The Lived Experiences of Women in Backyard Dwellings: A Cape Town Case Study

Hayley Abrahams (ABRHAY005)

Supervisor: Dr Suraya Scheba

Co- supervisor: Dr Andreas Scheba

Department of Environmental and Geographical Science

University of Cape Town, South Africa

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PLAGIARISM DECLARATION:

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled "*The Lived Experiences of Women Living in Backyard Dwellings: A Cape Town Case Study*" has been written by me in fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in the Environmental and Geographical Sciences department at the University of Cape Town. This thesis is a product of my own work, under the supervision of Dr Suraya Scheba of the Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences at the University of Cape Town, and co-supervision of Dr Andreas Scheba of the Equitable Education and Economies division at the Human Science Research Council. Due acknowledgement is made in the text for the use of work done by others and I declare that this thesis has not been submitted previously by another for any other degree or diploma at another University or institute of higher education.

Name: Hayley Abrahams

Signature: Signed by candidate

Date: January 2025

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Abstract

Backyarding has grown rapidly in South Africa, and it remains poorly understood. This study explores the embodied experiences of women residing in informal backyard dwellings, and how their infrastructural conditions shape their citizenship rights. This study makes use of the example of the Wesbank community in Kuilsriver, Cape Town. Through semi-structured interviews, focus groups discussions and non-participant observations, this study reveals how women struggle to practise their citizenship rights through everyday negotiations within their landlords, and makes visible how emotions are a fundamental component of the intricate ways in which individuals acquire and utilise resources that are vital to their basic life. By revealing these experiences, the work adds to a more thorough knowledge of the lived reality of these women and provides insights into the gendered dynamics of informal backyard dwelling.

Keywords: Cape Town, backyard housing, gender; lived experience, infrastructure; citizenship.

Glossary of terms

Acronyms

ANC - African National Congress

BNG – Breaking New Ground

DHS - Department of Human Settlements

EPE- Embodied Political Ecology

FPE - Feminist Political Ecology

RDP ─ Reconstruction and Development Programme

SALGA - South African Local Government Association

UPE - Urban Political Ecology

General terms

Apartheid: A form of government in South Africa where people were divided into distinct groups, roles, advantages, and places according to their race, with white people disproportionately benefited and black people suffered.

Backyard owners: Tenant households who own their structures, renting out space in the yard from landlords.

Backyard residents: Households living in a backyard structure with an alternative form of tenure than are captured by market dynamics. They could be relatives, or persons residing in the yard on a charitable basis.

Backyard tenants: Tenant households renting out both the backyard structure as well as space in the yard.

Bungalow: Internationally, a one-storied house with a low-pitched roof. In the South African context, however, the term is commonly used to refer to informal backyard dwellings, often small, makeshift structures.

Backyard dwelling: A makeshift, self-contained unit of accommodation used by one or more households as a home.

Housing backlog: The under provision in housing that has accrued against previous development plan targets.

The White Paper on Housing: Sets out the principles, guidelines, proposed policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa.

Loadshedding: Turning off the electricity supply to ease pressure on a failing power grid.

Main house tenants: Tenants renting a room in the main house directly from the landlord.

Wendy house: A form of accommodation and is a wooden structure. The structure is usually erected in someone's backyard.

1. Introduction

"Across time and place housing has played a central role in building families and communities as well as shaping the social and economic fabric of society" (Sobantu, 2020).

South Africa, a country with a diversified population and a long history, is struggling to address a serious urban issue that affects all of its communities: a severe shortage of affordable and well located housing. This scarcity has given rise to the growth of informal settlements that lack adequate service provision and are often located in the urban periphery. Africa has the lowest levels of infrastructure supply; just 54% of its urban population has access to properly managed water, and no more than 23% has access to sanitation (UN-Habitat, 2022). Additionally, UN-habitat (2020) states that even though the percentage of urban residents worldwide who live in slums has decreased significantly—from 28% in 2000 to 24% in 2018—more than 1 billion people still reside in these types of settlements, with 23% of them in Sub-Saharan Africa and over 50% in East, South-East, Central, and South Asia.

According to South Africa's National Census[1] (2022), just about 8.1% of urban households in South Africa occupy informal housing, although this figure is contested because of possible undercount (Statistics South Africa, 2022). Other estimates put the figure closer to 20% in the South African metros (Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa, 2021). While the majority reside in informal settlements, a notable percentage have assembled informal structures in the backyard of properties. It is known as backyard housing. Backyarding usually takes place

[1] The National Census is an official survey of the population. This process helps compile a numerical profile of South Africa.

on a small scale, entailing a few standalone structures put up in the backyard of formal housing (Brueckner et al., 2018). However, the amount of dwellings on a plot is growing and are placed on different parts of the land which is available. As Lemanski (2009) states, the growth of backyard dwellings in South Africa is closely linked to the implementation of state-subsidised and serviced housing, where additional outdoor space has created opportunities for adding secondary one- or two-room structures. Backyard dwellings have limited access to municipal services and these facilities are generally shared with other households on the same property. The individuals share common utilities such as electricity, water taps and toilets with the landlord (Isandla Institute, 2022). Previous studies have demonstrated that services are not effectively delivered to disadvantaged communities due to poor and inadequate infrastructure (Naidoo and Kuye, 2005; Emily and Muyengwa, 2021). The absence of infrastructure portrays collapsing citizenship with regards to the state's failure to meet citizen's expectations of basic service provision.

The embodied experience of backyard dwellers, especially those of women, have not been adequately researched. The question of how women make homes within the confines of informal backyard dwellings is at the core of this research. This includes more than just the physical aspects of the homes; it also includes the lived experiences of the occupants, like the social, emotional, and psychological aspects that shapes how they perceive themselves and their community. Through delving into women's personal stories, I hope to illuminate the complexities of day-to-day existence in these settings and advance a more sophisticated analysis of the difficulties encountered by women residing beyond the traditional housing systems.

Examining the gendered aspects of housing precarity is crucial in the South African context, where concerns about social justice and gender equality are of utmost importance. When it comes to issues with safety, healthcare, and economic vulnerability, women are disproportionately affected by informal housing conditions (Jooste and Mathibela, 2020). The goal of this research is to put women's experiences front and centre while recognizing and addressing the unique difficulties they face. By means of this study, I want to disentangle the complex network linking the scarcity of infrastructure, make-shift and adaptive embodied experience, and gender relations in South African urban environments.

1.1 Background to Research Problem

Upon reviewing the research carried out by Wiltgen Georgi et al. (2021), it becomes evident that there are contexts where there is restricted access and utilisation of women's citizenship rights in relation to infrastructure. They claim that failing to consider gender-specific demands in planning impedes women's capacity to fully enjoy their civic rights, particularly in economically disadvantaged areas. Furthermore, current literature either pays little attention to existing gender-related inequalities or provides simplified and shallow views neglecting how gender-related inequalities cross with poverty within cities, poor infrastructure and unequal access to the city (Shang, 2022; Chant et al., 2015). Studies on poverty in African cities have not comprehensively understood the gender-related inequalities in access to housing and infrastructure services (Parikh et al., 2015), as well as the certain requirements and everyday practices of women living in backyard dwellings. Some work done by Cherubini (2011) expanded on the results of inclusion or exclusion from citizenship rights for individual citizens, by connecting their structural stance to their daily practices and lived experiences. Cherubini

(2011) notes that a feminist-oriented study of citizenship should take into account how far people have the capacity to govern their individual lives' and bodies, what degree of access they have to the material and meaningful resources required for their welfare, and to what extent they are able to decide between various life choices. Additionally, a critical oversight in previous and current scholarship is the treatment of infrastructure as gender-neutral, neglecting both the unequal access to basic services among diverse groups within the urban poor. It also overlooks how existing infrastructure can contribute to gender-based violence (Datta and Ahmed, 2020). Over and above, inadequate information exists on the relationship between gender, infrastructure and citizenship in Cape Town specifically, which is the motivation behind this study.

1.2 Significance of the Study

Previous studies on backyard housing in South Africa have largely ignored the nuanced and gender-specific realities of those who reside in informal backyard dwellings (Lemanski, 2009; Turok and Borel-Saladin, 2015; Scheba and Turok, 2020; Lategan, 2017). The thesis contributes towards closing this shortfall by paying particular attention to women's experiences of living in an informal backyard dwelling. It shows that informal living conditions are long-lasting and profoundly ingrained in the lives of individuals who inhabit them, in contrast to the widespread belief that such situations are transient. The thesis seeks to depict the day-to-day reality that women encounter by researching their lived experiences in these locations. Moreover, the thesis specifically looks into how these women deal with challenges of belonging and resource availability. It explores the nuanced connection that these women have with the state, and ways these relations are mediated through infrastructure and more direct relations with landlords. By

revealing these experiences, the thesis adds to a more thorough knowledge of the lived reality of these women and provides insights into the gendered dynamics of informal backyard dwelling.

1.3 Research Aim and Questions

Aim:

The study's main aim is to investigate the embodied experiences[2] of women residing in informal backyard dwellings, and how their infrastructural conditions[3] shape their citizenship rights.

Research Questions:

1. What are the material conditions[4] experienced by women living in informal backyard dwellings, and how do these conditions impact their daily lives?
2. How do women in these settings access services to meet their gendered needs, and what burdens do they encounter in the process?
3. In what ways do the infrastructural conditions of informal backyard dwellings influence the women's relationship with their citizenship rights and their ability to exercise these rights?

[2] Embodied experiences reflect how women internalize and respond to the challenges or opportunities presented by both material and infrastructural conditions.
[3] Infrastructural conditions focus on the systems and structures that either enable or hinder these material realities.
[4] Material conditions describe the immediate, tangible realities of their environment.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

Following Chapter 1, the appropriate literature is reviewed in Chapter 2. In this chapter, the main theoretical frames utilised in this thesis are presented. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research's methodology, including the research design, data collection methods and analysis, as well as the ethical considerations and difficulties of this investigation. Chapter 4, 5 and 6 presents the research findings, in the form of specific themes that emerged throughout the analysis. Chapter 7 discusses the data that was presented, along with any gaps. The research is concluded in Chapter 8, which summarises the important findings and provides reflection on the relevance of this contribution from both a societal and academic viewpoint.

2. Theoretical framework

The primary theoretical discussions with which this research is in conversation are outlined in this chapter. The collections of writing examined may be divided into three categories: Housing and Backyarding in South Africa, Infrastructural Citizenship, and Gender and Embodiment. This chapter offers a review of previous research on the key ideas used in the study as well as highlighting important gaps, developing the theoretical framework that has directed data collecting and analysis.

2.1 Housing and Backyarding in South Africa

2.1.1 Overview of the South African housing context

In South Africa, the mandates of local, provincial, and national governments concerning housing provision are defined by the Constitution and related legislation (Department of Human Settlements, 2004). The national government is responsible for establishing the overarching policy and legislative framework for housing, such as the Housing Act[5] and the Breaking New Ground (BNG)[6] policy. It allocates budgets to provincial and municipal governments for housing programs and oversees their implementation to ensure alignment with national objectives. Additionally, it engages in strategic planning through frameworks like the National Development Plan, aiming to guide long-term housing delivery and development priorities (National Planning Commission, 2012). The provincial government, on the other hand, plays a crucial role in

[5] The Housing Act is there to enable the facilitation of a sustainable housing development process.
[6] The Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements of 2004, also known as Breaking New Ground, has been South Africa's main housing policy framework since 2004.

implementing national housing policies by adapting them to regional needs and managing housing programs. They develop provincial housing plans to align with national priorities and provide technical and capacity-building support to municipalities to enhance housing delivery (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Lastly, local governments, or municipalities, are at the forefront of housing delivery, implementing projects directly within communities by identifying suitable land and beneficiaries. They integrate housing into broader municipal planning through Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), ensuring alignment with local needs. They also engage with communities to ensure housing initiatives address specific priorities and promote sustainable urban growth.

The South African government has provided housing support for households with low and medium incomes across the nation since 1994 under the National Housing Subsidy Scheme (NHSS)[7]. Approximately 4.5 million housing opportunities (including serviced sites) have been delivered via the present housing delivery approach, which was implemented since the country's democratisation in 1994 (Thwala et al., 2018). Delivering free-standing homes, known as Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)[8] or Breaking New Ground (BNG) houses, has been a major political focus in South Africa as part of the post-apartheid effort to address historical socioeconomic inequalities (Tissington et al, 2013). Nevertheless, despite significant advancements since 1994, there is still a considerable "housing backlog" (Oldfield and Greyling, 2015).

[7] In South Africa, this is a government initiative aimed at providing financial assistance to low-income households to help them obtain housing. It forms part of the broader national housing policy developed to address the housing crisis.

[8] RDP was the first South African macro-economic framework established by the post-apartheid government aimed at promoting economic growth, addressing socio-economic inequalities and reducing poverty.

South Africa's housing landscape is incredibly complicated, with a wide range of laws, rules, programs, subsidies, and procedures in place (Oldfield and Greyling, 2015). The rate and scope of the development of the state-subsidised housing has continually been disputed, with some arguing for faster construction and broader coverage, while others highlight concerns about quality and resource allocation (Tissington et al., 2013). With that being said, one of the most apparent issues with state-subsidised programmes is that, particularly in large cities, it cannot keep up with the growing demand (Turok et al., 2021). As a result, the housing shortage has increased to 2.4 million in South Africa (National Housing Needs Register, 2023). At the same time, there is an increasing number of vulnerable households that fall through the gap. They make too much money to be eligible for a state-subsidised home, but not sufficient enough to be able to get financing from banks to purchase their own property or get into the private rental sector (Turok and Scheba, 2018).

A key problem with the government's housing approach was the developments were frequently located in the urban peripheries (Amin and Cirolia, 2018). They argued that the developments were frequently found on property that was originally purchased or allocated for township construction (Amin & Cirolia, 2018). As one of the key features of the RDP/BNG delivery is free-standing houses, a substantial amount of land is needed to build a big number of homes. Often accessible on the periphery of cities, on inexpensive land. This resulted in spatial segregation, which means the housing program did not aid in the consolidation, integration, or restructuring of the apartheid metropolis (Beier, 2023). However, there has been an additional shift in policy since 2004 (Lategan, 2017). The Comprehensive Plan for the Creation of Sustainable Human Settlements was subsequently approved in 2004 (Department of Human

Settlements, 2004). This represents the shift from just providing houses to creating sustainable and inclusive communities. This was intended to place more focus on the kind and location of housing, as well as healthcare facilities, education and job opportunities (Turok and Scheba, 2018).

Many options were made available to help people advance as their family and financial situations changed. As a result of the National Housing Code[9] 2009 revision and reissuing, the main housing initiatives currently include Integrated Residential Development Programme (IRDP), Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP), Social Housing Programme, Community Residential Units (CRU) Programme and Emergency Housing Programme[10]. Despite all these programmes put in place, many others have not benefited in any way from the right to housing, therefore compelled to live within backyards and informal settlements. Essentially, as Charlton (2018) states, the housing approach has largely remained the same and has not kept up with the requirements of low-income households for mobility in their daily battles to survive. Consequently, there has been an increase in informal backyard rentals and the occupation of abandoned properties (Turok and Scheba, 2018; Scheba & Millington, 2023).

[9] The National Housing Code established the core policy principles, guidelines and standards which apply to the government's different housing assistance programmes.
[10] These are the housing initiatives available in South Africa. For more information see: https://www.dhs.gov.za/content/programmes-and-subsidies

2.1.2 The wait for housing

The Constitution of South Africa[11] (1996), chapter 2 section 26 states that each South African citizen has the right to adequate housing, and the state is required to use all of its resources to gradually realise this right. Additionally, no one may be compelled to vacate their home or have it dismantled without an order from the court that takes all pertinent factors into account. Laws cannot allow for the arbitrary removal of people. For a great deal of South Africans, this right to adequate housing is only realised after a protracted and endless period of waiting (Oldfield & Greyling, 2015). The widespread reality of housing backlogs contrasts sharply with the constitutional clause guaranteeing everyone access to appropriate housing and a dignified life (Dawson and Mclaren, 2014). The process of waiting for state-provided housing is very common in South African cities, an accepted, daily, generational situation. Many people continue to wait, dream for, and expect an officially recognized house regardless of whether it may take generations.

For many individuals who were marginalised and discriminated against during apartheid, the most fundamental step toward securing a home is by signing up on the city's housing database[12]. (Oldfield and Greyling, 2015). According to Oldfield and Greyling (2015), in reality, more than a quarter of all households in Cape Town are officially registered on the housing database, colloquially known as the waiting list. The number of people on the waiting list is about 600,000. Currently, the City of Cape Town administration uses a variety of techniques to address housing

[11] This is the supreme law of South Africa. For more information see: https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/constitution-republic-south-africa-1996-04-feb-1997

[12] The housing database in South Africa is a system managed by the government, where people register to be considered for state-subsidised homes.

delivery, including renting out Public Rental Stock Housing, Social Housing programs, Financial Subsidy programs, Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP) as well as Small-Scale Rental Housing (City of Cape Town, 2021). However, as McGaffin (2018) highlights, each of these approaches to housing delivery has difficulties that limit their effectiveness and slow down their progress. Since the end of apartheid, housing has been pledged as a symbol of democracy, with the commitment being reiterated after each election. This normalised process and politics of waiting for a home from the state, forms citizen interactions with the state in both apparent and significant ways. As Oldfield and Greyling (2015) mention, waiting emphasises the importance of the state. In addition to being present and responsible, applicants must be actively registered in housing databases. On the other hand, it is necessary to conceal the frequently illegal circumstances in which people live while they wait at the individual level. Waiting necessitates persistence in backyards and squatter camps, "quiet encroachments" (Bayat, 2010) that the state ignores. Bayat (2010) describes “quiet encroachment” as non-collective yet persistent direct acts of scattered people and families to get the needs of life in a covert and unassuming manner.

Lately, waiting has sparked scholarly attention throughout the Global South. In Buenos Aires, Argentina, Auyero (2012) follows comparable instances in the protracted and difficult procedure that locals and immigrants undertake to get housing assistance. This process, he claims, turns recipients into state patients. According to this view, the government is in charge and manipulating the citizens by rejecting them and offering justifications while wilfully neglecting the urgency of their demands and the significance of their time (Oldfield and Greyling, 2015). Levenson (2017) also draws on Auyero’s (2012) work and further elaborates on the citizens

turning into state patients. Levenson (2017) argues that in the process of waiting indefinitely and becoming the subject of political calculations, they are deprived of their agency and given it all over to the state. In South Africa specifically, there's a strong focus on the informal areas where families live while waiting for housing. This has created tension between the state's efforts to build houses, and the public's mobilisation to secure housing. A perfect example of this is informal backyard dwellings. These citizens are not just passively waiting. They have created alternative solutions to their housing challenges as a mode of self provisioning. This is the focus of my thesis, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.1.3 Backyard housing in South Africa

In South Africa, renting backyard structures has been a notable mode of housing practice (SALGA, 2014). It entails landlords and tenants sharing the property, though they occupy separate dwellings (Shapurjee and Charlton, 2013). In recent years, informal backyard housing is among the fastest-growing sectors of the housing market in South Africa (Turok and Borel-Saladin, 2016). Previously, according to Lemanski (2009) backyard dwellers were mostly overlooked by housing policies, and statistics included them in the category of "informal settlement," even though their needs and struggles are substantially different. The informal backyard rental sector has been viewed by conventional South African policy as a transitory one, with people expected to eventually migrate into RDP homes (Watson, 2009). However, there has been a bit of a shift in recent years (Isandla Institute, 2022). According to Isandla Institute (2022) the idea that backyarding is a temporary solution to housing needs is rapidly losing ground as its permanence becomes more apparent over time. More officials are acknowledging the backyarding sector and some cities, like Cape Town, have included it in their housing policies.

According to the Human Settlements Strategy (2021)[13] the City of Cape Town has promoted backyard housing as a practical strategy for generating housing options.

In the 1970s is when the backyarding phenomena emerged at a large-scale (Bank, 2007). This tendency intensified even further. After the significant state-subsidised housing program was introduced, a greater wave of backyarding expansion took place (Lemanski, 2009). The implementation of RDP houses significantly increased the possibilities for backyarding, maintaining a conventional style with a 40m² residence on a serviced plot with an average of 160m² (Lemanski, 2009). Backyard dwellings were initially tolerated as long as they remained hidden and unobtrusive within yards (Morange, 2002). However, in 1994, they unexpectedly came to the attention of public authorities as they assessed the housing crisis and demand, rapidly emerging as a visible and complex issue. Post-apartheid municipalities are tasked with managing a challenging and complex legacy. Municipalities and central authorities oppose backyard shacks, both for political reasons (Watson, 1994) and due to limited technical solutions for managing them. This rejection, however, highlights a deeper challenge: as these informal structures proliferate, they expose gaps in the formal housing system that the authorities cannot easily address (Morange, 2002). The community's ability to create alternative housing options—despite official disapproval—underscores the municipality's diminishing influence over the housing landscape.

