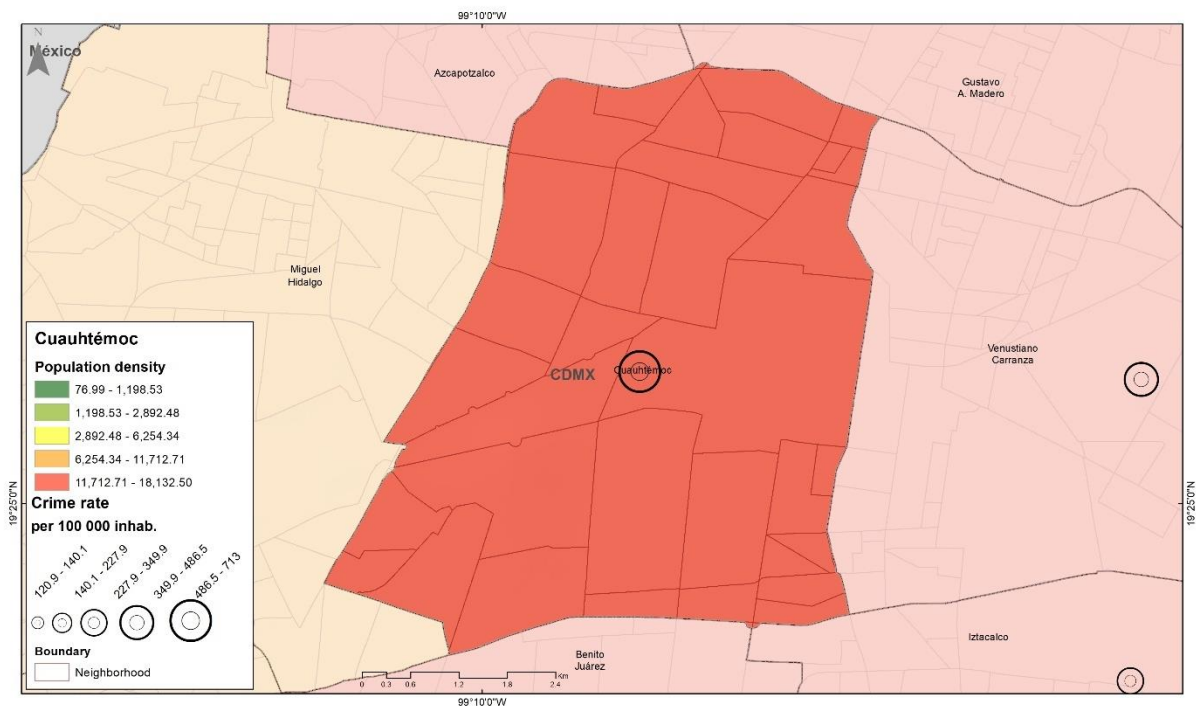
The municipality of Cauhtémoc ranges over 32.44 km<sup>2</sup> and is the home of 532 thousand 553 inhabitants resulting in a population density on 16.37, the highest density measured in 2015 (INEGI, 2015a). In 2010, 180 thousand 092 children and young people under the age of 24 were residing in the municipality, where 98 thousand 671 were under the age of 15 (INEGI, 2010)

Cauhtémoc has a gender distribution of 57% women and a 46% registered ownership of private homes while 39% rent their home (INEGI, 2015b). 12% is furthermore characterised as staying within either sharing or having borrowed their homes with extended family.

It borders to Iztacalco and Benito Juárez in the south, Miguel Hidalgo in the west, Azcapotzalco and Gustavo A. Madero in the north and Venustiano Carranza in the east.



Figure 2.3: Mexico City area with the municipality of Cauhtémoc highlighted. Source: SEDESA (2016)



Map 2.11: Population density and crime rates within the municipality of Cuauhtémoc. Source: (INEGI, 2018a; La Dirección General de Política y Estadística Criminal, 2019; PAOT, 2019)

With respects to the criminal aspect in the three participating municipalities, it is chosen to present this in one conjoined table based on the statistics from Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano (ONC, 2019a). This is to bring emphasis to the variations between the municipalities which will further be used in the discussion of the findings of this particular study in chapter 6.

**TABLE 2.1 : RATES OF HIGH IMPACT CRIME DISTRIBUTED BY MUNICIPALITY**

Crime	Álvaro Obregón (School 1)		Xochimilco (School 2)		Cuauhtémoc (School 3)	
	Rate	Ranking	Rate	Ranking	Rate	Ranking
Intentional Homicide	11.66	10	13.72	7	<b>22.52</b>	<b>2</b>
Femicide	0.14	13	0.72	5	0.57	6
Negligent Homicide	5.21	15	5.29	14	9.84	3
Extortion	4.80	9	2.65	14	<b>15.14</b>	<b>1</b>
Theft with use of Violence	389.16	8	295.52	10	<b>953.94</b>	<b>1</b>
Car Theft	103.43	12	<b>154.02</b>	<b>2</b>	109.76	10
Break-in and Theft (Home)	58.57	14	95.78	6	<b>142.68</b>	<b>2</b>
Break-in and Theft (Enterprise)	144.99	8	90.73	13	<b>477.82</b>	<b>2</b>
Robbery in Street	175.86	7	142.71	10	<b>700.55</b>	<b>1</b>
Rape	7.13	4	7.46	3	<b>22.33</b>	<b>1</b>

Note: Rates are measured by reported incidents per 100,000 inhabitants. Ranking refers to the ranking within the 16 municipalities in Mexico City. Table created based on numbers from (ONC, 2019a).

The table demonstrates varying levels of crime within the three municipalities, where Cuauhtémoc is the municipality representing the highest levels of criminal incidents within the sample and the city, where its inhabitants are those, who amongst close to 9 million inhabitants, are in the highest risk of suffering at least four distinct types of crime (OCMX, 2019). It is furthermore amongst the 3 highest ranked municipalities in 8 out of the 11 registered high-impact crimes. This places Cuauhtémoc as the most dangerous municipality within the city. Children growing up within this area may therefore be understood as being exposed to exceptionally high levels of crime and violence and is in stark contrast to the two other municipalities represented in the sample. Xochimilco further demonstrates the highest levels of car theft in the sample, while also being ranked as the municipality with the second highest rates of this criminal action within the city.

# CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES, CONCEPTS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

## 3.1. Introduction

Within this chapter, relevant theories and previous research will be presented in order to further give support to the research problem. In the first section, the theories of social studies of childhood will be presented before the following section gives attention to children and young people's use of public space by emphasising the effects of various social identities and conceptualisations of children and youth. Subsequently, the analytical categories for this thesis are defined before finally an outline is given of the thesis's six hypotheses.

## 3.2. Childhood Studies

With Allison James and Alan Prout's book *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood* (1990), the interdisciplinary research field of 'childhood studies' emerged as a critique and response to the existing child and childhood perspectives. With their book, James and Prout made a programmatic statement for a revised version of childhood studies (James & Prout, 2015). Consequentially it is argued that *the social studies of childhood* was constructed on the understandings from *interactionist sociology* where children are seen as agents and actors in the social world; the notion from *social constructionism* of the historically and culturally specific constitution of childhood in and through discourse; and the idea from *structural sociology* where childhood is perceived as a permanent feature of social structure (James & Prout, 2015).

The idea of children as worthy of study 'in their own right' has been a central focal point within the Western discourse about children and young people in recent years (James & Prout, 1997; Jenks, 1996), shifting the perceptions of children from passive subjects of socialisation, to shaping as well as being shaped by their circumstances (James et al., 1998; Robson, Bell, & Klocker, 2007; G. Valentine, 1996b). Through recognising the value of children and what they represent in their current state *as children*, research has also moved away from a regime of 'adults know best' towards that of listening to children and giving them a voice as central informants of their own lifeworlds (Hendrick, 2015). By doing research *with* children, rather than *about* them, children's competences, strategies and awareness, or rather children's agency,



has furthermore gained emphasis (Corsaro, 1997; James, 2009; Smith, 2008; G. Valentine, 1997a; K. Valentine, 2011), breaking with the Western traditional image of children as incompetent human “becomings” awaiting their time to become fully formed adults (Qvortrup, Bardy, Sgritta, & Wintersberger, 1994; K. Valentine, 2011).

Within research, these perceptions of children as 'social actors in their own right' and 'active research subjects' has led to a growing consideration of not only research conducted with children, but also of children as research-partners who are capable of participating in every step of the research process (Ennew et al., 2009, manual 1). The agency of children and young people has additionally had an impact outside academia, where the opportunity for young people to give their opinions on and participate in matters concerning themselves is increasingly advocated and legislated for (Robson et al., 2007). Children's position within both research and society has therefore over the course shifted from being an invisible social category characterised by the notions of incompetence and immaturity, to being recognised as competent responsible social actors in their own right, adept at managing their own space and time (Alanen, 1990; G. Valentine, 1997a). Nevertheless, children's agency still remains invisible, denied, or reclaimed as severely suppressed by restrictive circumstances in a vast number of accounts and varies according to the diverging perspectives found of children and childhood within distinct cultures, places, and contexts around the world, as well as in time (G. Valentine, 1997a).

Most notably, the two contrasting images of childhood as Dionysian (where children are regarded as inheritors of original sin) and Apollonian (where children are understood to possess an innate goodness) have come to dominate the ways in which we understand children in the North (Jenks, 1996; G. Valentine, 2004). The Dionysian narrative dominated the understandings of childhood in the seventeenth century, and conceptualised children as little savages or devils who are inherently unruly and troublesome, in need of discipline and socialisation in order to step out of this primal animality (G. Valentine, 2004). By the end of the seventeenth century however, a re-evaluation of childhood was proposed (Sommerville, 1982), and with it the understanding of children as innocent emerged (G. Valentine, 2004).

Jenks (2005) argues that these two images of childhood transcend (in time and place) in shaping adult's perceptions of children as either in need of strict control and discipline or freedom to develop their own interests and talents (pp. 65-66). More on these contrasting binary conceptualisations of childhood will can be found in chapter 3's sub-section 3.2.2.

The various perceptions of children and childhood should furthermore be seen in relation to the recognition of childhood as a social construction rooted in particular social, historical and cultural contexts (James et al., 1998). This understanding may be seen as a result of the groundbreaking study performed by Phillippe Ariès in the early 1960s, and gives recognition to the historical events, political policies, law, and public opinion the concepts of children and childhood are subject to (Ariès, 1979[1962]; Lawrence, 2004). This perception implies that our understanding of what childhood is and should be, are neither universal nor ahistorical, but rather a manifestation of the hegemonic perceptions prevailing in a particular time and place (Ursin, 2019). Consequentially, there has been a recognition of the existence of a plurality of contemporary childhoods, not only between, but also within different cultures (Punch, 2003). However, due to an overemphasis to the differentialities existing between childhoods of the global North and South, this understanding has been argued to be given an imbalanced focus within childhood studies, encouraging the development of a false dichotomy (see Boyden, 1996; James et al., 1998; Punch, 2003; Twum-Danso Imoh, 2016).

According to Twum-Danso Imoh (2016), the lack of recognition of the plurality of childhoods in the Southern world, has resulted in research tending to have an almost single-minded focus on humanitarian concerns through the marginalised childhoods (see also James, 1998). Punch (2015) has additionally noted this imbalance in research and suggests there are forces trying to uphold this single-minded picture, where the existing pluralities of childhoods is close to absent. Even though reasons for this lack of recognition are still to be disclosed, it is argued that upper- and middle-class childhoods in the South does not fit into our imaginaries of childhoods in this part of the world (Hanson, Abebe, Aitken, Balagopalan, & Punch, 2018). The fact that several scholars recently have pointed this out, is nevertheless a sign of advancement.

### **3.3. Children and Young People in Public Space**

The subsequent sections will be framed through the definition of public space as provided by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (hereinafter UNESCO), stating that public space corresponds to an area or place which is open and accessible to anyone and everyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socioeconomic level (UNESCO, undated). However, due to the restrictions of young people's access to, and freedoms in public space, G. Valentine (1996a, 1996b) argues it is no less than misleading to define it as 'open and accessible to all'.

Despite finding Valentine's statement admissible, the definition provided by UNESCO has nevertheless been found relevant in this thesis' reference to public space based on the common understanding it provides of these places while also functioning as a terminologically contrast to the enclosed space. Exploring the ways in which adults marginalise and exclude certain young people in public space will nevertheless be made a central focal point in the thesis.

Even though concerns about youth's presences in public space may be considered to be strongly dovetailed to the constructions of childhoods found within the North, childhoods in the Southern contexts are argued to be largely impacted by the Western hegemonic notions of childhood and upbringing (Boyden, 1997). The understanding of young people as either threatened or threatening in the public space discourse is therefore used while exploring their various relations to the public space in the South. However, due to the high levels of social inequality characterising most countries in the Non-Western world, children's varying experiences with social and spatial segregation, and their corresponding responses to it, will be highlighted and seen in relation with different power-relations of class, gender and age.

Considering the various ways in which youth relate to and are met in public space, this section will furthermore be divided into three subsections focusing first on how children's access to public space is regulated by various adults, second, the binary conceptualisations of children as a threat or threatened, and finally on how the rules and restrictions imposed by adults follow gendered stereotypes where girls tend to be constructed as more vulnerable than boys.

### **3.3.1. Public Space as Adult's Domain**

The ways in which adults attempt to control various groups of young people's access and use of public space has been frequently accentuated in several studies (e.g. Leiberg, 1995; Matthews, Limb, & Taylor, 2000; Swanson, 2007a, 2007b; M. Ursin, 2012; G. Valentine, 1996b). A central trend is that due to our perceptions of children being strongly dovetailed to the binary conceptualisations of them as either innocent or perilous (Jenks, 2005), perceptions of children in public space tend to be that of either being threatened by the "unknown" or constituting a threat through their unruly behaviour (A. Clark, 2013; Jenks, 2005; Leiberg, 1995; G. Valentine, 1996b). These perceptions also tend to follow the pattern of younger children and girls together with children of the upper class being constructed as vulnerable and in need of protection from the perilous public space, while youth, and particularly older, poor boys' presence are often portrayed as a menace to adults and children alike. The result for both contrasting understandings is nevertheless that of strict regulation and supervision by a range

of factors and actors, and an exclusion from public space, either as a way of providing protection of themselves, or that of others.

The understanding of children as either in need of protection or constituting a threat is however rather simplified, and several scholars stress the importance of acknowledging the ways other social identities such as age, gender and socioeconomic background intersect with the identity child and how people, in particular but not limited to adults, perceive it (Bayón, 2012; Jenks, 2005; Saraví, 2015; Swanson, 2007a, 2007b; M. Ursin, 2012; G. Valentine, 1996a, 2003). More on this will be explained in the following sub-section.

The key controllers of children's admission to, and liberties in public space in the global North are argued to be parents and guardians acting on their increased concerns about violence and traffic (Gough & Franch, 2005; G. Valentine, 1996a). In the South however, and maybe particularly pertinent in various countries within the Latin American region, parental concerns are suggested to have a supplemental function to the neoliberal and punitive urban exclusionary policies and practices designed to "cleanse the streets of urban undesirables" (Swanson, 2007b, p. 709), often directed towards street youth, informal workers and the poor (Caldeira, 2000; Swanson, 2007a, 2007b). The society's elite furthermore systematically use urban space and planning to exclude and marginalise people of lower socioeconomic sectors and indigenous groups (Beall, 2002; Bollens, 2006; Caldeira, 2000; Robins, 2002; Swanson, 2007a, 2007b), making socio-spatial exclusion additional to violence, the main concern for a vast number of children and youth growing up in this part of the world (Travlou, 2003).

A further major study shaping our understanding of children's use of public space is that of Hart (1979), who studied children's use and experiences of space in the fictitious city of Invale in the US. Through demonstrating youth's negotiation with parents over their use of public space, Hart claimed that parents' spatial restrictions are starkly shaped through their fears about traffic, accidents and their children being "corrupted" by strangers. Several examples of children's ways of dealing with this control is however demonstrated, where in the UK one of the most common strategies used in order to win extensions to spatial ranges is by demonstrating competence, convincing parents of their own capability to manage space and the possible threats it represents (G. Valentine, 1997a).

Studies have also examined the ways in which young people in addition to adult restriction have to confront the antagonism of other youth who intend to control the local areas where they 'hang out' (A. Clark, 2013; Glebbek & Koonings, 2016; Matthews, Limb, & Percy-Smith, 1998;

Percy-Smith & Matthews, 2001; Winton, 2005). A vast number of young people's relations to public space is therefore additionally affected by the threat composed by other young people through phenomena such as bullying (Percy-Smith & Matthews, 2001) and criminal youth gangs (Glebbek & Koonings, 2016; Pain, 2001; Winton, 2005). Youth gangs may nevertheless be understood as a symptom of resistance to the adult supremacy of public space, their presence, together with that of a vast number of other children and young people, may be considered to be a demonstration of their management of their own social relations and a negotiation and resistance to the rules imposed on them by adults through an active defiance, production and reclamation of space (Qvortrup, 1994; Robson et al., 2007; Waksler, 1986). The streets as a place of autonomy and construction of personal and collective identity (Gough & Franch, 2005) and friendships (Bunnell, Yea, Peake, Skelton, & Smith, 2011) has therefore equally been central focal points within research. On closer review, children gathering in groups or "gangs" in public space has furthermore been suggested to be a defensive mechanism to the danger constituted from either other young people or adults (Loader, Girling, & Sparks, 1998; Melde, Taylor, & Esbensen, 2009; Pain, 2001). The presence of groups of children and young people are nevertheless commonly perceived of as suspicious, and thus generates unsafety amongst other young people as well as other social groups (Pain, 2001).

### **3.3.2. Vulnerable Children of Wealth and Threatening Impecunious Youth**

As mentioned above, different perspectives of children are found to be bound to their socioeconomical strata, where most upper-class youth appear to often be constructed within the protectionist approach (G. Valentine, 1996a). Youth from low-income sectors seems on the other hand to trend to be constructed as a threat to adults and peers alike due to their defilement of adults' regime of public space, and thus more often become subjects to socio-spatial exclusion and discrimination rather than protection (Saraví, 2015; G. Valentine, 1996a).

Through the construction of being in need of protection, a lack of trust in well-to-do children's abilities to manage their safety in public spaces is also present, expanding the conceptualisation of these children as incompetent and dependent on adult protection (G. Valentine, 1997a). Believing children are unable to understand and manage the "perilous" public space on their own is hence argued to be "disabling" children, where they instead of being recognised as reflexive and responsible individuals allowed and encouraged to make their own choices, become subjects to restrictions and control (James, Curtis, & Birch, 2008).

As an example of the socio-spatial restrictions parents impose on their children within the higher socioeconomic sectors, the prohibition of play in the streets and encouragement of use of semi-enclosed or semi-public areas are illustrious (Ariovich, Parysow, & Varela, 2000; Ennew, 1994; Gough & Franch, 2005). Seeing the “corrupting” street unfit for these children, parents instead encourage the use of “safe” environments (Ariovich et al., 2000; Matthews, Taylor, Percy-Smith, & Limb, 2000; M. Ursin, 2012). Important to note is that the few studies examining the geographies of young people’s perceptions of safety, has indicated that “safe” environments are those of the home, the school and shopping centres. This has furthermore been explained by the presence of the different surveillance mechanisms found within these places, which inspires a feeling of security in the face of the unknown (Dammert, 2012). Consequently, this reinforces the restructuring process of the public space, understood as the meeting place for citizens, in favour of private spaces (shopping centers, school and the home) and to the detriment of the city streets and plazas.

However, parents’ rules and restrictions are not the only measures use in order to regulate the better-off children’s use of public space, as they to an increasing degree also have taken control over children’s recreational time through the extended use of organised activities (Cosco & Moore, 2002; Ennew, 1994). In the North, a central focal point in the discourse on childhood and public space is therefore that of the institutionalisation and domestication of childhoods (e.g. Holloway & Valentine, 2000b; G. Valentine, 1996a). A discrepancy in the effects of these regulating measures within different social sectors in the global South is howbeit argued for, where these phenomena tend to be more frequent within the better-off families (Sen, 2014). A lot of these children’s access to the public sphere is additionally hampered through the chaperoning in private transportation, otherwise known as “parental taxis”, to and from organised activities and (private) schools (Gough & Franch, 2005; Saraví, 2015). Their “urban normalities” thus often becomes limited to their experiences within semi-public and enclosed spaces, where the most basic use of the public sphere, such as walking down the street, going to a public market, or using public transportation, are limited and even ‘unknown’ to a lot of the youth from high income families (Gough & Franch, 2005; Saraví, 2015).

On the contrary, children from the lower socioeconomic sectors tend to elude the restrictions imposed by adults through an extended use of the public sphere, and thus become understood as representing a threat to the better-off children (Pain, 2001; Saraví, 2015; Swanson, 2007a, 2007b), where the example of youth gangs (which I will come back to later in this sub-section) is fulcrum (Glebbek & Koonings, 2016; Pain, 2003; Winton, 2005). These constructions are in

particularly, but not limited to, the young (poor) men, who are frequently displayed as a problem for society through being constructed as provoking fears in others within the public discourse (Pain, 2001; G. Valentine, Skelton, & Chambers, 1998). Several studies claim that for children from low-income sectors, the street continue to be an important aspect of their use of public space through representing a place for play, ‘hanging out’, or meeting friends in street corners, open public spaces, and small, local shops (Gough & Franch, 2005; Holloway & Valentine, 2000a; Saraví, 2015). The construction of them as a menace may however be linked to the conflictious place-making practices and activities of young people in relation to adults (A. Clark, 2013; Jenks, 2005; Leiberg, 1995; G. Valentine, 1996b). It may just as well be a symptom of adult’s notions of lack of control of this space as well as these youth.

A vast number of children and youth from low-income sectors additionally make use of their competence to become “independent entrepreneurs”, working on the street in order to pay for the costs of their own education or support their family (Swanson, 2007a). Due to the common assumption that regardless of a child’s situation, spending time on the streets has them converted into criminals and that “street work fosters delinquency” (Swanson, 2007a, p. 713), these children’s agency often become considered a threat to adults, and in particular those of higher socioeconomic sectors. A paradox is however that due to the discrimination they experience in the semi-public spaces which seem to be “reserved” for the better-off young people, the street is the only place left for them to occupy outside the even more regulated space of the home and school. Due to their physical aspects (such as the way they dress, the colour of their skin and the way they talk), they are considered unwelcome in cinemas, restaurants and shopping centres. Youth from low-income sectors therefore are in a situation of multiple disadvantage, having no obvious right to spaces of their own, but ironically left to claim the street where they are perceived of as not following the rules, and thus a threat (Gough & Franch, 2005).

### **3.3.3. Gender Hierarchies and The Vulnerable Sex**

Despite the differentiation in use of public space amongst young people of various social sectors, it has by several scholars been established as one of the only autonomous spaces youth are able to carve out for themselves, and constitutes therefore an important social venue for girls and boys alike (Matthews, Limb, et al., 2000; G. Valentine et al., 1998). In particular, the neighbourhood and the streets nearby the homes of children from low-income families are

frequently used and are found to be some of the most important contexts for, and therefore influences on, children's social and cultural development (G. Valentine, 1997b).

As puberty sets in however, it is argued that gender asymmetries and generation hierarchies emerge in various places, as pointed out in Gough and Franch's (2005) study in urban Brazil. In their article, Gough and Franch note that girls' relationship to the street at this point alters through assuming a more practical function as facilitating movement from one place to another, where only sporadic interaction-stops are made with friends while passing through to somewhere else (Gough & Franch, 2005). Girls are however also argued to experience more restrictions on their movements in general in comparison to boys (Hart, 1979; Matthews, 1987; Punch, Bell, Costello, & Panelli, 2007), and are seldom allowed to leave their neighbourhoods without male or adult supervision, particularly not after nightfall (Gough & Franch, 2005; Saraví, 2015; G. Valentine, 1997a). Girls' social and physical space in urban Mexico has therefore been claimed to often become limited to that of the home, the family and the neighbourhood (Saraví, 2015) which will be further discussed in section 3.4.1.

