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Reyna Moreno, Juan Carlos; Muñiz, Ivan, dir. Compact City approach versus Self-Sufficient City approach : two models of urban sustainability. A bibliographic review. 2021. 58 pag. (952 Grau en Economia)

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TITLE: Compact City Approach Versus Self-Sufficient City Approach: Two Models of Urban Sustainability. A Bibliographic Review

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DATE: 25 May, 2021

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## **1 Introduction**

The motivation of this research is to realise a bibliographic review of the literature about Compact City and Self-Sufficient City approaches to reach urban sustainability. There is much debate in the scientific community about which approach is more successful or more accessible, so this bibliographic review serves to explore these debates and analyze some of the deeper ideologies between these urban sustainability approaches. The study uses literature published between 2008 to 2020 regarding seven regions around the world, the seven regions are Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, and North America. The decision to begin the search in 2008 was due to the fact that the financial crisis marked a noticeable change in urban sustainability models. As many cities around the world were essentially rebuilding after the crisis, they were also rethinking the environmental and social impact of urban development.

In order to carry out the assessment of the scientific literature gathered in this piece, this research employs a meta-analysis. This is research that seeks to integrate the findings of multiple independent tests of a similar hypothesis in a more objective manner by treating the empirical study as a unit of analysis (Pratt and Cullen, 2005, pp. 10). Once the data was gathered following a phase of coding the articles according to the relevance to Compact City, Self-Sufficient City, economics, urban planification, environmentalism, energy efficiency, and region at issue. The next step was classifying the information to identify the patterns and ideologies of the authors and recognize to whom the research is directed.

This research is divided into four sections following this introduction. The sections are the theoretical framework, methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusion. The first part of this research attempts to explain what are the main points of these theories (Compact City and Self-Sufficient City) which guide the analysis. The methodology section is dedicated to presenting the meta-analysis and the phases followed to create the database used in this research.

Section four is centered in the findings and discussion of the data gathered of the seven regions studied in this work. This section also explains the main characteristics found in all the literature regarding the concepts that motivated this research and adding the category of governance due to the importance of the State in urban planning, implementing policies, and managing Natural resources.

Furthermore section four analyses the findings from global to regional level with the aim of identifying the patterns and ideologies of the authors and recognizing to whom the research is directed in each region. Finally, section five focuses on the conclusions of this research, which stem from the results of the findings and further research recommendations.

## **2 Theoretical Framework**

This section has the task of expounding what are the main characteristics of the Compact City and Self-Sufficient City approaches that will be used as reference to assess the articles gathered in this research.

### *2.1 Compact City*

The concept of Compact City that is going to be used in this research as a model to analyze the articles collected, assess how the interpretation of each author varies according to the geographical location, and how the notion is implemented in areas like North America and Europe differentiates from how the notion is implemented in regions with vastly different conditions such as Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, or Africa.

The predominant concept of Compact City comes from a western interpretation that spreads a romanticized image to reproduce cities located in the global north, like Barcelona or Amsterdam (Dempsey and Jenks, 2010). The main task of a Compact City is to create a sustainable space that seeks to reduce global warming and employ resources in an efficient way.

According to Dempsey (2016) “[t]he Compact City has relatively high residential density with mixed land uses. It is based on an effective public transport system and has an urban layout which

encourages walking and cycling. It also supports low energy consumption and therefore pollution is reduced” (pp.9). Furthermore this notion also implies control of developments within city limits that look for a sustainable lifestyle for the communities through economic growth that derive in better infrastructure and creations of local business (Dave, 2010).

It is notable that the current literature often refers to the concept of sustainability to describe a Compact City and its benefits; further for a city “to be described as sustainable, urban development must support social conditions and cohesion, encourage efficiency and economic sustainability” (Dave, 2010, pp.21).

Therefore “Compact City” does not mean a small city, but a city with well-designed and well-utilised space for people. A Compact City works well when it is not only good for the urban area, but also for the countryside (Rogatka and Ramos Ribeiro, 2015, pp.131). Thus to accomplish a multicentered or mono-centric phase of development it is necessary to adopt policies that encourage the density of the urban space. This could achieve sustainable results that can be enjoyed by all inhabitants of the city. These policies could enforce the three fundamental pillars of sustainability, environmental, economic and social (Dave, 2010).

In consequence, the adoption of this kind of design results in different formations within and without the city that can be resumed in twofold. One characterized by following the principles of maximization of resources ( capital, inputs, outputs, communications, technological advantages, sustainability etc.) and well-defined property rights (Cookson Smith, 2011). The second form is featured by following an anarchist design that does not adhere with the ideas of order claimed by the concept of Compact City. This means there is not a single owner of the property, and their inhabitants main tasks are not to achieve a sustainable maximization of profit, but are a sustainable way of living.

Hence the city is an organism that has not only one shape within its spatiality, on the contrary, each neighbourhood that constitutes the city is a reflection of the interaction between social classes, economic and political ideologies, and the environment.

In conclusion the approach of Compact City seeks to improve the life of the dwellers of a metropolis through the implementation of policies that have a tendency to promote density development in a sustainable and efficient way, mixed land use, combat global warming, encourage alternative modes of transportation, leading by economic growth relating public and private development, and avoid the proliferation of urban sprawl.

## *2.2 Self-Sufficient City*

The concept of self-sufficiency will help to analyze the approaches that researchers around the world are using to assess the problems faced by the cities caused by economic and population growth.

One of the main problems of contemporary cities is the necessity to manufacture their own consumption of inputs. Examples of this would be food, capital, energy, people, industrial materials, water etc. . Stemming from that are the issues of waste management and pollution derived from production and consumption of commodities.

The obstacles to reach an efficient control of energy and material is determined by the grade of development of the city's infrastructure, technology, population density, consumer behaviour of their inhabitants, and regulating mechanisms provided by the government's policies (Bai, 2017).

Therefore cities are described as "open systems with high dependency on their hinterlands, which range from local, regional to global"(Bai, 2017, pp. 836). Thus the self-sufficient approach seeks to decrease the level of dependency from the outside by improving the flow of inputs and outputs through the city (Baccini 1997; Beatley 2007; Agudelo- Vera et al. 2012, cited by Bai, 2017, pp.837).

The philosophy of economic self-sufficiency is one of the paradigms that attempts to solve the dependency of cities from the outside through a set of programs and policies at the grassroots level. This

theory identifies self-reliance as a key point to encourage local districts to produce commodities made by local inputs (workforce and materials) in order to improve the environment and economic conditions of the community (Sura, 2017). The self-sufficient management theory looks for an economy less dependent on inputs coming from outside the city and at the same time stimulates local business. The concepts of this theory as explained by Sura (2017) can be summarised as follows; encouragement of members of a community to reduce their level of consumption, pursue a constant flow of information and technology to decrease the level of reliance from outside the city, support the use of local inputs, implement policies that improve labor relations focusing on worker well-being instead of profit, and pursue a balance between sustainable development and the global economy while preserving the local culture and environment.

Hence it is necessary to adopt a holistic and balanced urban development that integrates the whole ecosystem and the diversity of cultures that are in constant interaction into the city (Pe and Currie, 2012). The aim of implementing urban policies that reduce the economic and population growth in the city with the intention of achieving a more equal distribution of the wealth between dwellers and reduce the impact of the ecosystem of the city.

If the aim of contemporary societies is to reach a phase of self-sufficiency within the city, it is necessary to enhance the relationship between the environment and the society. Therefore it is essential to improve the interaction among classes, which implies a serious criticism of the capitalist mode of production and seek for a model that guarantee to all the inhabitants of the urban area the right to get access to food, housing, governance, education, and a job that give them the opportunity to be economically and ecologically self-sufficient and live in balance with the society and the urban environment.



### 3 Methodology

The purpose of this section is to explain how the units of study from existing literature were found and thus analyzed. Therefore to achieve this task, this study will use a meta-analysis to interpret the literature gathered through databases such as UAB library and JSTOR.

The units of analysis in this study will be published in academic journals. A combination of the following words and phrases will be introduced to the database to find the sample; “Compact city”, “Self-sufficient city”, and adding the geographical region of research: “Africa”, “North America”, “Latin America”, “Europe”, “the Middle East”, “Asia”, and “Australia” between 2008-2020.

The articles will be in English and published between 2008 and 2020. The reason 2008 was chosen as the starting year is because this was the year of the global financial crisis.

Once the information is collected, the next step is to code the literature according to the relevance to economics, urban planification, environmentalism, energy efficiency, and self-sufficiency. The main task is to identify the patterns, gaps in the literature, and ideologies of the authors and recognize to whom the research is directed.

Another objective of this research is to analyze the correlation, if it exists, between compact and self-sufficient cities around the continents and examine how it has changed since the eruption of the financial crisis in 2008.

