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Potentials for adopting sustainable mixed-income housing in African cities: a bibliometric and systematic review

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ABSTRACT

This paper offers an overview of mixed-income housing in African cities, emphasising its importance, challenges, and potential solutions. As urbanisation increases, mixed-income housing becomes crucial for addressing housing inequality, fostering social inclusion, and promoting sustainable urban development. However, its application in African contexts is under-researched. Through bibliometric analysis and systematic review, the study utilised VOSviewer to examine existing research, identifying publication trends, dominant themes, emerging trends, and mapping out research gaps of mixed-income housing in the African context. The study highlights geographical biases and calls for diverse research settings to understand mixed-income housing complexities across different African cities. The emerging trends further underscore the need for tailored policies, community integration, sustainable financing, and long-term impact assessments. However, gaps remain in understanding environmental sustainability, economic impacts, and community dynamics in mixed-income housing. The paper concludes with recommendations for future research, advocating interdisciplinary collaboration and mixed-method approaches to formulate a comprehensive strategic framework. Addressing these gaps can guide evidence-based policies to promote inclusive, sustainable mixed-income housing in African cities, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and fostering resilient urban futures.

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African cities; bibliometric analysis; mixed-income housing; sustainable urban development; systematic review; urban inequality

1. Introduction

Urbanisation is rapidly reshaping the African landscape, with cities experiencing unprecedented population growth, economic expansion, and social transformation (Agyemang et al., 2019). However, African cities face severe housing affordability crises exacerbated by rapid urbanisation and limited economic opportunities (Isah & Khan, 2016; Sareen & Haque, 2023). Spatial inequality is prevalent, marked by stark divisions between affluent areas and impoverished informal settlements, leading to

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unequal access to amenities and infrastructure. Additionally, economic disparities strain social cohesion, fueling segregation and fragmentation. A mixed-income housing model has the potential to address these challenges by fostering diverse, inclusive communities and reducing spatial inequality (Tsenkova, 2022). This approach promotes social interaction across economic classes, integrates lower-income residents into better-serviced areas, and ensures a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities.

Despite the potential benefits, the adoption of mixed-income housing in Africa is currently limited by several factors. For instance, inadequate funding often manifests through high land and construction costs, making it difficult to provide affordable housing while maintaining profitability (August, 2016). Moreover, political will is often weak, as many local governments prioritise private-sector interests or lack long-term urban planning frameworks (Trillo, 2019). Regulatory challenges, such as outdated zoning laws and inefficient land tenure systems, further complicate implementation, especially in cities like Lagos and Nairobi. There are few successful examples, primarily confined to select urban centres, and they often lack scalability. To advance mixed-income housing in Africa, further research is needed to examine best practices from global successes, adapt them to the African context, and explore innovative financing models that could enhance the viability of these projects. Additionally, investigating the long-term impacts on residents' social and economic mobility could offer valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners, underscoring the rationale for this review.

Mixed-income housing refers to residential developments that incorporate diverse housing types and price points, catering to various income levels within the same neighbourhood (Simbanegavi, 2019). By integrating affordable, market-rate, and subsidised housing units, these developments aim to reduce spatial segregation and create more socially diverse communities (Levin et al., 2022). This variety stands in contrast to traditional housing models that concentrate low-income residents in segregated areas, perpetuating cycles of poverty.

Globally, mixed-income housing has emerged as a strategy to address urban inequality and promote sustainable development. Cities such as Chicago, New York, and Toronto have implemented such projects with varying success, showing the potential to transform urban landscapes (Tsenkova, 2022). However, in Africa, mixed-income housing models remain underexplored despite the urgent need for innovative solutions to the continent's growing housing challenges.

The dynamics of mixed-income housing in African cities are shaped by a complex interplay of socio-economic, political, and spatial factors (Onatu et al., 2023). Rapid urbanisation has intensified the demand for affordable housing, while entrenched spatial segregation, historical inequalities, and weak urban governance present significant barriers to the implementation of such initiatives. Furthermore, land tenure systems, regulatory frameworks, and cultural norms vary across African cities, influencing the feasibility and effectiveness of mixed-income housing projects.