### **3.4. Children's Perspectives of Safety within the Public Sphere**

As presented in the sections above, various concerns about children and young people's safety constitute some of the main reasons for adult restriction and control of their access to and freedoms in public space. Different social identities furthermore seem to be determinant factors of these restrictions and control. However, despite an abundance amount of social, political and scientific attention given to the adult population's perspectives of safety in public space and the measures taken in order to protect themselves and their children, limited focus has been given to children's own perspectives of safety within these places and spaces (DeGroof, 2008; Goodey, 1997; Hale, 1996; May & Dunaway, 2000). The scarcity of youth samples is somewhat surprising given that children and young people are considered both to be more vulnerable and tend to more often be victimised than their adult counterparts (Berzin, 2010; Hashima & Finkelhor, 1999; Lunecke, 2016; Newsome & Sullivan, 2014; Pain, 2001).

Even though limited, a growing research interest in youths' perceptions may be observed in recent years (see Cops, 2010; DeGroof, 2008; May & Dunaway, 2000; May, Vartanian, & Virgo, 2002; Wallace & May, 2005). The newly granted focus on youth samples has moreover brought interesting findings, as it suggests that the common background variable of socioeconomic belonging does not play as an important a role among the younger population



as among adults (Cops, 2010). This variable nevertheless seems to be ‘standard’ within research on both adult and younger people’s sense of safety in the public sphere, and therefore also has been granted a central focal point within this thesis. Howbeit, the mere fact of belonging to a certain social category (i.e. socioeconomic class) cannot offer a satisfactory explanation for sense of safety within the public sphere. The hypotheses of gender differences, the physical and social environment of the neighbourhood, talk of crime and victimisation will therefore additionally be used in order to explore young people’s sense of safety within the public sphere in Mexico City. Relevant previous studies will therefore be presented below, where due to the limited body of research with youth samples, the following sections draw on research relating both to adult and to child perspectives. Each theory section will be concluded with a causality model providing a visual demonstration of the hypotheses’ effect on young people’s sense of safety. The theories will additionally set the basis for the thesis’ six hypotheses presented in the final section of this chapter.

### **3.4.1. Gender**

Gender has through numerous studies been demonstrated to be the most significant predictor of lower sense of safety due to the close to undisputed documentation of higher levels of sense of insecurity amongst female participants in contrast to men (Pain, 2001). These findings have been promoted as problematic because it has contrasted with the actual objective chances of victimisation, where men are shown to be more likely to be the victim of crime (Pain, 2001). The study of the possible explanatory reasons believed to underpin females’ sense of insecurity has therefore been vastly explored, leading to a development of numerous hypotheses. Four of these hypotheses will be briefly touched upon in this section, as they are believed to be particularly pertinent in relation to girls’ sense of safety. The first hypothesis is related to the believed physical vulnerability of girls; the second is the “shadow of sexual assault hypothesis”; hypothesis three is related to the hidden nature of girls’ victimisation; and hypothesis four is based on the effects of parental restrictions as previously presented in section 3.3.3. With regards to boys’ expected low reports on sense of unsafety, the hypotheses of methodology and parental restrictions will be used.

Within adult research, one of the most common hypothesis used to explain women’s heightened sense of unsafety is based on their physical vulnerability, where they are alleged less capable to defend themselves or to recover from a criminal assault, leading to the tendentious construction of them as fearful and passive born victims (Pain, 2001; Pantazis, 2000). This

hypothesis has however been discarded in the academic discourse through a demonstration of the effects of their spatial resistance, where they employ a vast number of coping strategies to avoid harassment and violence in public spaces (Pain, 1997; Painter, 1992; G. Valentine, 1989). In the public discourse however, and maybe especially within Latin America where traces of machoistic attitudes still are common, females still tend to be perceived of as the “feebler” gender (OXFAM International, 2018). With regards to young people, these attitudes are manifested through a stronger regulation of girl’s use of public space than boys (Goodey, 1994; Gough & Franch, 2005; G. Valentine, 1997a).

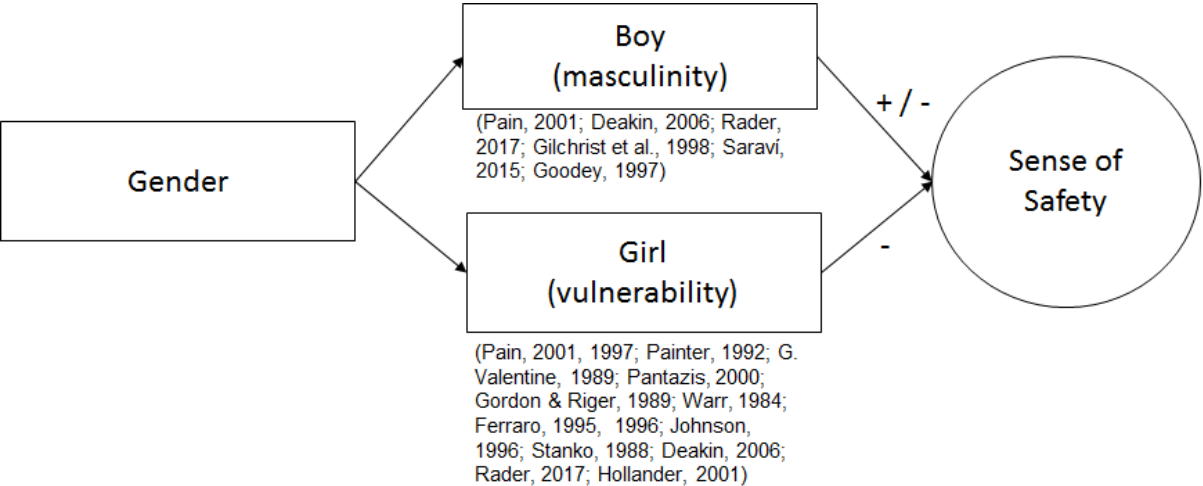
Research with adult samples has furthermore led to the hypothesis of females’ particular vulnerability to a series of victimisation incidents such as those related to sexual crimes (Gordon & Riger, 1989; G. Valentine, 1989; Warr, 1984). Building from the arguments that being raped is an “ever-present” concern for most women (Gordon & Riger, 1989; Warr, 1984), Ferraro (1995, 1996) developed the “shadow of sexual assault hypothesis” linking women’s fear of rape and sexual assault to their fear of non-sexual related crimes. This has also been demonstrated in a study with young people conducted by The Children's Society (2012) where girls tend to worry about being followed by a stranger in public, which may be associated with the previously mentioned concern of being raped. The threat of being followed may furthermore be associated with the thesis of the hidden nature of girls’ victimisation which has been linked to the sub-legal harassment of being followed, stared, shouted and whistled at in a vast number of locations (Goodey, 1994). This theory further builds on the lack of knowledge of girls’ victimisation due to unreported incidents from those who are physically abused at home or who have been sexually assaulted (Goodey, 1994; Johnson, 1996; Stanko, 1988).

Another important hypothesis is tied to both that of vulnerability and the elevated risk of becoming a victim of sexual assault, and is based on the effects of the general assumption that girls are in need of protection from others, are more likely to become victimised by a stranger, and that the public space is dangerous for them (Deakin, 2006; Podaná & Krulichová, 2018; Rader, 2017). Thus, because girls from an early age are taught that they are likely to become victims of sexual crimes, they are also more likely to live in fear of becoming victim of these crimes while being in the public sphere by strangers (Hollander, 2001; G. Valentine, 1989). These ideas further justify parents’ stricter regulation of their girls’ access to and liberties in public space.

In direct contrast to females, the stereotypes of men is that of offenders rather than victims due to the low prevalence of reported unsafety amongst male participants (Pain, 2001; G. Valentine

et al., 1998). In recent studies nevertheless, men’s concerns in public space is suggested to be considerably higher than previously thought, especially amongst young poor men who are argued to be the most targeted victims and thus also affected by unsafety in public space (Pain, 2001; Saraví, 2015). Several theories put forth as an explanation to men’s low prevalence of unsafety has linked to the reluctance in med to express unsafety, whereof the first theory has been associated with the image of male invulnerability, where due to notions of insecurity being associated with weakness, men are hesitant to admit to feeling unsafe even though they very well may experience it (Deakin, 2006; Gilchrist, Bannister, Ditton, & Farrall, 1998; Rader, 2017). Goodey (1997) has moreover demonstrated that admission to concerns of crime is tied to the social identity of age, where young boys tend to more easily admit to concerns of crime than their older counterparts. Choices of methodology has furthermore been argued to play a role, where the use of qualitative studies has demonstrated more balanced gender-nuances due to more men reporting higher levels of sense of insecurity in face-to-face interviews than in surveys (Crawford, Jones, Woodhouse, & Young, 1990; Gilchrist et al., 1998; Stanko & Hobdell, 1993).

**FIGURE: 3.1: CAUSAL MODEL OF GENDER AND PERCEIVED SENSE OF SAFETY**



Note: The + sign indicates a positive relationship with sense of safety, while the - sign indicates a negative relationship.

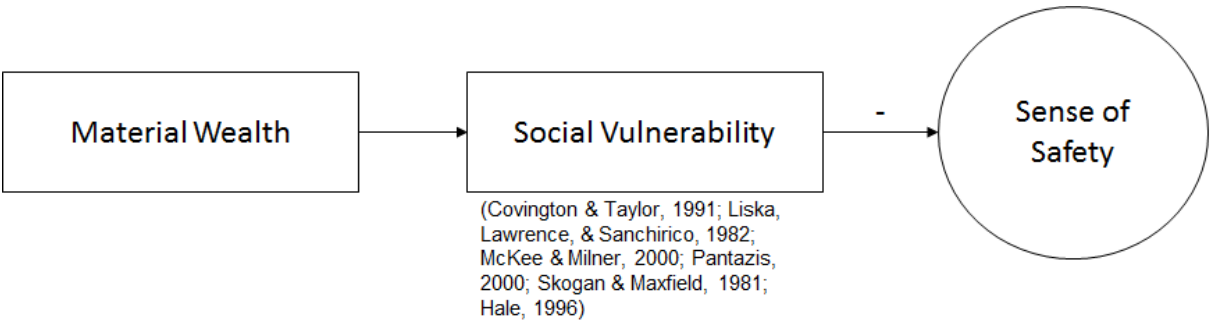
**3.4.2. Material Welfare**

Even though abundant research has studied the effects of gender on sense of safety, little research has been devoted to the topic of social class. The existing body of literature on the topic has nevertheless found that members of minorities and those of lower socioeconomic status groups are both more vulnerable to and also experiencing more unsafety in relation to crime than their wealthier counterparts (Covington & Taylor, 1991; Liska, Lawrence, &

Sanchirico, 1982; McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). One explaining hypothesis is that people experiencing some type of social vulnerability are less able to protect themselves or their property as well as to avoid situations which might produce anxiety (Hale, 1996). Within the Latin American context, these differences in access to protection are often made visible through the extensive and increasing use of gated communities, private security and private transportation within the higher socioeconomic sectors which those of the lower socioeconomic sectors tend to not have admission to.

This lack of both material and social resources may in addition often result in limited abilities to cope with victimisation at an individual level, while they at the community level lack the contacts, organisational possibility and political networks available to higher status neighbourhoods (Hale, 1996). This has furthermore been linked to the geographical and social areas within which different social sectors are living within (this will be further addressed in the next sub-section), which for the underprivileged strata tend to be areas characterised by physical and social incivility abandoned by those who can afford moving out. The wealthier sectors tend to reside within gated communities which are often seen as a respond to, and expected to have a reductive function on, victimisation rates and sense of unsafety (Glasze, Webster, & Franz, 2006). However, studies have found weak or no relationship between gated communities and higher levels of safety (Blakely & Snyder, 1998; Borsdorf & Hidalgo, 2008; Caldeira, 2000; Giglia, 2001, 2008; Glasze et al., 2006; Lacarrieu & Thuiller, 2001; Low, 2003; Romig, 2005; Vilalta, 2011)

**FIGURE: 3.2: CAUSAL MODEL OF MATERIAL WEALTH AND PERCEIVED SENSE OF SAFETY**



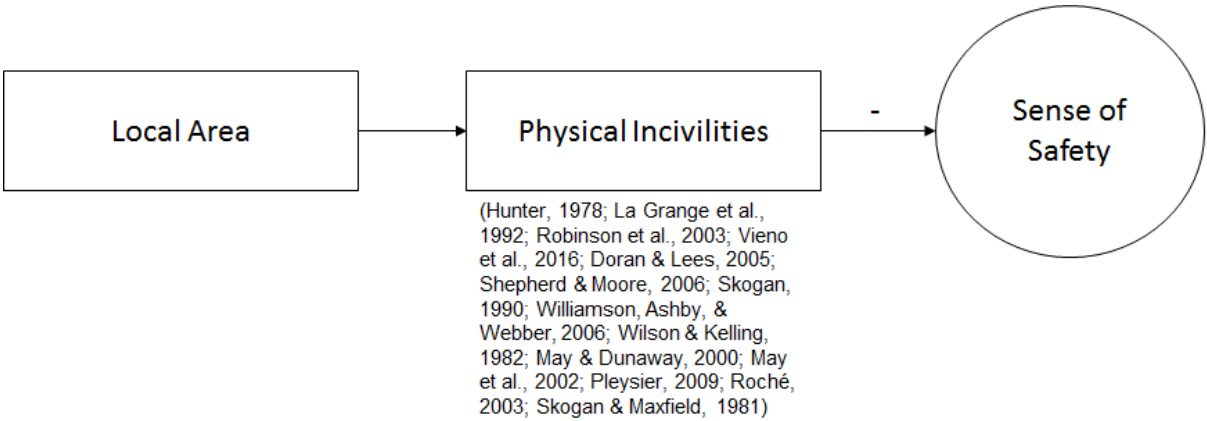
Note: The - sign indicates a negative relationship with sense of safety.

### **3.4.3. School Area Belonging**

A considerable body of research has linked children's sense of safety to their physical environment (e.g. Cope, 2008; Ferraro, 1995; La Grange et al., 1992; Pain, 2001; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981), where certain conditions especially related to low-income sectors' local area are assessed to have a declining effect on perceived safety through representing certain cues, or a constellation of related cues of insecurity (Visser, Sichling, & Chaskin, 2017). In particular, studies have illustrated that people tend to declare lower levels of safety if their local area is characterised by physical incivilities such as graffiti-covered walls, vacant run-down dwellings, dirty sidewalks etc. (Hunter, 1978; La Grange et al., 1992). Physical incivility through the social composition of the neighbourhood, its function and reputations (e.g. prostitution, drug dealing and addicts) has furthermore been linked to social incivility (Hunter, 1978; La Grange et al., 1992), where also young people's 'hang-out' in the streets is included (La Grange et al., 1992; J. B. Robinson, Lawton, Taylor, & Perkins, 2003; Vieno et al., 2016). The causal mechanism to decrease sense of safety amongst adults is that these community-signs of neglect indicate that dangerous elements are present, and that social control mechanisms within the neighbourhood have broken down, facilitating for both actual victimisation and a lack of sense of safety (Cope, 2008; Doran & Lees, 2005; Shepherd & Moore, 2006; Skogan, 1990; Williamson, Ashby, & Webber, 2006; Wilson & Kelling, 1982). The impact of perceived incivility within their local area on young people's sense of safety has also been demonstrated to be significantly linked in several studies (May & Dunaway, 2000; May et al., 2002; Pleysier, 2009; Roché, 2003), where the more young people perceive their local area as criminogenic, the lower sense of safety has been reported. This has furthermore been connected with the criminal reputation an area has (Kullberg, Karlsson, Timpka, & Lindqvist, 2009).

According to Lewis and Salem (2016) lower sense of safety is therefore rather than being the result of an individual's direct experience with crime, a product of the disruption of social control in a given area. Children and young people's sense of safety is thus likely to be influenced by the physical and social conditions within their own local areas (Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). Covington and Taylor (1991) further suggest that perceived safety will be higher for those residing in well-to-do areas where less disorder and more stability, more and better city services such as policing, function as a blockage of the appearance of some concerns about local area safety. As mentioned in the previous sub-section, the real effects of gated communities on sense of safety and victimisation is however still subject to dispute.

**FIGURE: 3.3: CAUSAL MODEL OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PERCEIVED SENSE OF SAFETY**



Note: The - sign indicates a negative relationship with sense of safety.

### 3.4.4. Talk of Crime

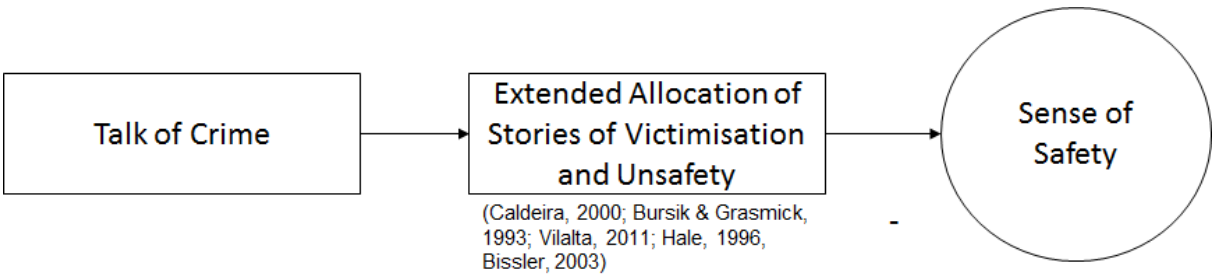
The relationship between sense of safety and the flow of information between individuals is characterised by a limited research body, where the restricted existing research has a central focus on adult participants. Studies have nevertheless found talk of crime to be associated with victimisation and to have a negative effect on sense of safety through an extended allocation of stories of victimisation and unsafety (Caldeira, 2000; Hale, 1996; La Grange et al., 1992; J. B. Robinson et al., 2003).

Caldeira (2000) demonstrates that through the dispersal of crime stories, people’s sense of insecurity, danger and turmoil are being underpinned by feeding a “circle in which fear is both dealt with and reproduced, and violence is both counteracted and magnified” (p. 19). These narratives furthermore shape the urban landscape and public space, where social interactions in cooperation with socio-spatial stigmatisation and discrimination help erode sense of community and shrink people’s universe of interactions (Caldeira, 2000; C. S. Clark, 1993). In places where insecurity has reached extreme levels and the governments seem unwilling or unable to provide equitable public security to its people, crime, talk of crime and fear moreover encourages multiple organised and unorganised, legal and illegal responses generated by the population (Parra Rosales, 2017). Examples of these responses are the contracting of private security forces, isolation in private enclaves and in the more extreme instances, lynching (Parra Rosales, 2017). Taken to the extreme, the sharing of crime-stories therefore even exacerbates violence itself through a “legitimising” of private or illegal violent actions (Caldeira, 2000).

Caldeira (2000) additionally argues that the contagious, repetitious and compelling nature of unsafety and talk of crime contribute in shaping simplistic and stereotypical interpretations and

explanations of crime, who commit crime, how, where and to whom victimisation occurs, and the effects of fear by elaborating prejudices and creating categories which establishes certain groups of people as dangerous and criminal, and others as potential victims. J. Scott and colleagues (2012) have further underscored this, arguing that the various groups of people who often are marked out as perpetrators of crime through diverse narratives of stories of crime “tend to be in some way structurally disadvantaged (class) or socially stigmatised (race).” (p. 151).

**FIGURE: 3.4: CAUSAL MODEL OF TALK OF CRIME AND PERCEIVED SENSE OF SAFETY**



Note: the - sign indicates a negative relationship with sense of safety

**3.4.5. Indirect and Direct Victimization**

The identification of the relationship between previous victimisation and feelings of safety has been the focus of several studies among adults and young people alike, and a common belief is that those who have been victims of crime hold different views about crime and violence and even about society and the city, from those who have not (Caldeira, 2000; Hale, 1996; Rader, May, & Goodrum, 2007; Schafer, Huebner, & Bynum, 2006; Skogan, 1995; Stafford & Galle, 1984). Some of the effects of having experienced violence are argued to be an enclosing of the home, moving, the adaptation of protective or avoidance strategies and/or a restriction of activities which all reinforce a feeling of loss and restriction as well as the perception of a chaotic existence in a dangerous place (Caldeira, 2000).

The hypothesised relationship between victimisation and sense of safety is commonly understood as direct- when the individual personally suffers the crime, or as indirect- when the individual knows the victim of a crime or have otherwise heard about it, and through this knowledge, his or her own perceived likelihood of becoming a victim is elevated (Hale, 1996). The explanation of direct victimisation has however been accused of being starkly limited, as it does not give reason to why people who have never been victim of a crime still report a

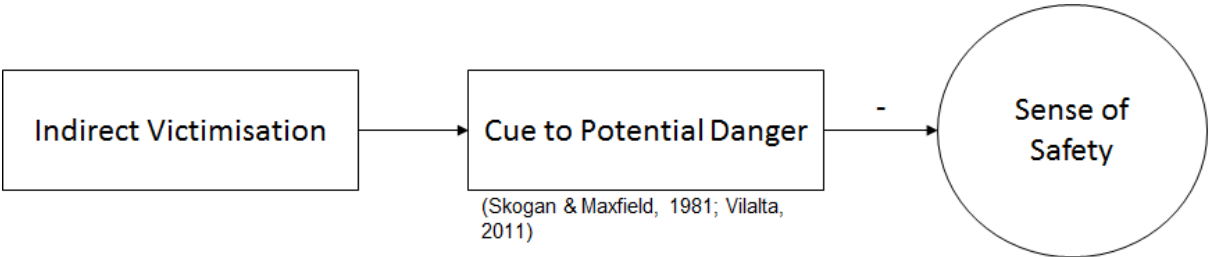
relatively low sense of safety (Hale, 1996). A plausible explanation has thus been found in the effects of indirect victimisation as will be discussed below.

### Indirect Victimisation

The relationship between indirect victimisation and sense of safety has tended to be more consistent than that of direct victimisation (as will be discussed below), where various studies have found that adults and children hearing about other people’s victimisation report an increased sense of insecurity themselves (Hale, 1996; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Tyler, 1980). This type of victimisation is thus also connected to the previously mentioned talk of crime and the flow of information between various individuals.

Through their studies in three American cities, Skogan and Maxfield (1981) demonstrated that a friend or a neighbour’s victimisation is taken as a cue to potential danger, and thus makes people more cognisant of their own risk of being victimised. As a consequence, they experience an elevated sense of insecurity without having experienced direct victimisation themselves (Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). This understanding is further dovetailed with the effect of a flow of information within people’s networks, where an individual’s belief of likelihood of becoming a victim is intensified because it has happened to someone else belonging to the same network (Vilalta, 2011). Previous research nevertheless suggest that children are more affected by being a direct victim of a crime than witnessing or hearing about it (Horn & Trickett, 1998). The relationship between victimisation and sense of safety consequentially seem to be complex, making it hard to identify a consistent pattern.

**FIGURE: 3.5: CAUSAL MODEL OF INDIRECT VICTIMISATION AND PERCEIVED SENSE OF SAFETY**



Note: The - sign indicates a negative relationship with sense of safety.

### Direct Victimisation

Considering that ‘being young’ is one of the most important predictors of victimisation, the prevalence of victimisation is significantly higher in this social group compared to the rest of the population (Pain, 2001; Walklate, 2007). Worth mentioning however, is that several



scholars claim that the perception of being victimised among young people is greater than their objective risk of victimisation (Ferraro, 1995; May & Dunaway, 2000; Shepherd & Moore, 2006), even though this has been contested in various recent research claiming the focus on young people as perpetrators has obscured the fact that they also experience high levels of victimisation (Pain, 2001). Studies have nevertheless concluded on varying results, where the studies of Roché (2003) in France, and Schreck and Miller (2003) in the US, are some of the few that have found direct victimisation to predict a lower sense of safety amongst victimised girls and boys alike. Other studies, such as that of DeGroof (2008) (Belgium), have only managed to identify a significant influence among boys, while May, in both his individual study (2001) and that in collaboration with colleagues (2002) (both US), have found no relation at all. This trend seems furthermore to be consistent with the research conducted amongst the adult population, leaving a reliable link between being victimised and sense of safety absent (DuBow, McCabe, & Kaplan, 1979; Ferraro, 1995; La Grange et al., 1992; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981).

