



**UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA**

**SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIROMENTS**

**IMPACT OF THE WALL OF SHAME ON MOBILITY**

**CAPSTONE RESEARCH PROJECT**

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## TABLE OF CONTENT

Abstract.....	p.03
Introduction.....	p.04
Table 1 – Migration to Lima since colonization.....	p.05
Table 2 – Migration to Lima since 1920.....	p.06
Methodology.....	p.10
Study Site.....	p.10
Figure 1 – Villa María del Triunfo.....	p.11
Figure 2 – Wall of Shame.....	p.11
Study design.....	p.12
Data collection and analysis.....	p.12
Results.....	p.13
Map 1 - Location of the Wall.....	p.13
Map 2 - Comparison of street's quality.....	p.14
Figure 3 - Public transportation in Villa María del Triunfo.....	p.15
Figure 4 - Public transportation in Villa María del Triunfo.....	p.16
Figure 5 - Transportation in Surco.....	p.18
Map 3 - Educational institutes and literacy rates by districts.....	p.17
Discussion.....	p.18
Conclusion.....	p.19
Recommendations.....	p.20
Limitations.....	p.21
References.....	p.22

## **ABSTRACT**

Lima's history has been marked by significant demographic shifts, beginning with Spanish colonization, followed by internal migration, and more recently, Venezuelan immigration. This rapid urban growth has put immense pressure on the city's infrastructure and basic services, triggering different policy responses.

One particularly striking example of this urban evolution is the "Wall of Shame," a 10-kilometer barrier separating the poor district of Villa María del Triunfo from the affluent district of La Molina. This physical division has had profound consequences for the residents on both sides, particularly in terms of mobility and access to opportunities.

Through interviews with residents and a detailed analysis of the area, this research shows the disparities between the two sides of the wall. Residents in Villa María del Triunfo face numerous challenges in accessing essential services, employment opportunities, and public transportation due to the physical and social barriers imposed by the wall. The limited mobility of these residents significantly impacts their quality of life and restricts their ability to participate fully in society.

Beyond the physical impact of the wall, it also created a psychological divide, fostering feelings of isolation and marginalization among the residents of Villa María del Triunfo. This social segregation reinforces existing inequalities and makes even more difficult promoting social cohesion and urban integration.

Key words: Impact, barriers, mobility, social, economic, politic.

## INTRODUCTION

Lima, Perú has gone through significant demographic changes throughout its history (Matos, 1990, p.2). These changes, primarily caused by migration, have had profound implications for the city's urban planning and political landscape. Lima's demographic history can be divided into four distinct periods:

The colonial era, the arrival of Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century marked the beginning of a significant demographic transformation in Lima. Between 1535 and 1600, an estimated 50,000 to 100,000 Spanish settlers arrived in Peru, including soldiers, administrators, and merchants. These settlers established Lima as the capital of the Viceroyalty of Peru and the center of Spanish colonial power in the region. In addition to Spanish settlers, there was also migration of indigenous populations from various parts of the Andes Mountains to Lima caused by the *encomienda* system, which granted land and indigenous labor to Spanish conquistadors and officials. This system led to the displacement of indigenous communities and the exploitation of their labor. Enslaved Africans were also brought to Perú during the colonial period to work on plantations and in other sectors of the economy. (Matos, 1990, p.5)

The republican era, following Peru's independence from Spain in 1821, Lima continued to be a major destination for internal and external migrants. The discovery of silver and other minerals in the Andes Mountains, particularly during the 19th century, spurred significant population growth in the city. The silver boom in the mid-19th century, centered around the Cerro de Pasco region, attracted thousands of people from all over Peru, including indigenous populations, mestizos, and immigrants from Europe and Asia. This influx of migrants led to a rapid increase in Lima's population, putting a strain on existing urban infrastructure and housing. The Peruvian government implemented various policies to accommodate the growing population and promote economic development. These policies included the construction of new infrastructure, such as railways and roads, to connect Lima to other parts of the country and facilitate migration. Additionally, the government encouraged foreign investment in mining and other industries to create job opportunities and attract more migrants.

The 20th and 21st centuries saw dramatic shifts in Lima's demographic composition, driven by a complex interplay of economic, political, and social factors. Beginning in the mid-20th century, Lima's industrialization and economic growth attracted large waves of internal migrants, primarily

from rural Andean and Amazonian regions. Between the 1950s and 1970s, Lima's population nearly doubled, with an average annual growth rate of around 5%. However, the internal armed conflict of the 1980s and 1990s, led by the terrorist group Shining Path, triggered one of the largest forced migrations in Peru's history. Hundreds of thousands of Peruvians, especially from rural areas, were forced to flee their homes and seek refuge in cities, primarily Lima. This rural growth created a humanitarian crisis and placed a big pressure on the capital's public services. (Matos, 1990, p.5)