This article aims to explore the potential of mixed-income housing to address housing inequality, foster social inclusion, and promote sustainable development in African cities. By analysing case studies, synthesising existing literature, and identifying research gaps, the study seeks to inform policymakers, urban planners, and practitioners about the opportunities and challenges of implementing mixed-income housing initiatives in

Africa. Ultimately, this exploration hopes to contribute to more equitable and resilient urban futures for the continent.

2. Materials and methods

This section details the materials and methods used in the analysis, focusing on document selection, screening, and the rationale for their inclusion. It also describes the analytical tools and data presentation methods essential for the reliability and validity of the proposed framework for sustainable mixed-income housing in Africa.

The study utilised the Scopus database to source relevant materials due to its extensive range of high-quality, multidisciplinary sources (Anthony et al., 2023; Tanko & Mbugua, 2021). Scopus allows for efficient data extraction, including up to 2,000 articles for scientometric analysis using the VOSviewer software (Aule, Majid, et al., 2024). While Scopus offers comprehensive coverage, other databases such as Web of Science and Google Scholar were not included in this analysis to maintain consistency and avoid challenges in merging data from different sources within the basic version of the VOSviewer. However, this reliance on a single database may introduce limitations in the diversity of sources, potentially omitting relevant literature found in non-Scopus-indexed journals.

For data identification, screening, and inclusion, this study followed the Systematic Review method, adhering to the 'Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses' (PRISMA) guidelines outlined by Page et al. (2021). The search was confined to the Scopus database to avoid complexities in merging data from different sources with the VOSviewer tool. The Boolean search terms 'mixed-income' OR 'mixed-income' AND 'Housing' AND 'Africa' were used, resulting in the identification of 268 materials.

The search, conducted on 10 April 2024, was further refined by limiting the language to 'English' and excluding 'articles in the press'. After applying these restrictions and exclusions, 262 documents remained for analysis. The final query string used was: TITLE-ABS-KEY (('mixed-income' OR 'mixed-income') AND housing) AND (EXCLUDE (LANGUAGE, 'French') OR EXCLUDE (LANGUAGE, 'Chinese')) AND (EXCLUDE (PUBSTAGE, 'aip')).

These 262 documents were exported as CSV files into Microsoft Excel, preserving key bibliographical data such as author names, affiliations, and journal rankings. The data were then prepared for scientometric analysis using VOSviewer. It is important to acknowledge that the exclusion of non-English documents may have introduced some bias, as valuable studies in other languages could be overlooked. Furthermore, the focus on journal articles over other forms of literature, such as police reports, may limit the study's scope.

As a method of systematic analysis, scientometrics scrutinises the impact of research publications, authors, journals, institutions, and countries in a specific knowledge domain (Ghaleb et al., 2022). While VOSviewer, developed and refined by van Eck and Waltman (2010, 2014, 2022), is particularly useful for visualising relationships among articles and mapping scientific landscapes, it may be too technical for some readers. For this reason, only the most relevant aspects of its functionality will be discussed. VOSviewer creates network, overlay, and density map representations based on