**FIGURE: 3.6: CAUSAL MODEL OF DIRECT VICTIMISATION AND PERCEIVED SENSE OF SAFETY**

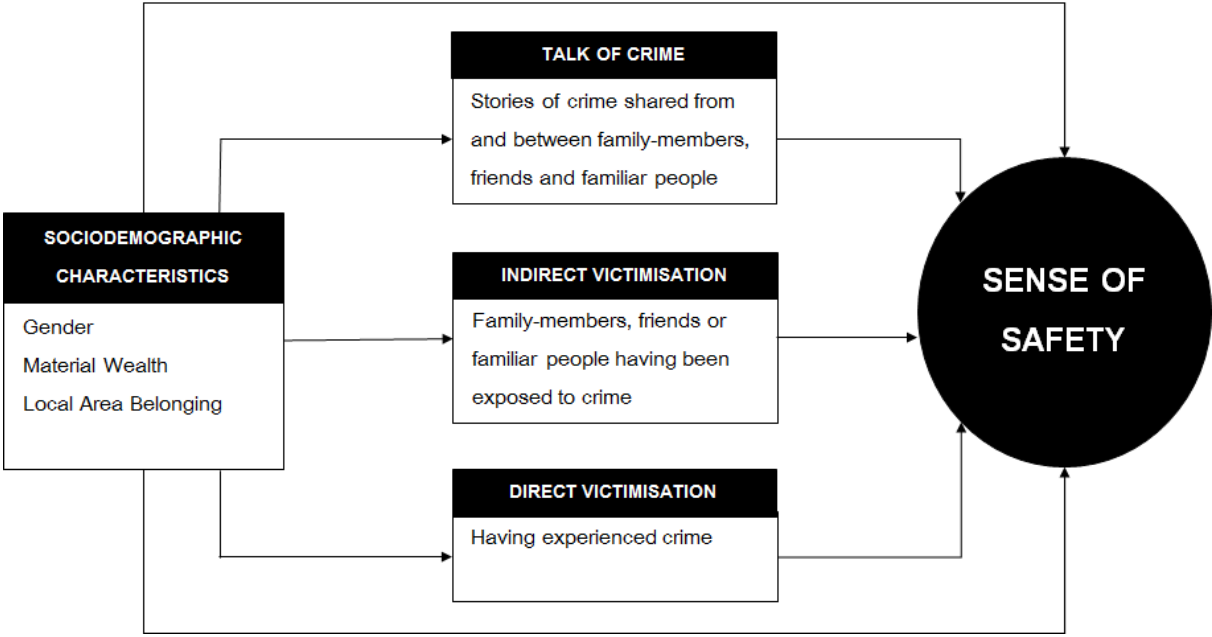


Note: The - sign indicates a negative relationship with sense of safety.

### 3.5. Hypotheses

In this chapter, theories and previous research have been presented, providing an indication of what findings one can expect to do in this study. With this as a starting point, hypotheses have been formulated and will be presented below. Based on the presented previous work and theories, a causal model of hypothetical relationships explaining children and young people’s perceived sense of safety within the public sphere has been developed based on the thesis’ variables. See Figure 3.7.

**FIGURE: 3.7: CAUSAL MODEL OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH’S PERCEIVED SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE**



**Hypothesis 1: Girls will report higher levels of unsafety**

The only consistent predictor of young people’s sense of safety is that of gender (being female) which is associated with a lower sense of safety in most studies (e.g. DeGroof, 2008; May & Dunaway, 2000; May et al., 2002). Gender differences in participants’ sense of safety is therefore expected, where girls are anticipated to report lower levels of safety than boys.

**Hypothesis 2: Children from families with high material wealth will feel higher levels of safety than children from families with lower material wealth**

The small existing body of literature on social class has found that poorer individuals report lower sense of safety than their wealthier counterparts (McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000). It is therefore expected to find a positive relationship between the families’ levels of material wealth and young people’s sense of safety.

**Hypothesis 3: Young people living and spending time in better-off areas will demonstrate higher levels of safety**

With respect to the local area, studies show that lower levels of sense of safety has been found within the younger population living and spending time in areas characterised by physical incivilities (Doran & Lees, 2005; Shepherd & Moore, 2006; Skogan, 1990; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Williamson et al., 2006; Wilson & Kelling, 1982). Children’s school area belonging is

therefore expected to be associated with their sense of safety, where those living and spending time in better-off areas are predicted to report higher levels of safety

**Hypothesis 4: Talk of crime and the sharing of victimisation stories will have a negative impact on young people's sense of safety**

Studies have found talk of crime to have a negative relationship with sense of safety through an extended allocation of stories of victimisation and crime (Caldeira, 2000; Hale, 1996; La Grange et al., 1992; J. B. Robinson et al., 2003). Talk or crime is thus expected to have negative effects on young people's sense of safety.

**Hypothesis 5: Children knowing someone who has been victim of a crime will report lower levels of safety**

Various studies have found that knowing about other people's victimisation leads to lower sense of safety (Hale, 1996; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Tyler, 1980). It is therefore expected to find a negative relationship between indirect victimisation and young people's sense of safety in the study.

**Hypothesis 6: Having been a direct victim of a crime will result in higher levels of unsafety**

Similar to indirect victimisation, people who have been victims of crime themselves have been demonstrated to report lower levels of safety than those who have not suffered these experiences (Hale, 1996; Rader et al., 2007; Schafer et al., 2006; Skogan, 1995; Stafford & Galle, 1984). A negative relationship between young people's direct victimisation and sense of safety is therefore expected.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH STRATEGY AND STUDY DESIGN**

### **4.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to determine young people's sense of safety within Mexico City in relation to their distinct sociodemographic characteristics. This chapter begins with an account of this particular study's chosen research strategy and design, while the next subsection presents the population and the sample, followed by short presentations of the questionnaire. The operationalisation of the central concepts and the qualities of the variables are then discussed in the subsequent section. Before the chapter turns to a description of the procedures of analysing the data. Thereafter, the validity section emphasises the reliability and validity of the research instrument, as well as the research study as a whole. Finally, issues related to children as participants is outlined, concluding with a thorough discussion on the relevant ethical considerations for the study.

### **4.2. Choice of Research Strategy and Design**

Choosing Mexico City as the research location for this study was based both on personal and professional choices. For one thing, I have a personal connection to Mexico City, and this is the city I have been living in for several years. I also find the evident discrepancies within the middle-class fascinating and have for some time had a desire to discover how various youth experience growing up in the city with regards to crime and perceived safety. To answer the research question "*How does school-area influence sense of safety among 12 to 15-year olds in Mexico City?*", I therefore decided to undertake a survey by means of a questionnaire to a representative sample of the population concerned. According to the Section on Survey Research Methods of the American Statistical Association (ASA), a survey is a method for gathering information from a sample of individuals, and is furthermore one of the oldest and most widely used methods within social research (Simon, 2006). It is extensively used in order to measure 'how much is happening to how many people' (Mayoux, 2006), while a questionnaire, as outlined by Simon (2006) "represent a potentially invaluable tool for ascertaining a wide range of factual information and subjective views and perceptions from a representative sample of a particular population" (p. 163). Questionnaires are also easily applied in a vast sample of situations by allowing variable degrees of flexibility of response according to circumstances. It was therefore judged as an appropriate research instrument for conducting a rigorous objective measurement in order to determine the truth or falsehood of my

predetermined hypotheses delineated in section 3.5 in the previous chapter (Mayoux, 2006). By presenting both questions and alternative answers in 15 out of 17 cases, the methodological approach through a questionnaire is also believed to produce more specific data which facilitates for an easier grouping and analysis than would have been attainable through the use of other methods opening up for better possibilities of comparison between the three school-area belongings (de Leeuw, 2011).

However, an appropriate design and testing of the questionnaire urge knowledge about the group of people being studied and what is to be explored (Simon, 2006). In that respect, my experiences having lived in Mexico City for many years were valuable. Through having visited different areas of the urban zone at day and at night, frequently made use of public transportation in order to get around in the city, and additionally having worked in one of the most exclusive, private schools in the city for an academic year, I have over an extended period of time conducted informal observations of the both the population and the incongruity of safety within the city. Through having personally lived and worked there, I firmly believe I have been granted with an invaluable knowledge and understanding of the context that would not have been achieved through a shorter fieldwork stay.

The data for the study was collected at three schools, where each school was invited to participate in the study due to being located in quite different areas of Mexico City, and also have varying crime rates (see section 4.2 in this chapter about the sample). The study follows ethical guidelines for research and data protection from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), and before the data collection could take place, I underwent the lengthy process of getting permission to do the study from the school leadership and the students and their parents (see section 4.5 on research ethics). The questionnaire was only distributed to the students who had been granted permission to participate by their parents and who at the moment expressed a will to participate.

At two schools I could go myself on the day of the data collection and provide additional information on the completion of the questionnaire as well as respond to questions or doubts that the participating students had. In the third school, however, a schoolteacher was in charge of presenting the study, providing information on how to respond and managing the completion of the survey. In the aftermath, she handed me the completed questionnaires together with a signed consent form from the parents affirming the student's participation. All parts of the survey were self-reported by the children themselves during school time.

In order to collect the data, I myself contacted several schools within Mexico City in order to present my masters project and check the possibilities for the schools' interest in participation. The response from the schools varied, where I in my first meeting with a public school was told that an initial permission from the *Dirección Operativa* (Operational Management) for that particular municipality was needed before I at all could present my study to the director. I was left with the impression that I had to pay the directorate in order for them so provide me access, and I therefore decided not to follow up on this request. Since it was the first school I visited, I was not depending on the participation from this school in particular. However, while approaching another school within the same municipality, the director was very welcoming and facilitated for several visits at the school and granted me access to all the school's students, corresponding to 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of Mexican middle school.), all without mentioning the directorate. In the private school, the process seemed a bit more structured, where after having presented my study to the director, participation was discussed and voted upon in the school board.

These two administrative approaches may furthermore represent both the hierarchical decision-making process common in Mexico through the director in the public school making the decision upon my first meeting with him. The process in the private school seem to be more of a democratic approach and may be a result of it being an international school with foreign leadership. An important note is also that being an international school is an indication of the level of academic quality and thus also the status of its enrolled student's families. This could also be observed by the big green area characterising the enclosed school premises, in contrast to the public schools characterised by bitumen and smaller space, but a higher number of students.

### **4.3. Population and Sampling**

Within quantitative research, the concept *population* has a technical meaning, and constitute a set of units that the *sample* is meant to represent (De Vaus, 2002). The units making up the population is therefore dependent on the units of analysis. A *sample* is obtained by collecting information about only some members of the population, while a *sampling frame* is based on the definition of the population (De Vaus, 2002).

In this study I was interested in learning about the lives of children situated in different geographical areas of Mexico City and whether or not some similarities and discrepancies could

be found between them with regards to their perceptions of safety. Participants were selected through a “sample clustering” approach, where subgroups of the population are used as the sampling unit, rather than individuals. I found this sampling method to be most efficient since the study takes place over a wide geographical region. To get a decent sample size in the relevant age group (12-15 years), I early on decided to contact a few secondary schools as it is easier to contact lots of individuals in a few schools than a few individuals in many different schools. Disadvantages involved include an increased risk of bias, in the case that the chosen schools and students are not representative of the population, resulting in an increased sampling error. The sample included all of the students in the selected classes in each school in order to attempt to accurately reflect the referent population. In this regard, school area 2 stands out, considering it is a private school and thus reflects the exclusive, upper-middle class within the municipality of Xochimilco. As previously mentioned, the study was preliminarily approved by the school boards, and the schools were in charge of handing out and receiving the information and consent forms before the study was undertaken.

As presented in chapter two, Mexico City is divided into 16 different municipalities, and the first step in the sampling process was to examine these areas with regard to relevant dimensions. The most important dimensions were safety (e.g. crime rate) and economic position (e.g. marginality and income levels). Due to stark social inequalities between and within the municipalities, a central tendency is for the children with affluent parents to go to private school while children with low income parents attend public school. Thus, the sample of schools in my study included both public and private schools, schools in more and less safe municipalities, and children living in families with varying household economies (see chapter 2)

The population in the study is defined as children attending formal education on a lower secondary level within three of Mexico City’s municipalities; Álvaro Obregón (school 1), Xochimilco (school 2) and Cuauhtémoc (school 3). The three municipalities participating in the study represent the north (city centre), west and south-east of the city (see Figure 4.1). The three municipalities all have different characteristics which was further presented in chapter 2, but important to note is that the municipality school area 3 represents, Cuauhtémoc, was found to be the most dangerous municipality within the city in 2018 in terms of crime and victimisation

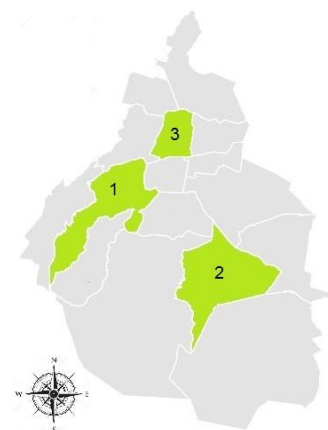


Figure 4.1: Mexico City area with the three participating municipalities highlighted in green. The numbers represent the school numbers.

(OCMX, 2019). Of further notice is it that school area 2 represent the private sector of the municipality Xochimilco, placing the children within this school in a particular position with regards to access to safety in comparison to the majority of the municipality, but also the children from the two other schools.

My *sampling frame* is that of one public lower secondary school in each of the municipalities of Álvaro Obregón and Cuauhtémoc, and one private lower secondary school from the municipality Xochimilco. The goal in selecting a sample from a school sampling frame, is to achieve representation of the population, which is achieved through the avoidance of exclusion or under-representation of certain types of people in the population.

By using two public and one private school as the sampling frame for the research, it is also anticipated that the schools will function as a facilitator of access to a bigger number of participants than what would have been achieved through an alternative approach such as having the questionnaire distributed in the mail or posting it online. It was also believed that applying the questionnaire during school hours would enforce the representativeness of samples, encouraging the generalisation of data compared to the rest of the population. Using schools as a research location, however, further brings forward a set of particular ethical challenges which will be thoroughly discussed in section 4.7 within this chapter.

As presented in Table 4.1, the questionnaire was completed by a total of 548 students, where 53% were girls, and 62% of the sample were within the first age cohort (12 to 13 years old). The overall response rate was 71%, but the samples and response rates varied between the schools.

**TABLE 4.1: SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY SCHOOL BELONGING**

	School 1	School 2	School 3	All schools
Gross sample	400	234	137	771
Net sample	254	185	115	548
Response rate	64 %	79 %	84 %	71 %

In the private school, 185 out of 234 (79%) students participated in the study. In one public school with what is estimated to be 400 students invited to participate in the study, 254 students partook (64%). This estimation is based on the numbers of students perceived to have received information about the study before the actual day of the survey, as it in several classes became obvious that none or only a few students had been informed about the study (more on this will be elaborated in this chapter’s section 4.7). In the final public school, I was only allowed to



invite a few classes to take part in the study, making the gross sample 137, where 115 students participated (84%).

### **4.3.1. External Validity**

External validity refers to the degree in which the results of a research design can be generalised past the specific way the original experiment was conducted (Stangor, 2007). A reliable measurement is therefore one where the same result can be obtained on repeated occasions (De Vaus, 2002). This means that even though a study may have high internal validity, it can be externally invalid if the findings cannot be reproduced or expected to hold up in other tests of the research hypotheses (Stangor, 2007). A central issue underlying external validity is that of *generalisation*, meaning “the extent to which relationships among conceptual variables can be demonstrated in a wide variety of people and a wide variety of manipulated or measured variables.” (Stangor, 2007, p. 256)

As previously presented, the gender distribution in the sample is characterised by a small favour of girls (53%), where in school 1, girls make up 55% of the sample, in school 2, 50%, and in school 3, 56%. These distributions are representative for the total population within each school, as well as the same trend of a small favour of women may be noted within the city where they constituted 53% of the total population in 2015 (INEGI, 2015a).

The distribution of material wealth varies both within and between the three schools, but the private school (school 2) nevertheless clearly distinguish itself from the two public schools with 79% of the children reporting to have access to all three material wealth indicators (which will be further presented in chapter 5) In comparison, this percentage is 21 for school 1, and 17 for school 3. The stark difference in material wealth between the private and the public schools are however to be expected considering that children of affluent families tend to go to private schools. The high percentage of children from affluent families within school area 2 is nevertheless not to be considered an indicator of the material wealth within the whole municipality within which it is located. As discussed in chapter 2, extreme differences may be found even within one and the same neighbourhood throughout the city. It is therefore to be considered representative for the upper-middle class inhabiting this area. This may also be noted in the 2010 numbers referring to poverty within the municipalities, where 28% of the total population of 415 thousand and 7 within the municipality school area 2 belonging represents (Xochimilco) was poor. This percentage was 31 in the municipality of school area 1 belonging

(Álvaro Obregón) with a total population of 727 thousand 34 and 24% out of a total of 531 thousand 831 in municipality of school area 3 (Xochimilco) (SEDESOL, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c).

School 2 also stands out with regards to parents' education, with 96% reporting their parents to have a bachelor, masters or a PhD as highest level of education, while for both public schools, this percentage is 40. Within Xochimilco, the average years passed in formal education is 10.2, while in Álvaro Obregón it is 10.4 and in Cuahutémoc it is 11.3 (SEDESOL, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c). This further encouraging the readers' understanding of the sample construction and that the representativeness for school area 2 will only apply to the upper-middle class within Xochimilco.

Of further importance is the presence of crime within these three municipalities, as has been presented in chapter 2. Table 2.1 demonstrates the distribution of 10 common high-impact crimes in Mexico City by the three municipalities, and as expected, Cuahutémoc (school area 3 belonging) is characterised by considerable higher rates of incidents in 9 of the 10 criminal actions. It is therefore also expected for children with school area 3 belonging to report higher values of victimisation (both direct and indirect) as well as lower levels of perceived sense of safety within their local areas (home and neighbourhood). Considering the economic position found within school 2, it is also expected for most the children from this school to be living in gated communities, further enhancing their access to protection measures.

#### **4.4. Description of research instrument: Questionnaire**

A questionnaire may be defined as “a device or tool for collecting information to describe, compare, understand and/or explain knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and/or socio-demographic characteristics of a particular population (target group)” (Simon, 2006, p. 164). In this thesis, the survey instrument is an independently developed self-report questionnaire, which was constructed through cooperation between myself and my two supervisors at NTNU, Vegard Johansen and Marit Ursin (see appendix 1 for the English, and 6 for the Spanish version). The questionnaire was designed specifically for the needs of the group, where both their age and culture were considered. Independent re-translation of the survey into Spanish was further completed in cooperation with two actors working within the government of Mexico, with careful consideration of the sampling selection. The questionnaire was administered in the school classroom during school hours, with the target population of schoolchildren from 12-15 years of age.

Due to the cognitive functioning of children aged 12 to 16, it is suggested that standardised questionnaires similar to those for adults are applicable (de Leeuw, 2011). Ambiguity of question wording is however particularly important, and by collaborating with Mexican nationals, I was able to benefit from local reconnaissance and discussions in order to make a careful consideration with regards to certain terms and concepts which do not translate literally, as well as the meaning and ambiguity of various words (de Leeuw, 2011; Simon, 2006). The simplest possible words and phrases were chosen while actively avoiding words with negative connotations, technical or political jargons, slang and otherwise ambiguous terms. The participant's social and economic characteristics were also closely considered through an avoidance of questions to which many of the participants would not be able to answer or relate to. Before applying the survey to the sample, a small pilot-study was made with the intention of further authenticating the translation and verifying the understanding of each question and answer provided in the questionnaire.

Considering quantitative research often measures theoretical concepts which are not directly observable, the quality of the research instruments used is essential. In the constructed questionnaire, the most commonly used format of a semi-structured questionnaire was applied. The choice fell on this structure due to its widespread use in gathering information about participants' perceptions of a specific topic or to explore differences between various groups of people (de Leeuw, 2011).

The questionnaire combines 15 structured questions with the intention of obtaining basic information, and two additional questions permitting more flexible answers where the participants can convey ideas or perceptions in an open-ended manner. It is further divided into four sections ranging from demographic characterisation questions about the participant and his or her family; their perception of public safety in relation to crime in Mexico City; previous victimisation of crime; and strategies employed in the participant's daily life in an attempt to either sustain or increase their sense of safety. In this master's thesis, the three first topics of the questionnaire are the focal points where a selection of seven variables are being used in order to predict children and young people's sense of safety within the general urban area of *the city*, their *neighbourhood*, and their *private homes*. Based on the questionnaire and the hypotheses presented in the theoretical chapter of the thesis, the following variables are considered as relevant: Sense of safety within Mexico City (day and night); sense of safety within the participant's neighbourhood (day and night); sense of safety within the home (day

and night); gender; material wealth; school area belonging; talk of crime and indirect and direct victimisation.

The questionnaire follows the 'golden rule' by commencing with the most basic and uncontentious information such as the participant's gender, age and their parent's educational and labour situation, while the more contentious and subjective questions, such as if they have access to a place, person or object which in particular increases their sense of safety, come towards the end (Simon, 2006). This particular structure is associated with two main advantages, where it primarily assures the recording of usable essential data in the unusual case of time running out or the participant taking offence at later questions, and prematurely terminating the completion of the questionnaire (Simon, 2006). Subsequently, it puts the participant at ease through first covering the contextual information and then gradually moving on to explore ideas, opinions, perceptions and the like in a more expansive manner. It thus represents a good way of maximising the value of the questionnaire (Simon, 2006). By ending the questionnaire with an open-ended question focusing on what increases young people's sense of safety, the intention is also for the completion of the questionnaire to end in a positive manner.

Another important facet within child research is to ensure enough time is given for the child to share its story or perception and not feel pressured to complete the task it is given in unreasonable time. While conducting my survey I had anticipated that the completion of the questionnaire would take about 10 minutes. I added 5 more minutes for a short introduction and the handing out and reception of the questionnaires. In most cases the time was sufficient in order for most participants to complete the survey. However, I took notice that the youngest groups needed a bit more time than the oldest, and thus informed the teachers while entering the class that it might take a bit longer to complete the survey. In the case of students not being able to complete the survey, the children were instructed to hand them in to me in the entrance area of the school during their next break. Several of the questionnaires from this particular class were nonetheless not completed, as I did not want to coerce any of the adolescents to complete the questionnaire in their break.

Furthermore, the various variables and scales will be presented. An explanation of how they are operationalised, whether there is correspondence between the scale and the theoretical concept, and why it is considered appropriate that they be included in the regression model will additionally be outlined.

#### 4.4.1. Dependent Variables: Perceived Safety

According to Ferraro and La Grange (1987) perceived safety or fear is often measured using various multi-item scales which also is the case in this study. Individual personal *perception of safety* in Mexico City, the participants' neighbourhood, and their home is measured using a scale consisting of six items related to self-reported levels of safety in each of the three locations, distinguished between sense of safety during the day and during the night (see Table 4.3). Each item has a five-point Likert answering scale ranging from very insecure (1) to very secure (5), resulting in an ordinal measurement of sense of safety.

**TABLE 4.3: MEASUREMENT OF PERCEIVED SAFETY**

Question	Response Options
In your opinion, Mexico City during the DAY is	Very insecure (1) Insecure (2) Regular (3) Secure (4) Very secure (5)
In your opinion, Mexico City during the NIGHT is	
In your opinion, your neighbourhood during the DAY is	
In your opinion, your neighbourhood during the NIGHT is	
In general, how safe do you feel in the home during the DAY	
In general, how safe do you feel in the home during the NIGHT	

#### 4.4.2. Independent Variables

Independent variables are the variables which in various ways influence the dependent variables (Pallant, 2016). In this thesis, relevant independent variables are; gender, material wealth, school belonging, talk of crime, indirect victimisation and direct victimisation.