In recent decades, Lima has experienced another wave of migration, this time with a growing international component. The economic crisis in Venezuela since 2014 has generated a surge of Venezuelan migration to Peru, with Lima as the main destination. According to official data, hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans have arrived in Peru seeking employment opportunities and safety. To manage these migratory flows, the Peruvian government has implemented various policies and laws, and it hurried the disorganized expansion of Lima, and the creation of slums. (Matos, 1990, p.22)

Table 1 - Migration to Lima since colonization

MIGRATION IN LIMA				
Years	Colonial Era 16th-18th Centuries	Republican Era 19th Century	20th Century	Contemporary Era 21st Century
Migrant profile	<p><b>Spanish Colonists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Class: Primarily from the middle and upper classes of Spanish society.</li> <li>Occupation: Officials, military personnel, merchants, and artisans.</li> <li>Motivation: Economic opportunities, political power, and religious zeal.</li> <li>Established the social and political structure of the city, the core of the colonial elite.</li> </ul> <p><b>Indigenous People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forced Migration: Many indigenous people were forcibly relocated to Lima and other colonial cities to work in mines, haciendas, and domestic service.</li> <li>Social Status: Subjected to a system of forced labor and discrimination.</li> <li>Formed the majority of the urban workforce, in a subordinate position.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enslaved Africans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brought to the Americas as part of the transatlantic slave trade.</li> <li>Worked under harsh conditions in mines, plantations, and domestic service.</li> <li>Social Status: Considered property and subjected to severe discrimination.</li> <li>Contributed significantly to the economic development of the city, particularly in the agricultural and mining sectors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Ethnic Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mestizos: People of mixed Spanish and indigenous ancestry.</li> <li>Mulattoes: People of mixed Spanish and African ancestry.</li> <li>Zambos: People of mixed African and indigenous ancestry.</li> <li>Often occupied intermediate positions between the dominant Spanish elite and the subordinate indigenous and enslaved populations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chinese Coolies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the abolition of slavery in Peru, the government sought to replace the lost labor by indentured servants from China. These laborers, known as "coolies".</li> <li>Role: Coolies primarily worked on plantations, particularly in the sugar and cotton industries.</li> <li>The conditions faced by coolies were often exploitative. They were subjected to long hours, low wages, and poor living conditions. Many died due to disease, exhaustion, or mistreatment.</li> </ul> <p><b>European Immigrants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Origin: Europeans, particularly from Spain, Italy, and France, migrated to Peru in search of better economic opportunities and political stability.</li> <li>Role: Many European immigrants became involved in various sectors of the Peruvian economy, including agriculture, commerce, and industry.</li> <li>European immigrants were generally more easily integrated into Peruvian society than Chinese coolies due to their shared cultural heritage and language.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>African Slaves: While the slave trade had been abolished, there were still some enslaved Africans in Peru in the 19th century.</li> <li>Indigenous Migrants: Indigenous people from the Andean highlands also migrated to Lima in search of work and education.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Andean Migrants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most substantial wave of migration to Lima during the 20th century came from the Andean highlands. This internal migration was primarily driven by poverty, lack of economic opportunities, and political instability in rural areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Venezuelan Refugees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In recent years, Lima has experienced a surge in Venezuelan refugees fleeing economic hardship and political turmoil in their home country.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Latin American Migrants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lima has also attracted migrants from other Latin American countries, such as Colombia and Ecuador, seeking better economic prospects.</li> </ul> <p><b>International Migrants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While less common than internal migration, Lima has also received a small number of international migrants, including Europeans and Asians.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Continuity of Migration:</b> Internal migration to Lima has continued in the 21st century, although at a slightly slower pace than in previous decades.</p> <p><b>Diversity of Migrants:</b> Current migrants come from a greater diversity of regions within the country, enriching the city's culture.</p> <p><b>Urban Challenges:</b> Constant migration has generated significant challenges for Lima, such as traffic congestion, environmental pollution, and lack of affordable housing.</p>
Historical context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of Lima: The city of Lima was founded in 1535 by Francisco Pizarro, quickly becoming the political and administrative center of the Viceroyalty of Peru.</li> <li>Spanish Migration: During the colonial era, Lima received a constant flow of Spanish migrants, both civilians and military, who occupied positions of power and settled in the city.</li> <li>African Slavery: African slavery was another important source of population for Lima during this period. African slaves worked on haciendas, mines, and Spanish homes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European Immigration: After Peru's independence in 1821, there was a significant increase in European immigration, especially from Italy, Spain, and France. These immigrants engaged in various economic activities, such as commerce, industry, and services.</li> <li>Internal Migration: Internal migration from rural areas to Lima also intensified during the republican era, driven by the search for job and educational opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great Migration Wave: The first half of the 20th century was characterized by a great migration wave towards Lima, driven by factors such as industrialization, agricultural modernization, and regional inequalities.</li> <li>Rural-Urban Migration: Migration from rural areas to Lima was particularly intense, as the city consolidated itself as the main economic and cultural center of the country.</li> <li>International Migration: Starting in the 1960s, Lima also began to receive international migrants, mainly from neighboring countries such as Ecuador and Bolivia.</li> </ul>	