In order to carry out the assessment of the scientific literature gathered in this piece, this research implements a meta-analysis, This is a research that seeks to integrate the findings of multiple independent tests of a similar hypothesis in a more objective manner by treating the empirical study as a unit of analysis (Pratt and Cullen, 2005, pp. 10).

Therefore a meta-analysis is a contrast between different researches on the same subject that allows comparison of different theories that differ in time and space. This method allows the evaluation and review of scientific articles beyond the typical division between the level of significance of a

hypothesis and explores other important relationships that were excluded from the research due to statistical reasons (Stock and Watson, 2002, Pratt and Cullen, 2005).

The first step of the research is to gather scientific articles by region through the implementation of keyword searches stated above (“Compact city”, “Self-sufficient city”, and adding the geographical region of research: “Africa”, “North America”, “Latin America”, “Europe”, “the Middle East”, “Asia”, and “Australia” between 2008-2020).

During this stage of selection was screening abstracts of literature that match the following criteria: a) relevance to economics, urban planification, environmentalism, energy efficiency, self-sufficiency, and Compact City: b) region at issue: c) research was published in an academic journal or certified organization. The literature was gathered through search engines such as UAB library and JSTOR.

The second phase of the research is to assess the abstract, and if the academic article is admissible following the criteria stated, it was added to be analyzed more deeply. Due to the fact that there is no universal rule as to when to stop a search, the rule assumed for this meta-analysis is after twenty consecutive irrelevant strikes were registered the search ended and new one began with a new combination of keywords and phrases (Ke, 2009; Villamayor-Tomas and Garcia-Lopez, 2018; Gerboc, 2020).

Once the sample was collected, the next step is to classify the information as follows: main findings, journal and year of publication, methodology and research design employed, and geographical coverage (Ferragina, 2018; Gerboc, 2020).

As a result of the second stage of research, the total sample gathered is equal to 178 articles published in academic journals (n=178) around the world. Once the data is collected the next phase is to code the literature according to the relevance to economics, urban planification, environmentalism, energy efficiency, and self-sufficiency. The main task is to identify the patterns and ideologies of the

authors and recognize to whom the research is directed. Thus coding is important to synthesize the data which will result in findings and further research recommendations.

## **4 Discussion and Findings**

The aim of this section is to summarize what are the subjects most commonly discussed in the articles when they approach how to become a sustainable city. This section is divided twofold in regard to what has been written in a global and regional context. The first section analyzes the three three categories that were most prevalent in this research, they are as follows: Compact City, Self-Sufficient City, and the addition of Governance due to the relationship found during the assessment of the articles.

The second section will explore the main findings of this research, from an analysis of a general view of the findings to a more specific one looking at the global results all the way down to the regional findings. Finally, this section concludes with a discussion of the gaps in the current literature.

### *4.1 Compact City, Self-Sufficient City, and Governance*

During the process of coding the articles gathered in this research, it was found that the approaches to reach a sustainable city focus on several concepts related to economics, environmentalism, politics, sociology, and urbanism. Furthermore, the constant repetition of these concepts seems to follow a pattern that is repeated across the seven regions studied. This section will expose the principal concepts found in the articles, to achieve this goal the section is divided in threefold; 4.1.1 Compact city, 4.1.2 Self- sufficient city and, 4.1.3 Governance.

#### *4.1.1 Compact City*

As it was explained in section 1.1, the Compact City approach relies on an urban development strategy led by the private sector. The researchers never specify what section of the civil society has to lead this urban and economic development, but it is assumed that they refer to economic agents with enough political and financial resources that are able to carry out a so-called regeneration of the urban environment.

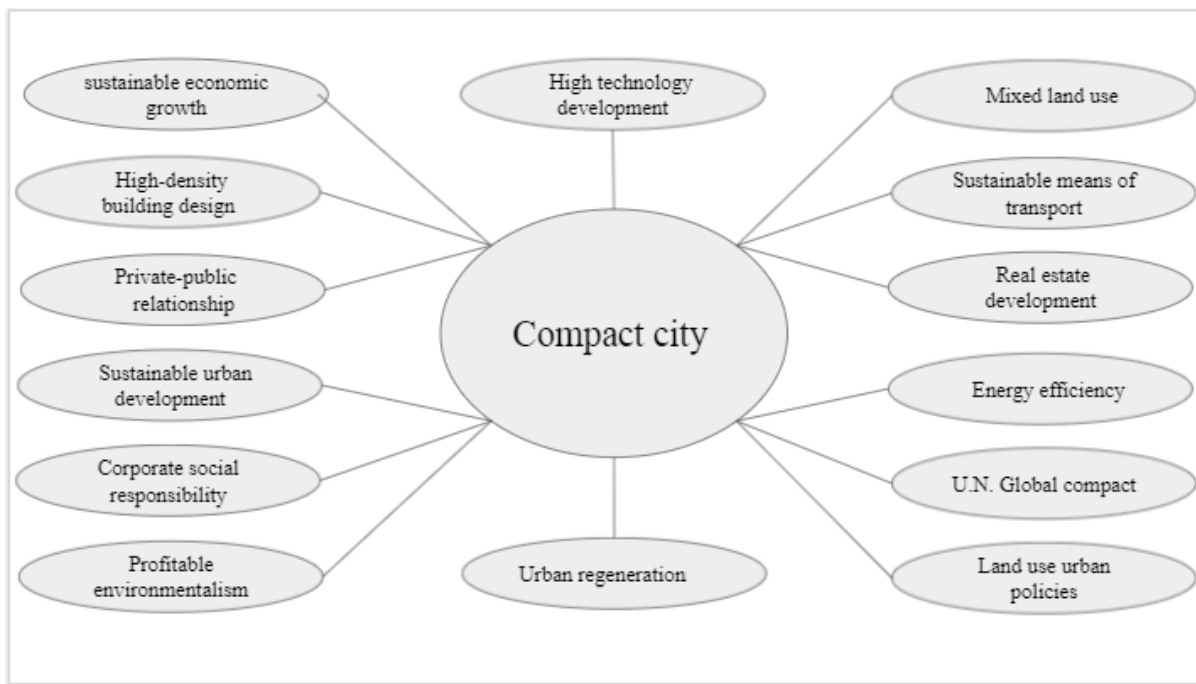


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows what are the main topics used by researchers around the world when approaching a Compact City interpretation with the aim of turning the urban landscape into a sustainable habitat for the dwellers of the city.

One can infer that sustainability, environmental protection, enhancement of infrastructure, and energy efficiency can be only achieved through a strong relation between the State and the private sector (corporations). Moreover, it is fundamental that local, state, and federal governments support the implementation of policy reforms that allow a free market flow of capital, deregulate land, and neighborhood protection in favor of real estate development based on high density buildings efficient in energy and water, and well-connected by sustainable energy efficient means of transportation.

After all, this ideology can only conceive the protection of the environment and the wellbeing of the inhabitants of the city through the maximization of profit of the private sector. It also requires the active role of an entrepreneurial government that looks to redevelop and densify the space to encourage sustainable economic growth.

#### *4.1.2 Self-Sufficient City*

In a global landscape, the creation of a universal definition of what should be a Self-Sufficient City agenda that provides solutions to a myriad of difficulties to reach the dream of creating an urban, sustainable space turns to be a utopia due to the vastly different situations that each city around the world faces. Nevertheless, this research attempts to delimit a concept regarding the existing literature written in the seven regions analysed about the subject between the timeframe described in the methodology section. Thus, after the assessment of the 178 units made during the coding phase of this work, it was found that there was a pattern of studies conducted on these urban sustainability approaches in all seven regions included in this work.

One of the main concerns is the access and production of food into the city, this issue was studied under the concepts of food sovereignty, food self-sufficiency, and urban agriculture. These approaches aim to solve a social problem created by lack of space to harvest and the difficulties of city dwellers to get access to fresh food. The way in which the researchers try to solve this issue differs around the world and will be discussed further in the sections below.

Another way to study how to attain a sustainable city is through the eyes of urban metabolism and the exchange of flows of inputs and outputs in the city with the task of measuring what is the capacity of the space to support this trade of matter. This theory regards that to assess the urban space it is necessary to approach the subject in a holistic way. In other words, to study the city as the sum of systems that are in constant interaction with each other and therefore an increase or decrease in one of them affects the whole urban system.

