

## **Physical-spatial and social configuration at neighborhood level, the Raval (Barcelona), an urban evaluation according with the Compact City Model**

**Edwin Javier Azofeifa Valverde**

### **ABSTRACT**

In urban areas, economic development and efforts for improving the quality of citizens' lives, instead of complementing each other and contributing to the advancement of the city, both of them generate and accentuate the processes of physical and social fragmentation in cities. This thesis describes and evaluates the physical-spatial and social configuration in the neighbourhood of Raval in Barcelona, with a particular focus on the role played in that configuration by the immigrant population. The aim is to identify how those processes in which social inequality and a lack of access to certain services and facilities manifest themselves. In order to illustrate this reality and understand the configuration of Raval, population data and information regarding services, facilities, and urban furniture were gathered. The concept of compact urban development (the compact city model) was used in order to interpret the potential weaknesses in the neighbourhood, which hinder its functionality. The main drawbacks are the predominance of population groups occupying certain spaces hindering their potential integration in the neighbourhood, the low diversity of land uses, the characteristics of public spaces that do not facilitate basic functions such as the meeting of population, and significant difficulties in accessing basic services or facilities. The paper concludes that the configuration of Raval can be understood as suffering from limited physical and spatial integration, from a lack of social cohesion, and from low levels of diversity in terms of commercial facilities and services.