[13] See https://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/City%20strategies,%20plans%20and%20frameworks/Human_Settlements_Strategy.pdf

The backyarding trend has a number of appealing qualities that argue for its inclusion in housing. The aforementioned structures increase the supply of housing and offer desperately needed rental space at little or no expense to the public funds. They make significant gains for extra households by leveraging current state expenditures in infrastructure and housing (Scheba and Turok, 2020; Gardner and Rubin, 2016). When compared to townships[14] developed in the edges of the city, distant from employment hubs and facilities, some backyard constructions are better situated (Lemanski, 2009). Backyarding provides marginalised individuals with an accessible entry point into urban areas, offering affordable housing and often proximity to centres of employment, education, and other resources (Crankshaw et al., 2000; Morange, 2002; Shapurjee and Charlton, 2013). For example, individuals can travel to work in middle and upper class areas or the city centre at a low cost, in comparison to the cost of transportation from remote townships (Morange, 2002). Further, backyard homes are preferable to informal settlements because they often provide greater access to basic amenities and higher levels of personal protection for residents (Turok and Borel-Saladin, 2016). Backyard communities may provide its residents vital social support through childcare arrangements, food sharing, and general aid during difficult times (Bank, 2007). It provides a sense of community and inclusion. People get to know their neighbours and the surrounding areas. They learn to share facilities and develop a sense of solidarity in their social class (Morange, 2002).

Furthermore, as Massey (2014) mentions, backyard housing suits women-headed households and young, transient individuals with precarious, low-paying jobs. This is especially relevant for

[14] In South Africa, townships are underdeveloped urban areas historically designated for non-white populations under apartheid.

women due to the gendered expectations placed upon them, such as the responsibility for childcare and domestic labour, which often limits their access to stable, higher-paying employment. The informal nature of these dwellings can provide a degree of proximity to familial or social support networks (Massesy, 2014). In contrast, men, who may not face the same societal pressures regarding caregiving roles, are often not as dependent on these types of housing arrangements. Women, especially those in low-paying or precarious jobs, tend to earn less than men due to the gender wage gap. As a result, backyard housing offers a more affordable alternative to formal housing, making it an accessible option for women who face financial constraints.

The benefits of backyard dwellings must be weighed against a number of difficulties and disadvantages. Among policymakers, backyarding's unfavourable traits are to blame for the sector's poor reputation (Isandla Institute, 2020). Only a small portion of these townships and suburbs were designed for the population densities that are now occurring. As a result, congestion and failures may occur due to overburdened infrastructure and services (Turok and Borel-Saladin, 2016). In addition, the hazards of pollution, electrocution, physical and mental health impacts are made worse by the usage of makeshift materials, high residential density and informally constructed infrastructure connections (Rice et al. 2023; Lategan 2017). This makes it more difficult for municipalities to maintain, repair, or replace the infrastructure, and it makes social unrest and environmental dangers worse. Informal backyard structures are frequently constructed without much technical input or guidance, frequently without municipal approval or adherence to recognized architectural norms and regulations (Isandla Institute, 2020). This may have an effect on property values and is undoubtedly a cause of social unrest. The long-term

worth of properties and their possibility for resale are impacted by the lack of official licences and building permits. Officials in South Africa frequently express hesitation while endorsing and accepting informal rents (Isandla Institute, 2020). Policymakers are reluctant to support the sector because of the negative stigma attached to informal backyard housing; this is reflected in the national housing policy's failure to address the issues prevalent in informal backyard rentals.

Backyard dwellers in South Africa, often residing on both public and private land, occupy a complex position within the housing landscape. Isandla Institute (2022) underscores the evolving legal framework and policy landscape surrounding backyard housing, advocating for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to guarantee backyard dwellers rights. Backyard dwellers, like everyone else, have the right to essential services. This right, set out in the Constitution, is non-negotiable. This is further reinforced by legislation like the Municipal Systems Act, which emphasizes equitable service provision for all residents (32 of 2000). Isandla Institute (2022) emphasizes the municipality's responsibility to provide these services, irrespective of whether the backyard dwellers live on public or private land. A legal opinion commissioned by the Isandla Institute and the Development Action Group (DAG) specifically examined the authority and obligations of municipalities to provide services to backyard residents on private land. The opinion refuted the argument, often raised by municipalities like the City of Cape Town, that the Municipal Financial Management Act (MFMA) prohibits investing in infrastructure on private land. According to Isandla Institute and DAG (2021), the primary focus should remain on fulfilling municipalities' legal obligations to serve all residents, including backyard dwellers. To address potential inequities and mitigate unintended consequences, the opinion recommends municipalities develop clear by-laws outlining the purposes, conditions, and obligations

associated with such investments (Isandla Institute, 2021). The Mshengu v Msunduzi Local Municipality case serves as a crucial precedent. In this case, the court ruled that the municipality had the obligation to provide water and sanitation services to farm dwellers residing on private land, rejecting the argument that the landowner should bear this responsibility (Isandla Institute, 2021)

Although backyard rentals are becoming a larger part of the housing market, there are still a lot of knowledge gaps. The existing literature has provided valuable insights into informal backyard housing, however, research on informal backyard dwellings in South Africa has largely ignored the experiences and difficulties that are unique to women living in these situations. Although studies regularly recognized the existence of women in these communities, they typically did not provide a thorough examination of the particular situations that women face. The gender disparity in the research of South Africa's informal backyard housing suggests that a chance to get a more comprehensive knowledge of the ways in which women's experiences interacted with housing issues was lost. Closing this disparity is critical for informing improvements to bettering the living circumstances of women living in informal backyard housing as well as for creating more inclusive and successful housing policies and interventions recognizing the specific needs and concerns of women. In addition to the gendered perspective on informal backyard housing, it also misses the lens of infrastructural citizenship offered by Lemanski (2019). This lens is concerned to bring together notions of infrastructure and citizenship to explore state-society relations and contestations more carefully. I used the following literature to support my claims and provide further insight into the gendered and infrastructural citizenship dimensions on this topic.

2.2 Infrastructural Citizenship

2.2.1 The idea of citizenship and infrastructure

Understanding of citizenship has expanded, evolved and taken on different meanings over time (Stokes, 2024). Citizenship reflects the interactions and expectations that exist between the state and its people and are expressed in laws, customs, and extreme behaviours. However, it is also not just a formal status but something people actively experience and engage with as they go about their everyday lives (Staeheli et al., 2012). Staeheli et al. (2012) offers the concept of ordinariness to help grasp the nuanced and multifaceted nature of citizenship. These include informal acts like helping neighbours in your community, participating in community organisations or even engaging in discussions about public issues. These practices reflect a lived experience of citizenship, illustrating how people claim their rights, express belonging, and negotiate their roles in society outside of institutionalised frameworks (Staeheli et al., 2012). This highlights how citizenship is not static but fluid and contextual. People may experience and express their citizenship differently depending on their personal situations, identities, or spaces they inhabit.

There are others that also explore this concept of citizenship in alternative ways. Isin and Nielsen (2008) introduced ‘acts of citizenship’ and emphasised viewing citizenship as not as active forms of participation; whereby actively participating, contributing ideas, making decisions or taking direct actions but rather as passive forms of engagement. This can involve things that are more observational and indirect. Isin and Nielsen (2008) argue that citizenship is not just passively held but actively created through these ‘acts’ that challenge, disrupt or redefine social and

political relationships. For example, people who are excluded from citizenship (undocumented or marginalised communities) can still engage in acts that assert their presence and rights. In essence, citizenship is not simply given or fixed; it is something that is continuously created and negotiated through collective or individual actions (Isin and Nielsen, 2008).

Lemanski (2020) contends that the discussions about citizenship are rarely brought into conversation with the enactment of citizenship rights. While citizenship is frequently discussed in terms of identity, belonging, or rights within a society, there is a disconnect when it comes to how these rights are practically realised and experienced by individuals. For instance, access to housing, healthcare, and political participation—core aspects of citizenship rights—are often inconsistently applied or accessible, particularly for marginalised groups. This argument should be viewed more deeply and seen as an ongoing and evolving process that shapes what citizenship means. As Lemanski (2020) argues, this shift reveals that it is not just about immediate, functional needs but also reflects a longer-term political logic.

One of the main ways in which marginalised urban residents interact with the state is through their access to infrastructure, which includes housing, transportation, healthcare, education, water, and sanitation. As a result, scholars are now exploring new ways to comprehend the functioning of urban infrastructure, particularly in the Southern city. Utilising concepts such as "hybrid" or "heterogeneous" infrastructure, they are thinking beyond the boundaries of conventional networks (Lawhon et al., 2018). The current research examines how urban populations use several forms of technology—both networked and not—to get things done. It

highlights how they blend formal and informal technologies together to thrive (Jaglin, 2015). Through exploring how urban residents use various forms of infrastructure to create as well as modify their own urban environments, the political dimensions at play are recognized.

In recent years, urban geography has experienced an 'infrastructure turn' that places infrastructure at the centre of how urban life is understood. This shift has opened up new ways of thinking about citizenship. (Amin, 2014; Coutard and Rutherford, 2017). Understanding infrastructure is vital to make the linkages between citizenship and infrastructure. Star (1999) explains that infrastructure is both relational and ecological; it has different meanings for different people, depending on how they use it and what role it plays in their lives. Whereas, Simone (2004) takes a more socio-economic view, focusing on how urban residents themselves shape infrastructure. He argues that people continually create and recreate the fabric of everyday urban life through their relationships, practices and use of available spaces and objects. Graham and McFarlane (2014) expand on this by emphasising that infrastructure is not fixed, but something that is experienced and produced in daily lives of people. They highlight the deep connection between infrastructure and the city's broader socio-economic and political dynamics. Bringing citizenship and infrastructure together is vital. This perspective captures infrastructure as a site where citizenship is enacted and contested over time. In the next section, I delve into more detail about the concept of infrastructural citizenship established by Lemanski (2017, 2019, 2020, 2022) and the significance of this lens.

2.2.2 Conceptualising infrastructural citizenship

In recent years, Lemanksi (2017, 2019, 2020, 2022) has established the concept of infrastructural citizenship as a starting point for examining how infrastructures and the services they provide are connected to ideas and practices of citizenship. This concept combines insights from both citizenship and infrastructure literature, to explore the manner in which citizenship practices and actions are reflected in infrastructure. In many ways, infrastructure defines who gets to be a "full" citizen. Those with access to reliable transportation, housing, clean water, healthcare, and digital connectivity can navigate society more freely, exercise their rights more fully, and engage in political, economic, and social activities. Conversely, those without such access are often excluded from these fundamental experiences of citizenship, which deepens existing inequalities.

Recent research in South Africa has applied the infrastructural citizenship lens to state-subsidised housing in Cape Town, examining how low-income urban residents interact with state-provided housing and services, and showing how infrastructure serves as a link between the state and the people (Lemanski, 2020). In this context, infrastructural citizenship emphasises the vital importance of infrastructure services in urban environments. It also points out how unequal access to these services and the resulting exclusions can lead to a denial of citizenship or a sense of abandonment by the state. Although this brings to light significant insights, there has been limited uptake of this lens in the backyard housing sector that is growing rapidly alongside these state-subsidised homes. Many South African citizens currently live in backyard dwellings and for these residents, limited access to the state's infrastructure conveys a fundamentally different message about their citizenship, worth, and sense of belonging. Backyard dwellers struggle to

claim their citizenship and secure their rights to essential services since they live in a legal grey area where the state's involvement in service delivery is unclear (Harris et al., 2023, Pilo, 2020). This legal grey area often leaves residents without clear rights to essential services, making it challenging for them to demand improvements or to hold the state accountable for service delivery, further entrenching their marginalisation. Backyard dwellers may be the clearest illustration of the importance of state infrastructure in South Africa (Millstein, 2020)

It is evidently difficult to assert citizenship and make demands of the government given the informal nature of the majority of backyard homes (Harris et al., 2023). The unofficial state of affairs makes it more difficult for residents to ask the government to provide better services. As a result, individuals in these conditions have created incremental infrastructure. These are structures that are 'in-progress, undergoing continuous adjustment and intervention' (Silver, 2014). Cawood et al. (2022) highlight that these instances of asserting infrastructural citizenship often involve practices such as self-construction and self-connection as well as other improvised methods when state support is lacking or unavailable. Self-construction, for instance, involves individuals building and modifying their own living spaces without formal permits or state involvement, crafting dwellings or amenities as resources allow. For instance, some residents in backyard dwellings have created makeshift plumbing systems by connecting hoses to nearby water sources, demonstrating their ingenuity in securing basic needs. Similarly, self-connections—such as hooking into electricity independently—reflect residents' efforts to fill critical service gaps left by the state. By stepping in where the state falls short, residents underscore their roles as active participants in shaping public life, showing that citizenship can be practised through everyday actions of survival, adaptation, and resilience.

In summary, examining backyard housing through the lens of infrastructural citizenship reveals significant challenges that residents face in asserting their rights and accessing essential services. This framework not only sheds light on the everyday struggles of these individuals but also underscores the urgent need for policies that recognize and address the realities of informal living conditions. As we move forward, it is essential to explore how these insights can inform infrastructure reforms that are more inclusive and equitable. In addition, this study addresses a gender-blind gap in previous research by investigating how women in backyard houses deal with daily obstacles, highlighting the need of recording gendered strategies for negotiating citizenship. While noting that poor infrastructure affects both genders, the research focuses on women's unique responsibilities, physiological realities, and vulnerabilities.

2.3 Gender and Embodiment

The concept of infrastructural citizenship prompts me to consider how people embody and experience infrastructure differently, particularly concerning gender. It is clear from looking at gendered experiences of infrastructure that men and women may interact differently and have different access to public services and amenities. This thesis examines service infrastructure from a gendered viewpoint in an effort to identify possibilities, obstacles, and inequalities that affect how public services are used and accessible to people of different genders. The study's focus on gender and embodiment, which draws on feminist political ecology and expressly applies a gendered lens to the research, is a crucial addition that helps you gain a more complete knowledge of the subject.

2.3.1 Gendered citizenship in the African context

The lived experience and benefits of citizenship continue to be uneven, especially for women (Oldfield et al., 2019). Feminist scholars have demonstrated criticism of the notion of citizenship and the absence of gendered analysis (Holma and Kontinen, 2020). One of the critiques is concerned about how the concept of citizenship is linked to public and political domains, consequently not considering the domestic spaces and caregiving work where much “female” activity has commonly been situated. Holma and Kontinen (2020) contends that critiques of gendered citizenship are associated with access to infrastructure, housing and livelihoods.

Oldfield et.al. (2019) drew on the research programme from the Southern African Gender Research on Urbanisation, Planning, Housing and Everyday Life (GRUPHEL) to explore the daily, gendered discussion around citizenship in Southern African cities. They argue that the research highlights both the physical and intangible social aspects of human settlement in peri-urban areas, focusing on factors like housing structures, access to services, the use of space, and overall living conditions. This work makes it clear that women's citizenship cannot be understood solely by looking at their public roles; instead, it must be examined within the home, where the foundation of their citizenship is shaped. Firstly, it is important to put forward the various meanings of home. Oldfield et.al. (2019) explain that the home is where individuals, through family and inter-generational ties, shape both their personal and social identities. They also suggest that it is within the home that men and women develop a sense of belonging to broader groups, like the community and the nation. Further, scholars such as Rassool & Prosalendis' (2001) meaning of home in Southern Africa gravitates towards home as a site of belonging. And others such as Salo (2003, 2018) and Ross (2009) emphasise home as a "site through which we can understand systems of social networks and already constituted gendered respectability. In these studies, home spaces are understood to different extents, shaped not only by their physical aspects but also by the cultural and social meanings embedded in the materials used to build them.

According to Oldfield et al. (2019) negotiations for citizenship are developed in the privacy of homes, essentially beginning with women's bodies. Using houses and women's bodies as our starting points, we analyse how women battle for agency. For example, Oldfield's et al (2019) strategy focuses on how women in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, and George Compound, Zambia, as

migrants, navigate everyday categories, formulae, and procedures to satisfy their visceral demands. Understanding embodied experiences of scarce material resources alongside the norms, identities, and connections that are a component of local subjectivities and the daily construction of citizenship provides an interesting site in the home and immediate community area. This argument is really important in terms of what my study is contributing to. It highlights the importance of providing a space for gendered discussions to take place in the home and the immediate community. Therefore, this thesis presents a gendered perspective on Lemanski's (2019; 2020) theory of infrastructural citizenship and argues that a specific lens on women-state connections emerges when citizenship is examined through the lens of gender and public infrastructure narratives.

2.3.2 Gender and housing in South Africa

Women's current access to housing and their experiences have been strongly influenced by historical housing policies (Todes & Walker, 1992). While the South African housing policy aims to address gender-related disparities in housing access and ownership (Meth et al., 2018), it often falls short in practice. Many policies were developed without adequately taking into account the specific needs and challenges women face, leading to a legacy of inequalities and failing to achieve gender equity at large (Venter and Marais, 2006).

According to the National Housing Code, the housing subsidy scheme in South Africa was designed to support households with a combined income of R3,500 or less per month. Over time,

a new subsidy band was introduced for middle-income citizens. The subsidy amount varies depending on the total income of both spouses. The Department of Human Settlements states that to qualify for a government house, applicants must be South African citizens who are at least 21 years old and either married, cohabiting, or single with financial dependents. In the policy framework, gender concerns arise due to the eligibility criteria (Venter and Marais, 2006). Women in South Africa often become mothers before the age of 21, placing them and their dependents in a vulnerable position. As a result, these young mothers and their children are left without access to crucial housing support, deepening their economic and social vulnerability. This exclusion creates a significant gap in the policy's effectiveness, as it fails to address the immediate housing needs of one of the most at-risk groups in society (Venter and Marais, 2006). The eligibility requirement for financial dependents in the housing subsidy scheme also overlooks single disadvantaged individuals, such as elderly women who may be in need of housing but do not have dependents (Venter and Marais, 2006). This criterion unintentionally excludes many women who are in desperate need of support. Furthermore, the stipulation could pressure women into having children to meet the qualification requirements, potentially leading to harmful socio-economic consequences. By tying housing access to dependents, the policy risks incentivizing decisions that may further entrench vulnerability, rather than providing equitable access to housing for all in need (Meth et al., 2018).

It has been challenging to assess the gender impact of housing and services delivered through current housing subsidies. According to Budlender (2001) housing departments try to gauge gender impacts by measuring the percentage of female-headed households benefiting from the subsidy. Interestingly, in the Gender series IV: Economic Empowerment 2001 - 2017 report, the

percentage of households receiving a housing subsidy more than doubled between 2002 and 2017, with a slightly higher proportion of female-headed households benefiting compared to male-headed households. The report further states that from 2009 to 2017, females were more likely than males to receive subsidies. Overall, the number of female-headed households in South Africa is expanding. In 2021, South Africa had 18 million households, with 7.6 million (42.1%) being led by women (Statistics South Africa, 2022). Given the increasing number of female-headed households and the global focus on gender-related issues, it is clear that gender must be a central factor in policy decisions.

There have been scholars such as Venter and Marais (2006) who questioned the housing policy and gender equity. They conducted research on gender-sensitivity and implementing the housing policy. Bloemfontein was used as the case study and Venter and Marais (2006) argued that firstly, globally, significant differences exist between women and men when it comes to the quality of housing environments. In line with current South African literature (Meth et al., 2018), the data highlighted one of the biggest disparities which was the socio-economic statuses between men and women. As income is one of the key points for qualifying for a subsidy house, the lower level income earned by women impacts their chances of being granted the subsidy. Historically, women's household responsibilities have hindered them from fully partaking in education, subsequently affecting their participation in economic activities (Chant 2003). They continue to be discriminated against in the housing sector. Consequently, the current housing policy's goal of considering economic aspects has only been partially achieved in practice. Additionally, the data revealed widespread dissatisfaction with the physical structure of houses, highlighting notable gender differences. Female respondents were more unhappy with wall conditions, dampness, and

roof quality, likely because they spend more time at home and have fewer resources for repairs (Venter and Marais, 2006). The case study shows that the substandard development and physical shortcomings of these homes are more acutely experienced by women.