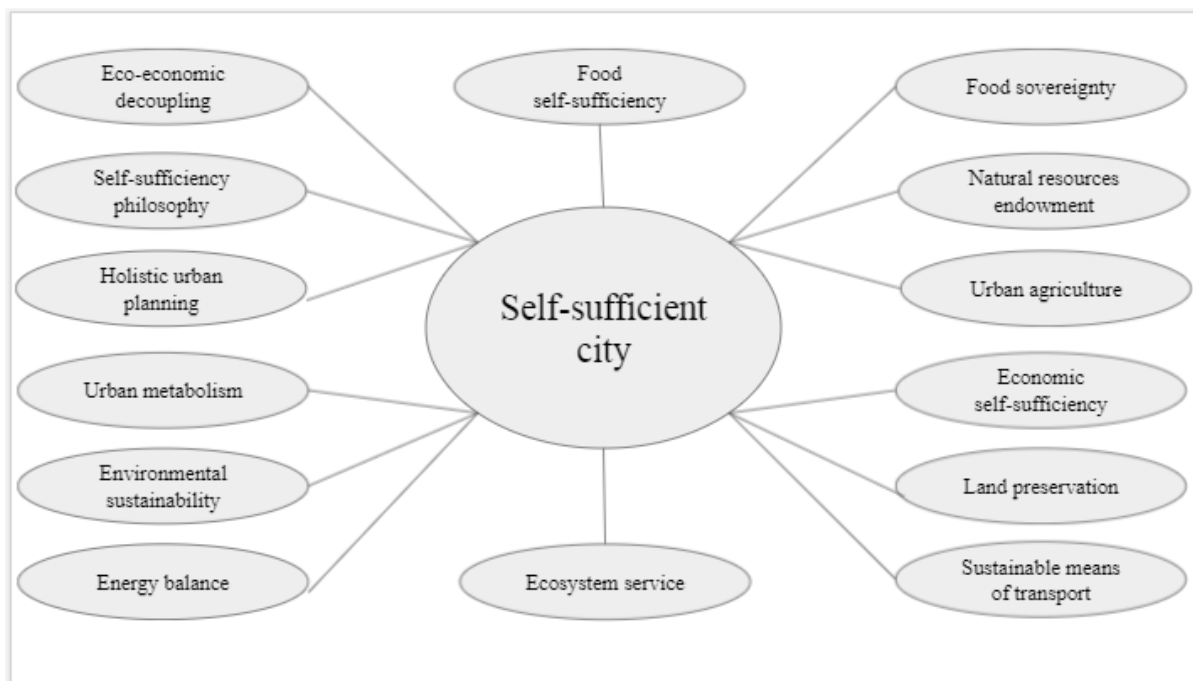


Figure 2

As with the Compact City interpretation, the Self-Sufficient approach seeks to achieve a state of urban sustainability and environment protection through the efficient use and production of means of transport and energy production and consumption. However, in some regions like Latin America, Australia, and Asia, there is an attempt to develop a type of economy that looks for a balanced economic and population growth with the adoption of the principles of the Self-Sufficient philosophy. Although this approach is not general, countries like Thailand and Cuba are implementing these ideas in an attempt to improve their societies in a non-capitalist way.

In conclusion, as it can be seen in figure 2, there are different ways to implement a Self-Sufficient urban development approach into cities all around the world, which will be analysed further in section 4.3 by each of the seven regions. The goal of this section was to illustrate and explore more deeply some of the concepts most often used in the literature. It can be assumed that this approach offers an ecological and environmental perspective that provides different options to reach urban sustainability that differ from the Compact City business-led interpretation.

### 4.1.3 Governance

During the assessment of data a close relationship between the Compact City and Self-Sufficient City approaches with Governance was found. These theories call for the implementation of policies that would modify the laws of the city or region. As seen in figure 3, despite the route to urban sustainability chosen, the government and modification of laws or policy is almost always included according to much of the literature analysed in this essay.

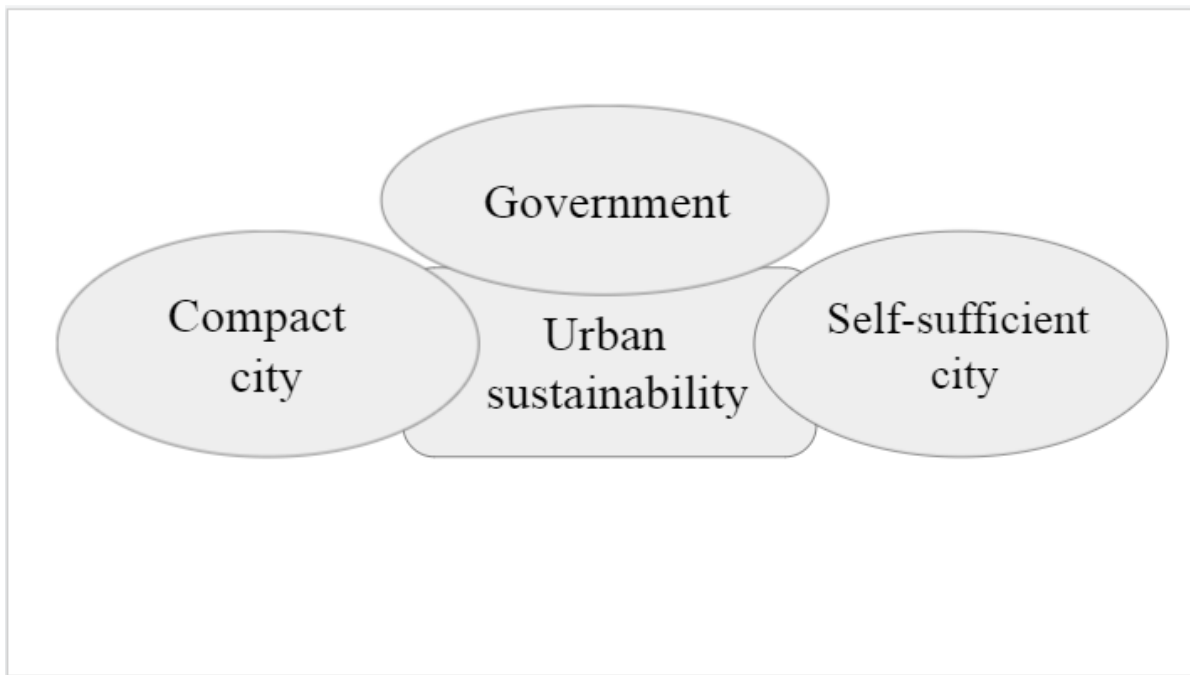


Figure 3

Therefore, it was necessary to include in the classification of the articles the category of “Governance”. This paper understands the definition of Governance in this context as the intervention of the local, regional and federal government through laws and management of the public affairs regarding public services, political participation of the dwellers, protection of the urban environment, changing the status of land use, design of urban policies, protection and promotion of human rights, preservation of the ecosystem, and its participation with the private sphere in entrepreneurial activities. Figure 4 gives an image of the main interventions of the government that were mentioned in the literature review.

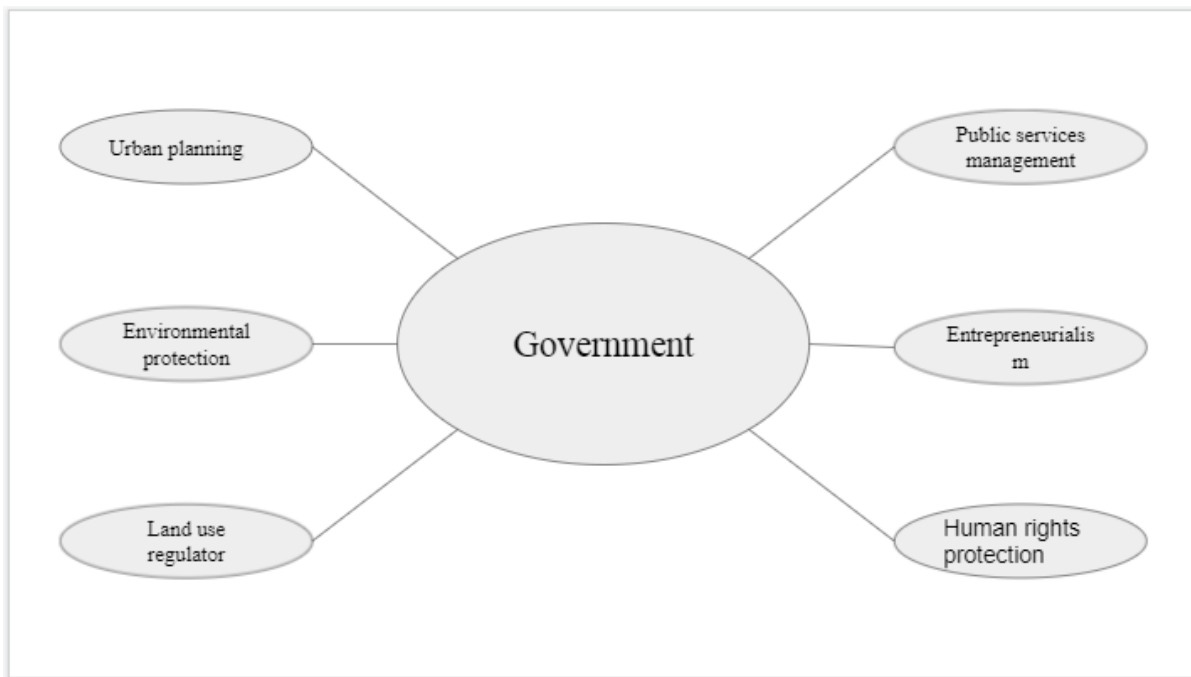


Figure 4

Since this relationship is highly significant, the inclusion of this category gives a deeper understanding of what role the State plays representing the interests of the hegemonic ideology of each city, its interpretation of what is urban sustainability, and how they want to reach the goal of urban sustainability.