##### **Girl**

This variable is included in the analyses due to the expectation of Hypothesis 1 to find a lower sense of safety amongst girls (DeGroof, 2008; May & Dunaway, 2000; May et al., 2002; Pain, 2001). Gender was measured with a single item question with a dichotomous scale to answer: "Girl" (0) or "Boy" (1). In the regression analyses, Boy is used as the reference category.

##### **Material Wealth**

It is expected to find a positive correlation between material wealth and sense of safety according to Hypothesis 2 and is thus the reason for this variable to be included in the analyses (McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000). A material wealth scale was constructed in order to test whether this may help to explain the gap between various children’s sense of safety within three various geographical areas. This scale is constructed based on three material wealth indicators which are listed in Table 4.4, with the dichotomous response options of “No” (0) or “Yes” (1). Young people’s families’ affluence is consequentially a summary index based on the three indicators presented in Table 4.4 with summary scores ranging from 0 (lowest affluence) to 3 (highest affluence).

**TABLE 4.4: MATERIAL WEALTH SCALE**

Question	
The current economic situation of your family allows for you to...	
Items	Response Options
1. own one car or more	“No” (0) “Yes” (1)
2. have your own bedroom in the house	
3. have a video-surveillance system, intercommunication or gate preventing people to arrive directly at the door of your home	

### **School Area Belonging**

Based on hypothesis 3, it is expected to find varied sense of safety based on the young people’s school area belonging (Doran & Lees, 2005; Shepherd & Moore, 2006; Skogan, 1990; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Williamson et al., 2006; Wilson & Kelling, 1982). This variable was created based on the various schools the children were attending at the time of the survey, and as stated in chapter two, the order of the schools is based on my access to them, where school 1 represents the public sector within the municipality of Álvaro Obregón, school 2 represents the upper-middle class in Xochimilco, and school 3 represents the public sector in Cuauhtémoc. In the regression analyses, School 3 (public school in exposed area) is used as the reference category.

### **Talk of Crime**

The variable of talk of crime is based on Hypothesis 4’s expectation of finding it to have a negative impact on young people’s safety (Caldeira, 2000; Hale, 1996; La Grange et al., 1992; J. B. Robinson et al., 2003). Talk of crime was measured using one item: ‘How often do you talk about insecurity with your family, familiar people and/or friends?’ with a four-point scale

to answer: never (1), 1-2 times a week (2), 3-4 times a week (3) and 5 or more times a week (4).

### **Indirect Victimisation**

Hypothesis 5 expects to find a negative relationship between indirect victimisation and sense of safety (Hale, 1996; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Tyler, 1980). An indirect victimisation scale was constructed in order to test the hypothesis and consists of five items where each item was dummy coded with 0 as no victimisation and 1 as having been victim of a crime. The scale varies between 0 (no victimisation) and 5 (experienced all five types of victimisation).

**TABLE 4.5: INDIRECT VICTIMISATION SCALE**

<b>Question</b>	
Have some of your family, familiar people or friends been a direct victim of some of these actions?	
<b>Items</b>	<b>Dummy Code</b>
1. crime, like vandalism, towards property (graffiti, broken windows etc.)	"No Victimization" (0) "Victim" (1)
2. robbery in the house or complete or partial theft of family vehicle	
3. assaulted with or without the use of violence	
4. an armed crime	
5. other serious crimes (kidnapping, death-threats, sexual assault, murder etc.)	

### **Direct Victimization**

According to sixth and last Hypothesis, it is expected to find a negative relationship between young people's direct victimisation and sense of safety (Hale, 1996; Skogan, 1995). A direct victimisation scale is therefore constructed based on the same five item-scale as indirect victimisation, with each item dummy-coded with 0 as no victimisation and 1 as having been victim of a crime. The scale varies between 0 (no victimisation) and 5 (experienced all five types of victimisation).

**TABLE 4.6: DIRECT VICTIMISATION SCALE**

Question	
Have you ever been a direct victim of some of these actions?	
Items	Dummy Code
1. crime, like vandalism, towards property (graffiti, broken windows etc.)	
2. robbery in the house or complete or partial theft of family vehicle	“No Victimization” (0)
3. assaulted with or without the use of violence	“Victim” (1)
4. an armed crime	
5. other serious crimes (kidnapping, death-threats, sexual assault, murder etc.)	

## 4.5. Statistical Analyses

In quantitative research, statistical analyses are central (Ringdal, 2013), and to answer the thesis’ problem, SPSS (IBM v.25) has been used as a statistical method. Descriptive statistics and correlation analyses are used in order to highlight the research problem.

### 4.5.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics refers to raw data which are simplified as tables, graphs, and summary statistics such as mean and standard deviation and refers to various ways of measuring central tendency and the spread of data (Valås, 2006). In this thesis descriptive statistics is used in order to check the spread of sense of safety within Mexico City in general, the respondent’s neighbourhoods and their home as well as the spread of girls and boys in the sample and school belonging. Furthermore, descriptive statistics is used in order to explore how sense of safety is spread within the categories of gender and school belonging.

Measurements of central tendency of the sample distribution and the spread of data about this central tendency is used in order to present descriptive statistics of the six dependent variables. Skewness refers to the distribution of the data and whether or not these have a normal distribution, which is indicated by a skewness value of 0. In the case of a positive skewness, the distribution is skewed to the right, indicating a clustering of scores under the average, and that the mean is higher than the median (Cox, 2017; Pallant, 2016). In the case of a negatively skewed distribution (indicated by a negative value) the majority of the sample scores above the



average, and the mean is lower than the median (Cox, 2017; Pallant, 2016). According to George and Mallery (2001), this value should be between -2 to +2. In order to present the descriptive statistics of sense of safety among boys and girls as well as between the three school belongings, percent values are used.

#### **4.5.2. Correlation Analysis**

In the study, a bivariate correlation analysis showing the interrelationships among the independent variables of the thesis is used. This allows for the detection of the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the variables (Pallant, 2016), but does not provide information of the causal relationship between them (Eikemo & Clausen, 2012). The direction of a correlation may be positive, which indicates that when the value of one variable increases, the other variable's value will also increase. If the correlation is negative however (indicated by a minus sign in front of the value), the increased value within one variable leads to a decreased value within the other. A correlation of 0 ( $r = 0$ ), indicates no relationship between the two variables, while a perfect correlation of -1 (negative) or 1 (positive), indicates that the value of one of the variables can be determined exactly by knowing the other variable (Pallant, 2016).

A correlation matrix will be presented in chapter 5 with a review of the relationships between the independent variables of the thesis. A variety of correlations were used, where Pearson product-moment coefficient (Pearsons  $r$ ) measures the correlation between two continuous variables, point biserial correlation measures it between one dichotomous and one continuous variable, and phi gives the correlation values for two dichotomous variables. A correlation between 0,1 to 0,29 is generally characterised as low, while it is characterised as moderate between 0,30 and 0,49, and large or strong between 0,50 to 1,0 (Schober, Boer, & Schwarte, 2018). By presenting the relationships in a correlation matrix, checking for multicollinearity is also made possible, indicating whether the correlation between some of the variables are too strong and thus may provide unreliable estimates.

#### **4.5.3. Multivariate Regression Analyses**

Seven independent variables are used in the analyses of this thesis, requiring multivariate regression analyses (Eikemo & Clausen, 2012). A multiple regression allows for the various independent variables to be presented in blocks (Pallant, 2016), permitting the examination of

the effect of the children's gender (1), material wealth (2), school-area (3 and 4), talk of crime (5), indirect victimisation (6) and direct victimisation (7) on each of the dependent variables. The regression analyses were conducted in two steps, where Step 1 included independent variable 1 - 4, while Step 2 included all seven independent variables. Since the data were inherently clustered within schools and within areas, my analyses were performed by using the multilevel regression technique of hierarchical linear modelling (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002).

#### **4.6. Children and Quantitative Research**

Considering this study is part of a master's thesis in childhood studies, the use of children as participants is a central factor. As mentioned in chapter three, there has been an unacknowledged and inappropriate adult-centric bias within research on aspects of childhood up until recently, where instead of asking the children themselves, adult participants such as parents or teachers have been favoured when investigating children's lives (J. Scott, 2008). Through the social studies of children and childhood nevertheless, the growth of body of research focusing on children as social actors in their own right by showing an interest in children *per se* has been significantly amplified. The body of research using surveys as a means to access the perceptions of this particular group of the society nevertheless still lags behind, where a very limited number of surveys are directed at children specifically (J. Scott, 2008).

Through facilitating for the direct voice and participation of children, ethnographic research has become a central method for the social studies of childhood (James, 2001). Ethnography has nevertheless been argued to not be a method *per se*, but rather a research approach facilitating for the use of different methods whereof children's participation plays a central role. Accordingly, the importance of doing research *with* rather than *about* children has gained strong foothold, demonstrating a trend of the acknowledgement of the competence and abilities of the child, where even very young children are perceived capable to formulate their own philosophical explanations for the world (de Leeuw, 2011; Ennew et al., 2009). As a contrast however, the main reason for the scarce numbers of quantitative research with children has been attributed to the concerns about their cognitive ability to process and respond to structured questions about behaviour, perceptions, opinions and beliefs (J. Scott, 2008). It seems therefore to be an inconsistency in the evaluation of children's proficiencies.

Using surveys in research with children howbeit, may contribute to the theoretical understanding and empirical knowledge of the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion

which are particularly evident in childhood experiences and life course trajectories (J. Scott, 2008). With regards to perceptions of safety, it is therefore believed that our understanding of the concept and how it affects the lives of children and young people would benefit from listening to and promoting children and young people's voices. The intention with this particular research is therefore, additional to answering the main and detailed research questions, to emphasise that children as young as 12 years old have firm opinions and perceptions regarding their own safety within a variety of contexts and that they are fully capable of processing and responding structured questions if they only are given the chance.

Although more recent methodological innovations such as focus group discussions and participatory assessments have become increasingly popular within child research (Simon, 2006) the disadvantage with participatory research is that instead of generating new knowledge for participants, it may merely extract the information everybody already knows for the benefits of the researcher (Mayoux, 2006). The very act of organising group discussions may additionally not only raise unrealistic expectations, but also make the participants more vulnerable by expressing their views and problems in public (Mayoux, 2006). As a consequence, the information obtained may be unreliable, but maybe more crucial are the undesirable consequences which may arise for all concerned (Mayoux, 2006). It is furthermore believed that by asking each participant the same questions under the same conditions, quantitative research through the means of a questionnaire facilitates for comparisons between children and childhoods through reaching a bigger number of participants (de Leeuw, 2011). The lack of direct contact between the researcher and the participants which is present in methods such as interviews (Ringdal, 2013), may furthermore facilitate for a more comfortable environment for the child and thus also influence the flow and honesty of information and thus minimise 'observer-included bias' (Sayer, 1992, p. 245). Moreover, the relative merits of quantitative versus qualitative approaches, although contested, is still found to be stronger with policymakers tending to give more attention to 'hard facts' (Kellett, 2011).

#### **4.7. Ethical Considerations**

A key issue within all types of research is the consideration of relevant ethical factors (Scheyvens & Storey, 2003), and even though these factors may vary according to the particular type of questionnaire used, basic issues mostly centre on confidentiality and the need to avoid embarrassing or contravening the cultural and social norms of the participants (Simon, 2006). With regards to contemporary research with children nevertheless, a particular set of

methodological and ethical guidelines based on the possible challenges of power, participation, exploitation or coercion has been developed, urging awareness about the risks involved for children participating, and the potential conflicts of interest between children and adults (Ennew et al., 2009; Morrow & Richards, 1996). These ethical principles do not guarantee that children always will be protected from harm while participating in research but are rather a means through which the awareness of these issues is strengthened (Ennew et al., 2009), and has thus been considered an integral and planned element in this research design.

#### **4.7.1. Key Ethical Issues**

As a response to the developments within child research and ethics, a significant growth in child research ethics has emerged during the recent years, emphasising the need to consider ethical issues through the entire research process (Alderson & Morrow, 2011; Morrow & Richards, 1996). According to Powell and colleagues (2012), some of the key ethical issues within childhood research are those connected to informed consent, the protection of the children and anonymity and confidentiality. These issues were also central in this study and will therefore be further explored in three following sub-section.

##### **Consent**

The ethical consideration of informed consent is one of the most debated issues on research with children (Alderson & Morrow, 2011; Cocks, 2006; Morrow & Richards, 1996; Powell et al., 2012), where common issues are related to who should be providing consent to children's participation, how the consent should be obtained, considerations of children's competence to give own consent and the nature of fully-informed, freely-given consent (UNICEF, 2011).

In this study, as in many child research studies, I was dependent on the consent from several gatekeepers, there amongst the school board, teachers and the potential participators' parents in addition to the children themselves. An information form (see appendix 2 for English and 7 for Spanish version) was therefore developed and provided the schools in order to provide information describing the purpose of the research, the research procedures and expected duration together with an identification of myself as a researcher and the willingness to answer any questions the schools could have. I also personally presented myself and the study to the head of school in school 1 and 2, and to the teacher in charge of the administration of the survey in school 3.

It was furthermore decided to obtain a written, informed parental consent (see appendix 4 and 9), where only the children whose parents gave their formal consent was invited to participate in the study. A non-response was assumed to be a refusal of participation. In order to ensure that the potential participants and their parents knew and understood the purpose of the study (informed consent), an information form (see appendix 7 and 8) together with the consent form was handed out to the head of school 1 and 2, who then distributed the forms to various teachers in the schools. The teachers were therefore in control of who were informed about the study and not, and in the case of school 1, I was not successful in gaining cooperation from all the teachers. This became obvious on the day of the survey, as it seemed like approximately half of the classes I was invited in to, had been notified of the study.

Children's consent was based on both them showing interest in the study by giving the information- and consent form to their parents and then returning it signed to the school or myself, as well as their active demonstration of will to participate on the day of the survey, were each provided with an information form which was handed out together with the questionnaire with an encouragement of them reading it before completing the survey (see appendix 5 and 10, and 1 and 6). The fact that the sub-director in school 2 also made the most appreciated effort of sending both the information- and consent forms to all of the school parents by email, and that in school 3, the school teacher administered the survey, further made the importance of the children demonstrating will to participate on the day of the survey in these schools, pertinent.

Parents are moreover argued to have a significant impact on children and young people's consent to participate in research, where parental support of the study is demonstrated to increase children's likeliness to agree to participation (Cree, Kay, & Tisdall, 2002). Due to this, an emphasis was given to the voluntariness of participation in the information form provided the students as well as in the introductory comments on the day of the survey. This study also recognises the importance for children to know that their parents are informed about the study in order to inhibit the sensation of them doing something their parents perhaps would not approve of by participating.

The procedure of making sure parental consent was given, varied between school 1 and school 2 and 3, requiring an adaptation of the information provided before the questionnaire was handed out to the participating children. In school 2 and 3, I was provided with a list of all the students in each class, where the students who had been granted parental permission to participate were highlighted, and the signed consent forms attached. This made it easy to distinguish who had been given permission and not, and thus led to an emphasis on the aspect

of voluntarism in the information provided to the students in these two schools. In school 1 however, I did not receive any such register of the students, and considering the time consuming effort, but also the lowered levels of confidentiality (which I will come back to in the section on privacy in this chapter), in the case of identifying each child who had handed in a signed consent form, I therefore asked the students who previously had handed in the form raise their hands if they wanted to participate in the study. A few students also handed the signed consent form directly to me on the day of the survey. Having an emphasis on the parental consent did however not lead to the omission of voluntary participation, as on further review, I had more written consent forms from parents than children participating in the study.

### **Protection of Children**

Another basic ethical principle within research with children is that of protecting the participants, their families and their communities from harm or injury and putting the best interests of the child first (Berman, 2016; Schenk & Williamson, 2005). Within the social studies of childhood, children's very inclusion in research has come to be perceived of as a means of protection through providing children with the possibility of participation and thus giving them a voice, and address power imbalances (Powell et al., 2012).

One of the aims of this study is to emphasise that children and young people understand and experience things different from adults, and that a recognition of this may improve our knowledge which better enables us to act as a response to their situation and needs. Children and young people are increasingly considered the best sources of accurate information about their own lives, and their perspectives of their own safety within the urban area may furthermore be central in the understanding of adult sense of safety within the urban context (Goodey, 1994; Kagan, 1979). While also acknowledging that children as young as 12 years old have firm opinions and perceptions regarding their own life, this study furthermore gives recognition to the competences and abilities of children and young people. In order to demonstrate this, a selection of comments written by the children in the comment-section of the questionnaire will be highlighted. The comment-section was left open for the children to convey any idea, opinion or perception as they pleased, as the section was left at the end of the questionnaire, within no initial question or remark, except for "Comments" (*comentarios*). One of the frequent comments made by the participating children in the survey was also that of gratitude, where they expressed great appreciation for having been taken into consideration. This also demonstrates the lack of focus on child participation in research within Mexico, where they

amongst other, seem to be consequently excluded from both national and local population surveys. This is furthermore indicated by the comments cited below;

“...I really liked the survey because it gave me the possibility to express what I feel while being in the city”.  
Girl, 12/13 years, school area 1 belonging

“Thank you for asking about my everyday experiences. I wish there were more surveys like this.” (Girl, 14/15 years, school area 3 belonging)

Emphasis should be granted to the beneficence and non-maleficence of the study, where the desire to protect children from potential harm of research while also allowing them to benefit from the results (UNICEF, 2011). Children are commonly perceived of as particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and other harmful outcome, and extra precautions are therefore needed in order to protect young people participating in research (Schenk & Williamson, 2005). An important feature of this study was therefore to figure out a way through which I could disseminate my findings back to the participators. I initially had the intention of returning to the schools and present my findings to the school staff and the children themselves, however, the time spent in Mexico after the analyses were done was not sufficient for me to be able to do this. However, I have already delivered a presentation of my findings to one of the schools and will provide the other two schools with the corresponding information as well. In this aspect, the consequences of conducting research within a different country that that within which one commonly inhabit becomes apparent.

### **Privacy: Confidentiality and Anonymity**

As a third ethical principle, privacy gives emphasis to the need to conduct research within a location the child finds safe while also making sure that the participant's privacy is upheld through confidentiality (UNICEF, 2011). Through being conducted in the school, this study follows the trend found in a lot of child research, bringing with it some particular aspects which may compromise confidentiality (G. Valentine, 1999).

One central aspect is the curiosity adults have about the little know, complex social worlds children share with their peers and siblings, making it difficult to find a private physical location for the research (G. Valentine, 1999). In this survey however, all questionnaires were completed within a classroom setting with varying levels of presence from the teachers. In some situations, the teacher left the room during the time it took for the youths to complete the survey, while in other situations they stayed and began doing their marking or engaged in small talk with me. It is difficult to say whether the presence of the teacher had an influence on the results, however I never experienced that the teacher engaged with the participating children during the

completion of the questionnaire. The fact that the survey was completed in writing, and that the questionnaires in most cases were handed in directly to me after completion, and then put in a black box only I had access to may moreover have decreased the possible influence of the teacher's presence.

What also seem to be a particularly contentious issue within sensitive research, is the dilemma around the limits of confidentiality with regards to disclosure of participants reporting high levels of victimisation (UNICEF, 2011). However, by not being able to link the consent forms to the participating children through most of them being handed in to the school administration before they were given to me, identification was made difficult (Amaya-Jackson, Socolar, Hunter, Runyan, & Colindres, 2000; Carroll-Lind, Chapman, Gregory, & Maxwell, 2006; Kotch, 2000). By specifically asking the children not to write their names on the questionnaire (see appendix 2 and 7) and not being able to check the results before leaving the school premises, the anonymity of data further limited my knowledge of individual disclosure of victimisation.

#### **4.7.2. Power Issues, Methodology and Ethics**

Negotiating unequal power relations is one of the central aspects of ethical child research (Abebe, 2009), and given the nature of power relations between adults and children, it is argued that it may be difficult to ascertain that children's consent is given freely (UNICEF, 2011). This is due to adult's powerful position in relation to children (Sime, 2008) and children's possible feelings of obligation to comply (C. Robinson & Kellett, 2004; G. Valentine, 1999). Gallagher and colleagues (2010) underpins these arguments by stating that "children's consent must be seen in the context of constraints, obligations and expectations over which researchers have little control" (p. 479), while Ennew and colleagues (2009) argue this is particularly pertinent in the case of research conducted in settings where adult's reign supreme, such as in school.

As mentioned, in this study, children were given the information and consent forms in order to bring to their parents and then back to the school administration. Considering this is a common procedure within schools, the concept of voluntarism was enhanced in the information sheet attached to the questionnaire as well as in the information provided on the day of the survey.

Within contemporary childhood research, there seems to be some consensus on the argument that the methods used are determined by the perception researchers have of children (e.g. Punch, 2002; Solberg, 2006; Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008). The interest within this project to better



understand how children perceive their own safety while occupying various locations within Mexico City, and which factors play influential roles in this perceived safety builds on the understanding of the child as a subject in research (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008), and promotes children as human beings similar to adults with inherently varying levels of competence. The importance of listening to children's own perspectives on matters concerning them plays a pivot role together with the focus on understanding children's lives in the here-and-now. The study nevertheless goes against the current trend following James and Prout's (1990, pp. 8-9; 1997, p. 8) recommendation of conducting ethnographic research with children in order to facilitate for their direct voice and participation. Instead, a quantitative approach was chosen, and a questionnaire was developed and then applied to the selected research participants. The aim of this research is nonetheless in accordance with research with children as it is stated by Ennew and her colleagues (2009), by aiming to empower the participating children and young people with the goal of gaining new information about their lives so that scientific replicable information from children about children can be put in the hands of policy makers and programmers.

While doing research with children on topics considered sensitive, Cashmore (2006) argues that this implies difficulties in gaining parental consent, while others have argued it also brings forth concerns about re-traumatisation of children (Øverlien, 2010) and an increased scrutiny from a hierarchy of gatekeepers (Hood, Kelley, & Mayall, 1996). Even though most of these studies refer to the study of domestic violence, these aspects have also been considered within this study due to questions about direct victimisation of high-impact crimes.

The use of questionnaires in cross-cultural research contexts require a consideration of several issues of difference, diversity, linguistic ability, the literal and figurative intercultural 'translatability' of terms and concepts and research ethics (Simon, 2006). In this respect, by collaborating with Mexican nationals before having a final version of both the various information forms and the questionnaire itself, I was able to benefit from local reconnaissance and discussions. As an example, the term "colonia" was used as a proxy for the term "barrio" (neighbourhood) in order to avoid negative connotations related to the latter and to facilitate for a shared understanding between participators from different school-areas.

# CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

## 5.1. Introduction

Within this chapter, a presentation and explanation of the statistical analyses used in the master’s thesis will be provided. The chapter will first present the descriptive analyses for the six dependent variables measuring ‘sense of safety’, while the descriptive characteristic of the independent variables included in the thesis’ six regression models will be outlined in the two following sections. Section 5.3 will furthermore give information on the indicators for and the development of the three composite variables (material wealth, indirect, and direct victimisation) and their descriptive statistics. Subsequently, a bivariate correlation analysis of the thesis’ independent variables is conducted, before the chapter is concluded with a section on multivariate analyses, which in this study is represented by six various multiple regression analyses.

## 5.2. Descriptive Analyses of Sense of Safety (Dependent Variables)

In this study, the dependent variables are the perceived sense of safety in the general urban area of the city, the neighbourhood and home, divided by day and night-time. Table 5.1 presents all six dependent variables, and further discussion of the statistics follows below the table.

**TABLE 5.1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF SENSE OF SAFETY (N = 538)**

Variable	Axis of Variation	Mean	St. Deviation	Skewness
Sense of Safety in the <i>General Urban Area</i> during the day	1-5	2,90	,69	-.33
Sense of Safety in the <i>General Urban Area</i> during the night	1-5	1,81	,72	.61
Sense of Safety in the <i>Neighbourhood</i> during the day	1-5	3,64	0,93	-.67
Sense of Safety in the <i>Neighbourhood</i> during the night	1-5	2,87	1,1	.00
Sense of Safety in the <i>Home</i> during the day	1-5	4,40	,85	-1.7
Sense of Safety in the <i>Home</i> during the night	1-5	4,03	1,01	-.95

Note: 1 = Very Unsafe; 2 = Unsafe; 3 = Regular; 4 = Safe; 5 = Very Safe

As demonstrated in Table 5.1, there are 538 valid responses on the various questions about sense of safety in the sample. The average value of the distribution (mean) indicates that sense of safety varies both with the different times of day as well as between the different locations.