Policies	<p><b>Encomienda System</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reward Spanish conquistadors and officials with grants of land and indigenous labor. This system encouraged Spanish migration to Peru as a means of acquiring wealth and status. It also led to the exploitation of indigenous populations, which could have driven some indigenous people to migrate to other regions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Casta System</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To establish a hierarchical social system based on racial and ethnic background. The casta system limited the social and economic mobility of certain groups, including mestizos (people of mixed Spanish and indigenous ancestry) and mulattoes (people of mixed Spanish and African ancestry). This could have encouraged some individuals to migrate to other regions or colonies in search of greater opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Forced Labor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure a steady supply of labor for Spanish agricultural and mining enterprises. Forced labor could have driven indigenous populations to migrate to avoid exploitation. It also created a demand for additional labor, which may have encouraged migration from other regions or colonies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Religious Conversion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To spread Catholicism and consolidate Spanish control over the indigenous population. Religious conversion could have led to cultural displacement and social unrest among indigenous populations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Colonial Administration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To establish and maintain Spanish political and administrative control over the colony. The colonial administrators' policies and practices, such as taxation and land distribution, could have impacted migration patterns by creating incentives or disincentives for certain groups to move to or from Peru.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Abolition of Slavery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminate the institution of slavery and promote human rights. The abolition of slavery led to a decline in the importation of enslaved Africans. However, it also created a labor shortage on plantations, which encouraged migration from other regions or countries to fill the void.</li> </ul> <p><b>Indentured Servitude</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To replace the lost labor of enslaved Africans with indentured servants from other countries. The introduction of indentured servitude, particularly from China, led to a significant influx of migrants to Peru. These laborers were often subjected to harsh conditions and exploitation, which could have driven some to seek freedom and better opportunities elsewhere.</li> </ul> <p><b>Immigration Policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To attract foreign investment and labor to contribute to Peru's economic development. The Peruvian government implemented various immigration policies to encourage European and Asian migration. These policies often favored individuals with specific skills or professions, such as engineers, artisans, and agricultural workers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Land Reform</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To redistribute land ownership and address social inequalities. Land reform policies could have both positive and negative effects on migration. On the one hand, they may have created new opportunities for landless peasants, reducing the need to migrate for economic reasons. On the other hand, land reform can also lead to social unrest and displacement, which may drive some people to migrate.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Immigration Reform</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To regulate the entry, stay, and work of foreign nationals. The Peruvian government has enacted laws and regulations governing immigration procedures, visa requirements, and the rights of foreigners. These policies aim to balance the need for foreign labor with national security concerns.</li> </ul> <p><b>Refugee Protection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide protection and assistance to refugees fleeing persecution or conflict. Peru has ratified international refugee conventions and established mechanisms for the identification and protection of refugees. The government has also implemented programs to assist refugees in accessing essential services, such as housing, healthcare, and education.</li> </ul> <p><b>Integration Policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To facilitate the integration of migrants into Peruvian society. The government has implemented programs to promote language learning, cultural understanding, and access to employment opportunities for migrants. These policies aim to reduce discrimination and foster social cohesion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Border Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To control irregular migration and prevent human trafficking. The Peruvian government has strengthened border security measures, including the deployment of border guards and the use of technology to detect illegal crossings. The government has also worked with neighboring countries to improve border cooperation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Economic Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create jobs and improve economic opportunities in rural areas to reduce the push factors for migration. Examples: The government has implemented programs to promote rural development, agricultural modernization, and infrastructure investment. These policies aim to address the root causes of migration and provide alternatives to urban migration.</li> </ul>	