#### 4.2 Global to regional

The purpose of this section is to reveal the main findings of the bibliographic review of the current literature about Compact City and Self-Sufficient City approaches. This section is organised into three sections in order to best analyze and explain the findings. First section 4.2.1 addresses the global finding of the seven regions under scrutiny. Then section 4.2.2 uncovers what has been written from each of the seven regions.

##### 4.2.1 Global Findings

As mentioned above, the total number of units gathered is 178 articles (n=178) from the seven regions under analysis ( Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin and North America, and Middle East). Once the articles were coded, 11 were categorized as irrelevant due to having little to no relation to the



topic at hand, 86 related to Compact City, 45 to Self-Sufficient City, and 36 associated to Governance.

The results are summarized in the following graph.

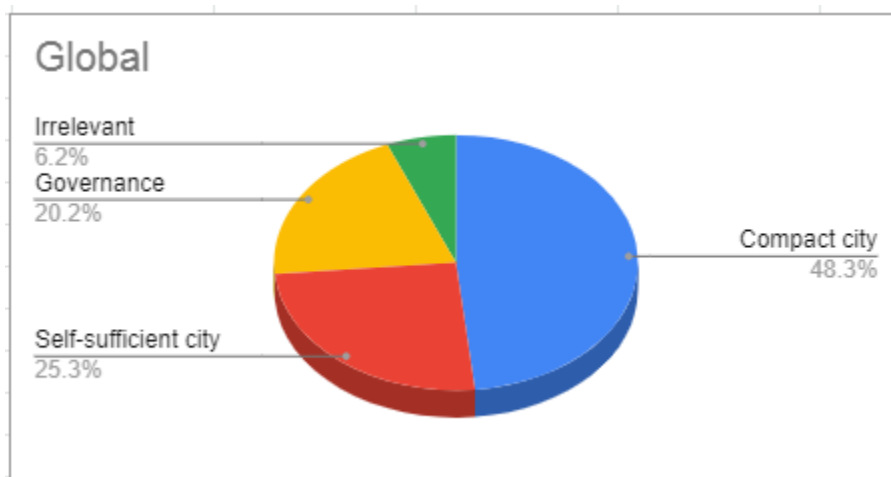


Figure 5

According to the figure above, it can be said that the most trendy interpretation of achieving urban sustainability at a global level is the Compact City approach with 48.3% of the total, followed by the Self-Sufficient view with 25.3%, which is very close to the number of articles related to Governance 20.2%.

However, a more detailed exploration is needed to know which regions are producing literature related to the three subjects analyzed in this research, especially those concerned with compact and Self-Sufficient cities. Thus to clarify what kind of literature each region is producing, this section analyses them with the help of the figures 6, 7, and 8.

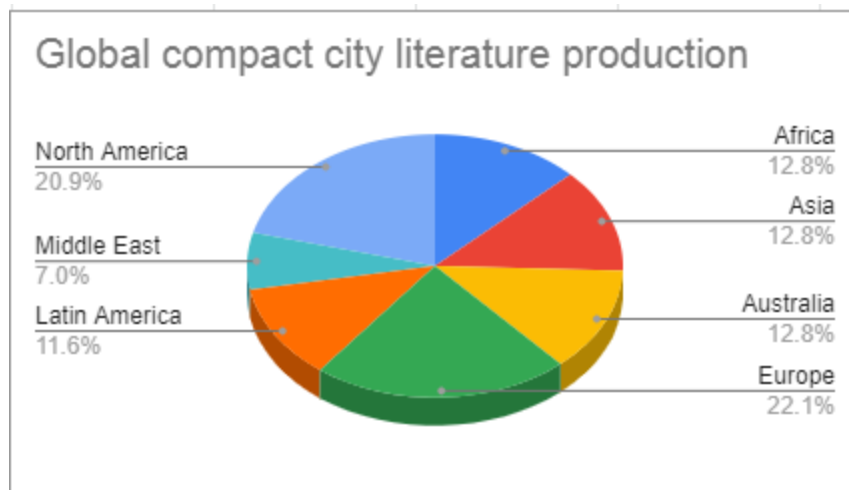


Figure 6

The literature production associated with the Compact City approach is predominant in the regions of the so-called Global North (which is compounded by Australia, Europe and North America) with 55.8% of the 86 articles related to Compact City. The data shows that the Compact City interpretation is more often used in regions where the capitalist mode of production is hegemonic and the publication of articles by scientific journals have a tendency to prioritize this approach.

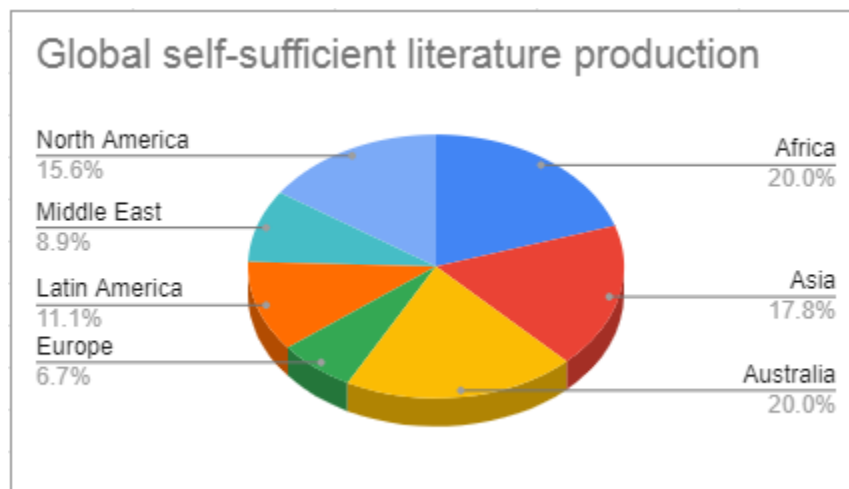


Figure 7

On the other hand, the production of publications related to Self-Sufficient cities at a global level points out a tendency to be produced in Africa, Australia and Asia with 58.8 % of 45 publications of this kind of literature gathered in this research as the figure 7 shows.

It is important to state that this is just a general overview of what has been written about the subject, later in this section there will be a deeper analysis with more detail about the main subjects studied by each region. Nevertheless it can be inferred that the journals in the regions mentioned above are open to addressing the subject of urban sustainability from a different point of view.

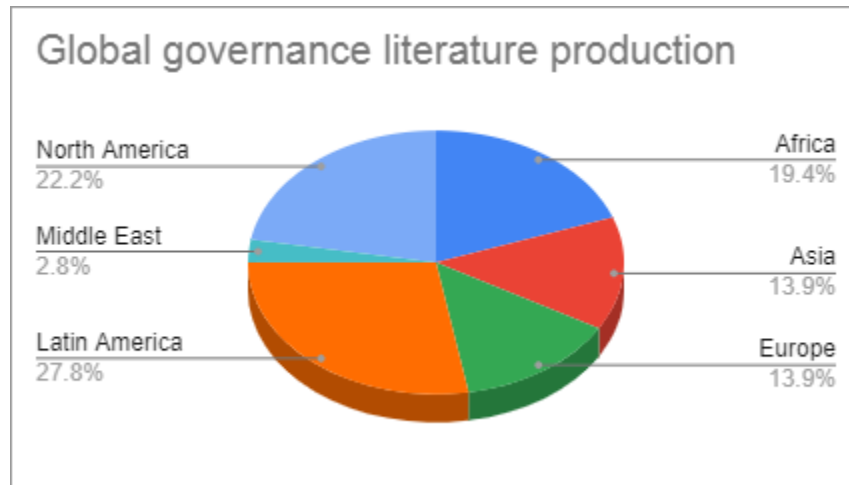


Figure 8

Finally, as it was mentioned above, 22.2% of the total articles gathered in this research approach the urban sustainability subject from a Governance perspective as a way to accomplish the main objective of creating a compact or Self-Sufficient City. Hence figure 8 shows that three regions are the main producers of this kind of literature with 69.4% of 36 publications, the regions are Latin America, North America, and Africa. The main subjects and implications discussed by these researchers are going to be analysed later in this section but it can be said that the articles call for an active intervention of the government to manage important social and environmental issues regarding the task of becoming a sustainable city. Figure 8 shows distribution of publication between the seven regions.