In particular, it is worth noting that sense of safety within the home has an average score of above 4 (safe) during both the day and the night, while sense of safety in the general urban area of Mexico City at night has an average score below 2 (unsafe). A central trend seems to be that of a decreased sense of safety during the night within all three locations. The standard deviation (St. Deviation) furthermore show a spread in the deviation from the average in the distribution, except from in the variable “*Sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the night*” which is an example of a normal distribution (Bennett, Briggs, & Triola, 2014; Bryman & Cramer, 2011; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2013).

Based on Table 5.1, all indicators except “*Sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the night*” and “*Sense of safety in the general urban area during the night*” are negatively skewed, which means that the majority of the sample scores above average (Cox, 2017; Pallant, 2016). Observed in connection with the average score of 4.4, we can see that the sample particularly perceives the home as a safe place during the day. However, a skewness of -1.7 indicates a great clustering of higher scores, and some scholars would argue that when the skewness is higher than 1, non-parametric tests should replace parametric tests or at least that caution should be made while performing them (Cox, 2017; Pallant, 2016). However, Pallant (2016) argues that even if the skewness exceeds 1, this is not that crucial while working with big sample sizes. Thus, due to the number of participants, the variable “*Sense of safety in the home during the day*” is included in further analyses.

### **5.3. School Area Belonging, Gender and Safety Variables**

Due to findings in previous research, an emphasis in this study as well is granted to the relationship between gender and perceived safety, while due to the interest in this study of exploiting the geographies of young people and safety, an emphasis will also be given to school belonging. This section therefore presents bivariate analyses of *School Area Belonging* and safety and then analyses of *gender* and safety. There will also be given a presentation of the distribution of sense of safety within these independent variables. The other independent variables in the thesis’ six regression models will be presented and commented on in the next section (5.4).

### 5.3.1. School Area Belonging and Safety

The distribution of the sample within the three different schools and the corresponding percentage they make up of the total sample is presented in Table 5.2.1.

**TABLE 5.2.1: SCHOOL AREA BELONGING**

Variable	N	Percent
School 1: Public School in OK Area	250	46
School 2: Private School in Better-Off Area	183	33
School 3: Public School in Exposed Area	115	21
Total	548	100

Considering there is a higher number of participants in school 1 than in the other two schools, this school will have a stronger effect on the analyses made. This could have been solved through a weighting of the variables but has rather been resolved through analyses focusing on comparisons between the three schools due to the interest in the variation between the three schools/areas.

The distribution of sense of safety within the three schools is presented in Table 5.2.2 to 5.2.4. Further discussion of the distribution is to be found underneath each table.

**TABLE 5.2.2: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE GENERAL URBAN AREA BY SCHOOL AREA BELONGING, PERCENTAGES**

The city	Day				Night			
	School 1	School 2	School 3	All	School 1	School 2	School 3	All
Very unsafe	4 %	1 %	8 %	4 %	32 %	38 %	40 %	36 %
Unsafe	12 %	24 %	11 %	16 %	48 %	52 %	41 %	48 %
Regular	69 %	65 %	69 %	68 %	19 %	10 %	17 %	16 %
Safe	13 %	10 %	10 %	11 %	1 %	0 %	1 %	0 %
Very safe	2 %	0 %	2 %	1 %	0 %	0 %	1 %	0 %
Sum	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Total	250	183	115	548	250	183	115	548

Note: School 1 = Public school in OK area, School 2 = Private school in better-off area, School 3 = Private school in exposed area.

Table 5.2.2 demonstrates that even though the sample's sense of safety in the city in general varies both with school area belonging and time of day, this area seems to be perceived of as unsafe by most of the participants. Young people's sense of safety appears to be lowest during the night, where as many as 90% of the participants from school 2, 81% from school 3, and 80% of the children belonging to school 1 report feeling unsafe. These percentages decrease to 25, 19 and 16 during the day, however, only a small percent report feeling safe,

where School Area 1 Belonging represents the highest percentage of 15, in comparison to 12% of those from school 3, and 10% belonging to school 2.

**TABLE 5.2.3: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD BY SCHOOL AREA BELONGING, PERCENTAGES**

Neighborhood	Day				Night			
	School 1	School 2	School 3	All	School 1	School 2	School 3	All
Very unsafe	5 %	1 %	7 %	4 %	12 %	7 %	25 %	13 %
Unsafe	3 %	4 %	7 %	4 %	25 %	12 %	25 %	21 %
Regular	37 %	20 %	42 %	33 %	40 %	40 %	36 %	39 %
Safe	44 %	47 %	35 %	43 %	18 %	28 %	10 %	19 %
Very safe	11 %	28 %	9 %	16 %	5 %	13 %	4 %	8 %
Sum	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Total	250	183	115	548	250	183	115	548

Note: School 1 = Public school in OK area, School 2 = Private school in better-off area, School 3 = Private school in exposed area

Table 5.2.3 indicates that young people’s sense of safety in the neighbourhood is stronger than within the general urban area of the city for all three schools, however, a stronger variance between the different school areas is noted. This is particularly evident during the night, where 50% of the children with school area 3 belonging report feeling unsafe during the night, while this percentage is 37 for those belonging to school 1, and 18 for the children belonging to school 2. This stark variance may also be seen during the day, where 5% of the children with school area 2 belonging, 8% with school area 1 belonging, and 14% belonging to school 3 report feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood.

**TABLE 5.2.4: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE HOME BY SCHOOL AREA BELONGING, PERCENTAGES**

Home	Day				Night			
	School 1	School 2	School 3	All	School 1	School 2	School 3	All
Very unsafe	2 %	0 %	4 %	1 %	2 %	1 %	5 %	2 %
Unsafe	2 %	0 %	4 %	2 %	5 %	1 %	15 %	6 %
Regular	10 %	4 %	14 %	9 %	22 %	10 %	21 %	18 %
Safe	33 %	22 %	35 %	30 %	36 %	36 %	29 %	34 %
Very safe	53 %	74 %	43 %	58 %	35 %	52 %	30 %	40 %
Sum	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Total	248	182	114	548	250	183	114	548

Note: School 1 = Public school in OK area, School 2 = Private school in better-off area, School 3 = Private school in exposed area

Table 5.2.4 demonstrates that safety in the home is the dependent variable with the highest safety scores, independently from time of day. Similar to the distribution within the neighbourhood, school area 3 belonging continue to represent the lowest sense of safety

amongst the three school areas, where 8% report feeling unsafe in the home during the day, and 20% report the same during the night. For school 1, 4% report feeling unsafe during the day, and 7% during the night. Children with school area 2 belonging continue to demonstrate the lowest unsafety scores, where 0% report feeling unsafe in the home during the day, and 2% report the same during the night.

### 5.3.2. Gender and Safety

As previously mentioned, the distribution of gender within the sample was 47% boys and 53% girls, and in this section, the focus will be provided on how gender influences sense of safety within the sample. Following the structure for school area belonging and safety, table 5.2.5 will present sense of safety by gender in the general urban area of Mexico City, table 5.2.6 within the neighbourhood and table 5.2.7 within the home. The discussion of the distribution is to be found below each table.

**TABLE 5.2.5: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE GENERAL URBAN AREA OF MEXICO CITY BY GENDER, PERCENTAGES**

The City	Day			Night		
	Girl	Boy	All	Girl	Boy	All
Very unsafe	5 %	3 %	4 %	42 %	29 %	36 %
Unsafe	22 %	8 %	16 %	44 %	52 %	48 %
Regular	63 %	73 %	68 %	14 %	18 %	16 %
Safe	9 %	14 %	11 %	0 %	1 %	0 %
Very safe	1 %	2 %	1 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Sum	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Total	291	255	548	291	255	548

Table 5.2.5 demonstrate that 27% of the girls within the sample report feeling unsafe in the general urban area of the city during the day, while the percentage is increased to 86 during the night. For the boys, 11% report feeling unsafe during the day, with an increase to 81% during the night. The gender differences seem however to be most influential between the category of “unsafe” during the day (22% vs 8%), while there seems to be a starker discrepancy at the level “very unsafe” (42% vs 29%) during the night.

**TABLE 5.2.6: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD BY GENDER, PERCENTAGES**

Neighbourhood	Day			Night		
	Girl	Boy	All	Girl	Boy	All
Very unsafe	4 %	4 %	4 %	11 %	15 %	13 %
Unsafe	4 %	4 %	4 %	25 %	17 %	21 %
Regular	39 %	26 %	33 %	39 %	40 %	39 %
Safe	41 %	45 %	43 %	20 %	19 %	19 %
Very safe	12 %	21 %	16 %	5 %	9 %	8 %
Sum	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Total	291	255	548	291	255	548

Based on the information from Table 5.2.6, there are no gender difference to be found within sense of safety within the neighbourhood during the day (8%). During the night however, even though more girls (36%) report feeling unsafe than boys (32%), boys demonstrate higher levels of unsafety than girls, where 15% of the boys report feeling “*very unsafe*”, while this percentage is 11 for the girls.

**TABLE 5.2.7: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE HOME BY GENDER, PERCENTAGES**

Home	Day			Night		
	Girl	Boy	All	Girl	Boy	All
Very unsafe	1 %	2 %	1 %	2 %	3 %	2 %
Unsafe	2 %	2 %	2 %	7 %	4 %	6 %
Regular	10 %	7 %	9 %	19 %	17 %	18 %
Safe	30 %	30 %	30 %	34 %	35 %	34 %
Very safe	57 %	59 %	58 %	38 %	41 %	40 %
Sum	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
Total	291	255	548	291	255	548

As demonstrated in Table 5.2.7, sense of safety in the home is characterised by high levels of safety, boys do nevertheless demonstrate lower levels of safety than girls, where 2% report feeling “*very unsafe*” during the day, and 3% report the same for the night. Also within the home are boys’ level of unsafety (2% during the day and 3% during the night) higher than that of girls (1% during the day and 2% during the night).

## 5.4. Other Independent Variables

In addition to the impact school area belonging and gender has on children and young people’s sense of safety within the three locations, I am also interested in knowing whether the material welfare of children’s families, their prior experiences with victimisation and talk of crime also

influence their perceptions. This section will therefore present the descriptive statistics of the variables *material wealth*, *talk of crime*, *indirect victimisation* and *direct victimisation* amongst the sample.

### 5.4.1. Material Wealth

The scale of “*material wealth*” is composed of three various dichotomous variables, and Table 5.3.1. displays the average value amongst the 543 children and young people who answered the questions about material wealth. The score variation is 0-3, with an average score of 2. This score may be interpreted as a common distribution of wealth amongst middle-class participants. The skewness of the composite variable is -.57, indicating a clustering of scores higher than the average, where school 2 stands out with 80% of the children scoring the highest score possible (this percentage is 21 for school 1, and 17 for school 3). Howbeit, 74% of the total sample report their family to own a car, 66% have an own room in their home and 62% respond positive to having some sort of surveillance or gate preventing direct access to the home.

**TABLE 5.3.1: MATERIAL WEALTH - COMPOSITE VARIABLE**

Variable	N	Axis of Variation	Mean	Skewness
Material Wealth	543	4	2,0	-.57

Note: 0 = None; 1 = One material wealth indicator, 2 = Two material wealth indicators, 3 = The family owns a car, the child has an own room in the home, and the home is equipped with a system of surveillance and/or gate preventing direct access.

### 5.4.2. Talk of Crime

**TABLE 5.3.2: TALK OF CRIME, PERCENTAGES**

Variable	Never	1-2 times a week	3-4 times a week	5 times a week or more	Total
Talk of Crime	20 %	52 %	18 %	10 %	545

The distribution of talk of crime is displayed in Table 5.3.2 and is measured by a four-item scale. As presented, most of the sample talk about crime 1-2 times a week, however 10% talk of crime 5 times or more a week.

### 5.4.3. Indirect Victimisation

The “*indirect victimisation*” scale is composed of five dichotomous variables, and the response distribution within the total sample is presented in Table 5.3.3. The valid response rate is 506, with a measured mean of 2.07. This indicates that the sample on an average, knows someone who has been exposed to two various criminal activities. The most common indirect crime is



assault with or without violence (65%), while experiencing an armed crime (27%) or other serious crimes (22%) are more uncommon. A small deviation in the distribution is showed by the standard deviation while the skewness demonstrates a low negative skewness, indicating a clustering of values higher than the mean.

**TABLE 5.3.3: INDIRECT VICTIMISATION - COMPOSITE VARIABLE**

Variable	N	Axis of Variation	Mean	St. Deviation	Skewness
Indirect Victimization	506	0-5	2.07	.30	-.27

Note: 0 = No victimisation; 1 = 1 crime; 2 = 2 crimes; 3 = 3 crimes; 4 = 4 crimes; 5 = 5 crimes

#### 5.4.4. Direct Victimization

Five dichotomous variables were also used in the development of the “*direct victimisation*” scale, and statistical explanation of the scale is provided in Table 5.3.4. As shown, 519 valid answers were given to the questions on direct victimisation, and the mean of 0.42 indicates that few children and youths of the sample have suffered direct victimisation. The standard deviation illustrates a low spread in the deviations from the average, with a relatively great positive skewness and a cluster of scores at the value 0 (no victimisation).

**TABLE 5.3.4: DIRECT VICTIMISATION - COMPOSITE VARIABLE**

Variable	N	Axis of Variation	Mean	St. Deviation	Skewness
Direct Victimization	519	0-5	.42	.20	1.62

Note: 0 = No victimisation; 1 = 1 crime; 2 = 2 crimes; 3 = 3 crimes; 4 = 4 crimes; 5 = 5 crimes

### 5.5. Bivariate Analyses

In this section, the results from a bivariate correlation analysis is presented and commented on.

#### 5.5.1. Correlation Analysis of the Independent Variables

Due to the possibility of strong correlations between the independent variables, bivariate analysis is run in order to check for multicollinearity and singularity. In order to inspect the relationship among the independent variables, a correlation matrix will be presented in Table 5.4. Pearson R (four variables on interval/ratio level), point biserial correlation (dichotomous variables and variables on interval/ratio level) and phi (three dichotomous variables) is used. Based on the measurements of the variables, the correlation matrix demonstrates various degrees of significant relationships between the variables, and the interesting correlations for the research problem will be presented below the table.

**TABLE: 5.4: CORRELATION MATRIX FOR ALL INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Girl	1,00	-.02	.02	.05	.10*	.01	.01
2. Material Wealth		1	-.39**	.54**	-.08	.24**	.08
3. School Area 1 Belonging			1	-.65**	-.08	-.21**	-.13**
4. School Area 2 Belonging				1	-.15**	.33**	.01
5. Talk of Crime					1	.09**	-.02
6. Indirect Victimization						1	.39**
7. Direct Victimization							1

Note:  $p < .01$  \*\*  $p < .05$  \* (2-tailed). N = 477. Reference category: Boy, School 2 and 3 Belonging, School 1 and 3 Belonging.

From the correlation matrix in Table 5.4 we may observe that several correlations are significant at the 0.01 level. However, a strong correlation is considered to be at the .50 to 1 level (Cohen, 1988), and important to note is therefore that there is a significant, strong positive correlation ( $r = .54$ ) between material wealth and school area 2 belonging. As commented in section 5.4.1, this indicates that high levels of material wealth are associated with school area 2 belonging.

## 5.6. Factors of Relevance for Perceived Sense of safety

This subsection is dedicated to the six hierarchical multiple regression analyses conducted in order to make individual explorations of the relationships between each of the dependent variables and the previously presented independent variables (predictors). Each analysis is conducted with two models with the same predictive variables used in each regression. The background variables found in Step 1 include being a “girl”, “material wealth”, “school area 1 belonging” and “school area 2 belonging”, where the coefficients achieved for each of the dummy coded variables (girl, school 1, and school 2), describes the variance between the presented variable and the reference category (boy, school 2 and 3, and school 1 and 3) (Eikemo & Clausen, 2012). The experience variables additionally included in Step 2 are “talk of crime”, “indirect victimisation” and “direct victimisation”. The results from the hierarchical multiple regressions will be presented in compounded tables by their geographical location the general urban area, the neighbourhood and the home. A summary-table of the findings will furthermore be presented in the sub-section 5.7

### 5.6.1. Sense of Safety in the General Urban Area of the City

Two hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted predicting sense of safety in the general urban area of Mexico City during the day and the night from the background and experience variables.

**TABLE: 5.5.1: REGRESSION 1 AND 2: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE GENERAL URBAN AREA (GUA) OF MEXICO CITY**

	Regression 1				Regression 2			
	GUA Safety - Daytime				GUA Safety - Nighttime			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$
<i>Background Variables</i>								
Constant	3.04**		3.34**		1.94**		2.18**	
Girl	-.26**	-.18	-.24**	-.17	-.20**	-.14	-.19**	-.13
Material Wealth	-.02	-.02	-.01	-.02	-.00	-.01	.00	.00
School Area 1 Belonging	.09	.06	.04	.03	.06	.04	.01	.01
School Area 2 Belonging	.02	-.02	-.05	-.04	-.09	-.06	-.125	-.08
<i>Experience Variables</i>								
Talk of Crime			-.10**	-.13			-.07	-.08
Indirect Victimization			-.17	-.07			-.13	-.05
Direct Victimization			.02	.01			-.14	-.04
$\Delta R^2$	.03		.05		.02		.03	

Note:  $p < 0.05 = *$ ,  $p < 0.01 = **$  Reference categories: Boy, School 2 and 3, School 1 and 3.

The significance values demonstrated in Table 5.6.1 shows statistical variances within the independent variables' abilities to predict sense of safety within the city, where being a *girl* is presented as the strongest predictor of sense of safety.

Both steps in regression 1 (day), demonstrates that being a *girl* is significant at the .01 level in both steps. This suggests that Hypothesis 1, predicting that girls will report lower levels of safety than boys is supported. It is furthermore noted that when the experience variables were entered into the equation in Step 2, *talk of crime* also has a significant negative impact on children's safety, giving support to Hypothesis 4, where talk of crime is predicted to have a negative association with sense of safety through an extended allocation of stories of victimisation and fear.

In regression 2 (night), being a *girl* keeps it position as significant at the .01 level, providing further support to Hypothesis 1. However, *talk of crime* it is not found significant in this regression, resulting in inconsistency in the effect of talk of crime connected to the time of day. Hypothesis 4 thus has mixed support.

The other predictors on both background and experience level had neither a significant impact in regression 1 nor 2, implying that hypothesis 2, 3, 5 as well as 6 are not supported.

### 5.6.2. Sense of Safety in the Neighbourhood

The same background and experience variables were used in two further hierarchical multiple regressions predicting sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the day and the night.

**TABLE: 5.5.2: REGRESSION 3 AND 4: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD**

	Regression 3				Regression 4			
	Neighborhood Safety Daytime				Neighborhood Safety Nighttime			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$	B	$\beta$
<i>Background Variables</i>								
Constant	3.48**		3.76**		2.27**		2.63**	
Gender	-.19*	-.10	-.18*	-.10	-.05	-.02	-.03	-.02
Material Wealth	-.03	-.04	-.02	-.02	.11	.10	.13*	.12
School Area 1 Belonging	.23*	.13	.16	.08	.36**	.16	.28*	.13
School Area 2 Belonging	.69**	.35	.65**	.33	.73**	.31	.71**	.30
<i>Experience Variables</i>								
Talk of Crime			.04	-.04			-.06	-.05
Indirect Victimization			-.22	-.07			-.38*	-.10
Direct Victimization			-.64**	-.14			-.63*	-.11
$\Delta R^2$	.08		.10		.08		.11	

Note:  $p < 0.05 = *$ ,  $p < 0.01 = **$  Reference categories: Boy, School 2 and 3, School 1 and 3.

The results from regression 3 and 4 (Table 5.5.2) demonstrate *school area 2 belonging* as the strongest predictor of sense of safety within the neighbourhood.

In regression 3, a significant positive relationship is found between the background variable of *School Area 2 Belonging* and sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the day. This indicates that children from this school area tend to report higher levels of sense of safety within their neighbourhood than children with *school area 1* and *3 belonging*. The table furthermore shows that even when the experience variables are added to the equation in Step 2, school area 2 belonging keeps its position as the best predictor of sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the day. These findings give support to the thesis' **Hypothesis 3**, predicting that children from areas with low levels of physical incivility report higher levels of sense of safety. Based on this variable not being found statistically significant in sense of safety in the general urban area of the city (regression 1 and 2), these results indicate variation of its effect based on geographical location. *School area 1 belonging* furthermore has a significant positive

relationship in Step 1, but not in Step 2 when the experience variables were entered into the equation, giving mixed support of **Hypothesis 3**. *Direct Victimization* seems furthermore to have a significant negative effect on children's sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the day, indicating support of **Hypothesis 6**, where those having experienced a crime are expected to report higher levels of unsafety. However, this association contrasts the results from regression 1 and 2, where there was no significant relationship found between this variable and sense of safety in the general urban area. The predictive effects of also this variable therefore seem to vary with geographical location. Being a *girl* has a significant negative effect on children's sense of safety in both steps within the neighbourhood during the day, supporting the findings from regression 1 and 2, and thus also **Hypothesis 1**. There is found no relationship between the background variable *material wealth* nor the experience variables *talk of crime* or *indirect victimisation* in regression 3.

In regression 4 (night), *school area 2 belonging* keeps its position as the best predictor of sense of safety within the neighbourhood with a significance level at .01 in both steps, giving further support to **Hypothesis 2**. *School area 1 belonging* also has a positive significant relationship with sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the night at a significance level at .01, however it takes on a smaller predictive ability (.05) when the explanation variables are added to the equation in Step 2. With regards to **Hypothesis 3**, the effect of school area belonging on children's safety is given mixed support, indicating that school area belonging is significant, but that the explanatory effect of in the case of *school area 1 belonging* is conditioned to the time of day. Regression 4 furthermore demonstrates that the experience variable *Direct Victimization* has a significant negative effect on children's sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the night, giving further support to **Hypothesis 6**, where those having experienced a crime are expected to report higher levels of unsafety. *Indirect victimisation* is furthermore found to have a significant negative impact during the night, however no significant relationship was found in regression 3, giving mixed support to **Hypothesis 5**. *Material wealth* has a positive association with sense of safety during the night in Step 2 when the experience variables were entered into the equation. This variable is however not significant in Step 1, and in neither of the steps in regression 3 (day), resulting in a divergence in the effect of also this variable, providing mixed support to **Hypothesis 2**.

Being a *girl* is not significant in regression 4, but was found significant in regression 3, and also 1 and 2, indicating shifting effects of the variable, giving varied support to **Hypothesis 1**. *Talk of crime* has neither a significant impact on children's sense of safety in the neighbourhood,

implying that it has diverging affects within the geographical locations when compared to regression 1 (sense of safety in the city during the day). The results thus give mixed support to **Hypothesis 4**. It was however neither found significant in regression 2 (sense of safety in the general urban area of the city during the night).

### 5.6.3. Sense of Safety in the Home

The two last hierarchical multiple regressions predict young people’s sense of safety in the home during the day and the night and used the same background and experience variables as in the four previous regressions.

**TABLE: 5.5.3: REGRESSION 5 AND 6: SENSE OF SAFETY IN THE HOME**

	Regression 5 Home Daytime				Regression 6 Home Nighttime			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	B	β	B	β	B	β	B	β
<i>Background Variables</i>								
Constant	3.84**		4.19**		3.40**		3.57**	
Gender	-.01	-.01	.01	.01	-.06	-.03	-.05	-.03
Material Wealth	.16**	.18	.17**	.19	.16**	.15	.17**	.16
School Area 1 Belonging	.24*	.14	.17	.10	.36**	.18	.33**	.17
School Area 2 Belonging	.40**	.22	.35**	.19	.56**	.26	.57**	.27
<i>Experience Variables</i>								
Talk of Crime			-.11*	-.11			-.04	-.04
Indirect Victimization			-.16	-.05			-.24	-.07
Direct Victimization			-.19	-.05			-.03	-.01
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	.08		.09		.08		.08	

Note: p < 0.05 = \*, p < 0.01 = \*\*. Reference categories: Boy, School 2 and 3, School 1 and 3.