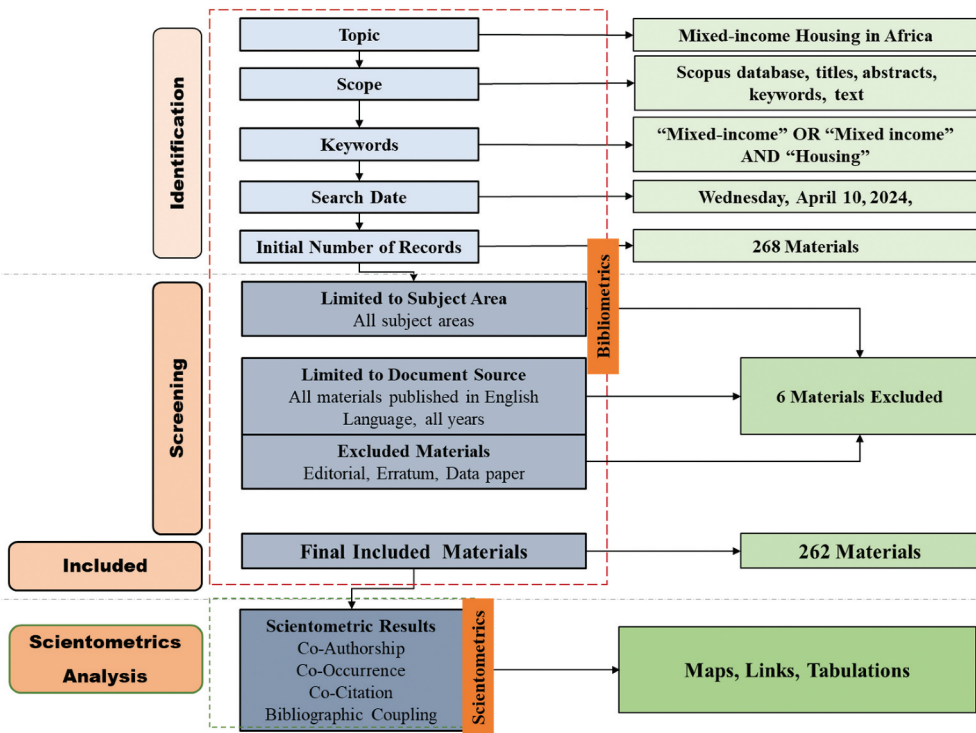


Figure 1. Use of PRISMA for data identification, screening, and inclusion.

bibliometric data, highlighting patterns and connections within the literature. It was chosen for its ability to display large maps clearly and effectively, making it the primary tool for this scientometric investigation (Oraee et al., 2017; Zakka et al., 2021).

As presented in Figure 1, this study utilised PRISMA for data identification, screening, and inclusion in mixed-income housing research. The 262 documents exported from Scopus were analysed using VOSviewer, offering graphical insights into the scholarly landscape and providing a foundation for understanding the field.

3. Results and discussions

This section provides an in-depth analysis of the scientometric review results, focusing on trends, themes, and gaps in mixed-income housing research. The analysis highlights significant patterns, implications for the field, and opportunities for future research, particularly in the context of African cities.

3.1. Documents by subject area

The 262 documents, including journal articles, reviews, book sections, and conference proceedings, were analysed to identify trends across different disciplines. ‘Social Sciences’ led with 56.6% of publications, indicating a strong focus on societal dynamics and policy frameworks related to mixed-income housing, as

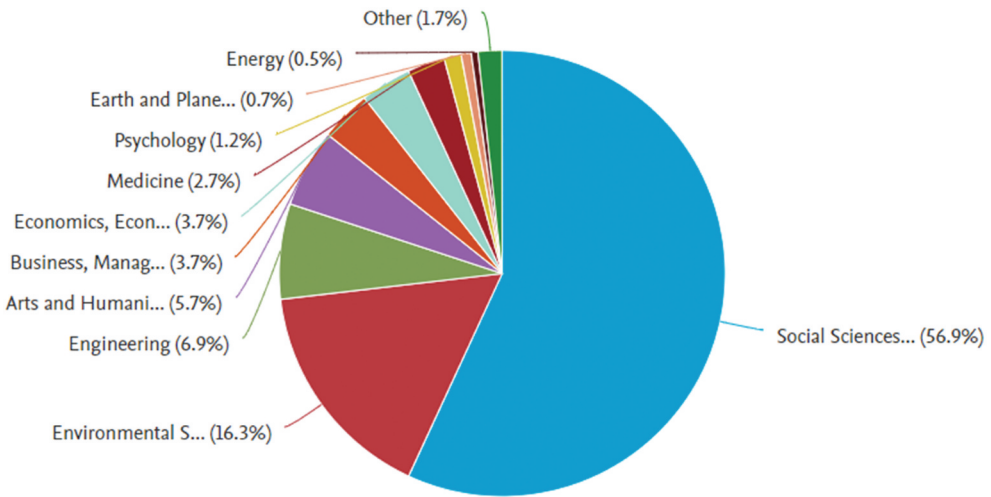


Figure 2. Distribution of mined materials of mixed-income housing.