In conclusion, the data shows a global tendency to write articles about urban sustainability from a business viewpoint but, as mentioned before, this business outlook changes according to the region. The same can be argued for the Self-Sufficient approach, with almost half of the publications (45) with respect to the Compact City (86). This suggests that sustainable urban development alternatives are less

valuable for academia, which seems to be more focused on sustainable urban development that prioritizes profit. An unexpected surprise was the articles framed by the Governance category due to the fact that they expose the effects of neoliberal urban policies to achieve sustainability. The consequences of such policies have created a global phenomena of gentrification, perpetuation of racism and xenophobia, and negative environmental impacts.

#### *4.2.2 Regional findings*

This section will explain the topics of research in each of the seven regions assessed in this bibliographic review. To do that, this section is divided into seven subsections; 4.2.2.1 Africa, 4.2.2.2 Asia, 4.2.2.3 Australia, 4.2.2.4 Europe, 4.2.2.5 Latin America, 4.2.2.6 Middle East, and 4.2.2.7 North America.

##### *4.2.2.1 Africa*

There is not a universal recipe to carry out the concept of compactness and self-sufficiency. Thus the aim of this and the rest of the sections is to illustrate the main themes and most prevalent topics in all the regions, starting with Africa.

In total 30 articles were gathered and coded from this region. The country with the most articles published in an academic journal is South Africa with 17, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa with three, and Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya with one each, respectively. The final seven articles approach the subjects on a continental level.

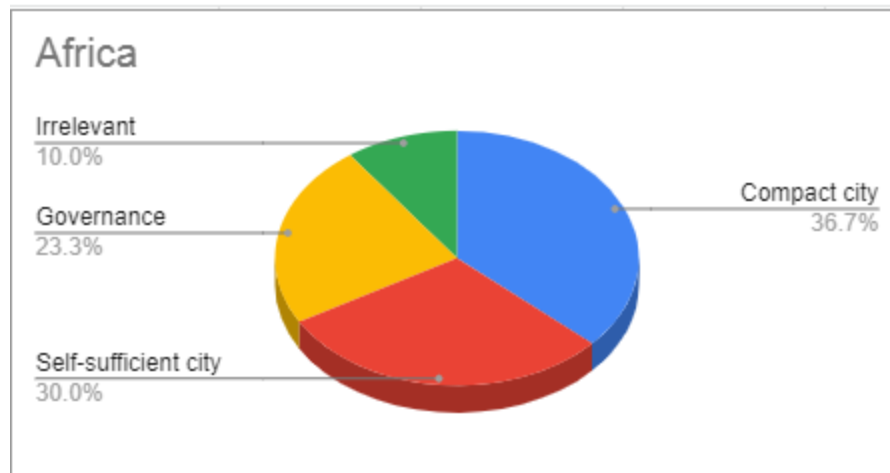


Figure 9

Figure 9 demonstrates the distribution of the articles according to the subject studied. This region shows that urban sustainability research is slightly dominated by the Compact City approach with 36.7% of the total, followed by 30% Self-Sufficient, and 24.3% of articles devoted to Governance.

The issues studied using a Compact City frame of reference focus on a private-public relationship to create a corridor development to enhance infrastructure and encourage economic clusters (Brand, A and Geyer Jr., 2017). Corridor development is a transportation-oriented urban development approach found in literature published about Compact City. Another perspective of compact cities in the context of Africa seeks to promote high density housing and retrofit buildings with the task of creating a compact form and efficiency of resources (Burak Güneralp, Yuyu Zhou, Diana Ürge-Vorsatz, Mukesh Gupta, Sha Yu, Pralit L. Patel, Michail Fragkias, Xiaoma Li, and Karen C. Seto, 2017). These are symptoms of gentrification as the current dwellers cannot afford this high-tech and “environmentally efficient” form of housing.

A pattern found in the literature was that authors encouraged the adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and United Nations Global Compact (GC) as measurable benchmarks to reach urban sustainability in the region (Malan, D., 2016). Thus different forms of

redevelopment of the urban environment were offered to tackle the problem of population growth and unemployment in the continent (De Vries, L. and Kotze, N., 2016). An example of this kind of redevelopment is the creation of clusters specialized on services (hotels) and industries (airplanes) near an airport with the task of improving economic growth (Rogerson, J., 2014 & Henderson, J. V., and Turner, M. A, 2020).

On the other hand, the most common themes studied in this continent using a Self-Sufficient approach were the focus on the promotion of human activities that do not affect the environment negatively due to economic growth, called decoupling economy (Hendler, P., 2015) and the search for Self-Sufficient production and easy access to food for the city-dwellers (Cleland, J., and Machiyama, K., 2017 & Williams, J., 2015).

The articles regarding social issues caused by economic growth and urban development stated that one of the big issues in all of Africa, but especially in South Africa, is the phenomenon of gentrification due to redevelopment of the urban area (Visser G. and Kisting D. 2019). This exacerbates the existence of segregation between sectors of the population caused by colonial and postcolonial policies that intensify poverty and racism (Masiya, T., Davids, Y. D., and Mangai, M. S, Obeng-Odoom, F., 2015, & Williams, J., 2015). The authors of this paper call for a better intervention of the government to improve the social conditions caused by urban development and economic activities.

#### *4.2.2.2 Asia*

During this research 25 articles were gathered to be analyzed and coded. Of these, 44% of the total were related to the concepts of compactness, 32% focus on achieving urban sustainability through a Self-Sufficient interpretation, and 20% regard social, environmental, and government issues that delay or block the development of a sustainable urban-space, this information is summarized in figure 10.

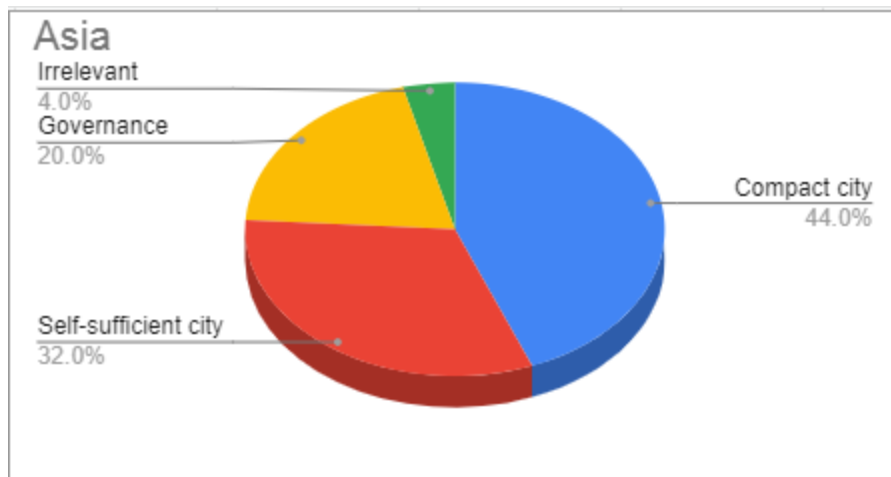


Figure 10

The countries that produce the most articles are China with six, India with three, Japan and South Korea with two each. The following countries produced one article that was included in this study, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Mongolia, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia.

The subjects explored in this region regarding a Compact City outlook were focused on transport-oriented development with participation of an entrepreneurial government that encourage economic and urban development as key factor to create high density building design that are water and energy efficient (Ann, S., Yamamoto, T., and Jiang, M., 2019, Cookson Smith, P., 2011, and Seema, D., 2010).

Some researchers suggest that to achieve urban sustainability, it is necessary to create a sustainable megacity that employs high ecologically friendly technology to face natural disasters derived from climate change (Kim, J., 2018 and Duncan, S., and Enquist, P., 2016). The main task of these approaches are to make cities more resilient to natural disasters in the East Asia region through the enhancement of infrastructure.

The subjects addressed with a Self-Sufficient viewpoint in this region center the attention on a balanced production and consumption of commodities that do not affect the environment. To accomplish this goal, the Self-Sufficient philosophy (Sura, K., 2017) regards the adoption of a program that seeks to

improve social and economic conditions of communities in an attempt to reduce their dependence on inputs from outside the region, minimize the impact of financial risks, and reduce poverty.

One of the big problems to reach sustainability in a space in this region is the constant population growth that is stressing the capacity of cities to keep its endowment of natural resources in balance with the economic growth. Therefore, to overcome these issues researchers suggest addressing the sustainability of the city in a holistic way to protect the environment and improve the exchange of flows between ecological and social systems (Koscica, M., 2014 and Wong, M. S., Hassell, R., and Yeo, A., 2016).