Table 2 - Migration to Lima since 1920

MIGRATION IN LIMA				
Years	1920 - 1950	1950 - 1980	1980 - 2000	2000 - Actualidad
Historical context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Exploitation of natural resources:</b> The soaring global demand for commodities like cotton and copper fueled Peru's economy. The expansion of extractive industries and agriculture in certain regions led to a mass exodus from rural areas to cities, primarily Lima, in search of better job opportunities.</li> <li><b>Leguia's administration</b> initiated numerous public works projects, including roads and railways, which facilitated population mobility and encouraged migration. Lima experienced unprecedented urban growth under Leguia's rule, attracting a large influx of migrants.</li> <li><b>The Great Depression:</b> The global economic crisis severely impacted Peru's economy, leading to job losses and reduced migration. Migrants who had moved to cities during the economic boom were forced to return to their rural homes due to unemployment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Industrial growth:</b> The 1950s and 1960s were characterized by industrialization, this created a strong pull towards cities, primarily Lima, intensifying internal migration flows.</li> <li><b>Formation of poverty belts:</b> Rapid urban growth led to housing and basic services shortages, resulting in the formation of marginal neighborhoods and poverty belts in cities.</li> <li><b>Onset of violence:</b> Peru was engulfed in an internal armed conflict that primarily affected rural areas. The violence led to the mass displacement of rural populations to cities seeking refuge and safety.</li> <li><b>Economic crisis:</b> Characterized by hyperinflation, unemployment, and an unsustainable foreign debt. The economic crisis affected all sectors of the population, but particularly the most vulnerable, intensifying both internal and external migration.</li> <li><b>Political instability</b> and frequent changes in government hindered the implementation of coherent policies to address the country's social and economic problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Forced Displacement:</b> The conflict between the state and insurgent groups like Sendero Luminoso and the MRTA resulted in the mass displacement of rural populations to cities, particularly in areas affected by violence.</li> <li><b>Hyperinflation:</b> The 1980s saw hyperinflation, devaluing people's incomes and causing a severe economic crisis. The economic crisis led to increased poverty and inequality, pushing many Peruvians to seek better economic opportunities abroad.</li> <li><b>Austerity Measures:</b> Fujimori's economic policies, while stabilizing the economy, also led to unemployment and job insecurity, fueling migration.</li> <li><b>Family Migration:</b> Unlike previous decades, migration during the 1980s and 1990s was often characterized by families migrating together in search of better opportunities.</li> <li><b>Informal Economy:</b> Many Peruvian migrants found employment in the informal sector of their destination countries, working in construction, agriculture, and domestic service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Economic Boom:</b> Peru experienced sustained economic growth from the 2000s onward, fueled by natural resource exploitation and foreign investment. This economic growth created more job opportunities domestically, reducing the pressure to emigrate.</li> <li><b>Xenophobia and Discrimination:</b> The increasing diversity of the migrant population led to xenophobic and discriminatory attitudes.</li> <li><b>Refugees and Asylum Seekers:</b> Peru received a growing number of refugees and asylum seekers, particularly from Venezuela, straining its capacity to provide assistance. The number of Chinese migrants to Peru has increased in recent years, driven by economic opportunities and trade relations between the two countries.</li> <li><b>Mining Boom:</b> The resurgence of the mining industry in Peru, particularly copper and gold mining, has created new job opportunities, attracting both internal and external migrants to mining regions.</li> <li><b>Political Instability:</b> Periods of political instability, such as the impeachment of former President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski in 2018, can create uncertainty and affect migration patterns.</li> </ul>
Statistics				
map				

Since the mid-1950s, Lima has experienced a rapid process of urbanization due to the large wave of migration from the mountains attracted by the rapid industrialization process that the country's capital was undergoing. This caused the slums that surround the outskirts of Lima to emerge. According to Maldonado (2015) there are three reasons for this could be identified: a flexible housing policy, available land, and a temperate climate. Since that time, Lima's growth has been disorganized and informal. The demographic changes that Lima has undergone over time have had a profound impact on its urban planning and political landscape and the city's government has had to adapt its policies and strategies to accommodate the growing population and address the challenges associated with rapid urbanization.

One of the examples of slums is in the district of Villa María del Triunfo and is called Pamplona Alta Nueva Rinconada, this slum emerged as spontaneous human settlements, presenting a complex reality marked by informality, a lack of basic services and social inequality. Historically, slums or poor neighborhoods had been separated from the more affluent parts of the city or region by physical structures or natural features such as rivers or mountains, the reason for this could be the desensitization to poverty. It has been observed that in the present of extreme poverty, people with more resources tend to feel as if they are unable to make a difference and decide on just ignore

the issue. There is also have a deep-rooted system of inequality that can make poverty seem inevitable, leading people to believe that there is little they can do to change the situation.

La Rinconada Pamplona Alta has been separated from the rest of the city by a wall that people like to call the “wall of shame”. This construction is approximately 10 kilometers long and three meters high that physically separates the district from a more affluent part of Lima, the districts La Molina and Surco (BBC, 2015). This barrier, built with materials such as cement, concrete and barbed wire, symbolizes social inequality and urban segregation between a high-income area and a low-income area and mainly represents the city turning its back to the problem. While some of the wall has been taken down, a lot of it still separates the two districts, reminding its residents of the existing inequalities.

The case of the “wall of shame” in Lima, as reported by BBC News in 2015, offers a vivid example of how physical barriers can exacerbate social inequalities and foster urban segregation. This 10-kilometre wall is a tangible manifestation of the deep socio-economic divisions that characterize many Latin American cities. The construction of this wall, justified at the time on a security basis, has had far-reaching consequences. On the one hand, it has reinforced the perception that inhabitants of poorer areas are a threat to residents of wealthy neighborhoods, fostering xenophobia and stigmatization. On the other hand, it has limited the access of residents of marginalized areas to basic services, educational and employment opportunities, this perpetuating the cycle of poverty. This Peruvian case illustrates how physical barriers not only serve to demarcate territories, but also to build invisible walls that separate people and condemn them to live in conditions of inequality. By analyzing this case, a better understanding can be achieved on how urban policies and planning decisions can have a lasting impact on social integration and the quality of life of citizens.