presented in Figure 2. ‘Environmental Science’ and ‘Engineering’ followed with contributions on sustainability and infrastructure, respectively. The more documents on ‘Social Sciences’ emphasise the significance of housing as a fundamental social need of humans (Aule et al., 2022; Turkoglu, 2015). However, the direct underrepresentation of fields like Architecture, Urban Planning, and Health Professions suggests a need for interdisciplinary research. Future studies should address these gaps to provide a more comprehensive understanding of mixed-income housing dynamics.

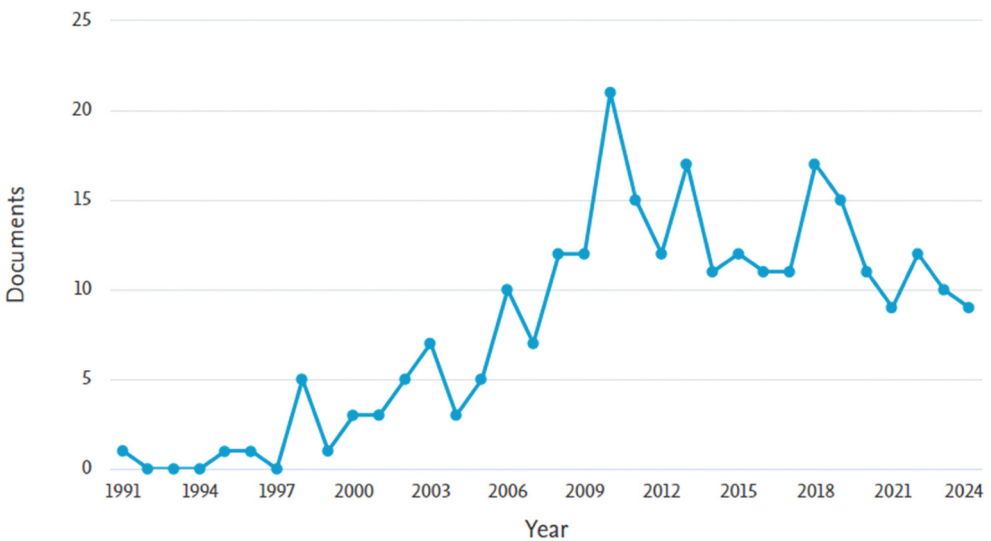


Figure 3. Documents by year on mixed-income housing.

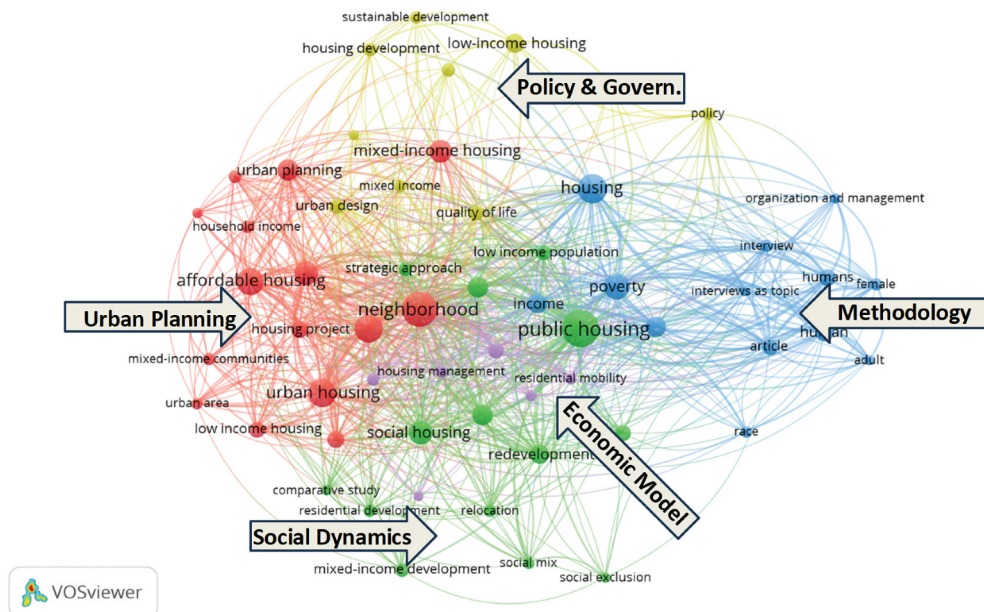


Figure 4. Main themes in mixed-income Housing.