2.3.3 Embodied political ecology

Towards the 1990s, academics created the field of urban political ecology (UPE), which explores the dialectic interaction that shapes and reshapes cities between society and environment (Chiu, 2020). Heynen (2017) suggested that in order for UPE to continue to be relevant in the face of changing urban landscapes, uneven urban environments must continue to be created alongside it. This means keeping an eye on the embodied and nontraditional politics that are essential to these revolutionary shifts. For this study I am particularly interested in this wave of UPE. The "second wave" of UPE comprises research that incorporates postcolonial, indigenous, feminist, and queer theory and is more focused on gender and sexuality (Heynen, 2017), as well as race (Heynen, 2016). The second wave of UPE is an important thread as it focuses on embodied political ecology (EPE). Doshi (2016) forcefully opens the door and compels a closer examination of embodied UPE, which breaks from strong feminist traditions within the field of UPE. She proposes:

> “Embodied urban political ecology fuses early commitments and new turns in the field by connecting socio-natures of consumption, waste and resource distribution with the intimate, meaningful and power-laden embodiments of such flows among differently situated groups” (Doshi 2016, p. 126)

Put more simply, this approach examines how individuals physically and directly experience the allocation and use of resources in urban areas within various social circumstances. It acknowledges that these encounters have emotional and power-related components in addition to their practical value. I am inspired by this argument for the importance of a focus on embodied, situated and intersectional perspectives. EPE as a third lens offers valuable insights into understanding the embodied experiences of urban infrastructure.

Furthermore, Rocheleau et al. 's (1996) collection is considered one of the most important works in linking political ecology and gender, introducing the concept of feminist political ecology (FPE). While this was a key moment, earlier thinkers had already begun exploring these ideas. They suggested the following:

> "Feminist political ecology treats gender as a critical variable in shaping resource access control, interacting with class, caste, race, culture, and ethnicity to shape processes of ecological change, the struggle of men and women to sustain ecologically viable livelihoods, and the prospects of any community for 'sustainable development'". (Rocheleau 1996, p. 4)

This approach offers and allows for work that illuminates how power conflicts over resources and relationships between bodies, places, and ecosystems are how gender is played and negotiated. Identities are shaped and experienced through social interactions, ecological practices, and the overlap with other factors like class and race. Subjectivities are not fixed but constantly negotiated in relation to these different aspects of life, reflecting how various social

and environmental dynamics influence how people see and understand themselves. (Sultana, 2011). FPE studies have improved the literature on political ecology and resource management by highlighting significant gender differences in resource conflicts in different situations (e.g. Carney, 1996; Rocheleau et al.1996). Scholars have demonstrated that looking at how access, control, and ownership of resources differ by gender can reveal important political dynamics in managing resources. By considering various social positions and locations, they have deepened our understanding of how gender affects relationships with resources.

Sultana (2011) expands these debates by focusing on the nuances of emotional geographies in resource management. She highlights both the obvious and subtle ways that natural resources affect people's everyday lives. She draws on emotional geographies' literature to emphasise the importance of recognizing the various feelings and meanings linked to accessing, using, and conflicting over resources. By focusing on these emotional aspects, she emphasises that understanding the emotionality surrounding resources is crucial for grasping the everyday struggles people face in managing and negotiating these resources. For instance, Sultana (2011) demonstrates how the suffering caused by arsenic poisoning and unequal access to water in rural Bangladesh influences both emotional and physical experiences, often resulting in unforeseen effects. She emphasises that these challenges extend beyond the material lack of water, affecting people's emotions and overall well-being, which complicates the situation within the community. This work discovers that certain gender subjectivities are produced by the embodied practices of navigating arsenic and gaining access to home water by highlighting the ways that water

experiences are intrinsically corporeal and physical (Truelove,2011). Sultana therefore emphasises the need for more study on routine body interactions with water, saying:

> ‘‘Paying attention to embodied subjectivities demonstrates the ways that embodiment and spatial relations both enable and constrain certain relations to water’’ (Sultana 2009, p. 439).

Women who are emotionally exhausted from the strain of getting clean water may turn to polluted sources, which will only make their suffering worse. Doshi (2016) argues that these understandings are important for understanding how emotional intensities interact with and influence social and ecological fluxes in urban political ecologies. Therefore, analysis of complaints against the city benefits greatly from research on emotion and affect (Doshi, 2016). The lens of emotion and affect research is closely linked to a number of issues related to daily living, citizenship, infrastructure, and the state. People's perceptions and experiences of urban infrastructure are greatly influenced by their emotions, and complaints about shortcomings have a huge emotional impact on people's day-to-day lives. Making a strong point on emotions enables a more detailed investigation of the ways in which urban problems impact people's routines, wellbeing, and quality of life (Sultana, 2011). Applying this lens in the context of women in backyard dwellings with limited infrastructure, the numerous and varied infrastructure and resource practices that women in communities adopt will be brought forward.

Conclusion

This research thus brings together backyard housing, infrastructural citizenship and feminist political ecology approaches (Figure 1) to explore the embodied experiences of women who reside in informal backyard dwellings with limited infrastructure.

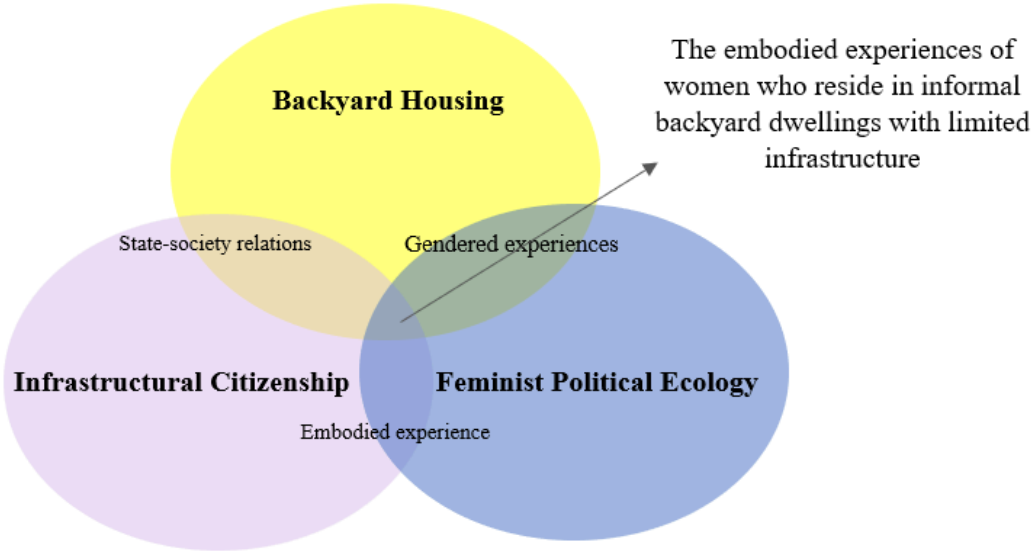


Figure 1 Conceptual Scheme: This graph represents the key theoretical framework employed in this thesis: backyard housing, infrastructural citizenship and feminist political ecology, as well as the way they interact with each other to give shape to the research question (Source: Author).

The literature on the housing and backyarding in South Africa develops the context of the current situation. It sets up a foundation for understanding the housing context and the factors that gave rise to backyard housing. As we proceed to investigate the women of Wesbanks' interaction with service infrastructure, in the context of informal backyard dwellings, Lemanski's work on

infrastructural citizenship (2019; 2020) provides insight into the relationships between citizens and the state, as reflected and reinforced through the physical presence of, and access to, public infrastructure. And lastly, the work on feminist political ecology reflects on how people embody and experience infrastructure differently, particularly concerning gender.

There are intersections between these notions that inform the study topics. Citizens living in informal backyard housing frequently lack official service infrastructure. They struggle to exercise their citizenship rights, such as access to essential amenities. The work of Lemanski (2019; 2020) put forward that the unequal access of service infrastructure might exacerbate existing socioeconomic inequality. If particular groups or communities continue to lack access to infrastructure, it can increase perceptions of marginalisation and exclusion, resulting in strained relationships with the state. Moreover, informal backyard houses frequently have challenges accessing services such as electricity, water, and sanitation. Feminist political ecology, specifically the work of Sultana (2011) and Truelove (2011; 2020), highlights the gendered character of resource access, underlining how women, as main caretakers, may incur a disproportionate burden of managing and gaining access to these resources. The framework emphasises the power dynamics that govern the allocation of resources in informal settlements, which affect women's everyday lives. Finally, women frequently face the physical responsibility of making up for inadequate infrastructure. Understanding the bodily experience at the nexus of inadequate infrastructure and feminist political ecology highlights how critical it is to acknowledge the different ways in which individuals, particularly women, manage their everyday lives, negotiate problems, and strive for well-being in the midst of environmental and infrastructure limitations.

3. Research Design and Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology used to collect the relevant data for this research. It details the methods chosen for the various types of data collection and explains the rationale behind these choices. Additionally, it discusses some of the difficulties encountered during fieldwork. Due to the study's nature, a qualitative methodology was applied. A qualitative methodology suited this study best considering that a central objective was to obtain insights of the lived experiences of women living with limited infrastructure and how they interact with their citizenship rights in backyard dwellings and to get a more in-depth perspective on their situated experiences in this regard.

3.1 Research Philosophy and Theoretical Underpinning

The research is situated within humanistic geography which intends to prioritise human perspectives. This subdiscipline sees human life and experiences as complex and multidimensional (Seamon and Lundberg, 2017). It emphasises the importance of human experience and their surroundings by shedding light on facts beyond the scientific scope. Therefore, the most suitable philosophy to frame this research within is a phenomenological philosophy. "The aims of phenomenological research are to reach the essence of the individuals' lived experience of the phenomenon while ascertaining and defining the phenomenon" (Cilesiz, 2010, as cited in Yüksel and Yıldırım, 2015. p. 3). This philosophy deems the world to be socially constructed and the approach is intuitive. Donna Haraway (1991), whose work is discussed in chapter 1 of Thinking Geographically (Hubbard et al., 2005), advocates that all types of knowledge are social constructions. Challenges women face are caused by social and

cultural biases rooted within society. The research was interested in the lived experiences of women living in backyard dwellings and to focus attention on their lives where their infrastructural experience impacts their citizenship practices.

Moreover, the theoretical underpinning of this study is embedded within feminist theory. Marxism and socialism are key parts in the history of feminist theory. Work by Jackie Tivers, Linda McDowell, Doreen Massey and others, who have been the main influences on the path of feminist theory in geography in 1980, highlighted the types of gender inequality that occurred in the spaces of households and the city (Hubbard et al. 2005). As feminist geographers are mainly concerned with the manner in which "theory plays out", it is essential to understand feminist geography as the study of knowledge that comes from the unique lives and experiences of women in various settings (Staeheli et al., 2004). For feminist researchers, gender is a politically contentious concept that influences how we think about various overlapping lived materialities in addition to being a person's physical and psychological embodiment. To illustrate how these everyday meanings and constructs are typically lived and created, some feminist scholars have explored gendered concepts of home, community, and nation (Palmary et al., 2010).

Furthermore, feminist standpoint theories have highlighted the political significance of comprehending and addressing the differences amid women (Boonzaier & Shefer, 2006; Callaghan & Clark, 2006; Doucet & Mauthner, 2006). Here, differences are seen not only as offering diverse perspectives on the world, but also revealing the many forms of authority that women face and experience globally. According to Kiguwa (2019) standpoint theories are

politically significant because they allow women to address and discuss their differences, share their own stories and take control of narrating their own lives. By doing this, perspective theories question the passive role that women have traditionally held in the process of knowledge production.

3.2 Research Design

To further complement the study and the research philosophy, a case study research design has been used. Yin (2009) outlines the case study research approach "as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 2009. p. 18). This resonated with and was suited for the aim of the study, exploring the lived experiences of women living in backyard dwellings. Flyvbjerg (2006) mentions that the value of a case study is that it can loom in on real life situations and explore perspectives directly with regard to phenomena as they occur in practice. Thus, using the case of Wesbank, Kuilsriver, it was appropriate for the understudied experience of backyard dwellings in Cape Town. Focusing on a single case study area within one context enables for the research to be better contextualised in the environment, resulting in a more successful study and gaining a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, this study took an exploratory rather than an explanatory research approach.

3.3 Qualitative Research Approach

The principal objective of all qualitative methods is “to explore and understand actions within specific settings, to examine human relationships and discover as much as possible about why people feel or act in the ways they do” (McDowell 2010, p. 4). Interviews are the primary qualitative technique used in this study. As a result, this strategy typically places an emphasis on depth and detail rather than a statistical outcome. It allows you to learn about someone's full information, perspective, and emotions. McDowell (2010) explains how bodies, gender, clothes and language matter in the conversation that occurs during interviews. She also states that “interviewing is an interpretive methodology” (McDowell 2010, p. 5). It implies that conducting interviews is a social interaction grounded in the idea that social reality is moulded by individual experiences and social contexts.

In her chapter, McDowell (2010) points out that interviews are intricate, socially contested and are connected to power; they are not purely an interchange of information. The location of the interview and your ability as a researcher to probe deeply enough to learn enough without being intrusive are two additional variables that need to be taken into account. Another important component McDowell (2010) debates is the issues concerning how one carries out the interview, which voices should be heard and what should be considered in respect of sensitivity.

3.4 Case Study: Wesbank, Kuilsriver Community

The study is situated within the Wesbank community in Kuilsriver, about 40 km from the Central Business District of Cape Town. Wesbank was established in 1998 and forms part of the low-income housing project within the Reconstruction and Development Programme. This community was created to relocate 25 000 people who were living in informal settlements or those who did not own a home (Hannelore and Velghe, 2006). At the time, the Oostenberg Municipality[15] was responsible for the development of these houses. The housing project features two types of housing: single freestanding homes and semi-detached houses. Image 1 and 2 illustrate the type of housing. The brick-built houses are mostly 27 m² in size with one bedroom, an open-plan kitchen and a small bathroom with running water and electricity. It has considerable yard space, therefore informal backyard structures are often constructed to accommodate additional family members or other tenants. The majority of the residents have been staying in the area for many years. Some shared that they have been staying in Wesbank for 5 to 8 years, whereas some have been staying in Wesbank for 24 years. That is since the establishment of this housing project. A notable number of the landlords own the homes. They mostly received them from the state or inherited them from their parents.

[15] The Oostenberg Municipality was the former metropolitan substructure of the area.

Image 1: A RDP home in the area. Source: Google maps, Feb, 2024

Image 2: A freestanding RDP house. Source: Google maps, March, 2022

According to the South African National Census[16] (2011), the community has an estimated population of 14,215 per km², with a slight female majority (52%) compared to males (48%). The largest age group is children aged 0 - 4 years, making up 12% of the population, while the middle-aged group accounts for 8%. In terms of racial demographics, 73% of the population identifies as Coloured[17], while 25% identify as Black[18]. Afrikaans is the most widely spoken language, with 73% of the community using it as their first language, followed by IsiXhosa (16%) and English (4%).

Wesbank is a low-income area and the community assistant that accompanied me mentioned that there had not been much economic development. Since the development of Wesbank no significant formal businesses have invested in the area, the only notable local supermarket is Shoprite as shown in image 3 and 4 (Hannelore and Velghe, 2006). In recent years, informal businesses started to develop such as house shops[19], cell phone repair shops, hair salons, barbershops, mechanics and shebeens[20]. Image 5 and 6 highlights some of these informal businesses. These businesses are mainly operating out of containers or homes. This does not come as a surprise since the area lacks formal businesses that can render these services. Additionally, unemployment is one of the most significant challenges. The majority of the

[16] The National Census is an official survey of the population. This process helps compile a numerical profile of South Africa.
[17] In South Africa, 'Coloured' refers to people of mixed-race ancestry. This term originated during apartheid, when racial categories were enforced.
[18] In South Africa, 'Black' refers to individuals of African descent. This term originated during the apartheid era, when racial categories were enforced.
[19] In the South African context, a 'house shop' refers to an informal retail shop that sells essentials, within a home. They serve as convenience stores, walking distance from the community residents' homes.
[20] A shebeen is an informal or unlicensed bar or pub where alcoholic beverages are sold. They often operate in homes or makeshift structures. It is regarded as a place for social interaction in communities.

women with whom I spoke to were unemployed and the few that were employed worked outside of the Wesbank community.

Image 3: Local supermarket. Source: Google maps, May, 2024

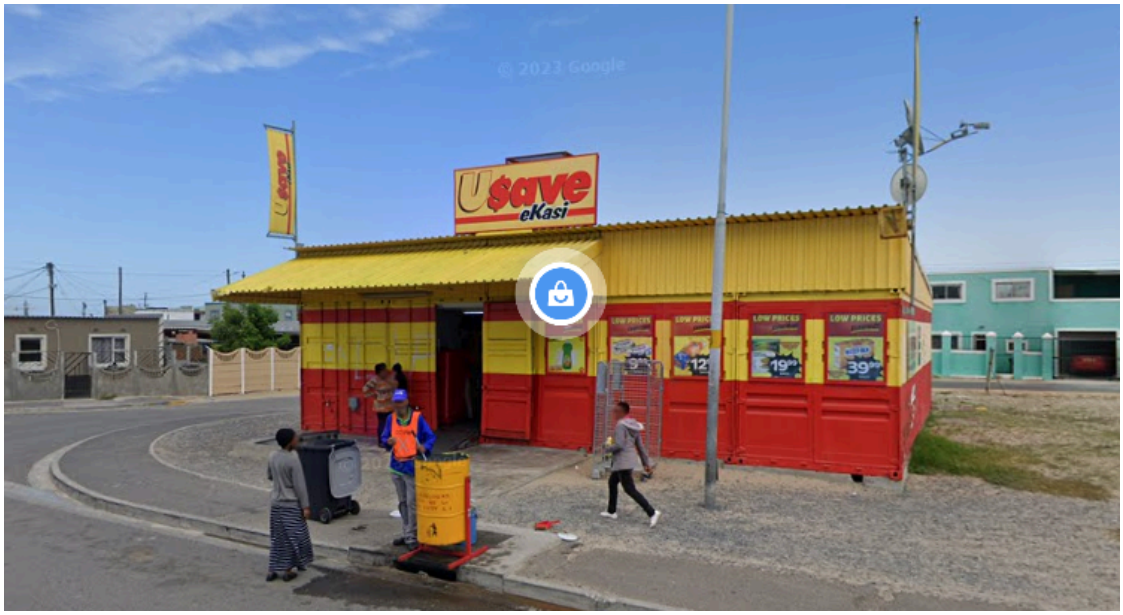


Image 4: Another local supermarket. Source: Google maps, May, 2024

Image 5: A ‘house shop’. Source: Google maps, May, 2024

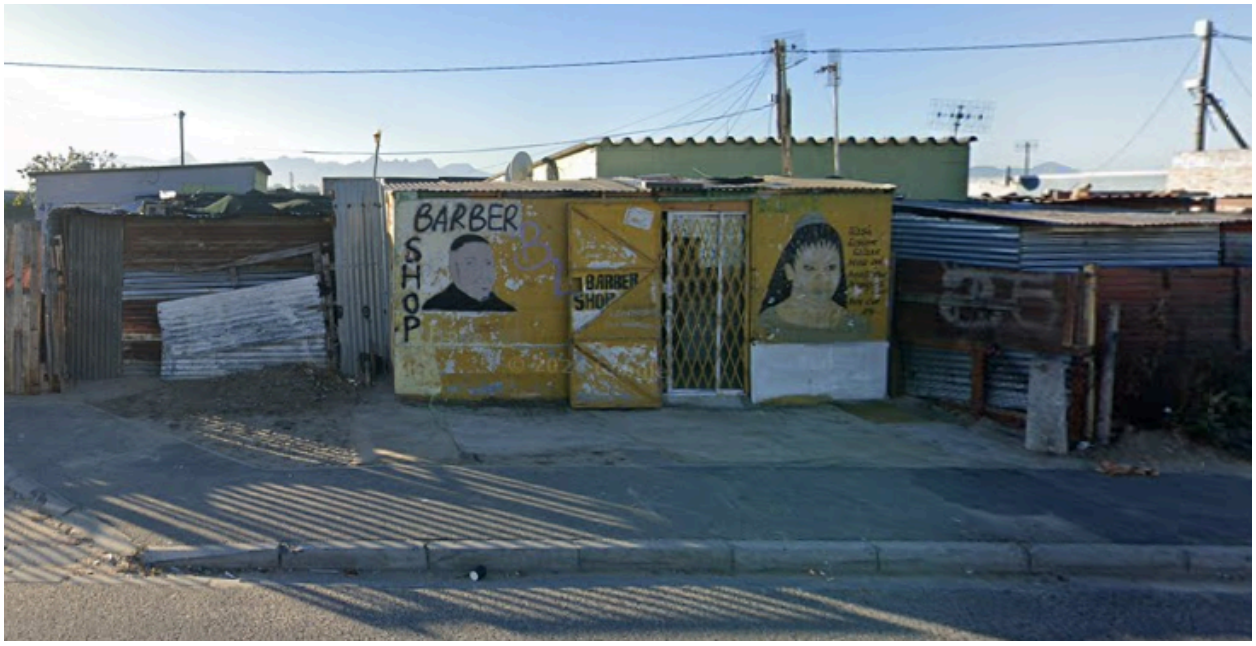


Image 6: Barbershop. Source: Google maps, May, 2024

The area is encircled by main roads such as Stellenbosch Arterial, Hindle Road and the R300 (Hannelore and Velghe, 2006) illustrated in image 7. Direct and adequate access to major roads was a key requirement for the project. However, participants mentioned how public transport is expensive. A taxi rank, in image 8, was then created on a public open space.