Throughout history, human societies have erected barriers of various kinds to demarcate territories, protect interests and control the flow of people and goods. The UNESCO (2020) established that these barriers, both physical and symbolic, have shaped collective identities, generated conflicts and limited opportunities for cultural exchange. Today, borders have become more porous and less visible, thanks to the development of surveillance and migration control technologies. However, their impact remains profound, fragmenting societies, restricting human mobility and perpetuating inequalities. The construction of walls, the implementation of increasingly strict border controls and the digitalization of migration processes are just some of the manifestations of this new form

of territorial control. The consequences of these policies are multiple and range from the increase in xenophobia and racism to the limitation of individual freedoms and the weakening of human rights.

The construction of physical barriers, such as the US-Mexico border wall, can significantly impact the quality of life for individuals on both sides. As highlighted by Nueva Sociedad (2020), the border, while a physical divide, is a dynamic space where economic disparities and social inequalities are accentuated. While some individuals may benefit from crossing the border, often through undocumented means, to access better economic opportunities and improved quality of life, those who remain on the Mexican side, restricted by the barrier, experience a range of challenges. These can include limited access to employment opportunities, healthcare, education, and social services, as well as increased exposure to environmental hazards and security risks. The barrier can exacerbate existing socioeconomic disparities, leading to a decline in the overall quality of life for many border residents.

The Korean Peninsula, divided by the heavily fortified DMZ, presents a stark contrast in quality of life between the two Koreas. According to a BBC (2023), what began as a temporary Cold War division has evolved into a state of simmering war with frequent escalations of tension. This physical divide has created a deep gap in the quality of life for citizens on both sides. South Korea, a vibrant democracy and economic powerhouse, offers its citizens a relatively high standard of living, characterized by access to modern amenities, quality healthcare, and educational opportunities. In contrast, North Korea, under a totalitarian regime, imposes severe restrictions on its citizens, resulting in a significantly lower quality of life. The psychological impact of this divide is profound. South Koreans, while often experiencing the stresses of modern life, generally enjoy a sense of freedom and security. On the other hand, North Koreans live under constant surveillance, with limited freedom of speech, movement, and thought. This can lead to feelings of oppression, fear, and a decrease in self-esteem. The psychological toll of such a repressive environment can be devastating, leading to widespread mental health problems.

The construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 dramatically altered the lives of East and West Germans. As reported by CNDH Mexico in 2024, the wall served as a physical manifestation of the Iron Curtain, separating a capitalist West from a communist East. This division had profound implications for the quality of life and access to resources on both sides. West Berlin, supported by the United States, experienced significant economic growth and development, offering its



residents a higher standard of living, access to modern amenities, and opportunities for social mobility. In contrast, East Berlin, under the oppressive regime of the GDR, faced economic stagnation and political repression. The wall restricted the movement of people and goods, limiting East Germans' access to essential resources like food, medicine, and consumer goods. Moreover, the psychological impact of the wall was significant, fostering feelings of isolation, despair, and a diminished sense of freedom among East Germans.

The construction of physical border barriers, such as the USA border, described by Swissinfo (2023), represents a significant threat to the integrity of ecosystems. Despite their apparent effectiveness in containing human migration flows, these infrastructures cause severe fragmentation of natural habitats. As activists point out, wildlife, including endangered species, are directly affected by these barriers, as their mobility and access to vital resources are impeded. This fragmentation can trigger a series of negative ecological consequences, such as reduced biological diversity, altered ecological processes and increased vulnerability of species to environmental disturbances. In this context, scientific research has shown that physical border barriers can generate long-term effects on the structure and functioning of ecosystems, underlining the importance of considering the ecological implications of these constructions in the planning and management of border areas.

Counterintuitively, the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea, a clear example of a physical barrier imposed by geopolitical conflict, has proven to be an unexpected refuge for biodiversity. According to Constructive Voices (2024), this extensive area has functioned as an ecological corridor, providing a safe habitat for numerous wildlife species, some of them endemic or endangered. The absence of intense human activity in the DMZ has allowed ecosystems to recover, creating a sanctuary where species such as the Asiatic black bear and the red-crowned crane can thrive. This particular case challenges the common perception that physical barriers are synonymous with fragmentation and biodiversity loss, showing that under certain circumstances, these structures can generate positive long-term ecological effects.

