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TFE: Understanding Urban Expansion and Informal Urbanization, A Case Study of Informal Settlements in Arequipa, Peru.

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Abstract

Based on scientific research conducted on the topic of urban expansion and informality, it appears that only very few scientific works have established definitive criteria for describing informal urbanization and its development patterns. This is primarily due to the inherent complexity of the subject, which exhibits significant variations depending on the specific country or city under examination. Conducting such studies is indeed challenging, as it necessitates an analysis of the local socio-economic and social context, while also considering the prevailing spatial planning policies at the local level.

Furthermore, the forthcoming work will concentrate on examining urban expansion in Peru, with a specific focus on the city of Arequipa. This will be achieved through the integration of various approaches and the utilization of different analytical criteria. The study aims to shed light on the significant urbanization trends observed in recent decades, driven by substantial population growth resulting from migration phenomena. It also aims to address the issue of relative poverty among populations residing in informal settlements, primarily due to limited resources, as well as the relatively lenient territorial management policies in place.

Considering the intricate nature of informal urbanization, the definitions and concepts related to it will be established based on a thorough review of existing scientific research on the subject. Through an investigation into the urbanization process of the city, involving the analysis of demographic and housing trends, as well as an examination of various informal settlements on the outskirts of Arequipa using historical satellite imagery, this study aims to shed light on both the broader urbanization patterns within the city and the specific areas that are susceptible to illegal land occupation. By considering multiple scales of analysis, the research will reveal the dynamics of urban growth and identify vulnerable sites where informal settlements have emerged.

The process of establishing informal settlements is influenced by several factors, including significant population growth resulting from rural-urban migration, limited housing options within the city, inadequate territorial governance, and a lack or absence of essential services and infrastructure. These conditions have played a critical role in shaping the emergence and development of these informal spaces. The study will explore how these interconnected factors contribute to the creation of informal neighborhoods, highlighting the implications of such conditions on urbanization dynamics in Arequipa.