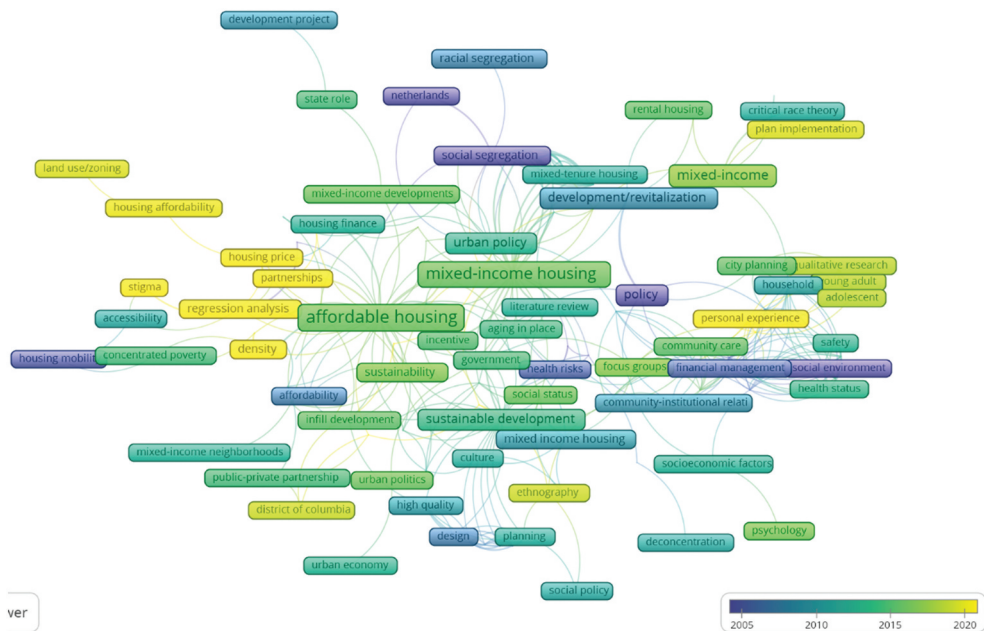


Figure 5. Trending keywords for mixed-income housing in the 2020s.

3.2. Documents by year of publication

Figure 3 illustrates the yearly trends in mixed-income housing research. Peaks often correspond to significant policy changes or housing crises, while troughs indicate periods of stability. The data reveals evolving research priorities and methodologies. Understanding these trends is crucial for contextualising current research and shaping future studies. Researchers should focus on emerging challenges and evolving methodologies to keep pace with the field's development.

Interestingly, the fluctuations in publication numbers often align with significant policy changes, economic trends, or housing crises, driving increased academic inquiry (Ajibola et al., 2015). Conversely, troughs suggest periods of instability or reduced research funding. This analysis offers valuable insights into the trajectory of mixed-income housing research, identifying periods of heightened attention and potential focus areas, thereby mapping the evolving landscape of scholarly interest in this area.

3.3. Top authors of mixed-income housing

Table 1 highlights the most prolific authors in the field, noting their contributions and the absence of African scholars. This gap underscores the need for more African researchers to address the continent's unique socio-economic challenges. The concentration of authors from community development and social services suggests a focus on social and policy dimensions, with less emphasis on urban planning and economics. This concentration, however, overlooks contributions from disciplines like urban planning, architecture, economics, and sociology, which are crucial for understanding the spatial, economic, and cultural dynamics of mixed-income housing (Chantzaras, 2019; Jutraz & Zupancic, 2014). Future research should encourage interdisciplinary collaboration to enhance understanding of mixed-income housing from multiple perspectives. Czischke (2018) notes that identifying leading authors in a field of study can stimulate further research, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and enhance productivity through networking.