While conducting research on the physical barriers that divide societies, I encountered a significant gap in the existing literature regarding the "wall of shame" in Peru. While numerous studies have examined the psychological and social impacts of such structures globally, there is a notable dearth of research specifically focused on the long-term consequences of this barrier especially on how it affects the mobility and the quality of transportation. Although the wall has been a subject of local

and national media attention, academic investigations into its impact on the daily lives of residents on both sides of the divide, particularly the marginalized communities, remain limited. This gap in knowledge presents a unique opportunity to explore the multifaceted effects of this physical boundary, including its influence on social cohesion, economic opportunities, and the overall well-being of the affected populations. The research question that is going to be answered through this report is, how has the wall of shame impacted mobility?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Study site**

The Villa María del Triunfo district is one of the forty-three districts that make up the province of Lima, located in Perú. It is bordered to the north by the La Molina district, to the east by the Pachamama district, to the south by the Lurín district, and to the west by the Villa El Salvador and San Juan de Miraflores districts.

Villa María del Triunfo is a district that throughout its history has been characterized by socioeconomic inequalities, with a significant portion of the population residing in informal settlements and slums. The presence of the "Muro de la Vergüenza" or "Wall of shame" has exacerbated these disparities, creating a physical and social division between the district and affluent areas. This barrier has limited access to essential services, employment opportunities, and public transportation, affecting the mobility of residents.



*Figure 1: The district of Villa María del Triunfo (taken from Wikimedia)*



*Figure 2 Wall of Shame (taken from La República)*

It was decided to study this area and its mobility because it is an ideal location to investigate the impacts of physical Barriers in mobility for different reasons like:

- The existence of a clear physical barrier, the wall constitutes a tangible obstruction.
- The clear socioeconomic contrast between both districts shows the social and economic implications of the wall.
- The diverse mobility needs because of the range of socioeconomic groups, each with distinct mobility requirements, allows a comprehensive analysis.
- The existing research on the "Wall of shame" has established its negative impact on various aspects of life, including mobility.

## **Study design**

This is a mixed-methods study that relies on in-depth interviews with the residents of the study area to gather a deeper understanding of their perceptions and the consequences of the wall on their mobility. The interviews inform other data collection approaches such as map and photo analysis. The study relies on the sustainability interpretative framework to discuss the results.

## **Data collection and analysis**

Six people were interviewed for the study: Two interviewees came from Villa María del Triunfo, two came from Miraflores and la Molina, and two came from Lima but had no previous knowledge of the wall. The interviewees from the different sides of the wall can provide valuable insights on the impacts of the structure on their daily mobility habits while the interviewees with no prior knowledge of the wall were picked to generate any missed perceptions of the structure and its impacts on the city and people and to capture a more global understanding of people's perceptions of physical structures that separate spaces.

These interviews were conducted via zoom and consisted of five different questions that focused mainly on topics like mobility, and the social and psychological impacts of the wall. This allows for a full understanding about how the wall impacted the people on both sides, especially in mobility. These interviews were analyzed by a thematic approach, by cataloging the different perceptions on the wall and physical barriers, then by the different ways the wall has affected them like the mobility, economic, social and psychological effects.

For this study, a map and photo analysis were conducted in which the quality of the roads and sidewalks was analyzed as well as the efficiency of the public transportation infrastructure and the location of basic services, this to compare the quality of life on each side of the wall.

## **Results**

The "Wall of Shame" in Villa María del Triunfo, Lima, has been a significant physical and physiological barrier affecting urban mobility and quality of life for residents on both sides. This analysis examines the impact of the wall on daily life, focusing on mobility, transportation infrastructure, and the contrasts in living conditions between the two areas it separates.

The wall has had a profound effect on the movement of people, particularly those living in Villa María del Triunfo. One resident describes the wall's impact on their daily commute:

*"Before, to go to work or anywhere else, I had to take a long detour or cross very narrow and bad roads. Before it was torn down, I had to get up much earlier to be able to get to work on time. Imagine, I had to walk for an extra hour just to be able to pass through a safe place."*

This statement reveals the significant time and effort required to navigate around the wall, affecting work schedules and daily routines. Another resident corroborates this experience:

*"The wall has greatly limited our lives. Before, we could pass more easily to look for work or visit relatives who lived on the other side. Now we have to take a long detour or wait for hours at the few access points. It's a waste of time and money."*



**Figure 3:** Location of the Wall, extracted from: [google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps)

These testimonies and the map demonstrate how the wall has created a barrier to movement, elongating travel times and restricting access to opportunities and social connections. The time and money spent on crossing this wall has a big economic impact on the residents of the slum.

The map shows the size of only one section of the wall, which provides an understanding of its overall massive size. To move from “La rinconada de Pamplona Alta” to “Las Casuarinas” residents cannot go in a straight line, they must go around the wall. This doesn't affect the people

from “las Casuarinas” because they mostly don't have reasons to move to the other side, but the people from “La Rinconada” work on the upper-class side, and to get there the public transportation system is not efficient or safe.

The interviews and map and photo analysis reveal a stark contrast in the quality of streets and sidewalks between the two sides of the wall. It is clear that on one side of the wall the living conditions are deplorable, barely sustainable, while on the other side the situation is the opposite: they have good living conditions, with a good environment, with resources and services at their disposal.