Table 5.5.3 shows that the background variable *School Area 2 Belonging* is the strongest predictor of sense of safety within the home.

In regression 5, *school area 2 belonging* has a significant positive relationship within both steps and is demonstrated to be the best predictor of sense of safety within the home during the day, giving further support to **Hypothesis 3**, expecting young people to live and spend time in better-off areas to demonstrate higher levels of safety. *School area 1 belonging* has furthermore a positive association in Step 1, but not in Step 2 when the experience variables are entered into the equation, giving mixed support to **Hypothesis 3**. *Material wealth* has a positive effect on sense of safety in the home during the day in both steps, giving support to **Hypothesis 2**. When the experience variables are added to the equation in Step 2, the results show that *talk of crime*

has a significant negative effect, giving support to **Hypothesis 4**, claiming talk of crime will lead to higher levels of unsafety amongst young people.

Regression 6 (night) further confirms *School Area 2 Belonging*'s effect on sense of safety in the neighbourhood by also being positively significant at .01 level in both steps, giving support to **Hypothesis 3**. *School Area 1 Belonging* furthermore has a positive significant association at 0.1 level in both Steps, giving further support to **Hypothesis 3**. However, Due to the lack of significance in Step 2 of regression 5, mixed support is found for **Hypothesis 3** depending time of day. When compared to regression 1 and 2 (no significant relationships) and 3 and 4 (significant in Step 1 during the day, and both steps during the night), it is additionally indicated that *School Area Belonging* has stronger effects in the neighbourhood and the home than within the city (no relationship found). As in regression 5, *Material wealth* has a positive effect on sense of safety in the home during the night, giving support to **Hypothesis 2**. Compared to regression 1 and 2 (no significant relationship) and regression 3 and 4 (significant during the night), it is indicated that the effect of the variable *material wealth* is dependent on both geographical locations, and the time of day.

No significant relationship is found between *Talk of crime* and sense of safety in the home during the night, even though it was found significant during the day (regression 5). This indicates that this variable's effect depends on time of day and thus gives varied support to **Hypothesis 4**. Compared with regression 1 and 2 (significant relationship during the day) and regression 3 and 4 (no significant relationship), it is furthermore indicated that this variable has stronger effect during the day, as well as it varies within geographical locations.

Table 5.5.3 indicate that being a *girl*, *indirect* and *direct victimisation* have no significant relationship with sense of safety in the home, which implies that the **Hypothesis 1, 5 and 6** are not supported. Being a *girl* was nevertheless found significant in both regression 1 and 2 as well as in regression 3, indicating that the effects of being a *girl* varies between geographical location as well as time of day. *Indirect victimisation* was furthermore only found significant in regression 4 (neighbourhood safety night), while *direct victimisation* was only found significant in the neighbourhood.

## 5.7. Summary of Findings

Within this sub-section the findings from the thesis's analyses is outlined with an emphasis on the variables able to predict the outcome of the dependent variables on a significance level of .01 when all other independent variables are controlled for (Step 2 of each regression analysis). The results will furthermore be used in order to either support or oppose the six hypotheses of the study.

In Table 5.6 we may see that the most robust variable in children and young people's sense of safety is "school area 2 belonging", which is significantly positively associated with sense of safety during day and night-time within both the neighbourhood and the home (see also Table 5.5.2 and 5.5.3). This indicates that children with *school area 1 belonging* report higher levels of safety within both the neighbourhood and the home than children with *school area 2* and *3 belonging*. Furthermore, Table 5.6 demonstrates a significant negative association between being a *girl* and sense of safety in the general urban area (see also Table 5.5.1), meaning girls report lower levels of safety in comparison with the boys of the sample within the city in general. *Material Wealth* is also found to be significantly positively associated with sense of crime in the home (see also Table 5.6.2), indicating that children from affluent families report higher sense of safe of safety in their home than the children with lower scores of material wealth. *School area 1 belonging* is found significantly positively associated with sense of safety in the home. Combined with the positive association with *school area 2 belonging*, this indicates that with regards to safety in the home, participants with *school area 3 belonging* report feeling significantly more unsafety than participants from the other two schools.

**TABLE: 5.7: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

Variable	the City Daytime	the City Nighttime	the Neighborhood Daytime	the Neighborhood Nighttime	the Home Daytime	the Home Nighttime
Girl	X**	X**	X*			
Material Wealth				X*	X**	X**
School Area 1 Belonging				X*		X**
School Area 2 Belonging			X**	X**	X**	X**
Talk of Crime	X**				X*	
Indirect Victimisation				X*		
Direct Victimisation			X*	X*		

Note:  $p < 0.05 = *$ ,  $p < 0.01 = **$



### **5.7.1. Hypotheses**

In this sub-section, all six hypotheses will be commented on based on the findings of the study.

#### **Hypothesis 1: Girls will report higher levels of unsafety**

Hypothesis 1 was supported by regression 1 (sense of safety in the general urban area during the day) (-.24) and 2 (sense of safety in the general urban area during the night) (-.19) on a .01 level, while regression 3 (sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the day) (-.18) demonstrated a significance level of .05. Regression 4 (sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the night), 5 (sense of safety in the home during the day), and 6 (sense of safety in the home during the night) however, found no significant relationship between sense of safety and being a girl. This implies that girls tend to feel lower levels of sense of safety than boys in the general urban area of the city and during the day in their neighbourhoods, while there is no significant gender difference in sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the night, neither in the home independent from time of day. Hypothesis 1 is therefore partly supported by the findings of this study. Considering being a girl has been presented as the only consistent predictor amongst young people and sense of safety (e.g. DeGroof, 2008; May & Dunaway, 2000; May et al., 2002), this study deviates from previous research, demonstrating various results depending on both geographical location and time of day.

#### **Hypothesis 2: Children from families with high material wealth will feel higher levels of safety than children from families with lower material wealth**

Hypothesis 2 was based on finding higher levels of safety among those who reported higher levels of material wealth (Covington & Taylor, 1991; Liska et al., 1982; McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981), and was supported by regression 5 (.17) and 6 (.17) on a statistical significance level of .01, and regression 4 (.13) on a significance level of .05. Nevertheless, regression 1, 2 and 3 demonstrated no significant relationships between levels of material wealth and levels of sense of safety, implying that also this variable vary with geographical location, where it is found significant in the home, and during the night in the neighbourhood, but not during the day and neither in the general urban area of the city.

**Hypothesis 3: Young people living and spending time in better-off areas will demonstrate higher levels of safety**

Hypothesis 3 predicted that due to the geographical location of the schools, school area belonging would have an impact on sense of safety (Doran & Lees, 2005; Shepherd & Moore, 2006; Skogan, 1990; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Williamson et al., 2006; Wilson & Kelling, 1982). School area 2 belonging was found to have a positive significant association with sense of safety in regression 3 (.65), 4 (.71), 5 (.35) and 6 (.57) on a statistical significance level of .01. School area 1 belonging was furthermore found to have a positive significant association in regression 6 (.33) on a significance level of .01, and in regression 4 (.28) on a .05 level. There was no significant relationship found between school area belonging and sense of safety in the city (regression 1 and 2).

**Hypothesis 4: Talk of crime and the sharing of victimisation stories will have a negative impact on young people's sense of safety**

Hypothesis 4 expected a varied relationship between talk of crime and sense of safety (Caldeira, 2000; Hale, 1996; La Grange et al., 1992; J. B. Robinson et al., 2003), regression 1 (.10) demonstrated a negative relationship on a significance level of .01 while regression 5 (.11) demonstrated a negative relationship on a .05 level. There was no significant relationship found within the neighbourhood, and only in the day in the general urban area, and the home. The results therefore confirm a negative relationship between talk of crime and sense of safety through an extended allocation of stories of victimisation and fear with varying effects in different locations.

**Hypothesis 5: Children knowing someone who has been victim of a crime will report lower levels of safety**

Hypothesis 5 was based on the belief that indirect victimisation would be negatively associated with sense of safety (Hale, 1996; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Tyler, 1980). There was however only found a significant negative relationship (-.38) with sense of safety in the neighbourhood during the night (regression 4) on a .05 significant level.

**Hypothesis 6: Having been a direct victim of a crime will result in higher levels of unsafety**

Hypothesis 6 anticipated a negative relationship between young people's direct victimisation and their sense of safety (Hale, 1996; Rader et al., 2007; Schafer et al., 2006; Skogan, 1995; Stafford & Galle, 1984) and was found significant in the neighbourhood (regression 3 = -.64,

regression 4 = -.63) on a significance level of 0.5. There was no relationship found between direct victimisation and sense of safety within the city nor the home, making the results of the study inconsistent with previous studies.

## **CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter is dedicated to a discussion of the study's findings presented in chapter 5 and the relevant theories of chapter 3. Each of the sections represents one of the six hypotheses of the study.

### **6.2. Young People's Sense of Safety in Mexico City**

Children and young people are exposed to violence and crime in a variety of forms and settings in every country in the world (UN, 2006), has been claimed to have reached epidemic proportions (Fitzpatrick & Boldizar, 1993; Martinez & Richters, 1993) and is moreover identified as a significant public health problem with a particular impact on children by the World Health Organization (2002). Growing up in a society characterised by high levels of crime and violence can thus be considered to be one of the most harmful experiences a child may be exposed to during its childhood.

Through Mexico being a country characterised by stark inequality, corruption, drug trafficking and extreme levels of violence, children and young people growing up there are in a particular situation of multiple adversities. Due to the vast contrasts existing within the country, there is however reason to believe there exist stark discrepancies between different realities of childhoods both within the country and its capital, Mexico City. This study nevertheless finds similarities amongst children and young people growing up in various geographical locations, and also belonging to different socioeconomic sectors within Mexico City with regards to their experienced safety.

Through the analyses concluded, geographical location has been identified as more influential on children and young people's sense of safety than their socio-demographic characteristics such as gender and socioeconomic background. Clear distinctions are observed between their perceived safety within the general urban area and the more local area of the neighbourhood and the home. The general area stands out as the unquestionable location within which most children and young people feel unsafe, where 4 out of 5 young children report feeling unsafe at night. In comparison, the numbers are completely reverse within the home, where 4 out of 5 children state that they experience feeling safe, while within the neighbourhood, 3 out of 5 testify to the same.

The high numbers of unsafety found amongst young people within the general urban area may also be considered representative for the adult population, where in 2018, 88% reported feeling unsafe within the city (INEGI, 2018c). These extreme levels may furthermore be justified through the city's high crime rates, where 2 thousand 151 individuals were reported killed, and 427 thousand 86 people reported being robbed combined with the use of violence last year (INEGI, 2018c). Based on statistics from 2017, Mexico was also positioned as the 4<sup>th</sup> country with the highest rates of impunity in the world (UDLAP, 2017), resulting in a very low rate of these abovementioned crimes being solved, but also reported due to the high dark numbers of crime, indicating that these rates should be even higher.

Based on these statistics, Mexican children may be argued to live in a society characterised by risk, where nothing seems to be in place and where interpersonal relationships are defined through stark levels of distrust. The importance of family and relationships established early on in life are thus emphasised, while the public space, through representing a place for random interactions with "others", implies risk of exposure to violence and crime. The insecurity discourse has furthermore reconfigured Mexico City through a classification of spaces as either "safe" or less "safe", characterisations which furthermore are assigned to the people who occupy them, especially those from the lower socioeconomic sectors (Saraví, 2015). Through the development of stigmatisation by the identities of "us" and "them" combined with spatial segregation, homogeneously occupied spaces are constructed within the understanding of space as belonging "between us" or "those like me" and a discrimination and exclusion of the "others" (Saraví, 2015). The city is thus a setting for fragmentation where not only experiences with violence, but also socio-spatial segregation has become part of everyday life of the children and young people growing up there. Even though children from diverse socioeconomic sectors share the same city, these spatial restrictions and territorial stigmas have led the spaces within which they are living as well as their appropriation of public space to be quite contrasting (Ariovich et al., 2000; Saraví, 2004, 2015; Marit Ursin, 2012), making the similarities found between various children and young people representing the upper- and lower- middle class in this study particularly interesting.

The Mexican population has become wary of, or evade, locations, situations and people considered dangerous, which has led to the presumption that those who can afford it, live most of their lives within the city's enclosed spaces, while the public sphere is left to the poor. This furthermore increases the contrasting realities of everyday life of children, but also the rates, and exposure to violence and crime itself.

Habits of evasion has however become installed in the daily life, where children's use of public space is highly restricted, while furthermore being taught to avoid going out at night or to follow the same routes to a certain destination to prevent the feeling of insecurity generated by the unknown (Dammert, 2012). These restrictions together with socio-spatial segregation make up young people's frameworks of "urban normality" which are based on their own experiences within urban settings. Through being constructed from an early age, where the upper-middle class children's experiences are mostly bound to the semi-public and enclosed space, while it for the lower-middle class is constituted by the public space of the neighbourhood, starkly diverging and non-colliding urban normalities are found within the population, starting with even the youngest children (Saraví, 2015). A continuous circle is thus established, where children tend to grow up within their own urban worlds and rarely explore the parts of the city left outside it, leaving it unknown and dangerous (Saraví, 2015). This may help explain why the general urban area is considered so dangerous to children and young people, while furthermore underpinning why that the more familiar the location in question is, the safer children feel.

There is however no reason to believe that this is a particular trend within the childhoods of Mexico, as the same societal traits may be found within the entire Latin American and Caribbean region. Increasing levels of unsafety has furthermore been found within several European cities (e.g. Carvalho & Lewis, 2003; Guitart, Ferret, & Ferré, 2014; The Children's Society, 2012). This study should nevertheless be seen in relation to the particular context of the global South with an emphasis on the Latin American region, while still acknowledging the diversity of childhoods found within this part of the world, the region, the nation and even within one and the same neighbourhood.

### **6.2.1. Gender and Sense of Safety**

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Hypothesis 1: Girls will report higher levels of unsafety than boys

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One of the most common findings in studies focusing on sense of safety, is that of significant gender differences, where being a girl has come to be the only consistent predictor of lower sense of safety amongst children and young people (e.g. DeGroof, 2008; May & Dunaway, 2000; May et al., 2002).

The results of this particular study seem to follow the trend within research with regards to perceived safety within the general urban area, where a greater portion of girls than boys report

feeling unsafe. However, these differences are not found to be as pertinent within the more local areas of the children's neighbourhood and the home. Put together, the findings of this study are thus inconsistent, where the hypothesis of girls reporting higher levels of unsafety than boys is supported within the general urban area but not found to pertain within the neighbourhood nor the home. The study thus brings to focus the importance of location in research on safety amongst children and young people.

One of the more prominent explanations to girls' heightened levels of unsafety are arguments concerning girls' perceived personal vulnerability to crime, which has been related to their physical size in comparison to that of a potential perpetrator, and to the sexual aspect of the genders, where girls are believed to feel more susceptible to sexual crimes and thus also other types of crimes (Ferraro, 1995, 1996; Gordon & Riger, 1989; G. Valentine, 1989; Warr, 1984). Due to girls being overrepresented with regards to sexual victimisation (NSVRC, 2015; Nybergh, Taft, & Krantz, 2012; Umubyeyi, Mogren, Ntaganira, & Krantz, 2014; WHO, 2017) and that traces of *machismo* may still be found within the Mexican society (OXFAM International, 2018) through an extended prevalence of crimes directed particularly towards women (such as human trafficking and femicides), these theories could be particularly pertinent in explaining the elevated levels of unsafety amongst Mexican girls. However, considering the discrepancies found in levels of safety between the general urban area and the more local areas of the neighbourhood and the home, some forces seem to be able to either counter for these vulnerabilities or trigger the unsafety of boys in order to nuance the expected gender differences. A central aspect in this respect has been claimed to be that of parental influence which in numerous of studies has been found to be stricter for girls than for boys (Deakin, 2006; DeGroof, 2008; Hollander, 2001; Podaná & Krulichová, 2018; Rader, 2017; G. Valentine, 1989). The study finds that the divergent regulations imposed on girls and boys due to gender-stereotypes presenting girls as vulnerable and boys as impervious, directly affects their perceptions of various places as "safe" or "unsafe".

A reason for finding significant gender differences within the general urban area of Mexico City may thus be linked to the particularly strict regulations girls experience within this location (Saraví, 2015; G. Valentine, 1997a). Through rarely being allowed to explore this area without either adult or male supervision (Saraví, 2015), Mexican girls seem to be under the impression that they are more likely to become victims there, and consequentially perceive this space as more insecure than the local area of their neighbourhood and home (Gough & Franch, 2005; Hart, 1979; Matthews, 1987; Punch et al., 2007; Saraví, 2015). Due to these starker restrictions

of access to, and freedoms within the general urban area, an increased importance is also given to the neighbourhood which thus becomes girls' main public location outside of the home and the school. A central distinction between the use of the local and no-local area is thus made, where due to extended time being spent within the neighbourhood, its places and faces becomes known and thus does not constitute as big of a threat as the unfamiliar general urban area.

Of further importance is that whereas more girls report higher levels of unsafety within the general area of the city, boys report higher *levels* of unsafety than girls within the home and neighbourhood at night. Following the trend of gender-differentiated parental restrictions, boys would also be most likely to experience lower levels of supervision than girls within these locations. Boys may therefore to a bigger extent be left alone at home at night, but also be left with the responsibility of supervising their sister(s) both in the neighbourhood and in the home when parents are not around. These experiences may function as a reinforcement of safety for the girls through having male supervision and protection, while it on the other hand is a reinforcement of unsafety for the boys through having greater responsibility and thus not only feeling unsafe for themselves, but also for their "more vulnerable" sisters.

The high levels of unsafety found amongst boys in this study may however be somewhat surprising due to previous studies arguing that boys tend to "downplay" these feelings (Goodey, 1997), but also due to the previously mentioned levels of machismo in the Mexican society. However, the acknowledgement by boys of feeling unsafe may be interpreted as a symbol of a changing Mexican culture, where machismo has been demonstrated to be connected with a "rural backwardness" amongst the younger population (Ramírez, 2008, p. 115). Albeit, the relatively young age of the participants may furthermore be influential, considering that their social and cultural identity is still under development. Through Mexico being recognised as a particularly dangerous country to grow up in, in terms of violence and crime, where high levels of unsafety is registered within most of the population (INEGI, 2017), this may furthermore facilitate for boys' disclosure of high levels of unsafety due to the acceptance and commonness of the phenomena.

Parental influence may furthermore play a part in boys' perceived safety within the general urban area due to most boys being allowed more freedom of mobility within the urban context, and thus not only get to know various places better and differently from girls, but also experience a sense of trust in their abilities to manoeuvre the greater public space. Through being able to familiarise themselves better within various areas outside of their immediate neighbourhood, the unexplored areas of the city also become fewer, decreasing also the threat



of the “unknown”. The liberty they experience in roaming more freely may furthermore have a positive effect on their perceptions of the general urban space and through an increased belief in own competences of handling the public sphere, and thus result in heightened levels of safety in contrast to girls (Gaetz, 2004; Gough & Franch, 2005; Kuasñosky & Szulik, 2000; Saraví, 2004; M. Ursin, 2012).

These factors may particularly be seen in relation to the discrepancy in levels of safety between boys and girls during the day. The lowered differentiation during the night, however, may indicate that the variation in parental regulation between the genders is not as pertinent at night. It may however also be connected with the common adult notion of night-time being more dangerous, leading parents to further increases their restrictions and control of their children’s (of both sex) access to this area (Fox, Nobles, & Piquero, 2009; G. Valentine, 1997a). Boys may thus not spend time within the general urban area at night, converting it in an area fostering fear due to its unfamiliarity (Mattson & Rengert, 1995).

An important observation is however that even though Mexican girls grow up in a machoistic society and generally experience more restrictions than boys while being raised into believing they are in need of male or adult protection, this does not make them passive victims. A vast number of girls are often seen taking the street in various demonstrations, claiming their right to feel safe within the public sphere, such as demonstrated in the photo below. Similar demonstrations made by boys or men are still to observe, even though, as demonstrated in this thesis, also their daily lives are characterised by high levels of unsafety.



Photo 6.1: A women’s organised demonstration against femicides and the kidnapping of young women in Mexico City, 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2019. (Private photo).

### **6.2.2. Material Wealth and Sense of Safety**

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Hypothesis 2: Children from families with high material wealth will feel higher levels of safety than children from families with lower material wealth

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Even though limited research has been conducted on social class and safety, documentations have been made on the negative effects of social vulnerability and poverty (McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000). This study, however, finds results that are inconsistent with the hypothesis predicting that children from families with high material wealth will feel higher levels of safety than children from families with lower material wealth. In the local area, high material wealth seems to be effective in the sense of providing access to payed protection, while it in the general urban area, seems to make them feel more vulnerable to threat. Albeit previous studies suggest that young people from low-income families demonstrate the highest levels of unsafety, children from low-income families are those found to demonstrate the lowest levels of unsafety within the urban area. Their levels of unsafety within the local area of the neighbourhood and the home are furthermore surpassed by those living within areas characterised by high levels of violence and crime.

As an initial statement, the descriptive statistics of the data indicates that children with the lowest score on the material wealth indicator are clustered within school area 1, Álvaro Obregón, where 46% scores 0 to 1 on the material welfare indicator, with 0 being the lowest possible score and 3 the highest. A further cluster of the highest score of material wealth can be found amongst the children with school area 2 belonging, Xochimilco, where 80% scored the highest score on the material welfare indicator. These statistics will thus be used as indicators of young people's socioeconomic status in the further discussion on material wealth's effect on young people's safety in Mexico City.

Finding material wealth to play a central role in the levels of perceived safety within the home and the neighbourhood indicates that children of affluent families experience higher levels of safety than those of low-income parents. These findings are thus congruent with previous research (Covington & Taylor, 1991; Liska et al., 1982; McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). A reason for these elevated levels of safety may be explained through children of the higher socioeconomic brackets' access to a vast number of protective measures unattainable to those from lower socioeconomic strata. High walls and gates, surveillance cameras and guards may all be features that enhance the sensation of being protected, and thus encouraging feelings of safety. A central observation is furthermore that 80% of the children with school area 2 belonging responded positive to having someone

working within their home. Having someone present while parents are absent due to long working hours may therefore have an additional influence on their sense of safety, and thus encouraging youth from school area 2 to feel safer within the local area.

Finding that the most economically deprived children are not those presenting the highest levels of unsafety within their neighbourhoods and home may however be an indication on the extreme levels of unsafety found within the area of Cuauhtémoc, where most of the children of school area 3 are believed to live and spend their time. It does nevertheless bring the assumption of the most economically deprived children to be living within the most exposed areas of the city into question. There is thus reason to believe that that area within which children grow up in Mexico City has a major influence on their levels of safety, and thus brings further emphasis to the inclusion of various areas in research on children's safety. A further discussion of the effect of the area can be found in the following discussion on Hypothesis 3.

Due to high levels of unsafety found within the general urban area, the results of the study demonstrate that the lowest feelings of unsafety within this location (16% in the day and 81% at night) can be found amongst those representing the lowest socioeconomic strata. Those feeling the most unsafe, are furthermore found to be the children representing the highest material wealth score. These findings are inconsistent with previous research and the expectations of finding lower levels of safety amongst those who come from low income families (McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000).

Based on the city being characterised by stark socio- and spatial segregation, where it is believed that those who can afford, live their lives within the protected enclaves of the city, these results are intriguing by indicating that they rather feel the most unsafe. These findings may however be a result of the limitation of the non-specification of place within this variable, where the variation between the places children have access to is indistinguishable within the data. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that material wealth does not have any impact on young people's perceptions of safety within the city in general.