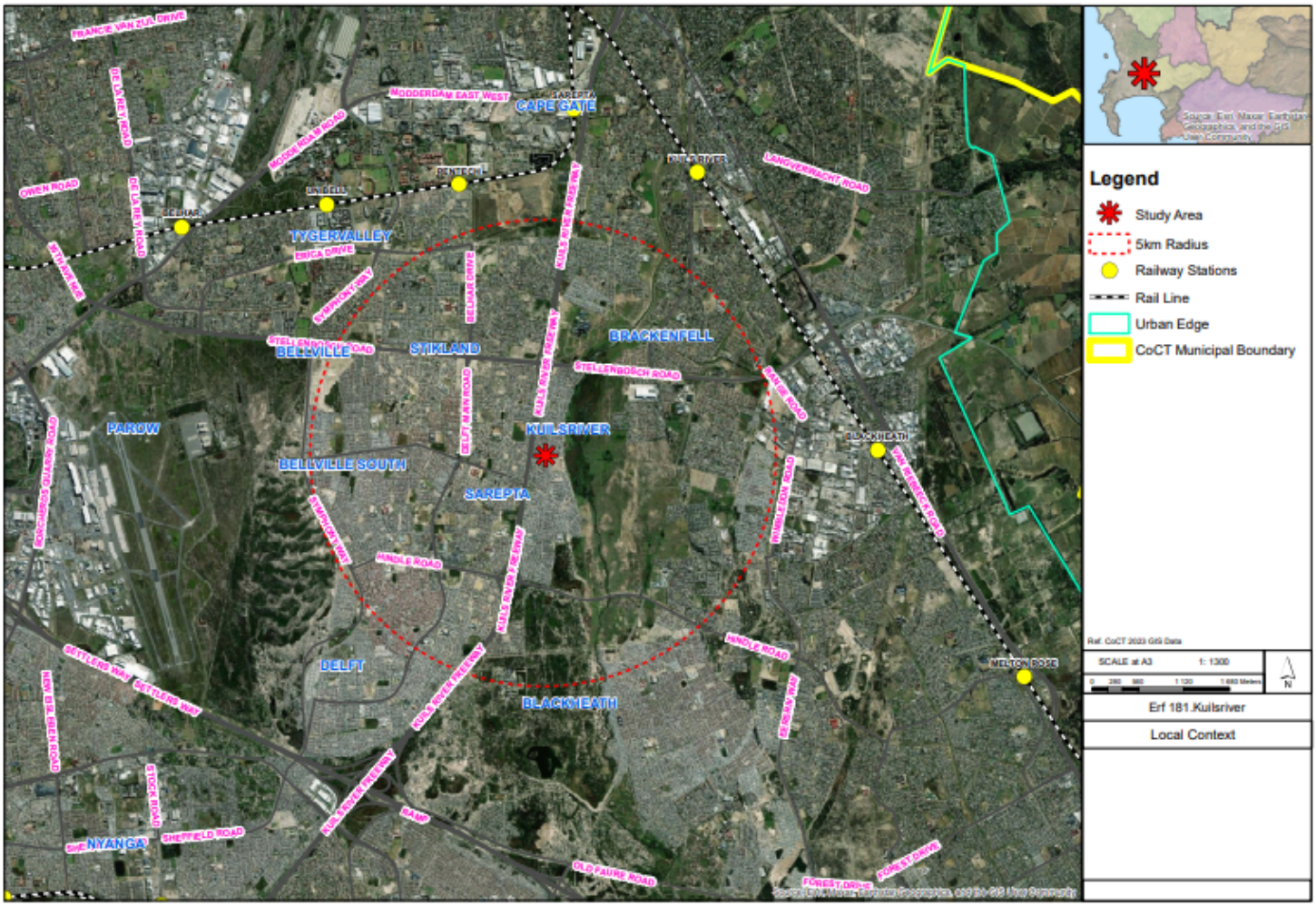


Image 7: Map indicating train stations and main roads. (COCT gis data, 2023)

Image 8: Taxi rank. Source: Google maps, Feb, 2010

Initially, when the people moved into these homes, all services were available. That included electricity, refuse removal, water and sanitation. However, currently there are a number of complaints among the residents regarding sufficiency and level of the service delivery. The challenges for service delivery in the area are more about improving the current infrastructure than addressing a shortage of basic needs. Furthermore, they raised complaints of not having a close enough police station. The residents have to travel either to Kuilsriver or Mfuleni police station, about 7km from Wesbank. Many are unable to travel this far. The residents mentioned that they have been asking for a police station since 2016. Below, image 9 displays the residents demanding a police station.

Image 9: Residents demanding a Police Station. Source: Mandilakhe Tshwete, Sept, 2023

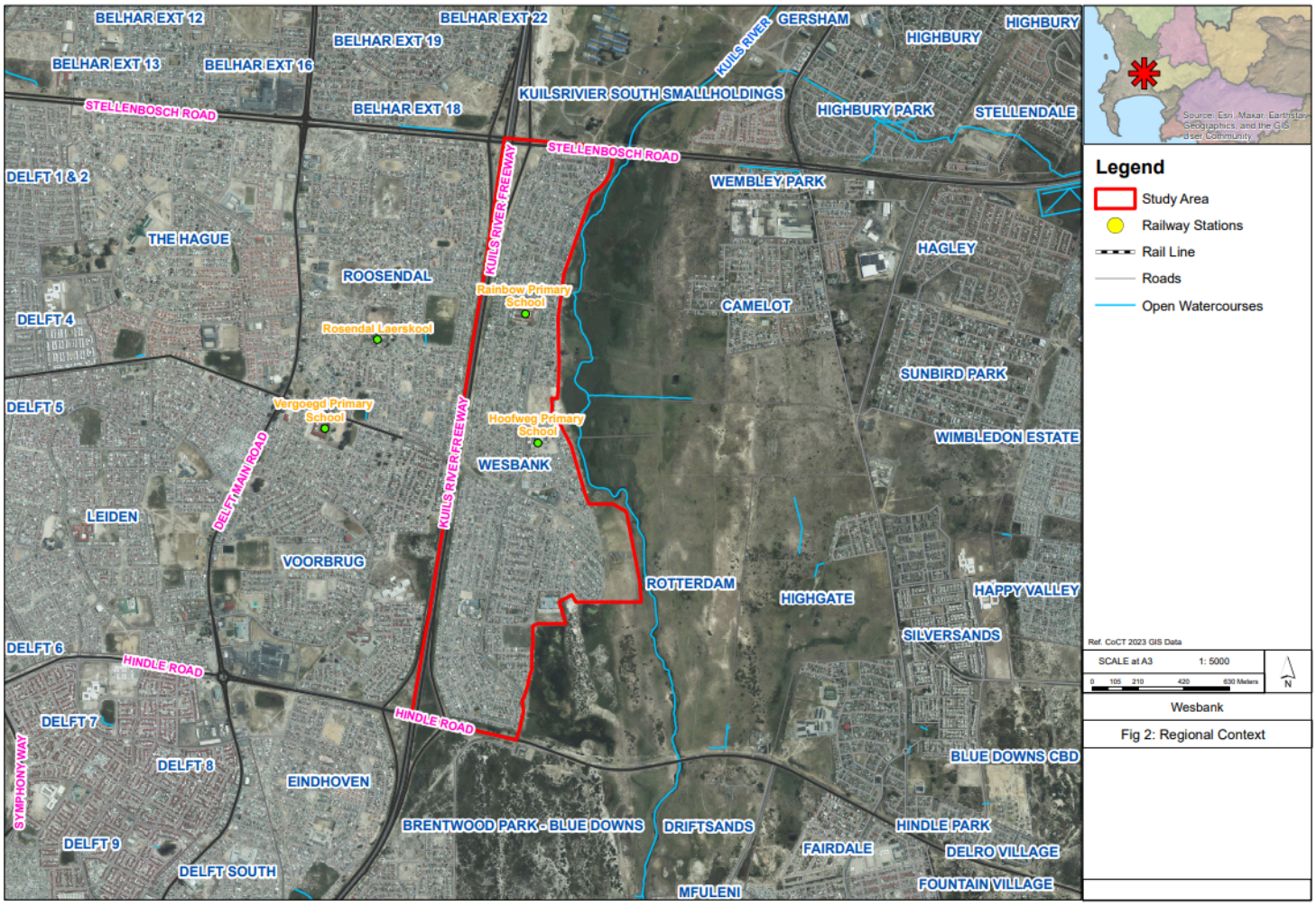
In terms of healthcare services, the community has a public clinic and a Sha'pleft healthcare container. Image 10 and 11 displays these healthcare services. The Cipla Foundation[21] started this initiative where they provide infrastructure, systems and support to nurses so that they can deliver quality primary healthcare services in the heart of disadvantaged communities.

[21] For more information about this initiative, see: https://www.cipla.co.za/cipla-foundation/shap-left

Image 10: Wesbank clinic. Source: Google maps, Feb, 2024

Image 11: Sha' pleft healthcare services. Source: Google maps, May, 2024

Access to education is also a significant issue. Wesbank High (image 13) is the only secondary school and Hoofweg Primary School (image 14), Rainbow Primary School (image 15) and Wesbank No.1 Primary School (image 16) are the only three primary schools in the area. Image 12 represents the different schools. According to the community assistant that accompanied me the schools are overcrowded. Due to the limited number of schools available, children are forced to rely on public transportation to attend schools in neighbouring communities such as Delft and



the broader Kuilsriver area.

Image 12: Map of the schools within the area and closest surrounding area. Source: City of Cape Town GIS data, 2023)

Image 13: Wesbank High School. Source: Google maps, Feb, 2024

Image 14: Hoofweg Primary School. Source: Google maps, Feb, 2024

Image 15: Rainbow Primary School. Source: Google maps, May 2024

Image 16: Wesbank No.1 Primary School. Source: Google maps, May, 2024

In Wesbank, there are small organisations that represent various community interests. Each of the groups are led by different people and operate with their own agenda. While it would seem logical for these groups to unite under a single civic umbrella to collaborate with local government, the community assistant mentioned to me that this does not happen much. Several of the participants expressed that they do not all speak with one voice. This hinders community mobilisation and participation.

3.5 Data Collection

The research focused on exploring the experiences of women living in backyard dwellings. To achieve this goal, a qualitative research approach was chosen. This approach was well-suited for investigating how knowledge is created and understanding human environments, individual experiences, and social processes in human geography. The research employed various methods, including interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant observations. The community has a "walking bus" system associated with the local school. This system involved women accompanying learners home. A family member is the principal of this local school, I therefore had access to the school and was introduced to the women in the “walking bus”. Providing an opportunity to involve the women in the research, I joined the women and walked with them and used the “walking bus” as a recruitment aid. This was how the first few interviewees were chosen. Furthermore, the data collection included landlords too. The way in which they were selected involved referral from a community assistant. The community assistant is a landlord as well, and introduced me to their friends that are landlords to individuals who are backyard tenants.

As data collection progressed, I also employed snowball sampling, a method where existing participants recommend potential new participants from their social circles (Naderifa et al. 2017). This was particularly useful when access to subjects was challenging. I adhered to all POPIA[22] regulations throughout, ensuring that no personal information was obtained without prior consent. Although the initial plan was to conduct all interviews within participants' homes, safety concerns prompted a change in approach for half of the participants. The community assistant generously offered her living space as an alternative interview location, as some women advised against conducting interviews in their homes due to the researcher's outsider status in the community. The methods are discussed in more detail below:

3.5.1 In-depth semi-structured interviews

The main source of data collection was in-depth semi-structured interviews that were conducted with participants and allowed me to gain an in-depth and rich understanding of the phenomena under study. According to Boyce and Neale (2006), in-depth semi-structured interviews deliver more detailed information and allow for the participants to express themselves fully as it can be regarded as more relaxed than other methods of data collection such as surveys. Instead of asking women to respond to questions regarding any aspects that were hypothesised, the interviews were structured to let the key factors come from the women themselves. This method allowed me to be more flexible and open-ended, making the participants feel as though they are having a conversation instead of a formal interview. Participants were able to raise difficulties that I was unaware of, assisting my comprehension and assisting me in reprioritizing in order to create research that was a more accurate depiction of the dynamics surrounding backyard living.

[22] POPIA is the Protection of Personal Information Act in South Africa. See: https://popia.co.za/

The language of choice for interviews was Afrikaans[23], which is the local people's native language. It was recorded on a voice recorder, and only done so if permission was given from the individual participants prior to the interview. After I concluded an interview I made a few notes before leaving the area. Once all interviews were completed, I then moved on to the transcription of each interview including details about the context and body language from the participants. This information was drawn from the notes taken during the interview and recollection of the session. Although the Covid 19 restrictions had been lifted, most interviews were carried out with the proper social distancing and proper ventilation in place. I had the privilege of interviewing 15 women between the ages of 25 and 65. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of these residents. Please refer to Appendix A and B (Table 1)

3.5.2 Focus group discussion

The second method of data collection involved two focus group discussions, one with backyard tenants and the other with landlords. These focus groups facilitated interactive discussions among participants, enabling them to freely express their thoughts and address various issues. The primary rationale for utilising focus group discussions was to stimulate collective viewpoints and delve into the underlying meanings and interpretations associated with the research topic. This approach was chosen to encourage deliberation and debate concerning the topic at hand, as highlighted by O.Nymba et al. (2018). The focus group discussions took place in a local school's library, which was an accessible point for all participants in the area. The focus groups were also voice recorded, with prior consent given by the participants. I made sure to inform all attending

[23] Afrikaans is one of the official languages of South Africa. It evolved from Dutch and is spoken primarily by the descendants of Dutch Settlers and some other groups. It reflects the country's diverse heritage.

to treat each other as well as the space with respect. The two separate focus group discussions included 10 of the original set of backyard tenants from the interviews and 7 landlords. The other five of the interview participants did not want to be part of the focus group discussion. All of the landlords who willingly participated also happened to be women. To clarify, the landlords who were in the focus group discussions were not those of the women interviewed. Please refer to Appendix C and D (Table 2).

3.5.3 Non-participant observations

The last data collection method involved non-participant observations, which entailed watching participants without direct engagement in their activities. Drawing from Crotty (1998), this approach provides detailed, comprehensive, and contextually specific descriptions aligned with an insider's perspective. In this study, observations occurred within the study area, involving the recording of notes and photographs. Prior, written consent from all participants was obtained. The aim was to gain insight into how participants constructed their living spaces. The observations focused on the participants' living environments and their interactions with the infrastructure within the backyard settings. It took place at four participants' homes with permission granted. The photographs that were taken were done on my mobile device and I avoided taking pictures of other individuals in the space, to protect their identity. The observations were unstructured and very casual. The duration of the observations were brief, but repeated over time. The participants who gave consent for the observations to take place were those from the interview.

3.5.4 Difficulties in the field

As for the research, I encountered challenges due to the unpredictable nature of human responses, which led to adaptations in the research methodology. Initially, some participants withdrew when they learned that I would visit their homes. However, this setback was followed by an increase in the number of participants. Safety concerns emerged during interviews conducted at participants' homes, particularly during December. The participants advised me to not conduct interviews alone, especially during this time. To address this, alternative plans were developed, and a generous woman offered her residence for interviews. This adjustment aimed to mitigate potential risks associated with conducting interviews in potentially unsafe circumstances. In addition to mitigating the risk of interviewing in potentially threatening areas, I took care of myself through proper conduct that also protected the participants. A school in the community has a walking bus system, as mentioned before, whereby learners are accompanied home by a group of women, and they all walk together to ensure the learners are safely home. I made use of the walking bus as a measure to support access. A member of the walking bus system who is also a community member assisted me and I walked through the community with the walking bus. Furthermore, I made sure to communicate effectively with the community assistant, participants and my supervisor before I went into the field. They were aware of my interview schedule and were notified where I am. Additionally, once I entered the homes I stayed in communal parts of the dwellings. Taking these actions reduced the risks associated with interviewing in a potentially threatening area.

3.6 Data Analysis

The most suitable method utilised to analyse qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions is known as thematic analysis. “It is a method for identifying, analysing, organising, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set” (Braun and Clarke, as cited in Nowell et al 2017, p.2). Making use of thematic analysis is a good approach when trying to find out something regarding people’s views and experiences. Thematic analysis allowed me to express more clearly the relationships between the facts collected during the fieldwork and the conceptual issues this research explores. Moreover, an inductive approach was used which involves drawing conclusions from the data and not being biassed or forced to make the data fit preconceived conclusions.

3.7. Positionality

Positionality refers to the researcher's stance in relation to their participants (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Creswell (2013) encourages researchers to disclose different aspects of their identity that they bring to the study and reflect on how these may shape their understanding of the research. As a researcher with prior experience in the study area, I entered this research with a certain degree of familiarity and pre-existing relationships within the community. These connections undoubtedly shaped how I engaged with participants during the data collection process, as I was not entirely seen as an outsider, but rather someone who had already established a rapport with some community members. While this prior familiarity facilitated smoother access to participants, it also raises the question of how my positionality—my identity

as a female, coloured, educated researcher—may have influenced the dynamics of my interactions and the overall research outcomes.

One significant aspect of my positionality is my gender. Being female may have made it easier for me to connect with and gain the trust of other women in the community, particularly those who participated in the study. They may have felt more comfortable sharing their personal experiences with someone they perceived to share a similar gendered experience. This likely impacted the data I was able to gather, specifically in terms of the depth and openness of conversations with female respondents.

Another key element is my race and ethnicity. As a coloured person engaging with predominantly coloured women, there may have been an inherent sense of trust or shared identity that encouraged participants to open up. However, this shared racial identity could have also shaped their responses in ways that they believed would align with my own lived experience. It is crucial to recognize that participants might have expressed themselves differently had I been of a different racial background, or if they had perceived me to be an outsider to the community.

In addition, my educational background and privilege must also be considered. As a university-educated individual, I am in a position of relative privilege compared to many of the participants in the community. This privilege not only influences my access to resources and the

frameworks I bring to the research, but also the power dynamics between myself and the participants. This may have created a hierarchy and shaped how they framed their experiences. This privilege has also shaped how I interpreted and analysed the data. My academic training has equipped me with analytical tools, but it also introduced potential biases in how I understand and write about the voices of the Wesbank women. As much as I strive for objectivity and reflexivity in my work, I acknowledge that these voices in my thesis may not fully capture the complexities of their realities, particularly if my own positionality has influenced which aspects of their experiences I have prioritised or downplayed. I understand that individuals with a very different background may have interpreted the data differently.

By openly reflecting on these factors—my gender, race, prior experience, and educational background—I aim to provide transparency about how my positionality has shaped the research process. Recognizing that my identity has influenced all aspects of the research process from participant selection to data interpretation allows for a more critical and nuanced understanding of the research findings (Wilson et al. 2022).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was received from the University of Cape Town's ethical clearance committee. In light of the in-depth focus of this research and its participation with human participants, ethical principles are central to the research methodology. Qualitative research focuses their research on exploring, describing and examining people in their natural environments. By disclosing the study's objectives, participation was on a voluntary basis. As

Orb et al (2001) states, rooted in qualitative research are the notions of relationships and power between the participant and researcher. Therefore, the study was guided by the basic ethical principles of Iphofen (2011), which including the following:

3.8.1 Caution of distress to the participants

In the first instance, all participants were treated with respect and courtesy. The interview questions were carefully put together and formulated so as to avoid conveying any form of disrespect to the respondents. As stated by Iphofen (2011), potential participants might include people classed as '*low-income*', *'marginalised'*, '*backyard dwellers*' which could lead to a lowered self-esteem. Caution was taken when approaching and interacting with the participants.