**Figure 4:** Comparison of street's quality, extracted from: [google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps)

*"Our streets are full of holes, trash piles up, and there aren't many lights. The sidewalks are broken and sometimes they don't even exist. It's difficult to walk around here, especially when it rains."*

This description paints a picture of an area lacking basic urban amenities, making pedestrian mobility challenging and potentially dangerous. In contrast, the Casuarinas Surco side presents a completely different scenario:

*"Our streets are well-maintained, clean, and safe. The sidewalks are wide and perfect for walking or jogging. We have plenty of green spaces and parks. It's a really pleasant place to live."*

The disparity in infrastructure quality directly impacts the residents' quality of life and their ability to move freely and safely within their neighborhoods. We can see in the images how differently maintained are both sides, the upper-class side has multiple trees, clean streets, places to park and bike freely and safely. In the other side there are parts where they don't even have a road and it's just dirt, there is a lack of vegetation and there are zones where people are not able to get to with cars, so they have no option but to walk.

The difference in public transportation infrastructure further exemplifies the inequality between the two areas. In Villa María del Triunfo, public transport is described as inadequate:

*"Public transport is very poor. The buses are old and overcrowded, and the schedules are not very reliable. Sometimes we must wait a long time to get on one. It is a daily struggle to get anywhere."*



**Figure 3:** Public transportation in Villa María del Triunfo, extracted from: [google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps)



**Figure 4:** "Mototaxis" Public transportation in Villa María del Triunfo, extracted from: [google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps)

This situation severely limits mobility options for residents, making it difficult to access jobs, education, and other opportunities. On the other side of the wall, the situation is markedly different:

*"We have good public transportation, but most people in our neighborhood prefer to use private cars. The buses are clean and efficient, but they're not as convenient as having your own car. We also have taxis and ride-sharing services, which are widely used."*



**Figure 7:** Transportation in Surco, extracted from: [google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps)

The contrast in transportation options and quality further exacerbates the mobility gap between the two areas. One can clearly see how for the upper-class side the use for public transportation as an election, in which they rather use their private cars because of commodity, and on the other side there this necessity to use public transportation that it's not efficient.



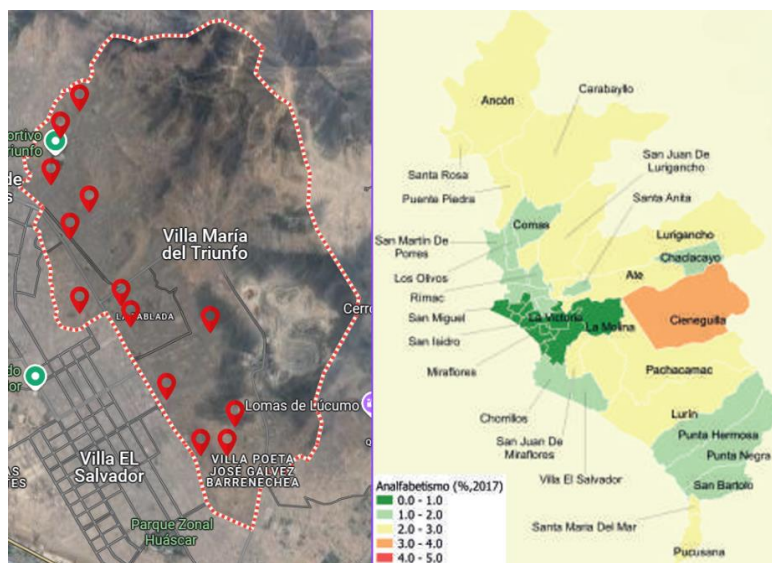
Beyond the physical limitations, the wall has created a significant psychological barrier. A resident from Villa María del Triunfo expresses:

*"I actually feel very sad when I see that wall. It's like an open wound that reminds us every day of the inequality that exists in this country. I feel like we've been locked in this bubble, as if we weren't people."*

This sentiment is echoed by a resident from Casuarinas, Surco:

*"The wall... it's always been there. It's a part of our landscape, I suppose. Growing up, we were taught that it's for our safety, to protect us from the other side. It's a bit sad, really. I've never understood why we can't all just live together peacefully."*

These statements reveal how the wall has created a deep social divide, fostering misunderstanding and separation between communities.



**Figure 8:** Educational institutes and literacy rates by districts, extracted from: [https://www.inei.gov.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/publicaciones\\_digitales/Est/Lib0012/N57/318m2.htm](https://www.inei.gov.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/publicaciones_digitales/Est/Lib0012/N57/318m2.htm)

We can see that this gap not only has social consequences, but also greatly affects the level of education they are able to access. Within the district there are mostly primary and some secondary

level institutions, but to access higher education they have to move outside the district. Perhaps this is why the illiteracy rate is higher than average compared to the other side of the wall.