The studies concerned with social, economic and political problems in this region are focused on the transition from a socialist to a market-led government (Breslavsky, A. S., 2016 and Douglass, M., 2013). Hence researchers advise that the private sphere of the society should address the problems that economic and population growth are creating on the environment, leaving aside the interference of governments on environmental issues (Han, H., 2017).

A common problem derived from real estate and economic development is the displacement of low-income populations in the name of the green, smart or ecological city (Križnik, B., 2018). The lack of distribution of wealth is a current issue around the world and Asia is not an exception.

#### *4.2.2.3 Australia*

This region is characterized by a wide adoption of Compact City policies, thus almost all the articles are dedicated to enhancing the policies applied since the Compact City interpretation of urban sustainability became hegemonic. Therefore eleven articles of 21 center the attention on the Compact City, nine focus on a Self-Sufficient approach, and just one article was found irrelevant. The data for this region is summarized in figure 11.



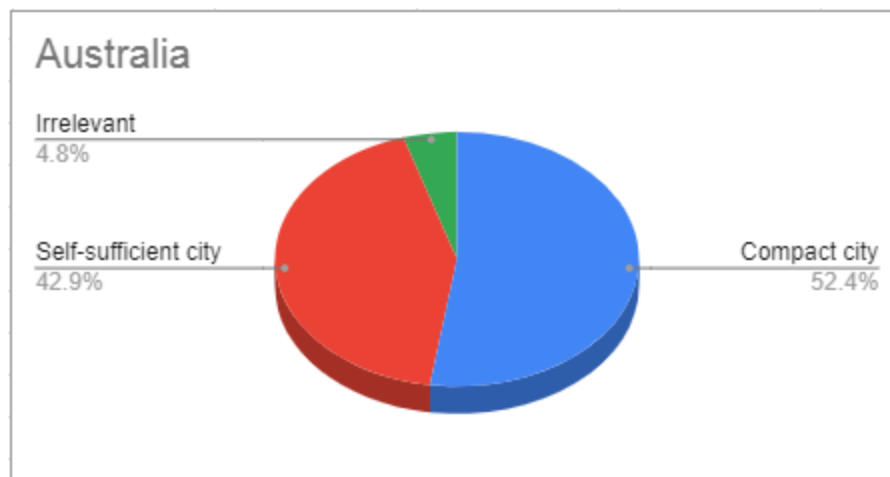


Figure 11

The cities studied in this region are Adelaide, Melbourne, Cape Paterson, Canberra, Erskineville and Sydney. The main topics approached are the assessment of neoliberal policies since 1990 (Bunker, R., and Searle, G., 2018), this was around the time in which the liberal party took control of the government.

As with the other regions under research in this paper, one of the main challenges that Australian cities are facing is population growth and the necessity to provide dwellers with basic services. Thus authors concentrate their studies on how to reduce the pressure on cities by assessing the connectivity of the country through the development of sustainable means of transportation (Cervero, R., 2013), create energy efficient, high-density housing and in balance with the existing environment following the recommendations of the United Nations Habitat and the ideas provided by garden city design (Davey, R., 2013 and Hartley, L., and Habitat 3, 2017).

One big concern stated in the literature in this region is the infill development of areas acknowledged as greenfields, brownfields, and greyfields with the intention of maximizing the urban space (Newton, P. W., 2010 and Randolph, B., and Freestone, R., 2012). The Australian interpretation also calls for the active participation of local dwellers in the design of these new housing developments with the intention of improving the interaction between residents and the new neighborhoods created (Wood, S., 2015).

Like the other regions, the management of natural resources play a special role in the literature analysed. For example, the measurement of the capacity that an urban ecosystem has to exchange flows of inputs and outputs, and the consequences to the environment (Bai, X., 2016,) or the development of technology necessary to create buildings and infrastructure efficient in energy and water that secure the sustainability of the city.

Special attention was found in the current literature about food sovereignty of the inhabitants of the urban area. To solve the problem of lack of access to fresh foods, researchers suggested the encouragement of urban agriculture to reach food sufficiency(Cumming, A., 2017 and Coles, S., 2015), and at the same time, the implementation of urban policies that protect land use with the intention of enhance the capacity of the soil to absorb, filter pollutants, and gather storm water (Martire, J. L., 2018).

Finally, one of the most often analysed subjects is the enhancement of public means of transportation with the aim of reaching an energy efficient network that reduces the emission of gasses and the encouragement of active mobility means such as walking and the use of bikes (Weller, R., 2008).

#### *4.2.2.4 Europe*

This section is in regards to Europe. Figure 12 demonstrates the article distribution between the different urban sustainability approaches. Compact city as an urban sustainability approach included 65.5% of 29 articles, 10.3% of the research is associated with self-sufficiency, and 17.2% of the research is focused on Governance which includes social or political issues that are consequences of urban policies that seek to reach sustainability.

The origin of the literature comes from the United Kingdom, Greece, Germany, Spain, Poland, the Czech Republic, Netherlands, Belgium, and a significant amount of articles center its attention on a global view of urban sustainability.

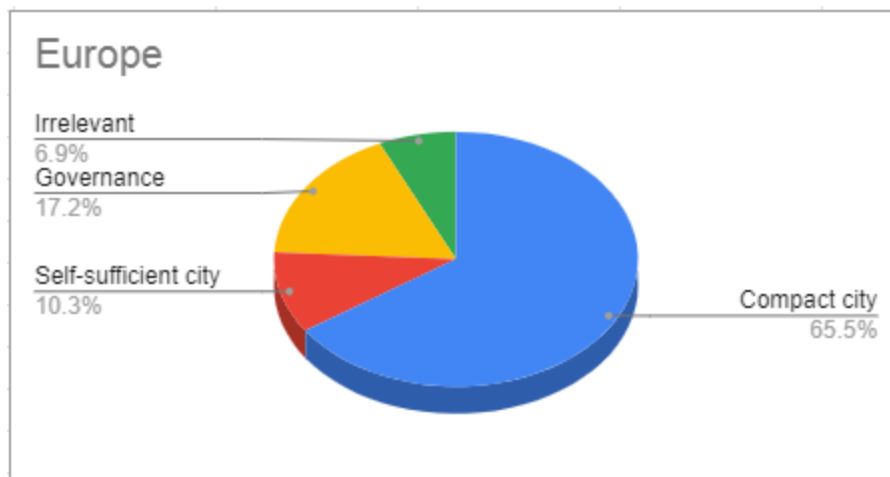


Figure 12

The main subject approach by the articles is focused on becoming the urban landscape into a space where the economic activity goes in balance with the environment. Thus variations of the Compact City ideology are developed in relation to economic growth, environmentalism, energy efficiency, density, mixed land use, public-private relation, and sustainability.

One of the variations of the Compact City is the so call eco-city or greencity, which is market-led urban development that seeks to densify the urban landscape in harmony with the environment with the goal of integrating poor layers of the society and the use of high green technology (Barthold, S, 2018).

Another alternative found in the literature to reach sustainability is the smart city, this approach is similar to the green city, eco-city, and the Compact City, and like the others, the smart city approach suggests an active role of the government to support the development of high technology firms, a specialized workforce, seek for density and smart buildings, enhance internet infrastructure and means of transport, reduce bureaucratic barriers in order to improve competitiveness, efficiency and sustainability (Janurova, M., Chaloupkova, M., and Kunc, J, 2020).

However one difference of this region in comparison to other places in the world is the population decrease and the rapid ageing of that population in the EU zone. Consequently, in the United Kingdom, the USA, and the EU the concept of the “silver city” is being developed, which is the construction of high density multigenerational housing that is ageing friendly (Gardner, G., and

Nasserjah, A., 2020). This will enhance the current urban housing stock and take advantage of the high-income older population layer of the society.

Another example of smart cities applies to post industrial areas, such as Eastern Germany, that are facing problems of population decline due to the transition from a socialist to a liberal government and the loss of the local industry.

In this case, the local and federal government is implementing policies known as smart-lean growth (Bartholomae, F., Woon Nam, C., and Schoenberg, A., 2017). This encourages investment in high tech business, services, and industry, with the aim to reach urban regeneration of the space and to achieve economic growth.

Considering the literature approaching a Self-Sufficient viewpoint, this region is not producing a big number of publications related to this subject. They can be summarized in three main subjects; one is the attempt to help the low-income sections of the society to become economically sufficient in order to get access to housing through subsidies provided by the government (Krapp, M.C., 2020). Secondly, researchers suggest the enhancement of green infrastructure regarding food security and climate change (Marot, N., Golobič, M., and Müller, B., 2015). Thirdly, and finally, studies were focused on improving the social metabolism of the city to reduce the footprint of the urban landscape through energy efficiency, re-density of the current urban stock, and the encouragement of the garden city ideas (Schott, D., and Mauch, C., 2016).