The descriptive statistics still present young people of the higher socioeconomic brackets' as those demonstrating the highest levels of unsafety within the general urban area of the city, and those of low-income families as those presenting the lowest levels of unsafety. These high levels of unsafety amongst children of high-income parents may be a symptom of the lack of protection these youth feel within this location, as they within the general urban area cannot rely on the same security measures as those found within their neighbourhood and their home.

In this relation, their access to safety within the more local areas may thus function as a contributor to heightened levels of unsafety in the areas within which these protective measures are not available to them. Due to their physical characteristics, where the way they look, dress, talk and behave are indicators of wealth (Saraví, 2004, 2015), their family's economic position may furthermore lead them to feel more exposed. These theories are further supported through finding the young people belonging to the lower socioeconomic sectors feeling less unsafe within the general urban area. Young people of these sectors feeling less unsafe may be due to their familiarity with the area, but also them not experiencing the high contrasts access to safety within the general urban area and their more local areas, as their access to protective measures may not be as opposing.

Important to note is however that the sample does not represent the lowest nor the highest socioeconomic strata found within the city, and that the differences found in this study is representative for the lower- and upper- middle-class only.

### **6.2.3. School Area Belonging and Sense of Safety**

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Hypothesis 3: Young people living and spending time in better-off areas will demonstrate higher levels of safety

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Young people's safety has on various occasions been linked to their physical and social surroundings (e.g. Cope, 2008; Ferraro, 1995; La Grange et al., 1992; Pain, 2001; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). Considering the previously discussed findings of material wealth's influence on young people's sense of safety within the neighbourhood and home, it may not be too surprising that children and young people from school area 2 are also found to be those that report being the most safe within the local area, nor that children with school area 3 belonging are those experiencing the highest levels of unsafety. The study thus presents findings that both are consistent and inconsistent with the hypothesis of young people living and spending time in better-off areas will demonstrate higher levels of safety, again with varying results being due to the location in question.

The home commonly represents a place of safety for most children, and this is also the findings of this study. However, it is striking that as few as 59% of children with school area 3 belonging feel safe in their home at night, especially seen in contrast with school belonging 2, where 88% feel safe in their homes at night-time.

The high levels of safety within the local area of the neighbourhood and home found amongst children with school area 2 belonging may partially be explained through the effects of gated communities. Besides having security measures available within and/or outside the home in particular, gated communities furthermore provide an enclosed, private neighbourhood where the contracting of private security guards protecting the neighbourhood is common. These neighbourhoods are often characterised by social care and control, where big gates and hired guards prevent and provide access to the area which often is conditioned to people having to hand in their personal identification papers which is returned upon exit. The appearance of cues generating concerns about safety are thus starkly regulated, encouraging higher levels of safety amongst its residents and users (Covington & Taylor, 1991; Rogerson & Christmann, 2007).

In stark contrast to the safety levels amongst children from school area 2, 50% of the children from school area 3, and 37% from school area 1 experience their neighbourhood as unsafe. The municipality school area 3 represent, is the area with the highest criminal rates as well as population density within the city (OCMX, 2019). Higher levels of unsafety found amongst young people from this area may therefore be explained through the probability of them residing in neighbourhoods characterised by high prevalence of actual and threat of victimisation, and thus also exposure to various crimes either directly or indirectly (May & Dunaway, 2000; May et al., 2002; Pleysier, 2009; Roché, 2003). The fact that the children from low-income families are clustered in school area 1, further increase the likelihood of these children residing in areas with high levels of physical incivility which on several occasions has been linked with lower levels of safety (Cope, 2008; Doran & Lees, 2005; Shepherd & Moore, 2006; Skogan, 1990; Williamson et al., 2006; Wilson & Kelling, 1982).

In contrast to the better-off neighbourhoods found within the city, these neighbourhoods tend to be characterised by high levels of disorganisation and lack of control, which may indicate that the local residents and institutions are not interested in and/or not able to adequately manage the community. These features may have an increasing effect on children's feelings of vulnerability, and thus promote unsafety within the local area. In the case of children from school area 2, the very reputation of the area as the most dangerous within the city may have additional negative influence on their safety (Kullberg et al., 2009). However, the actual rates of violence and population density may be the explanation to the differentiation in levels of safety amongst young people from school area 3 and school area 1. Through 14% furthermore feeling unsafe within their own homes in school area 3, in comparison to 8% within the more deprived children of school area 1, further supports this theory. These levels of unsafety may

furthermore be seen in correlation with the incidents of experiences with material damage to or robbery within the dwellings which will be further discussed in section 6.7 of this chapter.

However, these last statistics may also be connected to levels of physical and psychological violence in the home which has been proven to increase in stressful situations, which living within these areas may be characterised as (UNICEF, 2010). Through its focus on public violence nevertheless, this thesis does consequentially not have any statistics to sustain these claims and should be noted as only speculations by the author which may not be bound to children's actual experiences.

The varied levels of safety within the neighbourhood based on school area belonging may moreover be linked to the actual use of the neighbourhood by the children. There is reason to believe that children from school area 2 belonging rather spend time in organised activities or shopping-malls after school instead of actually spending time within their neighbourhoods (Ariovich et al., 2000; Matthews, Taylor, et al., 2000). The neighbourhood may therefore be considered to have a stronger importance for children with school belonging 1 and 3, due to its central function as a place of play, meeting friends, or simply 'hanging out' (Gough & Franch, 2005; Holloway & Valentine, 2000a; Saraví, 2015). Children's sense of safety within the neighbourhood may thus not only be contingent to the physical aspect of the neighbourhood itself, but also by children's attachment to and use of it.

The general urban area of Mexico City stands out as the most dangerous location in the face of its younger population, and albeit no association was found between school area belonging and sense of safety within this location, a moderating effect of school area belonging is indicated in the descriptive statistics. These statistics reveal that young people with school area 2 belonging are those feeling most insecure within the general urban area, followed by those from school area 3, and where children of school area 1 feel the least insecure.

Finding highest levels of unsafety within those from school area 1 is somewhat surprising considering the stark socio- and spatial segregation found within the city, where it is believed that children of the more wealthy parents live their lives within the protected enclaves of the city. What the data does not allow for, is however the identification of place within the large city, making the location referred to very wide-ranging and unprecise. It is expected that some places within the city are "safe" and other less "safe", and that the children have various access to these areas and are able to distinguish between them based on their characteristics from a very early age. When referring to the city in general terms however, this may be harder to

separate, having the less “safe” places influencing their perceptions of the city in total. The lack of specification of place while exploring safety within the city in general may thus inhibit children from distinguishing these places from each other, and thus result in this general feeling of elevated unsafety. The findings should however not be underestimated, as it may fairly be the result of lack of protection experienced within this location in comparison to that of the more local area of the neighbourhood and the home. Another explanation may be linked to their actual use of the general urban area and the public space in general, where children from school area 2 are more likely to be protected from the public sphere than those from the other school areas (Ariovich et al., 2000; Cosco & Moore, 2002; Ennew, 1994; Gough & Franch, 2005; Marit Ursin, 2012). Due to this protection, the general urban area not only becomes a place associated with less protection, but also associated with unfamiliarity and the unknown, which may have an additional increasing effect on their unsafety. Exposure to problems has also been suggested to reduce concerns (Carvalho & Lewis, 2003; Percy-Smith, 2002), giving reason to believe that due to children from school area 1 and 3 spending more time in open, public spaces, the city in general become more familiar, but also increase their exposure to incivilities and crime. The discrepancy of perceived safety between the school areas may therefore be due to both stronger familiarity and more exposure to hardships amongst children and youth from school area 1 and 3 (Gaetz, 2004; Gough & Franch, 2005; Kuasñosky & Szulik, 2000; Saraví, 2004; M. Ursin, 2012).

#### **6.2.4. Crime-talk and Sense of Safety**

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Hypothesis 4: Talk of crime and the sharing of victimisation stories will have a negative impact on children and young people’s sense of safety

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Although research being limited, allocation of stories of victimisation and crime has been found to increase people’s notions of unsafety (Caldeira, 2000; Hale, 1996; La Grange et al., 1992; J. B. Robinson et al., 2003). In this study, it was also found to have a negative influence on young people’s safety during the day within the general urban area and the home. The hypothesis of finding a negative association between talk of crime and young people’s perceived safety was thus supported within these locations, while the results are inconsistent with the expectations in the other locations.

Stories of victimisation and crime are believed to affect young people’s interpretations of crime through generating assumptions of certain crimes being conducted by specific people to defined victims within particular locations (Caldeira, 2000). Due to Mexico City roaming over 1,494

km<sup>2</sup>, and being divided into 16 various municipalities, there is reason to believe that extended parts of the city remain unexplored to a vast number of children and young people. In addition to the size, each municipality is characterised by varying levels of socio-spatial segregation and violence and crime, which furthermore encourages young people to stay within certain familiar areas due to the threat of either being discriminated against or becoming victim of a crime found in more unfamiliar places. Stories of victimisation may thus be the only source of information on large parts of the city, having particular effects on young people's sense of safety within the unfamiliar, general urban area. Due to the relatively high statistical number of victimisations within the city (see OCMX, 2019), it is also plausible that crime stories distributed in both official and social media have a central impact on children's safety within this location (Custers & Van den Bulck, 2012; DeGroof, 2008).

In the correlation analyses, talk of crime is furthermore found to have a stronger effect on girls' safety than boys. With a vast number of stories of femicides and "*trata de blancas*" (human trafficking) circulating within the city, these stories may have particularly stark impacts on the sense of safety amongst Mexican girls.

The finding of talk of crime as significant on children's sense of safety within the home during the day was an unexpected find. Due to very limited research supporting this finding, I can only speculate to why crime-talk has an association with perceived safety in the home. One explanation may be connected to the absence of parents in the home during the day, and that children thus feel more exposed and vulnerable to the stories they have heard than when the parents are home after work at night. This again connects children's notion of safety in the home to the experience of being protected by their loved ones, positioning parents in a particularly important role with regards to children's perceived safety within the home. Through crime-talk not having an affect on children's safety during the night, this theory seems plausible.

The ways in which victimisation and crime is discussed within the home may furthermore be of importance, where whether or not the children are listened to and invited to partake in discussions may be of influence. The Mexican violent reality may at some point be very brutal, where the media, both official and social, is characterised by high levels of grotesque pictures and descriptions of extreme violent actions. If children are not protected from some parts of this content, this may explain the effects of crime-talk on their safety within the home. This is also the case if discussions of violence and fear are experienced as "out of reach" to children where they are expected to sit passively and listen to adult's talk of crime instead of being encouraged



to participate and share their own views and perspective and are able to ask questions, to which adults to their best abilities try to answer.

Talk of crime was moreover the only variable found non-significant in children's sense of safety within the neighbourhood. The flow of stories of victimisation and crime was expected to lead to a decrease in young people's sense of safety within the neighbourhood but turned out not to be supported. This may be due to the high impact indirect victimisation has on perceived safety within this location and that the effect of stories of actual experienced crime by friends, family and neighbours is stronger than the flow of crime stories from unfamiliar people and the media.

### **6.2.5. Indirect Victimisation and Sense of Safety**

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Hypothesis 5: Children knowing someone who has been victim of a crime will report lower levels of safety

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Indirect victimisation has on several occasions been associated with elevated levels of unsafety (Hale, 1996; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Tyler, 1980). However, this study only found this to be the case within the neighbourhood at night. Put together, this study is thus inconsistent with the hypothesis of finding higher levels of unsafety amongst those children who knows anyone who has been a victim of crime.

Indirect victimisation was found to have a negative effect on young Mexicans' sense of safety in the neighbourhood at night. Hearing about other people's victimisation is strongly related to the flow of information between individuals, and the talk with neighbours or people within the same community or local area may therefore be a partial explanation to these findings. Being informed about the victimisation of someone has, additionally to being associated with elevated sense of insecurity within the child, also been noted to be taken as a cue to potential danger (Skogan & Maxfield, 1981). If the person victimised is a friend living within the same network or is a neighbour, it is thus plausible that children associate this person's victimisation with elevated possibilities of self becoming a victim (Vilalta, 2011). If the actual victimisation happened *within* the neighbourhood, this influence may furthermore be enhanced, considering it is the area within which most children frequent and also experience less restrictions. This furthermore supports the idea of victimisation not only being more influential on young people's sense of safety when it happens within the neighbourhood, but also that this is the location within which victimisation happen, which will be further discussed in the following sub-section.

Indirect victimisation was however not found to have an impact on sense of safety in the city in general, nor the home, indicating that even though family members, friends and familiar people have been exposed to crimes, this is not affecting the children's sense of safety within these locations. One reason for this may be linked to the "*normalisation*" of victimisation due to a vast number of criminal incidents occurring on any given day within the general urban area (see statistics in chapter 2), and thus triggering a sense of stoicism to this reality. As one girl in the sample states:

"Mexico City is one of the most inhabited [cities] in the world. Yes, it is dangerous, but we have "gotten used to it" so to speak. It is already very common to hear that they robbed or assaulted etc..." (Girl, School Area 1 Belonging)

In relation to not finding it to have an effect within the home, this may furthermore be due to the victimisation happening outside in the public sphere, and that the protecting abilities of the walls of the private home and its representation of safety together with parental protection decreases its effect.

### **6.2.6. Direct Victimisation and Sense of Safety**

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Hypothesis 6: Having been a direct victim of a crime will result in higher levels of unsafety

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Theories have been developed on the negative effect of victimisation on people's perceived safety, where those who have been victims of crime tend to report lower levels of safety than those who have not suffered these experiences (Hale, 1996; Rader et al., 2007; Schafer et al., 2006; Skogan, 1995; Stafford & Galle, 1984). The study found a link between direct victimisation and sense of safety within the neighbourhood, but not within any of the other two locations, giving mixed support to the hypothesis depending on the location in question.

Finding young people having been a direct victim of crime reporting higher levels of unsafety within the neighbourhood than those who have not lived these experiences, and considering that it is not found to have an impact on young people's safety in the other two locations, suggests that most children and young people's victimisation occurs within the neighbourhood. This however, is an interesting finding, as it highlights the importance of the geographies of children and young people's perceptions of safety, indicating that being a direct victim of a crime does not necessarily affect their general sense of safety, but that it is rather bound to the area within which the victimisation took place. These findings thus urge an understanding of the neighbourhood as the location constituting the biggest risk to youth and implies a misinformation of the general urban area as the most threatening location. However, it should also be seen in relation to the fact that the most frequent direct victimisation is material damage

to, or robbery in or of the family's house or car. Literature distinguishing between the effects of forms of victimisation on sense of safety is limited, but at least within this study the detrimental impact of these crimes seems to be present on children's sense of safety within their neighbourhood.

For the study to find no link between direct victimisation and sense of safety within the city's general area, gives further support to the theory of those who have experienced becoming a victim, has experienced the victimisation within a more local and familiar location. By it neither being found relevant in relation to sense of safety within the home, the effect of the walls of the home and the family again becomes central. An important note is however that it may be easier to report high levels of unsafety outside the home due to the possible incrimination of family members when reporting feeling unsafe in the home.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

### 7.1. Introduction

This master's thesis will be rounded off with a summary of the thesis's main findings and content before finishing off with some thoughts about the road ahead.

### 7.2. Summary of the Study's Findings and Answers to the Research

#### Problem

In the current research I aimed to advance the field of studies on sense of safety by analysing the association between young people's school area belonging and their sense of safety in Mexico City. The research problem was:

*“How Does School Area Belonging Affect Sense of Safety Amongst Children in Mexico City?”.*

Relevant concepts and theories were explained in the theory chapter and formed the basis for the thesis's results. Descriptive statistics and regression models were used in order to provide an overview of the data material as well as to elucidate the relationships between the study's variables. The discussion in chapter six shows the connection between the findings of the study and the theory and is connected to the research problem and hypotheses. The information this study is based upon is a self-report questionnaire answered by 548 children and young people between the age of 12 to 15 belonging to three various schools in Mexico City, representing the areas of Álvaro Obregón (school 1) (n = 252), Xocimilco (school 2) (n = 185) and Cuauhtémoc (school 3) (n = 115).

Although a host of variables can potentially affect children and young people's perceived sense of safety within their home, their neighbourhood and their city in general, this study is based on findings within several previous studies exploring children's sense of safety in urban areas which have found that those who tend to be the most fearful are; girls in contrary to boys (Cops & Pleysier, 2011; Deakin, 2006; DeGroof, 2008); young people from low affluent families in comparison to those of well-to-do families (Cops & Pleysier, 2011; Cops et al., 2012) and youths who have previously experienced victimisation (Deakin, 2006). Additional findings have been that information-flow between individuals can decrease sense of safety through indirect victimisation (Bissler, 2003; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Hale, 1996).

Sense of safety is thus not a spontaneous nor arbitrary reaction but rather a sensation which can be attributed to a variety of factors such as gender, demographical belonging and experiences with criminal actions. This study acquired statistical evidence that children living and spending time in three various areas within the city demonstrate varied levels of sense of safety within three various urban contexts; the city, the neighbourhood and the home. Sense of safety has in addition been found to depend on children's sociodemographic (gender) and socioeconomic characteristics (material wealth), as well as talk of crime and direct and indirect individual victimisation. Based on this, central hypotheses for this study has been that children and young people's sense of safety is dependent on the variation of these factors. And as it turned out, the most central predictors of sense of safety amongst the survey participants was their school area belonging, material wealth and being a girl.

The first significant finding is that sense of safety varies within the three geographical locations, bringing emphasis to the geographies of young people's safety.

The second significant finding is that the findings additionally suggest that certain demographic variables come into play in different scales within different locations, where being a girl was found statistically significant with regards to young people's sense of safety within the general urban area. However, as we moved to their more local areas, the neighbourhood and home, the only place being a girl was found statistically significant in order to support this hypothesis, was in the neighbourhood during the day.

Material wealth was additionally found statistically significant in the shaping of young people's safety in the neighbourhood and the home, but not within the general urban area. The expectations of young people from various socioeconomic sectors to demonstrate divergent perceptions of safety was thus only supported within the local area, where those of high-income families feel safer than those of low-income families. These findings deviate from previous research with adults, where little or no effect of enclosed home areas on the inhabitant's sense of safety has been found (Borsdorf & Hidalgo, 2008; Caldeira, 2000; Giglia, 2001, 2008; Lacarrieu & Thuiller, 2001; Low, 2003; Vilalta, 2011). They are however consistent with research suggesting higher levels of unsafety amongst those from the lower socioeconomic strata (McKee & Milner, 2000; Pantazis, 2000).

A fourth significant finding is that school area belonging was found statistically significant on sense of safety within the local area, but not in the general urban area. The variances found within the local area have been demonstrated to be linked to the characterisations of the

municipalities within which the schools are located, where young people living and spending time in areas characterised by high levels of crime and incivilities, demonstrated lower likelihood of experiencing feelings of safety (Doran & Lees, 2005; Shepherd & Moore, 2006; Skogan, 1990; Skogan & Maxfield, 1981; Williamson et al., 2006; Wilson & Kelling, 1982).

Further data analyses reveal some statistically significant variations in sense of safety depending on victimisation and location, where the neighbourhood stands out as the only location within which indirect and direct victimisation has been found to be statistically significant. This has been linked to the extended use of this location by a vast number of children, as it is the first public space children spend time in when leaving the home as well as representing the public space within which parental restrictions are lowest (Matthews, Limb, et al., 2000; G. Valentine, 1997b; G. Valentine et al., 1998).

### **7.3. Further Recommendations**

Our societies are in constant change, where the threat of violence and crime are becoming more and more pertinent in an increasing number of children and young people's lives all over the globe. The prevalence of violence and crime was recognised to have reached epidemic proportions close to three decades ago (Fitzpatrick & Boldizar, 1993; Martinez & Richters, 1993), and considering the development since then, it is concerning to find little research being done on children and young people's safety. By the Latin American region furthermore representing the region within which most children and young people are believed to grow up in a society characterised by high levels of crime and violence, the close to consistent exclusion of children and young people from national and local crime and safety surveys is particularly perturbing. An increasement of children and young people's position within the Latin American region therefore seems urgent in order for us to gain more knowledge of the effects it has to grow up and live within societies with the extreme levels of violence. Further studies are therefore encouraged of taking children's perspectives into consideration by actively approaching and listening to them. That the findings of this study are inconsistent with studies conducted with adults further supports this importance.

By finding that children's safety is highly dependent on geographical location and the distinction between the local and non-local area, a proposal of making area a key dimension in conceptual framework for understanding young people's safety is furthermore encouraged.

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## **APPENDICES**

In this final part of the thesis, relevant documents that were developed in relation to the thesis are presented. Due to the questionnaire and all contact with all parties being done in Spanish, a copy of the English translation of the documents will first be provided before the same documents are presented in their original form, Spanish.



# APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire - English Version

## DEMOGRAPHY

1) Gender  Feminine  Masculine

2) Age  12 or 13 years  14 or 15 years

3) Does any of your parents have a university degree (bachelors, masters, doctorate)?

no       yes

4) Who of your parents works within your household?

your mother       your father       both of them

5) The current economic situation within your family allows for you to...

	no	yes
as a family, go on holidays once or more times a year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
participate in extracurricular and/or recreative activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
as a family, possess one or more cars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
have your own room in your house	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
have a video surveillance system, intercommunication or a gate which prevent people from arriving directly at the door of your home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
have hired someone to be working as a maid or nanny in your home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC SECURITY IN MEXICO CITY IN RELATION TO CRIME

6) In your opinion,

	very insecure	insecure	regular	secure	very secure
Mexico City during THE DAY is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mexico City during THE NIGHT is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7) In your opinion,

	very insecure	insecure	regular	secure	very secure
your neighbourhood during THE DAY is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
your neighbourhood during THE NIGH is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mark “does not apply” if you do not use the place / means of transportation mentioned

8) In general, how safe do you feel while being in these places?						
	very insecure	insecure	regular	secure	very secure	does not apply
at school during school hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in your home during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in your home during THE NIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in the streets you frequent without a car during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in the streets you frequent without a car during THE NIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in supermarkets / shopping centres during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in supermarkets / shopping centres during THE NIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in parks / recreative areas during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9) How safe do you feel in general when you use these means of transportation?						
	very insecure	insecure	regular	secure	very secure	does not apply
private transportation (car / school transportation / uber) during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
private transportation (car / school transportation / uber) during THE NIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
public transportation (metro / auto-, micro-, metrobus / taxi) during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
public transportation (metro / auto-, micro-, metrobus / taxi) during THE NIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
walking / biking etc. during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
walking / biking etc. during THE NIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
private transportation (car / school transportation / uber) during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
private transportation (car / school transportation / uber) during THE NIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
public transportation (metro / auto-, micro-, metrobus / taxi) during THE DAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**EXPERIENCE WITH POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATIONS**

**10) How often do you talk about insecurity with your family, friends and/or acquaintances?**

never	1-2 times a week	3-4 times a week	5 or more times a week
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**11) Has any of your family, friends or acquaintances been a direct victim of any of these actions?**

	none	one	2-4 persons	5 persons or more	you do not know
crimes against property like vandalism (graffiti, broken windows etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
breaking and entering in the family house / complete or partial theft of family car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
assault with or without violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
witnessing someone else than the police or the army with a weapon (knife, gun etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
an armed crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other serious crime (kidnapping, threats to their life, sexual assault, murder etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**12) Have you ever been a direct victim of any of these actions?**

	never	once	2-4 times	5 or more times
crimes against property like vandalism (graffiti, broken windows etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
breaking and entering in the family house / complete or partial theft of family car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
assault with or without violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
witnessing someone else than the police or the army with a weapon (knife, gun etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
an armed crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other serious crime (kidnapping, threats to your life, sexual assault, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**13) If you were to be assaulted or suffer a crime, would you get in contact with the police?**

no	yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**14) If you marked NO in the previous question, why would you not get in contact with the police?**

<hr/> <hr/>
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**EVERYDAY STRATEGIES**

**15) How often does your parents supervise where, when and with whom you go?**

never	sometimes	regular	often	always
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**16) Please make a mark in the square which applies to you in each declaration that follows**

With frequency....	no	yes	does not apply
you are accompanied by friends when going somewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you are accompanied by an adult when going somewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you play / hang out in streets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you pay attention to your surroundings and act consequently while being in a public space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you follow a familiar route when going somewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you share your location (with a cell phone GPS-tracker) so that your family or friends knows where you are	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you refrain from going outside after dark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you avoid certain streets or areas within the city because of fear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you use public transportation after dark	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you bring something of high value when going somewhere (cash, jewelry etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
you bring an instrument of defence when leaving your home (self-defence spray, knife, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**17) Is there any place, person and/or object which in particular makes you feel safe?**

<hr/> <hr/>
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**Comments:**

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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**Thank You Very Much for your Cooperation.**

## APPENDIX 2: Introduction Form, Participants - English Version



### Research Questionnaire

Adolescents and Public Safety in Mexico City  
- A Quantitative Self-Report Study

Responsible Investigator May Gresdahl

The participation in this study involve NO costs and is voluntary. All the information provided will be treated with strict security measures in order to ensure your confidentiality, and please DO NOT write your name anywhere in the questionnaire. All the information and documentation provided in the study is subject to the Federal Law for Protection of Personal Data in Possession of Individuals. The information will be used for the purpose of my master's thesis and individual answers will not at any point be shared with anyone else. Additionally, you may choose to NOT reply any or as many questions of the questionnaire as you wish.