Table 1. Bibliometric information of top authors in mixed-income housing.

S/N	Author	Author Discipline	Document Number	Study Context	Most-Cited Material	Citations
1	Joseph, M. L.	Community Development	18	Cleveland, US	(Joseph et al., 2007)	229
2	Chaskin, R. J.	Social Service	11	Chicago, US	(Joseph et al., 2007)	229
3	Vale, L.J.	Urban Planning	9	Massachusetts, US	(Vale & Shamsuddin, 2017)	31
4	Tsenkova, S.	Planning	4	Calgary, Canada	(Tsenkova, 2019)	4
5	Shamsuddin, S.	Housing Policy	4	Tufts, Boston, US	(Vale & Shamsuddin, 2017)	31
6	Levy, D.K.	Housing and Urban Development	4	Scarsdale, New York, US	(Popkin et al., 2000)	124
7	Kleit, R.G.	Housing Policy	4	Ohio, US	(Manzo et al., 2008)	183
8	Khare, A.T.	Urban Planning	4	Cleveland, US	(Chaskin et al., 2012)	76

3.4. Themes in mixed-income housing

The analysis identified five main themes: Urban Planning and Design, Community and Social Dynamics, Policy and Governance, Economic Vitality and Financial Models, and Methodological Evaluation and Impact Assessment, as presented in [Figure 4](#). These themes highlight key areas of focus and overlap, providing a foundation for future research. Researchers should explore these themes in relation to African contexts, considering how they influence policy and practice. For instance, addressing the socio-psychological aspects of mixed-income housing could lead to more inclusive and effective community integration strategies. Theoretically, these themes align with findings that social, economic, and environmental issues significantly impact global housing sustainability (Aule et al., 2024, 2022b; Jaiyeoba & Aklanoglu, 2018).

3.5. Emerging trends in mixed-income housing

The Overlay Visualization of co-occurrence analysis revealed key trends and variables in mixed-income housing research since 2020, as presented in [Figure 5](#). These include a focus on tailored policies, community integration, sustainable financing, and urban planning. The lack of specific policies for African contexts and limited research on financing models highlights critical gaps. Future studies should develop context-specific strategies and explore innovative financing mechanisms to address these gaps. Accordingly, the emerging themes underscore the need for research on fostering inclusive communities, sustainable financing mechanisms, urban planning specific to African cities, and long-term impact assessments (Aule et al., 2019, 2022a, 2022b; Horgan & Dimitrijević, 2020).

3.6. Systematic methodologies and findings on mixed-income housing

The 12 materials from previous studies that mentioned ‘mixed-income Housing’ directly in their titles or keywords were reviewed systematically to explore common variables, theoretical frameworks, geographical contexts, data collection techniques and analysis tools to identify significant findings, conclusions and recommendations.

3.6.1. Research variables, methodologies and concepts

The study variables, as presented in [Table 2](#), encompass various topics, reflecting the multifaceted nature of mixed-income housing research. The study variables in mixed-income housing research are diverse, covering topics such as neighbourhood safety, housing quality, and social interaction but missing environmental sustainability and economic impacts. Future research should explore the gaps in these areas. Likewise, the conceptual frameworks range from socialisation theory to new urbanist design yet are lacking in contemporary resilience theories. Integrating contemporary resilience theories could address climate change and economic shocks. Furthermore, the data collection methods vary widely, with a need for more mixed-methods approaches combining qualitative and quantitative data, as well as the utilisation of advanced analytical techniques like machine learning.

Table 2. Systematic analysis of variables, methodologies and concepts in mixed-income housing.