The literature centering on government issues considers the potentially negative consequences of Compact City urban policies implemented at a local level, and calls for the compensations to local dwellers in order to achieve a more equal society (Foord, J., 2010). In addition to compensations, another solution is the enhancement of infrastructure and urban housing stock of the suburban areas with the goal of achieving a sustainable economic development and encouraging political participation in order to reach the benefits of the compact design (Williams, K., Joynt, J.L.R., and Hopkins D., 2010).

Nevertheless, not all the literature supports the ideas of compactness in Europe, finding that the concepts of greencity, smart city and Compact City, are related to the exclusive benefit of the hegemonic economic class represented by the real estate companies, high technology firms, and green infrastructure developers (Krueger, B., 2018, and Vanolo, A., 2014).

#### 4.2.2.5 Latin America

This region includes 29 articles. Of them, 35.7 % were studies focused on the Compact City viewpoint, 17.9 % were using a self- sufficient approach, and 35.7% of the total were related to Governance, while 10.7 % were irrelevant to the study of urban sustainability. This information is summarized in figure 14. The countries analyzed by these articles were Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and some of the studies examined urban sustainability in the whole region.

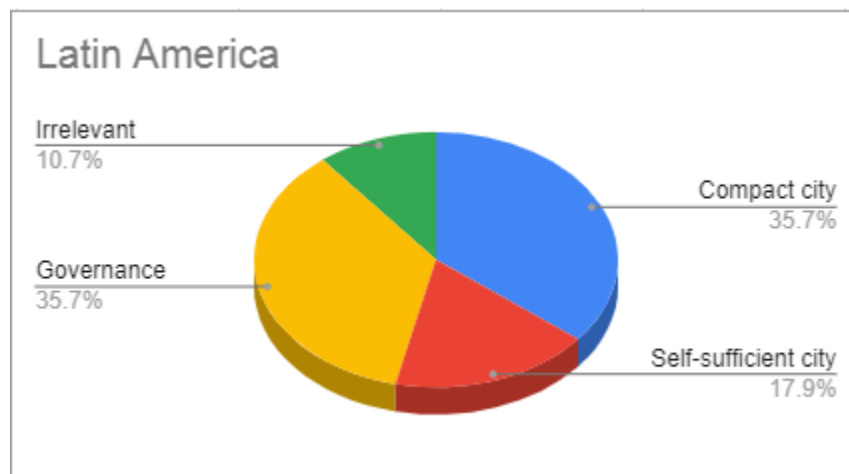


Figure 13

The studies from a Compact City perspective showed that the urban space centered their attention on an urban development in function of the low-income layer of the population regarding a transit oriented housing that helps to reduce the impacts of population growth and traffic congestion (Cervero, R., 2013). To achieve this goal the author suggested the implementation of urban policies aims to enhance public transport and provide housing to low-income inhabitants.

One of the concerns found in the literature from this region focused on the encouragement to reach a denser city urban landscape as a solution to improve the public services provided by the State

(Libertun de Duren, N., and Guerrero Compeán, R., 2016). To reach an efficient level of public spending per capita the authors recommended urban policies that motivate density.

As the other articles regarding the adoptions of compactness to reach sustainability, it was found that in this region that the relationship between the private sector and the State has been fundamental to encourage real estate development, change the current land use policies, deregulate the flow of the financial market to achieve urban sustainability (Valenzuela Aguilera, A., and Pérez, C., 2017). Even though the outcomes of this relationship in this part of the world might not always be what is expected.

The articles found in this bibliographic review related to self-sufficiency in Latin America and centered in the study of the urban-space and addressed the subject of food sovereignty, an holistic approach to reach sustainability, household sufficiency, and the implementation of traditional thinking. The access to food for all the inhabitants, especially between the urban poor layers of the population, is trying to be solved by the encouragement of urban agriculture to self consume and produce and the preservation of green belts with the help of urban and suburban policies (Gürcan, E.C., 2014). Food sovereignty policies are determined by social movements of farmers that are part of the design of public programs that seek to improve quality of and access to food, and the preservation of the local environment.

Another example of an attempt to reach urban sustainability through a holistic approach is the New Plan developed by the Cuban government. The goal of this program is to decentralize community planning, create housing cooperatives to promote collective self-build homes, encourage grassroots social movements, reduce economic and population growth, and promote a wider distribution of urban landscape (Pe, L., and Currie, A., 2012).

The New Plan implemented in Cuba is, with the project carried out in Thailand, one of the alternatives to reach urban sustainability that does not rely on capitalist programs to enhance the quality of life of dwellers and improve the current conditions of the local environment.

Keeping with the review of the literature of self-sufficiency in this region, it was found that there is a project to apply Traditional thinking in the development of local communities with the purpose of enhance quality of life of the inhabitants and improve the current conditions of the local environment through a collective management of natural resources and strengthen the economic conditions of the population (Barkin, D., 2012).

Regarding the problem of housing, the development of urban policies with objectives to stimulate household self-sufficiency through rental adjustment and subsidies to low-income dwellers (Hurtado-Tarazona, A., 2020). This initiative focuses on reducing exclusion from the housing market and achieving self-sufficiency for the inhabitants.

Considering now the literature centered on social issues determined by Compact City urban policies, it was found that technocrat urban strategies is one of the big determiners of urban sprawl, gentrification and inequality in Latin America (Angotti, T., and Irazábal, C., 2017). These authors suggest that the use of Compact City policies may reduce political participation and be exclusionary of inhabitants in the design of the urbanscape.

One of the main criticisms found in Governance literature, is the negative side effects of green city urban development. According to the literature, this kind of development seeks the enhancement of the environment only if it is profitable in economic terms (Anguelovski, I., 2017) thus, ignoring the negative consequences created by this urban design, such as land speculation and what the author calls green gentrification.

It can be summarized that since the implementation of Compact City policies in Latin America in the 1990's, urban poverty has increased, along with violence, social exclusion, displacement, segregation, and environmental damage due to mega projects (Caldeira, T.P.R., 2015, Davis, D.E., 2014, and Dueholm Rasch, E., 2017). It can be argued that the ideas to achieve compactness are not to blame for these outcomes but perhaps since this theory represents a business approach, it implies that the goal

is to perpetuate efficiency despite its consequences, which is a clear example of a technocratic point of view.

#### 4.2.2.6 Middle East

This is the region with the least amount of articles gathered concerning the subject with a total of 12. The Compact City approach is the subject with more publications with six, which represent 50 % of the total, followed by four articles focused on self-sufficiency, and just one research produced centered on a Governance perspective. This information is summarized in figure 14.

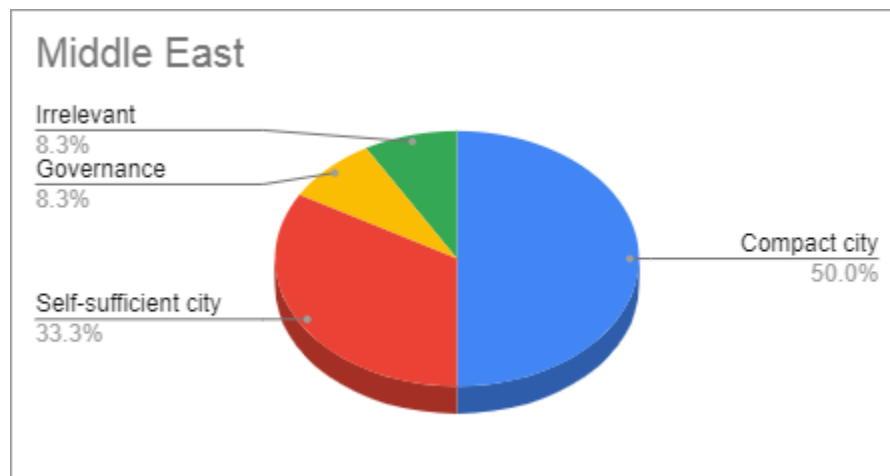


Figure 14

The countries with more articles published are Iran and the UAE with two each one, followed by Bahrain, Jordan, Israel, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia with just one study found concerning Compact City, Self-Sufficient City, or Governance perspective.

Once the studies were assessed, it was found that one of the main concerns about Compact City development is centered on the design of a connected dense grid urban form. The aim of which was to transform the cities of the region into transport networks efficient in resources management and infill development of the urban environment (Kelbaugh, D., 2013).

Additionally, and apart from the Governance relation, an important issue of the region to reach compactness and transport development is the decentralization of the government decisions in the planification of the urban design (Kheyroddin, R., Piroozi, R., and Soleimani, A., 2017). Resulting in the



prevention of urban sprawl which has been found to create inefficiency in the communication between the urban core and suburbs.