#### Instructions:

Mark a **X** in the square in order to respond each question except question 14 and 17. Please do only make one mark for each statement.

#### Questions:

If you have any questions, please raise your hand and I will be with you as soon as possible.

In case of any additional concerns regarding this survey, please contact Thomas Helgesen (thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no), the Data Protection Authority at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

By answering this questionnaire, you give your consent to participate in the study "Adolescents and Public Safety in Mexico City".

Thank you very much for your participation.



## APPENDIX 3: Information Form, Parents - English Version



### Request for Participation in the Research Study Adolescents and Public Security in Mexico City - A Quantitative Self-Report Study

Responsible Investigator: May Gresdahl

Institution: Norwegian Centre for Childhood Research, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

By this document I respectfully address you in order to inquire about the possible participation of your daughter/son enrolled in NAME OF SCHOOL in the research study on “Adolescents and Public Security in Mexico City”. The person responsible for carrying out the study is May Gresdahl committed to the Norwegian Centre of Childhood Research (Norsk Senter for Barneforskning) located at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet), in Trondheim, Norway. The study will serve to elaborate the thesis of my Masters of Philosophy in Childhood Studies, and will be conducted in **NAME OF SCHOOL** on the day of \_\_\_\_\_.

The main objective of the study is to explore the relations between the socioeconomic level of adolescents in Mexico City aged 12 to 15 years and;

- a) their perception of public safety;
- b) their exposure to potentially dangerous situations; and
- c) their daily routines

The intention of the study is to obtain information concerning the experience and perceptions of adolescents of Mexico City with the objective of helping more young people to feel safe. The thesis proposal has been approved by the Data Protection for Research Authority (Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata) and all information and documentation provided in the study will be subject to the Federal Law for Protection of Personal Data in Possession of Individuals. The study is scheduled to be completed by August 2019.

#### What does Participation in the Study Imply?

Participation is voluntary and free of charge and information about the students, their families nor the school will not be disclosed. The data collection will be completed by the use of a questionnaire provided to the participants in paper format during school hours. The questions will refer to the perception of public safety of the adolescents, their exposure to potentially dangerous situations, their daily routines and the socioeconomic situation of their family.

### **What Will Happen with the Acquired Information?**

The data provided by the participants will be treated under adequate security measures ensuring the confidentiality in accordance with the provisions of Article 21 of the Federal Law for Protection of Personal Data in Possession of Individuals. The original questionnaires will be safeguarded by the responsible investigator and will be destroyed after encoding.

Informed consent is the legal base for processing personal data in the study, and written consent of the parents of the participants will be requested before the survey is conducted in each school. Parents also has the option of revising the questionnaire before giving their consent through getting in contact with the responsible investigator May Gresdahl on phone number: 5566890269 or by sending an email to gresdahl@ntnu.no. Questions and additional information may also be required through these means of contact.

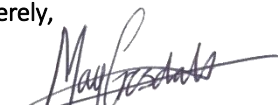
The participant has the right to request access to their own data, rectify and cancel their answers as well as oppose to their handling by contacting the responsible investigator May Gresdahl through the means of contact provided in the previous paragraph. You may also request this by contacting Thomas Helgesen (thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no), the head of the Data Protection Authority at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, or the Norwegian General Data Protection Authority (Datatilsynet) on this email address: postkasse@datatilsynet.no.

Additionally, you may get in contact with the thesis supervisors, Marit Ursin on marit.ursin@ntnu.no or Vegard Johansen on vegard.johansen@ntnu.no who both works at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

### **Voluntary Participation**

The participation in this study is voluntary, and the consent granted for the purpose of this study may be cancelled at any time during the study, resulting in all the personal data being excluded from the study's data set.

Sincerely,

  
May Gresdahl

## APPENDIX 4: Consent Form, Parents - English Version



### Informed Consent for the Participation of the Study of Investigation Adolescents and Public Security in Mexico City - A Quantitative Self-Report Study

Responsible Investigator: May Gresdahl  
Institution: Norwegian Centre for Childhood Research, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

By signing this document, I grant the consent for the participation of my daughter/son \_\_\_\_\_ enrolled in **NAME OF SCHOOL** in the study of investigation "Adolescents and Public Security in Mexico City".

The purpose of the study has been explained to me and I have understood it.

I have also been informed that the participation of my daughter/son is voluntary, and that she/he as well as I as a parent may annul the consent granted for this purpose at any moment during the study, resulting in the exclusion of data. The name of my daughter/son will not be presented at any stage of the study.

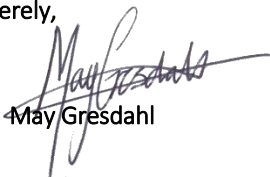
I understand that all the information provided by my daughter/son is treated under adequate security measures, and that her/his confidentiality is always guaranteed so that information cannot be traced back to the girl/boy, the family nor the school she/he belongs to.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

  
May Gresdahl



## APPENDIX 5: Information Form, Schools - English Version



DATE of MONTH, 2018

**May Gresdahl**

Norwegian Centre for Childhood Research,  
Norwegian University of Science and Technology  
Trondheim, Norway

**Mr. / Mrs. NAME**

Subdirector NAME

School Name

Present

My name is May Gresdahl and I am studying a Masters of Childhood Studies taught by the Norwegian Centre for Childhood Research (Norsk Senter for Barneforskning) belonging to the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, Norway. The main objective of the masters I am currently attending is to investigate and analyse the dynamics between childhood and culture as well as the dynamics between economic, social and political conditions and children's welfare in various parts of the world.

As part of the second year of my masters I am to develop a study of investigation regarding a topic of personal interest, that is, the thesis. The main objective of my thesis is to investigate how the perception of public safety deviates between distinct groups of adolescence and how this may affect the daily routines of children and young people in Mexico City. As part of the investigation, the first step is to carry out a survey of approximately 15 minutes with at least 500 participants aged 12 to 15 years in various schools.

It is expected that the results of the thesis will allow the finding of relevant information regarding the experiences and perceptions of children and young people which may be used in order to make recommendations to the institutions in charge of education in order for them to carry out actions intended to improve the safety of more children and young people.

It should be mentioned that the thesis proposal has been approved by the Data Protection for Research Authority (Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata) and that all the information and documentation provided in the study will be subject to the Federal Law for Protection of Personal Data in Possession of Individuals. Likewise, informed consent is the legal basis for processing personal data in the study, and therefore, the written consent of the parents, and



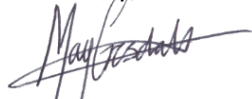
verbal consent of the participants themselves will be requested. All information will be treated with strict security measures in order to ensure participation confidentiality.

Derived from the above, I respectfully allow myself to request an appointment in order to further present my thesis project and to ask for your consent to carry out this brief survey to the students of **NAME OF SCHOOL** on their perception of public safety in Mexico City. The survey could be conducted in the hours and days convenient to the school during the period of September to December of the current year, which is when I will be staying in Mexico.

Finally, I allow myself to attach to the present writing, the survey to which I refer and the letter of information and request of consent of the parents of the students.

I appreciate your time and attention, and I will be at your service for any questions or clarifications at the email address: gresdahl@ntnu.no and by phone number: 5566890269.

Sincerely,



May Gresdahl

## APPENDIX 6: Questionnaire - Spanish Version

### DEMOGRAFÍA

1) Género  Femenino  Masculino

2) Edad  12 o 13 años  14 o 15 años

3) ¿Alguno de sus padres tiene educación universitaria (licenciatura, maestría, doctorado)?

no

sí

4) ¿En su casa, quien de sus padres trabaja?

su mamá

su papá

los dos

5) Favor de marcar la respuesta correcta en cada declaración que sigue

La situación económica actual de su familia les permiten que...	no	sí
como familia pueden salir de vacaciones una vez al año o en más ocasiones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
usted participa en actividades extracurriculares y/o recreativas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
su familia posee un o más automóviles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
usted tiene una habitación propia en su casa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
su hogar tiene un sistema de video vigilancia, intercomunicación o portón que impide que las personas lleguen directamente a la puerta del hogar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en su casa labora un(a) trabajador(a) del hogar y/o niñera	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### PERCEPCIÓN DE SEGURIDAD PÚBLICA EN LA CIUDAD DE MÉXICO CON RELACIÓN AL CRIMEN

6) En su opinión, la Ciudad de México durante EL DÍA es	muy insegura	insegura	regular	segura	muy segura
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
En su opinión, la Ciudad de México durante LA NOCHE es	muy insegura	insegura	regular	segura	muy segura
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7) En su opinión, su colonia durante EL DÍA es	muy inseguro	inseguro	regular	seguro	muy seguro
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
En su opinión, su colonia, durante LA NOCHE es	muy inseguro	inseguro	regular	seguro	muy seguro
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Marque “no le aplica” si usted no usa el lugar / medio de transporte mencionado

8) En general, ¿qué tan seguro se siente estando en estos lugares?						
	muy insegur@	insegur@	regular	segur@	muy segur@	no le aplica
en su escuela durante horarios escolares	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en su hogar durante EL DÍA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en su hogar durante LA NOCHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en las calles que frecuenta sin coche durante EL DÍA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en las calles que frecuenta sin coche durante LA NOCHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en supermercados / centros comerciales durante EL DÍA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en supermercados / centros comerciales durante LA NOCHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en parques / áreas de recreación durante EL DÍA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
en parques / áreas de recreación durante LA NOCHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9) Normalmente cuando usted usa estos medios de transporte, ¿qué tan seguro se siente?						
	muy insegur@	insegur@	regular	segur@	muy segur@	no le aplica
transporte privado (automóvil / transporte escolar / uber ) durante EL DÍA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
transporte privado (automóvil / transporte escolar / uber) durante LA NOCHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
transporte público (metro / auto-,micro-,metrobús / taxi) durante EL DÍA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
transporte público (metro / auto-,micro-,metrobús / taxi) durante LA NOCHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
caminando / andando en bicicleta etc. durante EL DÍA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
caminando / andando en bicicleta etc. durante LA NOCHE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**EXPERIENCIA CON SITUACIONES POTENCIALMENTE PELIGROSAS**

**10) ¿Qué tan seguido habla usted sobre la inseguridad con sus familiares, conocidos y/o amigos?**

nunca <input type="checkbox"/>	1-2 veces por semana <input type="checkbox"/>	3-4 veces por semana <input type="checkbox"/>	5 o más veces por semana <input type="checkbox"/>
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**11) ¿Alguna vez ha sido usted víctima directa u observador de algunas de estas acciones?**

	nunca	una vez	2-4 veces	5 o más veces
delitos contra la propiedad como vandalismo (grafiti, ventanas rotas, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
robo a casa habitación / robo total o parcial del automóvil de su familia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
asalto con o sin violencia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
observar a que una persona, que no es la policía o el ejército, porta un arma (cuchillo, pistola, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
un crimen armado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
otros delitos graves (secuestro, amenazas de su vida, agresión sexual, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**12) ¿Alguna vez han algunos de sus familiares, conocidos o amigos sido víctimas directas de algunas de estas acciones?**

	ningun@	un@	2-4 personas	5 personas o más	usted no sabe
delitos contra la propiedad como vandalismo (grafiti, ventanas rotas, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
robo a casa habitación / robo total o parcial del automóvil de su familia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
asalto con o sin violencia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
observar a que una persona, que no es la policía o el ejército, porta un arma (cuchillo, pistola, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
un crimen armado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
otros delitos graves (secuestro, amenazas de su vida, agresión sexual, homicidio etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**13) ¿Usted se pondría en contacto con la policía si fuera agredido o sufriera un delito?**

no <input type="checkbox"/>	sí <input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------------	--------------------------------

**14) Si usted marcó un NO en la pregunta anterior, ¿por qué no se pondría en contacto con la policía?**

_____
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## ESTRATEGIAS COTIDIANAS

### 15) ¿Qué tan seguido vigilan sus padres por dónde, a qué hora y con quién se encuentra?

ninguno

poco

regular

mucho

demasiado

### 16) Favor de marcar la respuesta correcta en cada declaración que sigue

Con frecuencia...	no	sí	no le aplica
lo acompaña un@(s) amig@(s) cuando va a algún lado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
lo acompaña un adulto cuando va a algún lado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
juega/pasa el tiempo por las calles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
presta atención a su entorno y actúa en consecuencia mientras se ubica en el espacio público	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sigue una ruta familiar cuando va a algún lado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
comparte su ubicación (GPS del celular) para que su familia o sus amigos sepan dónde se encuentra	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
se abstiene de salir al anochecer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
no usa el transporte público después del anochecer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
evita ciertas calles o áreas dentro de la ciudad por causa de miedo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
no lleva nada de gran valor cuando va a algún lado (efectivo, joyas, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
lleva un objeto para defensa personal cuando sale de su casa (aerosol de autodefensa, cuchillo, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 17) ¿Hay algún(os) lugar(es), persona(s) y/u objeto(s) que lo hace sentir segur@?

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### Comentarios:

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**Muchas Gracias por su Cooperación.**

## APPENDIX 7: Information Form, Participants - Spanish Version



### Encuesta del Estudio de Investigación;

#### “Adolescentes y La Seguridad Pública en la Ciudad de México.” - Un Estudio Cuantitativo Autoinformado

Investigadora Responsable May Gresdahl

La participación de este estudio NO tiene costo y es voluntaria. Todos los datos proporcionados serán tratados con estrictas medidas de seguridad para garantizar su confidencialidad y por favor NO escriba su nombre en ninguna parte de la encuesta. Toda la información y documentación proporcionada en el estudio estará sujeta a la Ley Federal de Protección de Datos Personales en Posesión de los Particulares. La información se utilizará para mi tesis de maestría y no se compartirán respuestas individuales en ningún caso. Adicionalmente, puede decidir NO contestar las preguntas de la encuesta que desee.

La intención del estudio es obtener información sobre las experiencias y percepciones de los adolescentes de la Ciudad de México con un fin de ayudar a más jóvenes a sentirse seguros.

#### Instrucciones:

Marque una **X** en el cuadro para responder a cada pregunta excepto las preguntas 14 y 17. Favor de marcar una sola respuesta por cada declaración.

#### Preguntas:

Si tiene alguna pregunta, favor de levantar la mano y estaré con usted lo antes posible. Para cualquier inquietud adicional respecto esta encuesta, favor de comunicarse con Thomas Helgesen (thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no), la Autoridad de Protección de Datos en la Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología.

Al completar esta encuesta, usted da su consentimiento a participar en el estudio “Los Adolescentes y la Seguridad Pública en la Ciudad de México”.

**Le agradezco mucho por su participación.**



## APPENDIX 8: Information Form, Parents - Spanish Version



### Solicitud de Participación en el Estudio de Investigación Los Adolescentes y la Seguridad Pública en la Ciudad de México - Un Estudio Cuantitativo Autoinformado

Investigadora Responsable: May Gresdahl

Institución: Centro Noruego para la Investigación de la Niñez, Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología, Noruega

Mediante la presente me dirijo a usted para consultar sobre la posible la participación de su hija/hijo matriculado en **NOMBRE DE LA ESCUELA** en el estudio de investigación sobre “Los Adolescentes y la Seguridad Pública en la Ciudad de México”. La persona responsable de llevar a cabo el estudio es May Gresdahl adscrita al Centro Noruego para la Investigación de la Niñez (Norsk Senter for Barneforskning) ubicado en la Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología (Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet), en Trondheim, Noruega. El estudio servirá para elaborar la tesis de su Maestría de Filosofía en Estudios de la Infancia, y se llevará a cabo en la **NOMBRE DE LA ESCUELA** el día \_\_\_\_\_.

El objetivo principal del estudio es explorar las relaciones entre el nivel socioeconómico de los adolescentes que tienen entre 12 y 15 años en la Ciudad de México y;

- a) su percepción de la seguridad pública;
- b) su exposición a situaciones potencialmente peligrosas; y
- c) sus rutinas cotidianas

La intención del estudio es obtener información sobre las experiencias y percepción de los adolescentes de la Ciudad de México con un fin de ayudar a más jóvenes a sentirse seguros. La propuesta de tesis ha sido aprobada por la Autoridad de Protección de Datos para Investigación (Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata) y toda la información y documentación proporcionada en el estudio estará sujeta a la Ley Federal de Protección de Datos Personales en Posesión de los Particulares. El estudio está programado para concluirse en agosto de 2019.

#### ¿Qué Implica la Participación en el Estudio?

La participación es voluntaria y gratuita adicionalmente no se revelará información sobre los estudiantes, sus familias, ni a la escuela. La recopilación de datos se realizará a través de un cuestionario proporcionado a los participantes en papel durante el horario escolar. Las preguntas



se referirán a la percepción de la seguridad pública de los adolescentes, su exposición a situaciones potencialmente peligrosas, sus rutinas cotidianas y la situación socioeconómica de su familia.

### ¿Qué Pasará con la Información Adquirida?

Los datos proporcionados por los participantes serán tratados bajo medidas de seguridad para garantizar su confidencialidad de conformidad con lo establecido en el artículo 21 de la Ley Federal de Protección de Datos Personales en Posesión de los Particulares. Los cuestionarios originales serán resguardados por la Investigadora Responsable y serán destruidos después de una codificación.

El consentimiento informado es la base legal para procesar los datos personales en el estudio, y se solicitará el consentimiento por escrito de los padres de los participantes antes de que la encuesta sea realizada en cada escuela. Los padres también tienen la posibilidad de ver el cuestionario antes de dar su consentimiento y se pueden comunicar con la Investigadora Responsable May Gresdahl al número 5566890269 o al correo electrónico gresdahl@ntnu.no para solicitar información adicional y realizar preguntas.

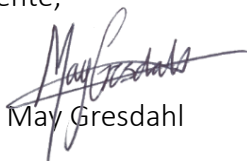
El participante tiene derecho de solicitar acceso, rectificar y anular sus respuestas y datos, así como de oponerse al manejo de los mismos al dirigirse a la Investigadora Responsable May Gresdahl a través los medios mencionados en el párrafo anterior. También lo puede hacer solicitar poniéndose en contacto con Thomas Helgesen (thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no), el responsable de la Autoridad de Protección de Datos en la Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología, o a la Autoridad de Protección de Datos Generales de Noruega (Datatilsynet) a través esté correo electrónico: postkasse@datatilsynet.no.

Adicionalmente se puede poner en contacto con los supervisores de la tesis, Marit Ursin en marit.ursin@ntnu.no o Vegard Johansen en vegard.johansen@ntnu.no quienes trabajan en la Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología.

### Participación Voluntaria

La participación del estudio es voluntaria, y se puede anular el consentimiento que haya otorgado para tal fin en cualquier momento del estudio, y todos los datos personales serán excluidos del conjunto de datos del estudio.

Atentamente,

  
May Gresdahl

## APPENDIX 9: Consent Form, Parents - Spanish Version



### Consentimiento Informado de Participación en el Estudio de Investigación Los Adolescentes y la Seguridad Pública en la Ciudad de México - Un Estudio Cuantitativo Autoinformado

Responsable: May Gresdahl

Institución: Centro Noruego para la Investigación de la Niñez, Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología, Noruega

Al firmar este documento, doy mi consentimiento para la participación de mi hija/hijo \_\_\_\_\_ matriculada/o en **NOMBRE DE LA ESCUELA** en el estudio de investigación “Los Adolescentes y la Seguridad Pública en la Ciudad de México.”

El propósito del estudio me ha sido explicado y lo he entendido.


También me informaron que la participación de mi hija/hijo es voluntaria, y que ella/él o yo como madre / padre puedo anular el consentimiento que haya otorgado para tal fin en cualquier momento del estudio sin que se incluyan sus datos. El nombre de mi hija/hijo no se mencionará en ningún parte del estudio.

Entiendo que todos los datos proporcionados por mi hija/hijo sean tratados bajo medidas de seguridad y que su confidencialidad siempre sea garantizando para que no se pueda rastrear información sobre la niña/el niño, la familia o la escuela que a la que pertenece.

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Atentamente,

  
May Gresdahl



## APPENDIX 10: Information Form, Schools - Spanish Version



FECHA de MÉS de 2018

May Gresdahl  
Centro Noruego para la Investigación de la Niñez  
Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología  
Trondheim, Noruega

**Sr. / Sra. NOMBRE**

Subdirector NOMBRE  
Nombre de la escuela  
Presente

Mi nombre es May Gresdahl y soy una estudiante de la Maestría en Estudios de la Infancia impartida por el Centro Noruego para la Investigación de la Niñez (Norsk Senter for Barneforskning) perteneciente a la Universidad Noruega de Ciencia y Tecnología (NTNU) en Trondheim, Noruega. El objetivo principal de la maestría que estoy cursando es investigar y analizar cómo las dinámicas entre la cultura y las condiciones económicas, sociales y políticas afectan el bienestar de los niños en diferentes partes del mundo.

Durante el segundo año de la maestría que estoy cursando debo desarrollar un estudio de investigación sobre un tema particular de mi interés, es decir, la tesis. El objetivo principal de mi tesis es investigar cómo la percepción de la seguridad pública varía entre distintos grupos de adolescentes y cómo puede afectar las rutinas cotidianas de los jóvenes en la Ciudad de México. Como parte de la investigación, el primer paso es llevar a cabo una encuesta de al menos 500 reactivos, que toma 15 minutos realizar, en varias escuelas con grupos de adolescentes que tienen entre 12 y 15 años. Se prevé que los resultados de la tesis permitirán encontrar información relevante sobre las experiencias y percepciones de los adolescentes, con el fin de hacer recomendaciones a las instituciones encargadas de la educación para que éstas puedan llevar a cabo acciones para que los jóvenes se sientan más seguros.

Cabe mencionar que, la propuesta de tesis ha sido aprobada por la Autoridad de Protección de Datos para Investigación (Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata) y toda la información y documentación proporcionada en el estudio estará sujeta a la Ley Federal de Protección de Datos Personales en Posesión de los Particulares. Asimismo, el consentimiento informado es la base legal para procesar

los datos personales en el estudio y, por ello, se solicitará el consentimiento escrito de los padres y el consentimiento oral de los participantes mismos. Toda la información proporcionada será tratada con estrictas medidas de seguridad para garantizar su confidencialidad.

Derivado de lo anterior, me permito solicitarles una cita con la finalidad de presentar mi proyecto de tesis y pedir su consentimiento para llevar a cabo la breve encuesta a los estudiantes de la **NOMBRE DE LA ESCUELA** sobre su percepción de seguridad pública en la Ciudad de México. La encuesta podría ser realizada en los horarios y días que ustedes lo permitan durante el periodo de septiembre y octubre del año en curso, que es cuando estaré en México. Por último, me permito anexar al presente escrito la encuesta a la que hago referencia y la carta de información y solicitud de consentimiento de los padres de los estudiantes.

Agradezco mucho su tiempo y atención, y quedo a sus órdenes para cualquier duda o aclaración en el correo electrónico gresdahl@ntnu.no y en el número celular 5566890269.

Atentamente,

  
May Gresdahl