3.8.2 Giving information and seeking consent

An 'informed consent' strategy was adopted, ensuring that all participants were fully aware of the aim and methods of the research. They were required to sign a consent form before interviews were conducted. Furthermore, I allowed participants to withdraw from the study at any point without the need for justification, honouring their autonomy.

3.8.3 Confidentiality and protecting participants identity

All participants were reassured that all the data collected will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. Additionally, I kept all research participants anonymous and made sure to protect their identities. Pseudonyms were used in reference to any participants quoted in the study.

3.8.4 Monitoring safety

As Iphofen (2011) states, the monitoring of physical safety should not be separated from ethical concerns. The study required me to become part of the participants' living environment. There were physical as well as emotional risks that could have led to threats during the research process, however measures were put in place to mitigate such risks.

In each case, the research is focused on disadvantaged individuals whose trauma is intertwined with housing, informality, and the provision of their fundamental necessities. It was critical to offer the backyard tenants the freedom to explore these ideas in a way that was natural to them. This gave participants the opportunity to define the parameters for the type of discourse they were willing to engage in, the themes they wanted to explore, and the methods by which these issues were studied. Moreover, the majority, if not all, of the participants face financial limitations. However, in alignment with research ethics, monetary compensation was not the most suitable approach to express gratitude and reciprocate their hospitality in allowing me to enter their homes and lives. Consequently, leveraging the research funds available, I arranged for the distribution of essential food parcels to all participating women. This gesture extended to both the individuals who were interviewed and those who took part in the focus groups, encompassing both landlords and backyard tenants.

4. Physical and Social Infrastructure

The obstacles and peculiarities of living in informal backyard dwellings can be very distinctive. Depending on the particular setting, the resources available, and individual experiences, the characteristics of living in these dwellings might vary greatly. This section details the physical and social nature of living in a backyard dwelling as described by the women themselves, as they are faced with gender-specific challenges.

4.1 The yard itself

Typically, the yard around a casual backyard residence is small and has simple characteristics. As Bank (2007) states, the yards in some ways resemble "little communities," fragments of bigger wholes, with their own unique norms and rhythms that are determined by the manner in which social interactions take place. These rhythms are also influenced by the social infrastructure of the backyards, the size and structure of the homes, the amenities offered, and the geographical restrictions of social existence. Each backyard of the different women whom I interviewed has somewhat a very similar rhythm to one another. These common patterns provide a more detailed perspective of yard life. In the yard, the original home stands there and the yard tenants frequently have their structures in the front, back, or sides of the house. In most cases, the entire property has a single access gate and the tenants reach their separate dwellings from a shared yard. The yard generally looks relatively small due to its compact design, leaving only enough space for necessary outside activities. The boundaries are marked by improvised hedges, obstacles, or fences built of salvaged wood, corrugated metal or both. These limits, which serve as a barrier to the space and provide a sense of separation, are more practical than aesthetic. The

yard often has natural ground coverings, such as bare dirt, compacted soil, or patches of grass. The ground generally lacks proper paving or landscaping and is uneven and rocky. Furthermore, in some instances the main home and the backyard housing may be partially or completely separated or screened in, depending on the preferences of the property owner. See image 17, that depicts the outside of a typical property. Image 18 exemplifies an aerial view.

Image 17 The outside of a typical property. Source: Author (2023)

Image 18: Aerial view of a typical layout. Source: Google maps

The yard does not leave much space for any outdoor amenities such as a patio for outdoor gatherings, furniture such as chairs and tables, a pool for the children and possibly a braai area[24]. The women feel that they lack a place to relax, participate in hobbies, or engage in other leisure pursuits, making it difficult for them to let go of tension and enjoy their spare time. For the mothers, they expressed that their children's wellbeing may suffer from a lack of leisure space. The lack of possibilities for children to play and explore raises questions about their growth and enjoyment. In addition, the lack of recreational space further aggravates feelings of loneliness, particularly if the women like to interact with others and spend time with them outside. They feel cut off from their social network because they do not have a venue to meet up with people or host family functions. Below are some accounts of the women:

[24] A braai is a South African term and refers to grilling or barbecuing meat over an open flame.

"...I want my own yard to have a small pool and braai area, I also want to entertain people" (Sonja, 16 November 2022)

"...More space, all guests must sit inside my wendy house[25]. We can't sit outside nicely because there is no space" (Chantel, 05 December 2022)

Many of the women also expressed that there is no space for proper washing lines or space to hang out their clothing. Without a space for a washing line, the women feel a lot of inconvenience and frustration because they are unable to dry their laundry efficiently. Frustration may result from this, especially if they must use inefficient and time-consuming indoor drying techniques. Further, as the yard is set up and so compact it also affects the women's daily house chores like doing laundry. There is limited fresh air coming into the yard and little sunlight exposure. The cultural aspect of line drying laundry outdoors, which has been a standard practice throughout many years for certain cultures, may cause feelings of longing or a separation from tradition. Below, image 19 depicts a sketched version of the yard's layout.

"Also, space for my own washing line. I have to borrow lines from the neighbour to hang my things…" (Sandra, 05 November 2022)

[25] A form of accommodation and is a wooden structure. The structure is usually erected in someone's backyard.

"You know for us coloureds, hanging our washing out on a nice sunny day is important, we can get more done, now I must wait because I can only hang little by little" (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

"We must now wait and see because there are other ladies in the yard who also need to hang out their people's clothes…" (Fatima, 18 November 2022)

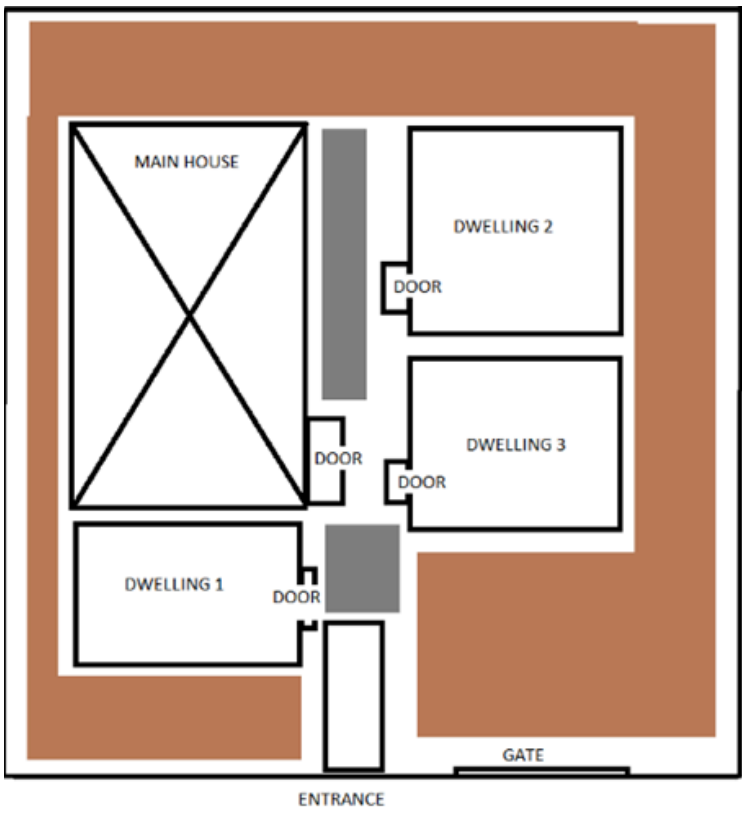


Image 19: Sketch of the layout. Source: Author (2023)

4.2 The physical material

There are differences in the quantity, size, and density of backyard structures. Since the varied building materials used in backyard houses have an impact on living circumstances, fire and flood risks, and environmental health, the structural characteristics of these structures are significant. The shack[26] is the most prevalent variety, but there are also 'wendy'[27] dwellings, substantial brick-and-mortar rooms, and higher-quality independent flats (Scheba & Turok, 2020). The most predominant type of backyard accommodation in Wesbank that was identified was 'wendy house' dwellings rather than brick-and-mortar rooms. Materials vary, but in many of the accounts of the women interviewed, their structures are made of low-grade wood and the ceilings are made of corrugated iron. Typically, materials from secondhand sources are used to make doors and windows. Image 20 reveals these materials as mentioned.

> *"My structure is made of wood, there's no cement or bricks in my place"* (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

> *"Our dwelling is like a wendy, it's wood. We don't have a ceiling, its iron boards. The wind is coming through there, but okay the blankets keeps us warm"* (Maggie, 16 November 2022)

[26] A shack refers to a makeshift or informal dwelling typically constructed from materials like corrugated iron, wood, plastic sheets, and other available scraps.
[27] A form of accommodation and is a wooden structure.

Image 20: Woman standing outside her home. Source: Marecia Damons (2022)

These makeshift structures are either built by the individuals living in the main house for additional family members or to rent it out to outside tenants for extra income. At times, they are even built by the occupier who has been given the open space in the yard, in which case the rent is typically lower. There could be anywhere from one to six dwellings in a single front or backyard. The high percentage of backyard shacks on the property shows how scarce houses are in the Wesbank community. Just as Turok & Borel-Saladin (2015) state, it reflects the overcrowding among backyarders found in previous studies.

Furthermore, items of furniture are often creatively used to divide different living areas in which the women take on their everyday responsibilities as the woman of the house. In addition to furniture, thin wooden sheets as seen in image 21, are also used by the tenants to separate spaces.

> *"We use cheap thin boards to separate the kitchen from the room we all sleep in"* (Bronwyn, 05 December 2022)

> *"Our cupboards are used as walls in our bungalow[28]. We don't still have doors and rooms, it's just cupboards that makes the two different spaces"* (Michelle, 07 December 2022)

[28] In the South African context, the term 'bungalow' is often used informally to describe backyard dwellings, which are typically makeshift structures. It is used synonymously with 'hokkie' and 'wendy house'.

Image 21: The boards separating the different spaces. Source: Marecia Damons (2022)

Altogether, the women living in the backyard dwellings argue that the housing condition is either poor or very poor, and that repairs should be made to the walls, floors, or roof. When the backyard resident is directly linked to those residing in the main house, the dwelling typically tends to be more firmly and durably constructed, often even built with brick and mortar or acquired as a prefabricated Wendy house[29]. As Zweig (2015) puts forward, the appearance of the home is frequently a major indicator of the type of relationship between the tenant and the landlord, with coarsely built homes typically belonging to people who have no family connections to the landlord. Therefore, there is less security of tenure and consequently less investment in the construction or renovation of the backyard residence. Moreover, the majority of backyard dwellings are poorly insulated and subject to extreme internal temperatures because they are built with materials like wood and tin. As a result, they experience intense heat during

[29] A prefabricated wendy house is a temporary structure that's usually bought instead of built from scratch.

the summer, and extremely cold temperatures during the winter. These women use their own initiative to ensure that their homes are warm enough during the winter seasons (image 23) and use buckets to prevent the floors inside their homes from getting wet and damaged by the rain. See image 22 of the rain water collected.

Image 22: The bucket to catch the rain. Source: Author (2022)

Image 23: Insulation with plastic. Source: Author (2022)

Basic services

The layouts of the formal homes on the property are connected to municipal services like refuse removal, water, sanitation, and electricity. The women and their families typically access services via the main house. Backyard dwellers, who often share services with their landlord, are more secure than those in informal settlements who have less access to those services. Despite the better security, the women communicated many problems and challenges with regards to their access and provision via the landlords. Virtually, every backyard dwelling is connected to the main home's electricity by a network of illegal extension cables that run from outlets within the main house to the dwellings outside. These wires were all fed by the same prepaid electricity metre inside the main house. There are two possible types of connections, neither of which need to be installed by licensed electricians. Depending on the situation, wires may be buried below or

hung from one dwelling to another, resulting in a "multiplug" that supplies electricity to a number of different appliances. Below, images 24 and 25 illustrate these connections.

Image 24: Illegal electric connections. Source: Author (2022)

Image 25: Illegal electric connections. Source: Author (2022)

Water is either accessed from taps in the yard, shown in image 27, or from the main house. These homes and backyard dwellings both wait for ‘free’ metered water that flows at low pressure and recycle water so that limited quantities can be stretched to a variety of labour. The government’s distribution of ‘free’ water[30] nevertheless creates rippling disparities that shape poor people's daily routines. Furthermore, the women and their families generally use the bathrooms within the main home, which are shared not only with the formal housekeeping unit but frequently also with a number of backyard houses, sometimes including multiple families. For other alternatives to using the bathroom facilities within the main house, the women make use of the ‘bucket

30

In the South African context, the government’s distribution of 'free' water refers to a policy under the Free Basic Water (FBW) scheme, which was introduced in 2001. This policy aims to provide all households, particularly low-income and vulnerable communities, with a minimum amount of water (6000 litres) for basic needs at no cost.

system'. The 'bucket system' refers to a behaviour in which people urinate into buckets that serve as makeshift toilets, frequently in places with poor access to regular sanitation services. They urinate in buckets or other containers in these circumstances when the bathrooms in the main house are not accessible or available. Below, image 26 reveals the bucket system.

Image 26: The bucket as the toilet. Source: Author (2022)

Image 27: The outside tap. Source: Author (2022)

For waste disposal, tenants normally use the municipal bin (image 28) that is already on the premises or throw their garbage outside. However, some of the women expressed that they occasionally go without access to municipal bins. This can be as a result of inadequate municipal services or inadequate waste management infrastructure in these locations. Residents would therefore need to find different means of waste disposal. There are also times where these tenants and their landlords' waste does not get collected.

> *"We have a big bin outside, I throw all my stuff in the outside bin and then every Tuesday the garbage truck comes and empties it. But, sometimes they skip us and it piles up, people then start to take their bins themselves to the field and dump it there"* (Noni, 06 December 2022)

Image 28: Municipal bin in the yard. Source: Author (2022)

Health

Furthermore, the dwellings have an influence on health, both in terms of 'trivial' and common ills and more serious, chronic, and life-threatening disorders. In the backyard residences, signs of mould and dampness were seen. The women mention that they become more prone to diseases as a result of this stress on the body and immune system. In particular, respiratory diseases like Tuberculosis (TB) are aggravated by wet and draughty housing. Further, the risk of TB transmission can be increased in environments where several people dwell in close quarters with little ventilation, such as backyard dwellings. For the individuals already battling with TB, the disease's growth and severity can both be accelerated by living in wet, mouldy circumstances.

"…I had TB this year… You know, it's because of this place that I got TB, the materials of my house. The wind and dust came in easily and I was never healthy because of not getting the proper protection from outside germs and bacteria" (Chantel, 05 December 2022)

Another illness heavily impacted by the dwelling itself is eczema. It is an inflammatory, itchy, and reddened chronic skin condition. In humid, mouldy settings, mould spores, dust mites, and other allergens thrive. Eczema sufferers who come into touch with certain triggers may experience skin irritation, which may exacerbate their disease. The mothers frequently take the lead in managing the household. They are in charge of overseeing their family members' health and general well-being. Mothers shoulder the responsibility of making sure that their loved ones receive the right care, treatment, and comfort when dealing with this chronic illness.

"My child even, he has severe eczema and the dust isn't good for him that comes in there by us. I even need to wash his clothes more often and that needs more water to get all dust out from the day" (Zelda, 18 November 2022)

"My kids' eczema flares up so often, I feel helpless because my daughter is only two and the itching really irritates her and I can't do much to help her and she can't help herself. Windy days I just keep everything closed, we sit in the darkness instead during the day. No windows open and doors shut…" (Susan, 18 November 2022)

4.3 Arrangements and rules

The reality of backyarding is diverse and varied, straddling various degrees of formality and informality. In addition to interviewing the tenants, landlords were interviewed too. The landlords whom I interviewed who had these backyard shacks erected on their properties, did not undertake any formal process. All of the building of these makeshift structures and infrastructure connections were carried out and arranged informally. They were not bothered by any regulatory requirements. All of them expressed that there were no officials or any governmental entities that ever came to address them or report them for their activities in the yard.

For a considerable number of backyard tenants, lease agreements are not regulated in writing (Isandla, 2022). Moreover, many of the women have verbal agreements with the landlords, however these agreements do not protect them from subjective changes such as increased price of water and electricity, blocking or having restrictions on these services. In the absence of an agreement negotiated prior to occupancy, a backyard dwelling may be deemed to be utilised to shelter extra family members rather than a rental unit. Therefore, the arrangements regarding the agreements can be seen as a ‘sense of understanding’ that permits occupancy in unlicensed rental accommodations or on property used for unlicensed rentals. The rent that is set by their landlords all depends on their relationship with the tenant, the location of the property, the quality of the building materials and occasionally the tenant's means of support and capacity. The monthly rent for the women interviewed ranged from R500 to R1000, whereas family members usually do not pay but help out elsewhere. The services required such as water and electricity are normally excluded from the rent price, and the woman needs to make additional payments throughout the month to the landlord. The rent is agreed upon verbally by the two parties to be paid at a specific date and all of the women pay their rentals in cash. A lot of them complained that their rental

price was not reasonable and the rent was excessive compared to prices for other backyard homes.

> *"For my bungalow I pay R1000 per month. People tell me that is rent money for a small house per month not for a backyard bungalow with no services included"* (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

> *"I pay them R550 just to stay there, then I must still pay R200 for electricity separately"* (Bronwyn, 05 December 2022)

> *"No, we don't pay. My boyfriend and the lady are brother and sister. They're family. We only give money for electricity, 50/50"* (Maggie, 16 November 2022)

Despite the absence of written lease agreements between owners and tenants, certain rules do exist. Most of the women communicated that their families have rules that they need to adhere to which have been enforced by their landlords. Those rules include a curfew, rules about entering and leaving the premises or even denying visitors or overnight guests. These restrictions significantly affect the freedom and autonomy of the women and their families. Below, the women give some insights into these rules:

"No, I can't have visitors over. Not even my own family, I go to them instead. My landlords are my boyfriend's parents and they are strict. As a grown woman, I still get treated as a child living in the yard of someone else's parents" (Fatima, 18 November 2022)

"I can't really have people over, but the rare occasion that I do I actually don't enjoy it because the landlady thinks they are there for her then she wants to drink with them and get rude with them and that's why I never have my friends there because of her manners" (Bronwyn, 05 December 2022)

For many of the landlords, there is a good reason behind the rules that are reinforced, however for the tenants the good intentions behind it does not seem to be reflected. The landlords voiced that the reason for the rules is to mainly ensure safety and harmony. Therefore, there are rules to regulate tenant conduct and refrain from disruptive behaviour that can have a detrimental influence on the main house. Moreover, to preserve security and avoid overcrowding, landlords may impose restrictions on the number of visitors permitted, the length of their stay, and their behaviour while on the property. Below are some of their responses in regards to the rules enforced by them as the landlords:

"I want to know who is coming in and out for my own safety, that is why they must first ask me if they can have people over" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

"I said no visitors now they don't get people because they know I will put them out" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

"They must be home at a certain time because there isn't a separate entrance and if they don't come before that time I lock up and go to sleep. It's not my problem, they can sleep under the - afdakkie - canopy. If you don't have rules, they will walk over you" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

From the perspective of the tenants, certain rules are overly stringent or obtrusive, restricting the freedom and independence of the women in their living area. This makes them feel angry and frustrated. There is also a lack of flexibility that was picked up, because the rules in place may not take into consideration the tenants' particular requirements or situations. Tenants who need specific accommodations or encounter unforeseen circumstances may encounter difficulties as a result of this lack of flexibility. The rules that place too many limits on how the women and their families behave, such as limiting visitors or prohibiting certain activities, may be viewed as unjust and violating their rights.