Author Names	Study Variables	Research Methodology		Theoretical /Conceptual Framework
		Data Collection Procedure	Data Analysis Tool	
(Anderson et al., 2003)	Neighbourhood safety, Housing quality, Youth risks, Psychological and physical morbidity	A systematic review was conducted using ten computerised databases	Bibliographic information in the online databases	None
(August, 2016)	roadblocks to resistance, benevolent branding, consultation games, resistance co-optation, reprisal fear, internalised powerlessness, tenant power potentials	Ethnography, participants observation, media and Document analysis, in-depth qualitative interview	Transcribed and analysed using NVivo software	New urbanist design principles, planning concept of social mix, Deconcentrating of poverty theory, US HOPE VI program
(Chaskin et al., 2013)	neighbourhood dynamics and Neighbourhood environment, Perspectives on youth in mixed-income communities, Youth, social interaction, and the management of neighbourhood relationships, public space and public behaviour, Engagement in activities and services	Interviews, Field observations, Focus groups, and Review of documentary data	Qualitative data analysis software using the NVivo program	Socialisation theory, social contagion theory, social capital theory, social control theory
(Dokow & Luque, 2019)	Degree of individual heterogeneity, Additional dimensions of individual heterogeneity, Subsidy to local public goods serving small catchment areas, Immobile versus mobile residents, Individuals choosing multiple local public goods, Significant differences among local public goods, Local public good as a real estate asset, The case of insurer, hospitals, primary care doctor, and employer	Data from the US Centre for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS), Hospital General Information (HGI) File, 2012 Hospital Service Area File (HSAF), and 2010 Inpatient Beneficiary Survey (IPBS)	Jurisdiction-tract Gini ratio, Ordinal entropy index,	Hypothesis that hospital catchment areas overlap, Hypothesis that small catchment areas tend to serve patients in poorer health

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

Author Names	Study Variables	Research Methodology		Theoretical /Conceptual Framework
		Data Collection Procedure	Data Analysis Tool	
(Ellickson, 2008)	Essential policy choice: Projects or vouchers, Evolution of US housing assistance policy, Emergence of mixed-income projects, Case for the superiority of housing vouchers, promoting economic integration of neighbourhoods, waning of confidence in the social benefits of neighbourhood economic integration, why support for project subsidies persists, mediocrity of moving from a ninth-best to a seventh-best policy,	Systematic review	None	Dynamics of lock-ins, sociological theory suggests,
(Levin et al., 2022)	Past negative and positive side effects of social mix? Social mix housing policies in the Global East and South: China, Japan, South Korea, Sub-Saharan Africa, Singapore—A unique adoption of social mix housing policy, Social Mix Version 2.0: What might Social Mix Version 2.0 look like? The question of intentionality, Mixed-income housing transit-oriented design, Learnings from the Global East and South	Systematic review	None	Social mix in planning and housing policy, Galster and Friedrichs's challenge on progressive reformation, social mix version 2.0

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

Author Names	Study Variables	Research Methodology		Theoretical /Conceptual Framework
		Data Collection Procedure	Data Analysis Tool	
(Lukhele, 2014)	Integration, Accessibility, Efficiency, Image and aesthetics, Surveillance, Ownership and territoriality, Understanding the mixed-income housing concept in South Africa, Manifestation of social cohesion in urban areas, Target-hardening,	Systematic review	None	Principles of the comprehensive plan for the development of sustainable human Settlements, commonly known as the Breaking New Ground program (BNG)
(Neri, 2024)	Public housing regenerations, public housing in London, Primary school provision in England, school effects and neighbourhood, Impact of regeneration programs on residents, School inputs and peers,	Using 2001 census data and the National Pupil Database (NPD), the Difference in Differences (DID) design	Not stated	None
(Onatu et al., 2012)	Background to South African housing policy, Breaking new ground, Sustainable energy development in mixed-income housing development, why sustainable energy in low-income housing? Project background and critical results, Challenges encountered	Interviews, Focus group discussions,	None	Draft South African National Solar Water Heating (SWH) Framework and Implementation Plan, 2009
(Simbanegavi, 2019)	House price, Distance Contours, Race, Income, Crime, Age of house, Time dummy, autoregressive term (ART)	Mixed method – quantitative and qualitative – (interview, survey, case study)	STATA software to generate normality of the error terms, heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and autocorrelation; NVivo 11 for thematic, content, and cluster analysis; word cloud	Transaction and user cost theory, Neoclassical profit maximisation theory, Artificial neural network (ANN) theory, Hedonic pricing theory