## **DISCUSSION**

The discussion is based on the framework of sustainability and examines the results from the environmental, social, and economic perspectives. The Wall of Shame in Lima, Perú, serves as an example of how physical barriers can significantly impact mobility within urban environments. This discussion explores the various ways in which this structure has affected the movement of people and resources in the city.

The Wall of Shame emerged during a period of rapid urbanization and growing socioeconomic disparities in Lima. Constructed in the late 20th century, it physically separated a wealthy district from a marginalized area, reflecting the deep social divisions within the city.

One of the most significant impacts of the Wall of Shame on mobility has been its limitation of access to essential services and educational and work opportunities. By creating a physical barrier, the wall has restricted access to employment opportunities by increasing the time the residents spent traveling from one side to the other, making it extremely complicated to have a job on the other side, even then a lot of people decide to still travel every day.

This limitation in mobility also has a big impact in the education of the population, a connection can be made about the high rate of illiteracy in the zone and the restricted movement to educational institutions. This physical wall also limited access to healthcare facilities and public transportation networks

Beyond its physical implications, the Wall of Shame also created psychological barriers that affected mobility. The wall reinforced social divisions, discouraging residents from crossing into more affluent areas, and most likely contributed to a feeling of being unwelcome in certain parts of the city, by limiting contact between different socioeconomic groups, the wall reduced social mobility.

The restricted mobility caused by the Wall of Shame had significant economic consequences, it limited access to job markets for residents of marginalized areas due to increased transportation costs for those who needed to cross the barrier.

The wall's impact on mobility raised important legal and human rights questions, including potential violations of the right to freedom of movement, challenges to equal access to public spaces and services, and discrimination based on socioeconomic status. And the Peruvian Constitutional Court's order to demolish the Wall of Shame in 2020 marks a significant step towards addressing these mobility issues.

The Wall of Shame in Lima serves as a powerful case study on the profound impact that physical barriers can have on urban mobility. Its construction and subsequent demolition shows the importance of inclusive urban planning that prioritizes equitable access and freedom of movement for all city residents.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the research on the physical barriers that divide societies, a significant gap was encountered in the existing literature regarding the "wall of shame" in Perú. While numerous studies have examined the psychological and social impacts of such structures globally, there is a notable dearth of research specifically focused on the long-term consequences of this barrier, especially on the impact that this barrier has on the quality of life and mobility of the residents on each side of the barrier.

This gap was filled by conducting online interviews with six people, these interviewees from the different sides of the wall provided a valuable insights on the impacts of the structure on their daily mobility habits while the interviewees with no prior knowledge of the wall were picked to generate any missed perceptions of the structure and its impacts on the city. In addition, a map analysis of the quality of the streets and public transportation infrastructure to address the difference between both sides.

The main ideas that came because of this research are related to the impact of this wall on the different sides of the wall, this wall affected the people around him in almost every aspect of his life. He divided two districts that already had differences and exacerbated them, giving the reason as the need to ensure the security of people with more resources, but having deeper reasons such as the long history of inequality that divided them. This wall affected the mobility of the residents, especially harming the side with fewer resources, since a considerable number of them work for the people on the richer side, and this wall generates a detour, making a path that could be direct

take several hours, making it a waste of time and money due to the investment in public transportation or gasoline.

There is also a great contrast in the quality of transportation infrastructure, as well as accessibility to different services. Both in the map analysis and in the interviews, you can see how on one side the quality of the roads is terrible, and there are even areas where there is only one dirt road, which becomes extremely dangerous with the rains, while On the other side it has well-maintained roads with access to green areas and bicycle infrastructure. The disparity in infrastructure quality directly impacts the residents' quality of life and their ability to move freely and safely within their neighborhoods.

Beyond the physical limitations, the wall has created a significant psychological barrier. The residents from the slum fell as though society had turned its back on them, creating a big barrier to not having to see them, making them easier to ignore, while the other side feels as that the wall is the only way to keep them safe from delinquency. The wall has created a deep social divide, fostering misunderstanding and separation between communities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Future research need to clearly define what the objective of the research is, like the specific aspects of the consequences are intended to analyze like the impact on mobility, health, education, perception of safety, etc.

In the methodology, the use of maps, interviews, official and press documents was very useful to understand the problem more completely, as well as to provide a critical analysis of the situation.

## **LIMITATIONS**

Regarding the limitations of the chosen topic, since it is something that is happening in the actuality, the social, political and urban situation can change quickly, which could make the data collected become obsolete in a short time. Also, since the use of perceptions is essential for this work, the perceptions of the wall can vary significantly, making it difficult to obtain an objective and unified vision.

Regarding the limitations of the methodology used specifically the use of interviews, could imply a bias in the sample, the selection of participants in the interviews can introduce biases in the

results if a representative sample of the population is not gathered. In addition, the reliability of the data could be questioned because the responses of the interviewees may be influenced by social or psychological factors, which may affect the reliability of the data.

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