This region is focused on the development of an eco-city. This regards a new development oriented towards transportation. The goal of which is the creation of neighborhoods with efficient and sustainable means of transportation that connect cities in the Middle East with a global network of urban cores. The construction of this infrastructure aims to reach urban sustainability through environmentally friendly policies that encourage profitability (Kipnis, B.A., 2015, Masoumi, H.E., 2014, Pérez, F., and Cugurullo, F, 2016).

Conversely, the articles approaching a self-sufficiency interpretation were mainly focused on achieving self-production of food. This includes the promotion of improved access to fresh and quality food following the recommendation of the United Nations to reach food security (Galal, O., Corroon, M., and Tirado, C., 2010).

The only publication found related to Governance was focused on the political participation of the inhabitants in the planning of the urban policies. This was to avoid the perpetuation of crony capitalism which was a common theme seen in the Arabic states ( Molotch, H., and Ponzini, D., 2019).

#### *4.2.2.7 North America*

As in the other regions from the global north (Australia and Europe) the majority of the publications were focused on the spread of the main concepts of the Compact City, thus from the 33 articles gathered in this study, 54.5 % were focused on this interpretation. However this region did produce a bigger amount of publications dealing with social issues that critique the current urban policies. Therefore 24.2 % of the research found is approaching urban sustainability from a Governance perspective. Meanwhile 21.2 % of the literature found in North America was studied following a Self-Sufficient approach. This information is condensed in figure 15.

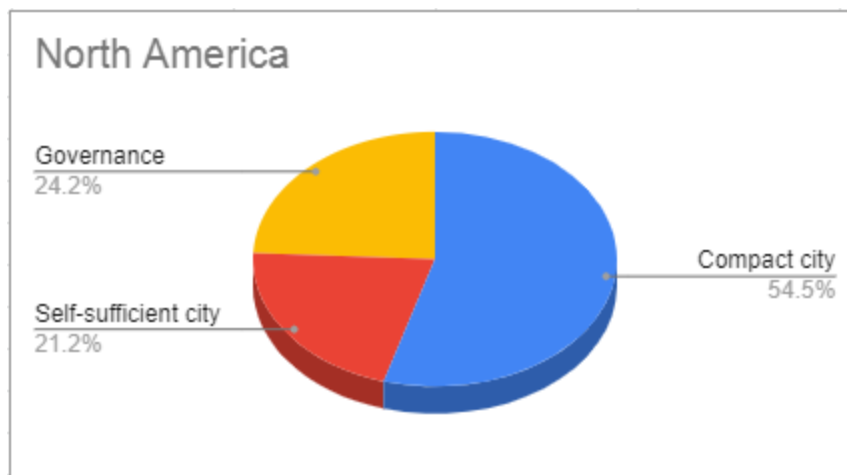


Figure 15

There was considerable interest in promoting and implementing recommendations dictated by the UN Global Compact (UNGC) in the articles focused on compact cities in this region. The UNGC encourages corporations to assume social responsibility in their activities in order to create local networks aimed to reach a sustainable urban development (Aravind, D., and Arevalo, J.A., 2015, and Hoessle, U., 2015).

Like the other regions around the world North America produced studies encouraging transportation-oriented development projects. These projects are then dynamized by the construction of transportation hubs such as airports. Airports attract the concentration of aviation clusters which results in impulses of redevelopment including high density housing near the area (Banai, R., 2017).

As such, the main attention in the literature was centered on the redevelopment of existing cities. Redeveloping existing cities includes enhancements of high technology infrastructure that connect the city with other urban nodes. Additionally, these improvements as they are called improve Governance, dynamize economic activities, and increase speed and efficiency of the connectivity between cities with the purpose of improving competitiveness (Niedzielski, M.A., Malecki, E.J., 2012 and Davies, S., Kovacova, M., and Valaskova, K., 2020).

Urban policies encouraged by local, state, and federal governments develop big data driven smart cities. These policies are aimed at enhancing the relationship between private and public spheres

to increase the investment and support of high technology firms. They are supposed to help reach urban sustainability through the management of big data, the production of internet of things that guarantee cyber security for all the dwellers and the creation of transport, services, and industries centered in high technology (Nelson, A., and Neguriță, O., 2020).

The goals of the green city, smart city, eco-city, and the aerotropolis, follow the same principles of compact design. In other words, they seek to densify the urban space through the implementation of resource efficient housing, connected by a sustainable transport system, resulting in a mixed land use design of the neighborhoods in balance with the urban environment (Duncan, S., and Enquist, P., 2016).

On the other hand, the studies approaching urban sustainability focused, again, mainly on achieving food self-sufficiency in a sustainable way with the task of providing dwellers quality food and easy access to it (Horst, M., and Gaolach, B., 2015). According to the studies, to succeed in food sufficiency it is necessary to provide subsidies to local producers. These subsidies are to encourage urban agriculture and facilitate the access to healthy food (Morgan, K., 2015). These kinds of initiatives are promoted by food grassroots movements that seek to participate in the design of urban policies that should guarantee a balanced interaction between the urban ecosystem and the development of transportation and housing (Schewenius, M., McPhearson, T., and Elmqvist, T., 2014).

Finally, studies concerned in urban sustainability through the use of the Self-Sufficient perspective call for an holistic approach to assess ecosystem services provided through land sharing and sparing, and the measurement of damages caused to the ecosystem by population growth, overexploitation of land (Stott, I., Soga, M., Inger, R., and Gaston, K.J., and McManamay, R.A., Surendran Nair, S., DeRolph, C.R., Ruddell, B.L., Morton, A.M., Stewart, R.N., Troia, M.J., Tran, L., Kim, H., and Bhaduri, B.L., 2017).

The articles concerning social issues were centered on the problems created by land speculation that increase urban sprawl and environmental damages due to population and economic growth

(Gottlieb, P.D., 2015). Thus, farmland protection is at the center of the debate of the Green New Deal promoted by the members of Congress at the federal level with the intention of providing subsidies in order to achieve a sustainable food system (Tumber, C., 2019).

Interestingly, special attention was found in the literature criticising how the greencity approach is focused on environmental protection but only if it is still profitable, while it ignores social movements and environmental justice (Lorr, M.J., 2012). While the smart, green, Compact City approaches are focusing on keep profits and competitiveness they have ignored the big problems of racial segregation and wealth disparities that this kind of urban design has perpetuated since the consolidation of neoliberalism (De La Cruz-Viesca, M., Ong, P.M., Comandon, A., Darity Jr., W.A., and Hamilton, D., 2018).

## **5 Conclusion**

The study of the city around the world is getting more attention due to the increase of population living in urban areas and massive flow of migration to the main economic cores located in each of the seven regions analysed in this research. The reason for this exchange between the regions is usually motivated by environmental disasters, violence experienced by wars or for economic and cultural reasons. Thus, the city has become a place that has to cope with these increases of flows coming from other systems that call for measures to face problems like climate change, housing and public services provision, economic growth, and social movements.

It is under this context where the Compact City and Self-Sufficient City approaches appear to provide solutions to these problems from different perspectives. The first one interprets that the solution to achieve sustainability relies on a market-led understanding while the second seeks to provide solutions centered on interpretations coming from grassroots movements that do not form part of the hegemonic ideology.

This meta-analysis has shown that each region analysed applies the concepts of compact and self-sufficiency according to the current social and environmental conditions that characterized every city. To this point, it is clear that the adoption of an interpretation by the city's government is a reflection of a constant fight between classes to impose an ideology. Therefore, according to the findings in this research, it can be said that the solution to the problems that cities are facing around the world relies on creating the maximum amount of profit while fighting environmental disasters, migration flows, natural resources management, and social conflicts.

The implications of adopting urban policies that aim to transform the urban landscape into a green, smart, or eco city are not analysed at all in the literature approaching the Compact City theory. An example of this lack of interest in the side effects of the compactness is the amount of publications in Africa and Latin America regarding consequences of 30 years of neoliberal recipes that attempt to fix structural problems of the capitalist mode of production that have just intensified the class struggle in the region by perpetuating poverty and inequality.

On the other hand, the predominance of the Compact City literature approach in Asia and Eastern Europe seems to be an opportunity for real estate companies and financial institutions to access new markets due to the political transition from a planned economy to a market led economy with an active role of an entrepreneur government.

The lack of alternative approaches to reach urban sustainability in North America, Europe and Australia that differ from a capitalist perspective seem to be a clear indication that these regions are not open to finding modes of production that revolutionize the actual state of affairs. Therefore it seems that the Compact City approach seeks not only to concentrate the human activity in the city but also the monopoly of how to reach urban sustainability. Whereas the Self-Sufficient City theories employ a more human-led approach, focused on promoting access to basic necessities while seeking environmental sustainability.

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