"I hate the rules, it makes me so mad when I can't just bring my people, so I go to them instead…" (Michelle, 07 December 2022)

"...very very annoying, but hey I am the tenant so I must just obey and do as she says" (Zelda, 18 November 2022)

Rights and responsibilities

In the focus group discussion, the landlords expressed deeper hunger for education on the rights of the landlords. Certain landlords make sure they are operating within the law by being aware of their rights. By knowing their rights, it enables the landlords to protect their property and monetary interests. Another aspect about knowing their rights as landlords is to do with handling disputes. The landlords feel that if they are knowledgeable it may resolve issues or disputes in a civil manner while remaining within the bounds of the law. For most of the landlords during the eviction process, they want to be informed of their rights and obligations in order to avoid responsibility for what happens to the tenants. Here are a few quotes from the landlord's responses in the focus group discussions:

"You cannot put them out because it's the law. It says you must give them 3 months' chance and if he doesn't find a place in those months you need to keep him there even longer until he finds a place. Automatically, that person does not look for a place because he knows the law. And if you put him out you need to give him a notice in advance and find him a place. The law works this way at the moment. So, you actually bind yourself to someone if you take outside tenants that are not family. Even my own daughter told me, I

can't put her out because she knows the law. She went to ask by the police station what her options were should I put her out." (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

"Legal aid writes out letters for you for free if you want to put people out. But the court says it's R18000 for an eviction letter. I found out all these things already if they want to cause problems with me. I need to be one step ahead, and therefore I need to know my rights as well, as a landlord" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

"…threaten the tenants with an interdict if they don't cooperate…" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

Moreover, maintenance and repair of the backyard dwellings and the yards itself are not seen to by the landlords of the women. Those all fall on the backyard tenants and it is their responsibility. However, the women communicated that they merely lacked the necessary finances to improve their backyard dwellings. There were only two instances reported by the women whereby the landlord made a few upgrades and improvements to the dwelling, reason being they were family. Below are a few accounts from the landlords on the discussion around maintenance and repairs on the backyard structures.

"The one in my yard put her own wendy house up there, it wasn't there. So, she must see to the stuff that must be fixed, I just gave her an open space" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

"No, they must fix the things on their own with their own money" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

"It's difficult to put toilets at the back, the plumbing will be a lot and expensive. It's too difficult. The pipe is under the house and the sand isn't stable under the house, it sinks. So, if we mess underneath from the front you need to go through the rooms to the back and it will be a lot of work" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

The upgrades and improvements made by the landlord for their family members in the backyard were all minor things. There were no significant changes to the actual dwelling, instead it was to better the quality of their access to services. Here landlords share what they have done for their family members living in their backyard:

"I put an electric box in my bungalow at the back so that they can buy their own electricity. The box was R800 that time when I bought it" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

"I put an outside tap up so they can pour water outside instead of coming in for water" (Landlord, 29 March 2023)

In conclusion, this chapter has provided a detailed exploration of the living conditions and challenges faced by women in backyard dwellings, shedding light on the complexities of their environments and the inequalities they endure. From the confined and often makeshift yards to the precarious structures they call home, these women navigate a daily reality marked by limited space, inadequate amenities, and unreliable access to basic services.

5. Embodiment

This section emphasises the lived experience of the backyard tenants in Wesbank, focusing on how their access to essential services are deeply embodied. This chapter highlights the emotional stress, safety risks, and physical strain they endure. It also investigates the intricate routines and rhythms that backyard tenants develop to manage shared resources, illustrating the need for constant adaptation and negotiation in their daily lives. It also addresses the risks, labour, and public shame women face in securing water, as well as the loss of dignity and privacy linked to inadequate sanitation. Finally, it underscores how unsanitary living conditions and limited waste disposal options reflect systemic inequalities shaping tenants' daily lives.

5.1 Micropolitics of provision, access and control

For the women of Wesbank, access to resources proves to be a crucial concern. The backyard tenants make their monthly payment towards electricity; however, the landlord still somehow takes advantage of the situation and displays unfairness towards the women. This is where the tension between the landlord and tenants begins.

"We buy electricity every week 50/50. But, I would like to buy my own box because the 50/50 thing doesn't always work out. Sometimes the owner doesn't have money, so I must buy for both of us. I want to speak to the owner about giving me permission to get my own box" (Vanessa, 16 November 2022)

"Sometimes I have problems with access to electricity because of the landlord. I pay R900 for the month with electricity included, but she still asks me to buy when she doesn't have even when I already gave my money" (Linda, 16 November 2022)

Pressure regarding payment plays a huge role in the access for these backyard tenants. Many expressed that they have been threatened by their landlords that if they do not pay extra during the month, their access to electricity will be denied. Tensions over excessive use and underpayment can strain relationships, and landlords may end up limiting access because neither the tenant nor the landlord has a way to evaluate consumption rates between the house and the backyard (Lemanski, 2009). The women feel that their vulnerability is being abused and put them in danger of losing their homes or being even more marginalised. Denying the women and their families access to electricity results in cruel living circumstances, as expressed by them. Without electricity, they turn to risky substitutes for lighting and cooking.

"I must give her R100 and then when she buys electricity I must also give my bit of money for that. If I work I give her money to stay at the back but if I don't work I tell her I

can't give her then she always threatens me, I must take my stuff and go live somewhere else" (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

"If I don't buy electricity one month when I can't, she pulls out my plug even though she has and was able to buy so long. The others don't even buy electricity but their plugs stay on. I feel like I am being punished" (Chantel, 05 December 2022)

The effects of irregular or frequent power outages on women, particularly in the areas of cooking and food preparation, are several. Power outages are unpredictable, which is frustrating, especially when they are trying to meet the task of serving meals to their family on time. Women in these situations frequently experience increased stress as they handle the added hurdles of planning and adjusting to the intermittent power supply. The continual need to change cooking procedures and deal with the uncertainty of power availability complicates their daily life, affecting not only their mental and emotional well-being but also subjecting them to the physical strains of long cooking sessions. Below, some women offer insights into their experiences of cooking food in the evening.

"My mother and I can't make food at the same time. If she has the kettle on then I must ask her first if I want to do something. We need to let each other know otherwise the electricity is going to trip. I need to start my food earlier than my mother so that we can both have a food done before load shedding for example" (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

"Every single day, we need to plan and organise and communicate about who is doing what when it comes to electricity. I feel so restricted, and it's really irritating. It affects me a lot, sometimes I tell my husband he must make food I don't smaak – not in the mood – to struggle so" (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

For the women living as backyard tenants, wider social relationships are what determine who has access to services. These regular politics and water and sanitation activities in Wesbank have a significant emotional and affective impact, resulting in psycho-social stress and anxiety in addition to material hardships. Landlords often restrict access to water supplies and bathroom facilities. According to the women interviewed, the psychological impact is immense, since the ongoing fight for basic necessities like water and sanitation can lead to emotions of anger, tension, and powerlessness. The majority of the women said that it was typically crucial to keep healthy ties with the owners in order to continue access to a clean water supply. Below, the women give some insight.

"There is no toilet or running water inside my wendy, everything is in the main house. I have access to the toilet in the main house, but I feel a little uncomfortable so I use the bucket in my wendy instead" (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

"Sometimes I feel so angry with the situation, it really makes a person upset having to pee inside and stuff. Not comfortable" (Lorraine, 18 December 2022)

Moreover, access regulations are frequently contingent on how frequently the bathroom is used and how much water is utilised for various tasks. Access patterns are dynamic processes rather than static ones, because access is obtained, maintained, and modified in different ways depending on the situation. The conditions for acquiring access can change for a number of reasons, indicating that the power structures influencing people's access and use of water evolve and transform over time. The accounts of how some women negotiate for access to and usage of water serves as an example of this in the paragraphs following. The ownership, access, use, and management of water that affect daily life are influenced by intricate webs of power:

> *"We get drinking water from the taps in the yard because it's closer and we don't have to go in the main house so often, but my children do not like it. It tastes funny…The landlord is my mother's friend and sometimes when I get me beers then I get her a beer also just so I can use the water inside on weekends when she is drinking before she starts an argument. As long as she is happy she will allow certain things"* (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

> *"When my kids are there and want to use the bathroom for water they can be messy sometimes, and get scolded. But if it's the main house children messing with water it is nothing. Sometimes I get the children of the main house to bring us water and then I let my kids play with them because they did me that favour…"* (Linda, 16 November 2022)

"We have to suffer a lot for water…" (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

The insecure access to a basic need (water) creates logistical, material, and emotional difficulties, particularly for the primary water providers (women). The capacity to get and keep access to safe water sources is intertwined with a slew of problems that have an immediate impact on the women and their day-to-day life. Access must always be re-articulated and maintained since access is never completely secure. Each of the women and their families must negotiate uncertainties and take advantage of new opportunities as well as obstacles. The main house members might not be home, and the women cannot access the home. The landlords could decide to stop providing water out of the blue and may limit the amount that can be consumed and when, or ask for favours in exchange. There are several elements that contribute to daily service insecurity, and this has an impact on how the women interact with one another both inside and across homes that are battling for the same supply.

5.2. Everyday routines and rhythms

The backyard tenants of the Wesbank community must recognize and navigate increasingly intricate and shifting patterns of daily governance. All agreements are informal and spatially intimate, and therefore a unique set of practices have unfolded. Many times, a schedule needs to be set up so that everyone is not doing the same thing at the same time. In particular, the scheduling and organisation revolves around electricity usage and water consumption. The women need to space out their cooking daily to prevent the electrical grid from becoming

overloaded at peak times. To balance the use of electricity, some women may cook sooner or later in the day. Additionally, to avoid wasting too much water, it requires them to plan their domestic activities with their landlords so that specific jobs, such doing washing, are not completed at the same time. The accounts below illustrate how these women have to arrange their time and duties in accordance with their landlords because of these problems.

> *"There is a limit in general. Like if I do washing today, there's no water for the evening. The next day it's back, the total for the day. So, I don't do washing that much, because I need to plan too much and think ahead and see if I can be without water in the evening. It shows on the metre, outside in the street"* (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

> *"We take turns on who is going to do the washing. If you used all your amount for the day then your water will be off for the rest of the day until the next day"* (Linda, 16 November 2022)

According to the women interviewed, the need to coordinate and arrange everyday duties using shared resources indicates a continual need for adaptation, which can lead to mental and emotional stress, particularly when attempting to manage domestic tasks, caring, and income-generating activities. The women ought to spend more time organising and arranging their daily activities. The emotional effect includes the possible annoyance of not being able to complete things at convenient times. Due to time restrictions, they find it challenging to

complete all of their responsibilities effectively. Even just waiting around for the landlords to be home and ask for permission and consult with them first, takes up time in which they could get the tasks done. However, they feel as though they are too afraid to go ahead without asking first. Gender disparities are further reinforced by the women's disproportionate responsibility for organising schedules and overseeing domestic duties.

> *"You know what, I am so – dik – fed up of always asking, asking! That time I used to go inside and ask, I could've been doing my first load of washing. Now there are times when this lady is not even at home that I can't even go in to ask…"* (Fatima, 18 November 2022)

> *"I am the one having to think of all this stuff, ahead of time. Some days I just skip what I planned to do because I am not in the mood to confront the lady in front"* (Vanessa, 16 November 2022)

> *"Every single day, we need to plan and organise and communicate about who is doing what when it comes to electricity. I feel so restricted, and it's really irritating. It affects me a lot…"* (Maggie, 16 November 2022)

Moreover, in Cape Town's low-income neighbourhoods, like in other communities and nations worldwide, gender stereotypes are pervasive when assigning jobs to men or women. The women interviewed are typically responsible for finding, allocating, and "digging" up space for waste disposal. The labelling of waste disposal as a "women's job" upholds conventional gender stereotypes and the notion that women should be in charge of caring for family members and doing home duties. Women may be exposed to safety dangers while managing waste, especially in places with insufficient waste management infrastructure. Some women expressed that even during the evenings when it is dark, they have to throw out the early evening waste from urinating in the bucket in the bungalow. They become more susceptible to accidents, harassment, or attacks as a result. These women experience mental distress when forced to cope with disposing of waste in such circumstances because they may feel ashamed, stressed out, or uncomfortable. Sandra explains below in detail what her daily routine looks like when it's time to dispose of her waste from during the night in her bungalow.

> *"I go outside and get water in a bucket, then I pee in there. Every morning I throw it out in the drain. When I'm on my period, is sometimes full of blood and then you must take it to the drain outside and then scrub your bucket with Handy Andy to get it clean, so it can be ready for the next time you need to use the toilet, use the bucket again, but once you use it again, the blood comes again and it's the same process"* (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

The unequal allocation of waste disposal obligations places an extra stress on women and results in an unjust work distribution within families. The responsibility on who needs to see to the bucket can also create tensions in certain relationships. An elderly woman points out how she needs to constantly remind her partner about the bucket and this causes her to start her day on a bad note. Women who are consistently responsible for waste disposal without enough help may experience feelings of annoyance, anger, or emotional weariness. She continues to say that she ends up doing it because she cannot take it when the buckets stay around for too long once they have woken up. It is a daily struggle in her old age to deal with the disposal of such waste. The participants internalise the ingrained patriarchal norms that support these infrastructure 'deficits' as gendered 'burdens' that must be suffered through sacrifice.

> *"It's not nice, because it causes small arguments between me and my boyfriend about who must throw the bucket out, and we must pass their kitchen to throw it out. They are busy with food and it's gross. Sometimes embarrassing. And also, when we can't throw it out, it smells in our bungalow and we are also busy with food. There are times I can't wait for the people in the main house to get home to throw it out, then I have to make a hole in the sand and throw it out there in the yard"* (Maggie, 16 November 2022)

> *"I have to remind him the whole time to put the bucket out and clean it out. I'm the only one worried about it and concerned. I don't even get a thank you for his pee in there also"* (Chantel, 05 December 2022)

> *"My husband has one leg, he can't carry a bucket. And you know how it goes, I'm the man of the house. Now I must do all those tasks, through these daily challenges. I'm stressing for my son too, he doesn't want to help me in the house. It is so tiring fetching water every day"* (Sonja, 16 November 2022)

Moreover, tenants frequently need to develop regular routines for gathering water using buckets or containers. The women normally start their regular routine by rising early in the morning to collect water in the main house for the family's morning routine before school and work. It starts off with a small bucket that may be used throughout the day, which is filled. For some women it is challenging for them to entirely fill their water jugs/buckets because of the persistently low-pressure levels and limited operating times. After their buckets are topped up, they carefully transport the water buckets back to their dwellings. As evening approaches, the women make sure they have adequate water for evening chores like cooking, washing dishes, and personal hygiene. They gather for the remainder of the evening depending on how much was utilised for the aforementioned chores much later in the evening, before their curfews.

One woman summarised,

> *"To collect water, only women go. While they never consider gathering water, our partners are always thinking about their jobs and work. They need water, but they don't have to deal with the hassle of gathering it. They don't want to know what issues women who collect water in the main house are dealing with"* (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

The women explain the dangers, risks, and embarrassment that surround these regular activities. Their bodies experience varying degrees of physical work, public shame, and gendered sufferings that are moulded by their placed position within families, communities, and other social groups (Truelove and O'Reilly, 2020). They expressed that experiences such as this influences and limits prospects for happiness and success in their life, while discursively generating social divisions and the exclusion of specific groups of women from municipal rights and places. The accounts below express these risks, physical labour, embarrassment and gendered sufferings the women face daily to access the services via the yard or main house.

> *"We use those 5 litre cans, we just refill it each time. For washing it takes a lot of buckets and it's so tiring because you have to carry it out every time and it's heavy. I'm the only one doing that. I'm so very tired when I'm done, all by myself."* (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

> *"I feel very unsafe, the yard is not closed and the gangsters that run around here too, and I must go collect water from the outside tap. Me, alone as a woman for my kids…"* (Linda, 16 November 2022)

> *"It's a struggle, because of the up and down, and in and out with the heavy buckets. Wow! My back"* (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

To get ready for work the next day, the women must enter the main home for water. Stress results from this and emphasises feelings of powerlessness, irritability, and anxiety. A sense of helplessness and low self-esteem results from not having control over their living circumstances. They are constantly worried and have to think strategically about how and if they will have access to the main house to prepare for work the next day. The fragile nature of their financial status is shown by the necessity to plan ahead while entering the main residence for job preparation. Any interruption to their routine, such as being unable to get ready for work owing to access restrictions, might have a negative impact on their capacity to find and keep a job.

> *"I have to worry in the mornings will there be electricity for me to boil water to wash, or the night before they locked up early and you didn't fill up water for you and now there isn't even water to wash or anything"* – (Sonja, 16 November 2022)

> *"...walking out the house without washing is a very uncomfortable feeling and I think about it throughout the whole day. And I can't skip work because of that, it's my food."* (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

> *"I need to bother the people in the main house to leave because I don't have a separate key to enter for water or even to leave for work because I also don't have a separate entrance"* (Linda, 16 November 2022)

5.3 Dignity, discomfort and privacy

A more general argument concerning the gendered feelings of discomfort and vulnerability encountered by the women is strengthened by the difficulties relating to access to basic sanitary facilities inside the family context. The necessity to go inside the main home to use the restroom, highlights the inconvenience of having to deal with this scenario at night. The situation that requires moms to lead their kids to the main house, sometimes in the dark, further exemplifies the many obligations women experience in the home. The involvement of women, particularly mothers, in meeting the needs of their children serves as more evidence of the gendered character of these issues. Feelings of exposure and vulnerability are amplified by the tension between trying to protect their children's wellbeing and the inevitable discomfort of doing these responsibilities. The events described in this story act as a microcosm for more significant problems with women's agency, autonomy, and safety in urban settings.

> *"Having to go into the main house for the toilet is a mission and there's no privacy. Also, during the evenings when you're in your pyjamas already, the kids want to use the toilet and want to use a proper toilet. Me, as the mother, has to be the one to take them out into the dark to get to the main house and in my pyjamas. I feel a little exposed to the people in the main house. It's just so uncomfortable"* (Fatima, 18 November 2022)

Through discussion, many of them communicated that they lack the necessary privacy to carry out intimate actions without feeling uncomfortable. It is unpleasant and unsettling for someone to be able to see or hear what they are doing if there are no dividers or private areas. They feel

pressured to finish their activities quickly since there are so many people competing for the limited bathroom time. This haste may result in a hurried approach to personal hygiene, thus limiting the efficiency of routines like thorough hand washing for example.

> *"When I'm on my period, using their toilet is not a good feeling. Very uncomfortable experience. Sometimes you experience pain problems and you can't be long because you need to be considerate"* (Vanessa, 16 November 2022)

> *"There are times where I feel uncomfortable washing in the main house, like when I get my period"* (Chantel, 05 December 2022)

> *"If there's someone in the toilet you have to wait first, until that person is finished. And sometimes it's frustrating because of the waiting…"* (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

Moreover, the sight of bodily waste in overloaded, rarely cleaned buckets was so repulsive for some individuals that it made the experience almost unbearable. One woman highlighted this sentiment, stating that she couldn't prepare food while using the bucket system in the bungalow during the day. The discomfort caused by the visual experience of bodily wastes in buckets extends beyond mere physical disgust. The statement illustrates that this unpleasant condition can affect the daily lives of individuals, hindering their ability to carry out routine activities such

as preparing food. Her reluctance to use the bucket system during the day due to the associated disgust reflects the extent to which unsanitary conditions can disrupt basic daily tasks. Options such as throwing out the waste into the main house's toilet or the drain are not always available. This highlights how little options they have when it comes to disposing of rubbish. The stories discussed here illustrate that residents of backyard houses experience daily challenges related to disgust, contamination, and unsanitary conditions due to their limited access to proper toilets and secure water sources.

> *"I feel very uncomfortable because I get guests that come to visit me and then they must use this bucket inside the bungalow and then it's not nice for them to see where you have to choose a space in your room where you have this bucket and, in your kitchen, just here where you'll be busy with food in your kitchen so that's very uncomfortable. They work with food in the kitchen and now you want to do a number 2 and now you must say sorry and ask so that I don't feel bad or shy, embarrassed or even judged. It's very unhygienic. I sometimes don't even make food or make them something because it's just gross"* (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

> *"When I'm on my period, I'm used to it. Through the lifestyle you live, you get used to it but it is still uncomfortable because the bucket where you pee in, is sometimes full of blood and then you must take it to the drain outside and then scrub your bucket with Handy Andy to get it clean, so it can be ready for the next time you need to use the toilet, use the bucket again, but once you use it again, the blood comes again and it's the same*

process. You can't let it stand in the house because there's people who come to your house and then it looks ugly and disgusting" – (Sonja, 16 November 2022)

In summary, the experiences of women living as backyard tenants in Wesbank reveal the deeply gendered impact of poverty and resource inequality. Their struggles with limited and precarious access to electricity, water, and sanitation underscore the systemic power imbalances and infrastructural inadequacies that shape their daily lives. Women disproportionately bear the emotional, physical, and social burdens of managing these hardships, from navigating exploitative landlord dynamics to enduring unsanitary and undignified living conditions.

6. Promise (un)fulfilled

This chapter explores the lived experiences of women in backyard dwellings in South Africa, focusing on how their housing conditions influence their daily lives and aspirations. It examines the instability and insecurity they endure due to the precarious nature of their homes, compounded by poor living conditions and limited access to essential services. These challenges are further exacerbated by social and economic inequalities, creating a profound sense of vulnerability. The chapter also delves into the concept of "promised housing," highlighting how the long wait for proper homes fosters frustration, exclusion, and a sense of marginalisation. Additionally, it considers the role of housing in enhancing dignity and belonging, illustrating how inadequate living conditions restrict these women's ability to personalise their spaces, maintain privacy, and achieve a sense of stability. Despite these hardships, the chapter reveals their resilience and creativity in navigating these constraints, shedding light on their hopes for a more dignified and secure future.

