



Urbanization, Informal Settlements, and Social Welfare Dynamics in South African Cities, 2005 Context

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Abstract

Urbanization in South African cities has led to significant growth in both formal and informal settlements, posing challenges for social welfare systems. The research employs comparative analysis of data from two major South African cities, focusing on surveys and case studies conducted among residents of formal and informal settlements. A key finding is that informal settlement residents often face disproportionate challenges in accessing social welfare services compared to those in formal areas, with a significant proportion (35%) reporting delays or outright denial of benefits. The study highlights the critical need for targeted interventions and policy reforms to improve access to essential social welfare supports within informal settlements. Policy makers are urged to prioritise inclusive urban planning that integrates formal and informal settlement residents, ensuring equitable access to social services.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, peri-urbanization, spatial inequality, social protection, qualitative research*

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