6.1 Security, stability and identity

In South African cities, housing is a major issue in the daily politics of citizenship (Oldfield, 2015; Lemanski, 2019). The following quotes from the women in Wesbank gathered this emotion affirmatively when we spoke about what it means for them to have a house:

> *"For me as a woman and as a mother, I would say that everyone deserves a house, even if it's only a 2-bedroom house. A house is what you make of it, you can live in a small*

block but what you make of it is home. To live in a wendy house is not fun, it's not great because at the end of the day you are just living on somebody else's property. If you have your own house, at least you know when you open the door it's your house…" (Vanessa, 16 November 2022)

"I want my own space. My own house! I don't want to feel like a burden to other people. For me as a lady, it feels so kak – bad – for me because I can't invite people to my house. I am ashamed. I can only imagine and day dream what my place will look like, I don't know when it will become my reality…" (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

For these women, living in the backyard of someone else's home does not provide them with any sort of permanence and stability that a state-subsidised house would cultivate. Having this sense of stability is not only important to them personally, but it was also a vital legacy for their children to inherit. There is a lot of anxiety hovering over the participants because of the lack of recognition from the government. Recognition and support from the government might change their lives and provide them the security they require, they say. These women are stuck in a condition of limbo without this acknowledgement, uncertain of their future, and constrained by financial obligations. The decision to rent a backyard property in Wesbank was not driven by personal desire, but rather by a lack of available housing options and a pressing financial need. These women are compelled to enter into unstable, transient relationships. It is a challenging decision made under pressure, illuminating the stark reality of poverty and the local housing

problem. This brings to light a sobering fact that many women must deal with when they live in someone else's backyard.

> *"It seems like they are not worried about us…"* (Fatima, 18 November 2022)

> *"I don't think they even care about us anymore, we are on our own. They only want to rely on us and promise us things when it's voting time. When voting time is done, then we're also forgotten just like that. I don't know about the government, we have to stand for ourselves"* (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

> *"I truly feel invisible. Even if they don't see us physically, they don't care in general. They might be aware but they don't care…"* (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

The legal and structural solidity that regular housing provides is absent from these improvised backyard dwellings. The women reiterate that it is a persistent issue that is firmly anchored in social and economic inequality. There is no assurance that the situation will get better in the future. There are significant psychological and societal repercussions to this lack of future confidence. It causes a perpetual state of tension and worry that affects not only the women who are directly engaged but also their families, especially the children who are raised in such a setting.

"To live in a wendy house is not fun, it's not great because at the end of the day you just living on somebody else's property…they can put you out any day" (Michelle, 07 December 2022)

"To be honest, I don't see much changing for us, we are too invisible. I am slowly accepting my reality hey" (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

In addition, their sense of insecurity and precariousness was connected to the material quality of their homes, which was contrasted with expectations of the types of items that constitute a proper home. The women mention features like durable roofs, strong walls, ample room for all family members, and good sanitary systems. For them, these components are not just extras; they are essential to maintaining human dignity and wellbeing. Moreover, the poor condition of their dwellings is accompanied by a strong sense of humiliation. Housing conditions and material things are frequently highly valued in society. These women feel inferior and insufficient in their eyes because they are unable to reach these standards. As a result of this social criticism, their uneasiness and humiliation are heightened, which lowers their self-worth and confidence within their homes.

"I need to know when someone is going to visit me, so that I can know when to double check if everything is clean. The pee bucket must be out of the house. I feel so disgusted by this" (Bronwyn, 05 December 2022)

"For me as a lady, staying in a bungalow with no furniture and a toilet, a kitchen with running water is actually very sad for me. It feels so kak – bad – for me because I can't invite people to my house. I am ashamed. I can only imagine and day dream what my place will look like, I don't know when it will become my reality" (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

"I never bring people or invite people to my place. Me and my boyfriend go to them… I am too ashamed" (Zelda, 18 November 2022)

Most of the time, if not always, mothers are very worried about the welfare of their children. Children's physical and emotional safety in human settlements is a major concern in South Africa (Sobantu, 2020). The women frequently express concerns about the protection, security, and wellbeing of their children while living in the backyard dwelling. These issues voiced by the women are firmly anchored in the difficult circumstances they are in. These concerns are not just abstract anxiety; rather, they reflect the present-day dangers that their families face on a regular basis. The country's violent crimes against women are related to the women's anxieties described below and their hope that housing would increase their protection and security.

"I don't feel safe. It's not safe for them to play in the yard even. but outside the yard it's dangerous. The gangsters jump over the gate into the yard. Sometimes the gangsters would run in there and climb on our roof and jump over to the next roof. Even though

there's a gate, I still feel the same because these things still happen" (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

"I'd really like my water coming from within my house, with a sink. It's more comfortable and because it gets late and you never get to all the things you wanted to do and there's now no water inside your house and the way Wesbank is now, there's a lot of gunshots going off and it's dangerous. Say you're thirsty and you never brought enough water and now you need to go out at night time" (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

Furthermore, these women are frequently subject to eviction or displacement because they lack official tenure rights to the land they live on. Due to their fear of losing their houses, tenants may be intimidated from claiming their rights or contesting the limitations put in place by landlords as a result of this lack of security. They tend to avoid stepping over the line or breaking these rules, because it will impact their privileges received via the main house. Surprisingly, many of them expressed that being limited to services as well as being blocked to use certain services is a form of indirect eviction. Despite not being taken out of their homes physically, the restrictions imposed upon them essentially deprive them of their right to a life of dignity. Their feeling of agency is undermined by this indirect eviction, which traps them in a state of exclusion of essential rights and services. The women voice how they just obey these rules to avoid any drama of being put out. Oftentimes they feel silenced in a sense. The women worry about retaliation from landlords if they exercise their rights or complain about unjust treatment. They

also understand that the landlord owns the property and has the right to evict them even if they remain in the same yard for many years.

> *"You know what, I just stay at home in my bungalow to avoid breaking rules or stepping on anyone's toes. I can't do what I want so I must just accept before she threatens to put me out again. I can't complain about these things and raise my concerns, I'm too afraid"* (Susan, 18 November 2022)

> *"I never bring people or invite people to my place. My boyfriend and I go to them instead. I know she's going to go on about the toilet when she is drunk. But, if I invite my family, it's only my mother and my grandma. I will ask the lady of the main house first, if I can bring them over because I know about the toilet situation"* (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

> *"We do feel sometimes we don't want to step on their toes too much just now they say we must go. But then again, who is going to give her that R1000 every month"* (Michelle, 07 December 2022)

6.2 Promised housing

It is clear through the accounts of the women that the fundamental goal is to live in their own homes, in their names. For individuals who are awaiting housing opportunities, the ideal home is associated with a specific kind of materiality, notably the completely functional brick home. The idea that a proper house must be made of bricks partially corresponds with the type of dwelling that has been constructed since 1994: a free-standing brick house (Millstein, 2020). Respondents clearly emphasise how their current property signifies not just physical and economic instability, but also their political and emotional journey. The women are aware of the fact that a home is forthcoming. They are on the waiting list; however, the waiting can be very discouraging. Waiting for formal residence has a significant impact on their image and perception of the state. Citizens exercise a restricted type of agency after waiting for years and decades. Many of them have expressed dissatisfaction with the government's performance in providing housing and private services, including water and sanitation.

> *"I believe that the government can do more, they can at least build homes every 2 years for those of us living in backyard housing, because housing is a big problem. I am on the waiting list for more than 15 years, I want be more confident that my housing coming, but it is difficult"* (Noni, 06 December 2022)

"I'm also on the waiting list for 6 years now. I don't have the money to just go and buy a house. The government needs to hurry up, it feels like forever and I know there's people waiting longer" (Michelle, 07 December 2022)

"I've lived here for 10 years, still waiting. I know people getting houses after years on the list so I am hopeful, but it is tiring, the sitting and waiting" (Susan, 18 November 2022)

The experience of waiting without reason is not rare. A prevalent perception was that the process of waiting for housing made them feel helpless and uncertain. The lack of certainty and predictability as to when they would obtain housing was a huge burden. They found it extremely difficult not knowing when or even if they would be assigned a residence, which caused immense frustration. One woman expressed:

"Waiting makes me nervous, like it is always at the back of my mind. I am very upset with the city, they don't give you updates" (Sonja, 16 November 2022)

Waiting for housing may be a stressful experience for the women. Through their accounts we get a glance inside the constantly spinning thoughts that go through the minds of them waiting for a state house, as well as the toll that this imposes.

"Sometimes I wonder if I will ever get a house for me and my children, always at the back of my mind" (Zelda, 18 November 2022)

"I don't like the way I am living, I am not at peace. Knowing you waiting for something, but it is just not coming" (Lorraine, 18 December 2022)

Furthermore, the promise of housing from the state extends beyond physical shelter; it entails a commitment to offer a full set of services and facilities that contribute to a safe and decent living environment. For the women, this promise appears unattainable, and a distinct sensation of being excluded pervades their daily existence. The sharp contrast between the promised advantages and their poor living conditions becomes immediately obvious. They feel a sense of being left out as backyard dwellers. The lack of basic sanitary facilities, unstable utilities, and the absence of social areas in their living surroundings underscore the striking contrast between the promised benefits and the reality of their everyday existence. The women's frustration cultivates as they deal with unmet promises that appear distant and impossible in their current circumstances. They also want a sense of formalisation which they see as inclusive citizenship. These instances demonstrate narratives that foster a sense of difference and separation.

"You know what, it is more than the house. I just want to use my own toilet and bathroom. I am so angry most days, I don't even have my own toilet wow. The bare minimum. That is what makes my mind go crazy" (Vanessa, 16 November 2022)

"I just want my own place so I can buy my own electricity and run my own water out of my own taps. That's the main thing, the basics" (Maggie, 16 November 2022)

6.3 Enhancing dignity

Housing was viewed by participants as enhancing their sense of worth and belonging as a citizen. As Sobantu (2020) states, in addition to providing shelter, housing also fosters stability, dignity, and a sense of pride. These reflections appeared clearly from the responses.

"A house is what you make of it, you can live in a small block but what you make of it is home. To live in a Wendy house is not fun, it's not great because at the end of the day you just living on somebody else's property" (Vanessa, 16 November 2022)

"I wish I had my own home, I think about that a lot. If I had my own home, I'd be able to do everything in my own place. It's really frustrating not having proper access that a human being deserves to be honest…" (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

"I want to have a party or have a small group of friends over, but I am ashamed of my place. I have no pride because of how the inside looks…" (Linda, 16 November 2022)

"...my own home will give me more peace and stability; these people can chuck me out whenever. Then where must I go?" (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

The women expressed how they would like a decent house to be once it appeared since they described their daily lives as being in a constant state of temporariness. Many of the women admitted to me that they had always wanted to install toilets but feared that the expense would be too high. In other cases, the women felt as though it is the state's responsibility to provide them with something as simple as a single toilet in their backyard bungalow. Some of the accounts from these women indicate that the access to a fully equipped toilet falls part of homemaking. These women see a toilet as a type of housing improvement that creates a more solid home. They expressed that a toilet signifies more than simply a place for sanitary purposes; it also stands for an essential feature of respect for one's privacy and dignity. Even in the absence of any notable advancements, having access to a toilet might inspire gratitude. In such situations, having a simple amenity that many people take for granted may be much welcomed by the women.

"It's deeper than having a toilet and bath, the physical stuff. It's the principle behind it..." (Tamia, 18 November 2022)

There are a few women who do not want improvements to their backyard dwellings. It is like a form of resistance. Their dissatisfaction with the state's disregard for their housing requirements are shown through their refusal to renovate their dwellings. It functions as a quotidian mode of

protest, in response to the inadequacies in governmental measures and the requirement for more comprehensive and equitable responses. Refusing to upgrade can also be interpreted as a symbolic action by them, who are expressing their reluctance to comply with an unfair system. It highlights the state's need to address structural concerns and undermines the usual narrative that lays the whole weight of housing repair on the shoulders of the citizens.

> *"You know, in a way, I don't want anything to be fixed though, I don't want to make it better for myself sometimes. I don't see myself living there forever, it's not what I want. And if we do things the government is going to pay less attention to us. If they first see what we can do they won't bother helping. I don't want this life for the rest of my life and I'm also not working"* (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

Moreover, one of the most important aspects of creating a house is to fill the rooms with items that reflect the beliefs, affiliations, identities, and goals of the occupants, personalising the space and the way it appears. Many women have indicated a great desire to improve their houses through home décor, but they struggle to make it happen. A variety of unfavourable feelings and disappointments are sparked by the inability to decorate their homes. For the women and their families, being forced to live in a place that does not seem like "home" makes them constantly uneasy and uncomfortable. The inability to decorate causes a complicated web of feelings, ranging from feeling uninspired to feeling uncomfortable and under social pressure. Here are a few accounts expressing the negative feelings towards not being able to decorate their homes:

"I can't do anything to make it look like a house, it leaks too much. My place is basically empty and it actually makes me feel a little uncomfortable in my own space because it feels like it's not mine" (Lorraine, 18 December 2022)

"My floors, my fake tiles are out, there are no mats because sometimes we forget to put a bucket when it rains and then everything is soaking. So, I just leave the floor as is, open and ugly" (Susan, 18 November 2022)

Memorable photographs and other achievements are one example of what they are not able to do in order to enhance their dignity and pride within their makeshift homes. For many there are limitations in terms of hanging up photographs. The inability to display these accomplishments and photos caused irritation and unmet expectations in the residences of the women. These restrictions serve as a continual reminder of the difficulties encountered and the absence of resources needed to build a place that celebrates individual successes and happy memories.

"I wish I could, but I can't even hang photos against my walls because the walls are getting wet because of the rain. It leaks down the wall. And it spoils the photos and certificates" (Fatima, 18 November 2022)

"...It was her school photos and baby photos and I had to take them off when it's winter time. That made her sad so I said we will keep it safe until we have our own place one day and where it won't get damaged" (Michelle, 07 December 2022)

Nevertheless, despite these obstacles, people frequently come up with original solutions. In some cases, they use random pieces of art they do not mind getting damaged, just to have some sort of décor within the homes. Below, this can be seen in image 29 and 30.

Image 29: Photoframe with art. Source: Author (2022)

Image 30: More art. Source: Author (2022)

In addition, being able to use plants and greenery to enhance their homes is another prime example of the kind of home décor they wish to display. It is quite irritating and demoralising to be unable to use plants to beautify their homes because of poor lighting in backyard residences. For one woman, not having plants in her home is a definite sense of unmet ambition and lost opportunity to create a bright and exciting environment. Inadequate natural light is a harsh reality for those living in small makeshift structures. Every attempt to introduce plants fails as they struggle to grow and ultimately perish from a lack of sunshine. A few women recognize these emotions and, within constraints, come up with alternate methods to decorate and personalise the living environment which helps lessen some of these unpleasant sensations. Some women opted for artificial plants to add a touch of greenery instead. Although these substitutes might not

completely reproduce the advantages of actual plants, they can provide a general sense of the desired ambiance, lessening some of the mental strain brought on by the absence of natural light. Below, image 31 is a visual example.

Image 31: The kitchen area with home décor (plants and art). Source: Author (2022)

In order to make the setting feel more treasured and personal, the women balance the lack of dignity by forging an emotional connection with it. Ornaments are also used as a way of improving their pride and dignity within the women's homes. Image 32 illustrates this. While these substitutes might not quite replace the conventional pride that comes from physically showcasing, they do serve as examples of how adaptable and resilient the women can be. The women find methods to maintain their self-respect and celebrate their families in spite of their limitations, serving as a constant inspiration to both themselves and those around them.

"These small ornaments around help me express my style and taste. I made the wendy house look like a home. So, when I do get my own house one day I would know what to do and know what I like, my style" (Sandra, 05 December 2022)

"Some of the things I used here are some of my grandma's stuff, from her lounge at that time. It's my way of remembering her… it's old fashioned but it's one way of making it look decent here…" (Hilda, 07 December 2022)

Image 32: More home décor (lamps and ornaments). Source: Author (2022)

This exploration into the lives of women in backyard dwellings highlights how inadequate housing profoundly impacts their well-being and sense of belonging. The absence of secure and stable living conditions fosters ongoing insecurity and vulnerability, limiting their ability to envision a future of stability and growth. The unfulfilled promises of formal housing deepen their marginalisation, leaving them in a precarious state of uncertainty and exclusion. Yet, despite these adversities, these women exhibit remarkable resilience and agency, finding ways to maintain dignity and foster a sense of belonging within their constrained circumstances.

7. Discussion

This discussion chapter delves into the broader implications of the findings, situating them within existing theories on infrastructure, citizenship, and the lived experiences of women in informal settlements. Drawing on the narratives of women residing in backyard dwellings in Wesbank, South Africa, the chapter examines how they navigate precarious access to essential services like water and electricity. Their lived experiences reveal the interconnectedness of material realities, social power dynamics, and emotional well-being in contexts of infrastructural inequality. A central theme emerging from the analysis is the continuous negotiation these women undertake to secure basic resources.

The discussion also highlights the embodied and emotional dimensions of restricted access to infrastructure. The women's feelings of stress, shame, and frustration underscore the profound psychological impact of their daily struggles. These emotional and embodied experiences challenge traditional views of infrastructure as merely technical systems, demonstrating their critical role in shaping dignity, well-being, and social inclusion. Furthermore, access to infrastructure, the chapter argues, is deeply tied to the experience of citizenship. The lack of direct connections to formal service grids symbolises these women's exclusion from the rights and privileges of urban citizenship. The chapter concludes by calling for a more nuanced understanding of infrastructure that incorporates social, political, and emotional dimensions, advocating for equitable urban development approaches that centre the voices and experiences of marginalised communities.

7.1 Re-arrangements

People (re)negotiate their social lives, create identities, and establish household economies as they navigate various settings (Korzenevica et al., 2022). People's perceptions of themselves in connection to society and the state are influenced by their lived experiences of physical settings, including the tangible aspects of infrastructure (Sultana, 2009; 2011; 2020). Therefore, women's lived experience cannot be examined in isolation from their living environments since they influence one another recursively (Sultana, 20211). In my analysis I reveal how women struggle to practise their citizenship rights through everyday negotiations within their landlords. The state of infrastructure accessibility is ever-changing for the women.

Service infrastructure is particularly closely related to the availability, the schedule and labour of household chores, the type of service provided by actors, the ability to pay and the attitudes of others, and gender relations (McFarlane et al., 2014). These factors are all linked to some sort of negotiation or arrangements that need to take place, in order for the women to gain access to services. Some negotiations have led to some success in gaining access to the services at certain times. But many times it has been uneven. For example, the change in water resources over time is a crucial feature that captures this dynamic environment (McFarlane et al., 2014). The women must make important decisions on how to distribute water resources in the setting of uneven and restricted access to water. Cleaning clothes and dishes seems like a simple task, but it becomes strategic when they have to strike a balance between upholding cleanliness standards and wisely using the water supply. According to Rodina et al. (2024) the adaptive resilience needed for them

to negotiate the uncertain nature of water supply in their daily routines is reflected in this continual negotiating.

For the women, about 100% of them have access to toilet facilities, however, only infrequently. In observing their reality, many of them could only use the respectable bathroom in the morning and occasionally in the evening, for washing themselves and their children. They were expected to take care of their hygiene, wash their hands, and use the bathroom at those moments, but they had to do so by constantly negotiating the spaces that were available, waiting for the others in the main house, and being forced to endure the body fluids, odours, and sounds of others. An experience of tension, uneasiness, and anonymity characterises what comes out of such environments (Lancione & McFarlane, 2016). As a woman mentions, it may be quite challenging to do tasks like changing sanitary towels during the menstrual cycle without the right facilities and privacy. As Lancione & McFarlane (2016) states, the feeling of stress, uneasiness and anonymity highlights the significant influence that living circumstances have on these women's dignity and general well-being.

Furthermore, they also typically lack direct connections for electricity as discussed by other scholars (Rice et al. 2023; Lategan 2017). In order to preserve their supply, the women must deliberately bargain with the landlords who have facilitated their connection to electricity, in addition to their daily navigation. The intentional negotiation with landlords highlights the interdependence of necessities and the women's autonomy in advocating for themselves. My findings align with Truelove's (2021) research in Delhi's informal settlements, where inhabitants

learn that community leaders and government officials have "infrastructural power" over vital resources, transcending borders across formal and informal, as well as between state and non-state entities. As demonstrated by her study, citizens engage in negotiations with both state and non-state institutions, while these same authorities seamlessly shift their identities and duties between the two in order to increase their authority over infrastructure management (Truelove, 2021).

Moreover, as McFarlane (2018) argues, these arrangements lead to uneven perceptions of the power dynamics that influence daily control of infrastructure. Requesting permission indicates a reliance on the facilities offered by the main residence. By doing this, the women try to strike a fine balance between claiming their right to use shared resources and admitting the imbalance in access to facilities. Their sense of community is shaped by this dynamic bargaining, which highlights how ad hoc and even how unstable their access to basic services is. This negotiating procedure is further complicated by the need to schedule precise times with the landlord to access the main residence. It gives these women's everyday lives a time component that necessitates careful planning and organisation. Their daily routines are impacted by this time negotiation, which also reflects the practicality of sharing a space. These glimpses into the women’s daily life highlight the requirement for planned and regulated access, which in turn affects these women's feeling of agency and control over their everyday lives.

In essence, the findings highlight the everyday challenges, resiliency, and agency faced by women living in informal housing as they negotiate difficult agreements for basic services. They

deal with complex and continuous negotiations and arrangements to get necessary services. The arrangements are more than just pragmatic; they reveal a complex relationship between agency, dependency, and security of vital resources (Korzenevica et al., 2022). The intricacy of these exchanges brings to light the ongoing difficulties with inequity that permeate their everyday existence (Rodina et al., 2024). In the particular setting of informal housing, securing basic services becomes a complex endeavour that involves addressing power relations and demanding autonomy. The negotiation process for necessities is a symbol of the larger fight against systemic injustices in their day-to-day lives.

7.2 Embodied suffering and emotions

In my study the women often used their emotions, particularly the idea of "suffering" and "exhaustion", to discuss challenges and their access to resources. As Sultana (2011) states, examining the many types of "suffering" that individuals describe highlights the emotional dimensions of water, where access, usage and control of water create interpersonal pain. This can be extended to the wider range of infrastructure that the women interact with. The focus on suffering, according to researchers like Klouzal (2003, p. 256), improves development research by addressing both the experience of hardship and material situations, therefore opposing the tendency in development research to overlook subjectivity. Essentially, taking care of the emotional aspect of infrastructure might increase consciousness of women's autonomy. In order to fully capture human agency and portray people's complexity and depth, subjective reactions must tackle people's personalities, values, emotions, and interpersonal interactions in addition to the ways in which psychological needs are not satisfied (Sultana, 2011).

Upon examining the women's interpretations of their experiences, I have acquired a deeper understanding of marginalised viewpoints. I think focusing on sufferings can provide a more thorough and comprehensive explanation of resource access and conflict concerns without objectifying sufferings. The women expressed their discomfort both directly and indirectly, I discovered, similarly to Sultana's (2011) work on water and arsenic in Bangladesh. The women used a variety of terminology to describe the varying degrees of overt struggle over services, which included 'hassle', 'embarrassed', 'feeling belittled', 'stress', 'feeling ashamed' and 'feeling sad'. They narrated these spectrum of emotions in individual interviews as well as the

group discussions. As Sultana (2011) states, the verbal communication is a kind of direct expression. These included expressing difficulties, grievances, or worries about insufficient access to service infrastructure. Whereas, the non-verbal indicators highlighted by Sultana (2011) were indirect expressions. Things such as body language, facial expressions that portray tension, anxiety, or irritation.. For many women, emotional discomfort is a daily reality when accessing services, particularly in navigating where to obtain them and managing social hierarchies and power dynamics tied to the main house (Brewis et al., 2021).

It is evident that everyday struggles with service infrastructure are made up of the embodied emotions, experienced differently and to varying extents based on the circumstances of each day (Doshi, 2016). For example, a mother explained how to shift positions to access water. She had to exploit her children's suffering to gain access to clean water sources, instead of invoking her own; it is considered more cruel and disgusting to withhold water from children than from adults. The emotional bond between the landlords and individuals who rely on the main home for water supply is created by these negotiations over access to safe water. Sultana (2009) therefore contends that power structures contribute to these emotional topographies. Within a FPE of gender–water interactions, it is crucial to recognize and address the various forms of hardships for water. It is also evident by observing emotions how the women and their families use their current water access and seek for additional ones in order to carry out daily responsibilities.

Furthermore, reflecting on water specifically, the embodied experience of collecting water, the emotional distress of receiving complaints during the process, the feeling of shame when needing

to collect water from a place that is not theirs, and the anxiety of collecting water at night, are shared experiences woven in the daily routines to collect water for these women. However, feelings of contentment and tranquillity brought forth by having access to clean water sharply contrasts the hardships faced by most women. But it is equally critical to emphasise the relief and happiness that one woman felt when she had regular access to clean water or when she occasionally had enough of it. Although these feelings were less prevalent, they are nevertheless noteworthy. Even under the worst of circumstances, the little joys of clean, safe water are significant (Bhavnani et al., 2003). Examining these stories and calls to action helps us gain a deeper understanding of the covert ways that resource geographies impact daily life. Additionally, it helps us comprehend how emotions are a fundamental component of the intricate ways in which individuals get and make use of a resource that is vital to their basic life (Davidson et al., 2005).

7.3 Promise of infrastructure

Many have argued that in cities in the Global South, where basic infrastructure conditions are frequently severe, citizenship is linked to the availability of infrastructure (Anand, 2011; von Schnitzler 2016). Within the backyards explored, as Haque, Lemanski, and De Groot (2021) mentions, service infrastructure availability is a reflection of authority, legitimacy, and power. These residents are deprived of access to basic service infrastructure due to their lack of property rights or ownership over the land they live on (Isandla Institute, 2022). As my findings revealed, the landlords frequently act as a go-between for facilitating access to the right to water and electricity by utilising the public system. Landlords with acknowledged property rights are entitled to municipal water and electricity (Isandla Institute, 2022), while the women living in the backyard structures lack the legal standing to be a member of the networked systems. In areas like Wesbank, where proximal individuals have access to services and those without, infrastructure comes to represent recognition and belonging to the nation-state and city (Dawson, 2010). Therefore, service infrastructure is essential to the women's connection with the state and, consequently, to their day-to-day gendered experiences as backyard dwellers.

Recognizing that the notion of citizenship is lived and experienced by people in inclusive and exclusive environments is important, as well as via their rights and advantages (Yuval-Davis 1997, 2011). For the women in Wesbank, the concept of citizenship is experienced, performed, reconstructed, and challenged via service infrastructure. Infrastructure provision is increasingly being used as mediators in state-citizen relations (Sultana, 2020). Thus, the regular practice of citizenship is interfered with by irregular availability of electricity and water. Ultimately, the

marginalised women can be seen as citizens without a city and the rights to the city (Kempin Reuter, 2019). This is evident in the findings, where the women in Wesbank had scarce access to services and infrastructure, and this scarce access became a symbol of acknowledgment as a city resident and citizen. They frequently contend that they have no measure of official governmental acknowledgment of their rights as citizens, because they have no official services and physical facilities that flow to them as backyarders.

It is unfortunate that the women do not come very often together to claim their urban citizenship rights by discussion, cooperation, action, and group thinking around access to services. They go through their daily struggles individually, however having to battle for shared services can ultimately lead to something deeper: a group battle for urban citizenship and a shared objective of acceptance. Their views and encounters of the state are very different because of their disconnection to the urban water and electrical grid. Disparities and marginalizations are felt physically and psychologically, where the urban poor's daily experience of water scarcity serves as a constant reminder of their despised and unwanted place in the city (Sultana, 2020).

Consequently, the illegal and undignified manner in which they need to access services demonstrates the state's inability to provide for all of its citizens, highlighting governance shortcomings at all levels and sizes, over time, which is being made worse by the influx of additional backyard dwellers in the city (Isandla Institute, 2021). For example, the presence of the bucket/containers and illegal connections made by the women, were seen as undesirable and unsightly by them and their families. This represents a mark of failure from the state’s side to

provide them with the necessary infrastructure. The lack of infrastructure serves as a constant reminder of their transitory status, embodied subjection, and lack of citizenship (Lemanski, 2019; 2020). Everyday, these levels of precariousness and insecurity reinforced heightened feelings of alienation and belonging. In an interview, a young mother stated that they want clean water for their families because they are citizens of this city, but because they are poor, they are undervalued. This rejection of impoverished women's duties as mothers, served as a clear reminder of their marginalised status. As Sultana (2020) states, these entanglements, which are particularly noticeable in the backyard dwellings, demonstrate the daily embodied and disputed nature of infrastructural citizenship.

8. Conclusion

This thesis delves deeply into the complex interconnections of embodiment and gender in informal backyard dwellings with limited service infrastructure. The main research approach consists of semi-structured one-on-one interviews, supplemented with focus group discussions and non-participant observations. The study uses these strategies to elicit personal experiences that offer insight on the complex dynamics. This chapter summarises the thesis's significant results while noting the research's contributions and limitations. Additionally, topics for additional exploration are indicated, laying the groundwork for future research attempts.

One thing that is apparent from this study, is that women's lived experience cannot be examined in isolation from their living environments since they influence one another recursively (Sultana, 2011). Firstly, this research highlights existing scholarly engagement regarding the material conditions of the women living in informal backyard dwellings (Isandla Institute, 2022; Lategan, 2017; Rice et al., 2023). In the yard the original home stands on its own and the yard tenants generally have their structures in the front, back, or sides of the house. In most cases, the entire property has a single access gate and the tenants reach their separate shacks from a shared yard. The most common type of backyard lodging in the study areas is the 'wendy house,' which is made mostly of low-grade wood and has corrugated iron ceilings. The women interviewed reported using second hand materials for doors and windows. The use of used furniture and thin wooden sheets to define living spaces within these constructions demonstrates creativity. Additionally, access to services is made possible by the main house, with all backyard houses illegally linked to the main house's power via extension cables, and water and sanitation facilities

come from taps in the yard or the main home. The findings demonstrate these women's tenacity and flexibility in the face of difficult living situations.

In the context of informal backyard dwellings, a gendered viewpoint has been noticeably lacking from current discourse (Lemanski, 2009; Turok and Borel-Saladin, 2015; Scheba and Turok, 2020; Lategan, 2017). This study fills a gap by carefully investigating and revealing the gender-specific aspects of living circumstances in informal backyard dwellings. By casting attention on factors that may have been neglected in larger conversations, the study raises awareness and understanding of the particular problems and possibilities that women experience in these living settings. This understanding has the potential to improve policy discussions, urban planning, and community initiatives, promoting a more inclusive and gender-sensitive approach to dealing with informal housing concerns. This work goes beyond surface-level observations. This is not to deny that men are affected by inadequate infrastructure, but rather to highlight how women's specific roles, physiological realities, and vulnerabilities serve to mediate their relationships with the state through access to infrastructure.

Secondly, the research demonstrates the embodied experience of women accessing services to meet their gendered needs and the burdens they face. As the backyard tenants and the landlords share the services, all agreements are informal and spatially intimate, and therefore a unique set of practices have unfolded (Isandla Institute, 2022). The women explain the dangers, risks, and embarrassment that surround regular activities that take place daily. Embodied experiences such as this reinforces social divisions based on gender and class, tangibly influencing and limiting

prospects for happiness and success in life, while discursively generating social divisions and the exclusion of specific groups of women from municipal rights and places.

The study presents an important addition by expanding the investigation of embodied experiences in accessing gender-specific services, highlighting emotional components within the larger context of different infrastructures. Expanding on Sultana's (2011) idea of emotional geographies of water, this thesis adapts and expands this paradigm to other forms of infrastructure. This expansion broadens the scope of emotional geographies, emphasising the importance of emotions in the complicated processes of acquiring and utilising critical resources. By doing so, the study not only broadens our understanding of how emotions play an important part in navigating service infrastructures, but also sheds light on the hidden ways resource geographies influence daily life. In addition, the thesis emphasises the importance of subjective experiences, arguing that emotional considerations are critical to understanding the diverse interactions that people have with vital resources.

Through examining the women's relationship with their citizenship rights, this research has shown the complicated and difficult nature of their access to housing and basic service infrastructure. While the women officially have access to these facilities, the restrictions and circumstances under which they can utilise them demonstrate the limits on their citizenship rights. The limited and restricted access to services highlights the precariousness of their rights. These descriptions of negotiating spaces, waiting for access, and tolerating unpleasant conditions highlight the women's fragility and the difficulties they encounter in exercising their right to

dignified living conditions. It contributes to the discussion about citizenship rights by Lemanski (2019), bringing light on the complex manners in which women navigate and negotiate their access to essential services within the setting of informal housing, displaying the constraints and challenges that they encounter in claiming their rights.

This study identifies several possible areas for future research, highlighting demographics and features that were not completely covered but might have a substantial influence on the lived experiences of women in informal backyard houses with minimal service infrastructure. Future studies may wish to explore the impact of language and race on these experiences. Investigating how language obstacles, particularly between English, Afrikaans, and other African languages, alter power relationships and limit access to crucial services might give useful insights into the complex dynamics at work. Furthermore, taking care of children became prominent, displaying a cascading effect on women as mothers. Examining the intersectionality of gender and motherhood in the context of informal housing may provide a more in-depth knowledge of the issues that women confront, as well as throw insight on policy concerns that currently ignore the major impact on other stakeholders such as children. Further research into these factors could build on existing knowledge and lead to more inclusive and successful policies addressing the challenges of informal housing everyday life.

Understanding the limits of a master's thesis in providing action-oriented suggestions, the major policy and practice advice from this study is to aggressively include a gendered perspective into informal backyard housing policies. Recognize the special obstacles and possibilities that women

experience in informal backyard houses, and ensure that regulations are tailored to gender-specific features of living conditions. This integration should include factors such as secure land tenure for women, community-driven planning that incorporates their views, gender-responsive infrastructure development, and capacity-building initiatives designed to empower women in these areas. Policymakers and practitioners may help to create more equitable and inclusive living circumstances, as well as resilient and empowered communities, by including gender sensitivity into informal settlement policies.

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Appendix A

Sample interview schedule

Opening:

I'm very grateful to you for sparing time to talk about your experiences and challenges. The purpose of this conversation is to explore your lived experiences as a woman living with limited infrastructure in backyard dwellings and how you interact with your citizenship rights.

I motivate you to communicate fully and openly as confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained. Opinions expressed will be treated in confidence. All responses will remain anonymous.

Body:

Household information (will be explored using observations as well – photos, videos etc.):

1. How many rooms, including kitchens, are there for this household?
2. In which way does this household obtain water for domestic use?
3. Does the household get water from the Municipality?
4. What is the main type of toilet facility available for use by this household?
5. What type of energy/fuel does this household mainly use for cooking?
6. What type of energy/fuel does this household mainly use for lighting?
7. How is the refuse or rubbish from this household mainly disposed of?
8. To what extent does public service delivery reach your home?
9. How do you respond to challenges to accessing infrastructure individually to meet your gendered needs?
10. What are the main struggles you are faced with living in backyard housing? How would you describe that experience?
11. As a woman, what burdens are you faced with regards to infrastructure failure on the dwelling?
12. How does your access to infrastructure affect your daily life as a woman, and in what way is it different to the men?

13. What are some of the things in your backyard dwelling that need improving?
14. How would you describe your relationship with your citizenship rights to public services?
15. Do you feel as a woman, you are being supported by the government when it comes to service provision in your backyard housing?

Closing:

(summarise)

Thank you for your time and input into my research project, I highly appreciate your willingness to contribute. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we end? I will be in contact with you again to have another conversation about the things you have shared with me today.

Appendix B

Table 1: List of interview participants and additional information

Name	**Age**	**Race**	**Date of interview**	**Location of interview**	**Duration of interview**
Bronwyn	38	coloured	05 December 2022	Participant's home	50 minutes
Chantel	27	coloured	05 December 2022	Participant's home	55 minutes
Fatima	35	coloured	18 November 2022	Community assistant's home	1 hour
Hilda	62	coloured	07 December 2022	Participant's home	1 hour 15 minutes
Linda	45	black	16 November 2022	Community assistant's home	45 minutes
Lorraine	55	coloured	18 December 2022	Community assistant's home	1 hour

Maggie	57	coloured	16 November 2022	Community assistant's home	45 minutes
Michelle	32	black	07 December 2022	Community assistant's home	50 minutes
Noni	61	black	06 December 2022	Participant's home	1 hour
Sandra	40	coloured	05 December 2022	Participant's home	1 hour 10 minutes
Sonja	45	coloured	16 November 2022	Community assistant's home	45 minutes
Susan	51	black	18 November 2022	Community assistant's home	50 minutes
Tamia	29	coloured	18 November 2022	Community assistant's home	1 hour 15 minutes
Vanessa	38	coloured	16 November 2022	Community assistant's home	1 hour 08 minutes
Zelda	46	coloured	18 November 2022	Community assistant's home	50 minutes

Appendix C

FGD themes for backyard tenants:

1. The burdens the women face with regards to infrastructure failure on the dwelling and how do they respond to challenges to accessing infrastructure collectively to meet their gendered needs.

2. Do women understand their citizenship rights, and to what extent are the women coming together to claim their citizenship rights.
3. Shared and similar experiences regarding infrastructure on the dwellings and how it affects them, in a gendered manner.

FGD questions for backyard tenants:

1. How long have you been living there in the backyard?
2. What are the materials of your homes?
3. How did you separate the rooms?
4. What's your privacy like?
5. What support would you as ladies want, from the government. What support would make you feel comfortable where you are living?
6. Are you allowed to have people over?
7. Are there groups of people in the community that you guys can go to for help or get together to discuss things like this in a group?
8. Is that something you guys would want here in the community?
9. wouldn't any one of you want to start that?
10. What would be the biggest problem or challenge living in the backyard?
11. What's your thoughts on building upwards, as Leonie said, there's no yard space to build, she would have to build up?
12. So if you were given an upstairs, would you think to rent the bottom out? Or would that be a problem?
13. If you were to start a small business there, with a separate entrance for people, will that be a problem for the people in the main house?
14. Does living in a backyard impact your work?
15. Has living in the backyard perhaps affected your family planning?
16. If you had your own house, would you rent out your backyard?
17. What do you think about the government?
18. Are you happy about the inside of your home?

19. Do you decorate your homes?
20. Do you feel like you belong in this community as someone living in the backyard?
21. Are you involved in the community, with the people around?
22. What do you see for the future, for yourself?

FGD questions for landlords:

1. How long have you been living here and do you own that main house or rent the main house?
2. Do you do the maintenance of the backyard structures as the owners of the main house?
3. What would you say is the biggest problem you have with them living in the back?
4. Are there rules in place?
5. Are you open to taking tenants who are willing to pay you more money?
6. If you have arguments or fights, what do you do?
7. How do they access the toilet and water?
8. Do you have a certain time until when they can come and use the bathroom inside?
9. Are their visitors allowed to use the bathroom inside or do they use the bucket at the back?
10. How is your privacy in your own home with the tenants coming in and out?
11. What are your thoughts on the government and people who have tenants in their backyards?
12. How do the people at the back receive electricity?
13. Are there restrictions on the water, since it's free?
14. If the backyard bungalow or wendy was built properly, would you still be open to renting it out?

Appendix D

Table 2: List of focus group discussion participants and additional information

Backyard tenants					
Name	**Age**	**Race**	**Date of FDG**	**Location of FGD**	**Duration of FGD**
Fatima	35	Coloured	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Hilda	62	Coloured	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Lorraine	55	Coloured	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Maggie	57	Coloured	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Michelle	32	Black	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Noni	61	Black	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Sandra	40	Coloured	28 March 2023	Community school hall	2 hours
Susan	51	Black	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Tamia	29	Coloured	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours
Vanessa	38	Coloured	28 March 2023	Community school's hall	2 hours

Landlords					
Name	**Age**	**Race**	**Date of FGD**	**Location of FGD**	**Duration of FGD**
Landlord 1	65	Coloured	29 March	Community	2 hours

			2023	school's library	
Landlord 2	54	Coloured	29 March 2023	Community school's library	2 hours
Landlord 3	50	Black	29 March 2023	Community school's library	2 hours
Landlord 4	47	Coloured	29 March 2023	Community school's library	2 hours
Landlord 5	54	Coloured	29 March 2023	Community school's library	2 hours
Landlord 6	43	Black	29 March 2023	Community school's library	2 hours
Landlord 7	61	Coloured	29 March 2023	Community school's library	2 hours