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

Author Names	Study Variables	Research Methodology		Theoretical /Conceptual Framework
		Data Collection Procedure	Data Analysis Tool	
(Trillo, 2019)	Mixed-income housing: A historical overview, implementing mixed-income housing strategies, Mixed-income housing: Useful, useless, counterproductive, Assessing the impact of mixed-income housing Policies,	Systematic review	Systematic review	The garden city paradigm, United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11, Ethically concerned planning theories
(Zhang et al., 2024)	Sense of community (SOC), Daily activity pattern, Neighbourhood facility utilisation, Sociodemographic attributes,	Survey questionnaire	Descriptive analyses, Structural Equation Models,	Social-spatial perspective by Gottdiener and Hutchison

Employing these mixed methods and advanced analytical techniques in housing research can enhance the depth and accuracy of research, leading to more robust policy recommendations (Ruhlandt et al., 2020). Therefore, future research should integrate contemporary urban resilience theories and sustainability models to address climate change and economic shocks. Additionally, employing mixed-methods approaches and advanced analytical techniques like machine learning could enhance the depth and accuracy of research.

3.6.2. Research geographical context, aim and findings

The geographical context of the studies varies widely, as presented in Table 3, with notable gaps in rapidly urbanising regions like Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, geographical contexts where most developing countries are found (Henderson & Turner, 2020). Future research should address these regions to understand mixed-income housing impacts in diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts. The study aims also vary, revealing a need for research on long-term economic impacts and social mobility outcomes. Recommendations for future studies include developing comprehensive frameworks that incorporate economic, environmental, and social dimensions to guide sustainable and resilient mixed-income housing policies. Addressing these gaps will provide a more nuanced and actionable understanding of mixed-income housing, ultimately contributing to more effective and sustainable urban development policies.

Table 3. Reviewing research geographical context, aim and findings in mixed-income research.

Author	Context	Aim	Finding	Conclusion/ Recommendation
(Anderson et al., 2003)	Systematic review	Mixed-income public housing and Reducing Residential Segregation	The impact of mixed-income housing developments on enhancing family health and safety	A tenant-based rental assistance program is advised to improve household safety, reduce hazards, mitigate youth risk behaviours, and address psychological and physical health issues.
(August, 2016)	Toronto, Canada	Recognise the interconnected factors that have hindered tenant organisation efforts.	No single factor explains limited resistance. With combined factors, very few tenants come up against revitalisation.	Improve efforts to eliminate the structural inequality that necessitates resistance.
(Chaskin et al., 2013)	Chicago, United States	Investigate how young people are viewed by residents of mixed-income developments	Improvements in the lives of young people living in mixed-income developments, while unsupervised youth have a negative influence on community	sustainability of mixed-income environments without adequate investments in structured supports and activities for youth.
(Dokow & Luque, 2019)	American Community Survey	Examine how the mixed-income housing model impacts households' contributions to local public goods.	The research model suggests that individuals select public goods to engage with based on their income level.	There is an equilibrium where smaller jurisdictions comprise more poor individuals.
(Ellickson, 2008)	Systematic review	Mixed-income housing and government Subsidies to	Mixed-income housing is clearly more effective than large, segregated public housing projects.	Increase investment in housing vouchers instead of using those funds to create inclusionary units.
(Levin et al., 2022)	Systematic review	Mixed-income communities and Global perspectives	Governments beyond the Global North are willing to invest in social mix policies.	support for housing regeneration, including the creation of socially mixed communities
(Lukhele, 2014)	South Africa	Mixed-income housing, urban development, and social integration.	Mixed-income housing promotes an inclusive community where low- and middle-income households coexist harmoniously.	Approaches to address racial issues could enhance urban social cohesion in a democratic South Africa.
(Neri, 2024)	London, United Kingdom	The impact of mixed-income public housing on students' educational performance.	Students who experience urban regeneration tend to achieve higher test scores by the end of primary school.	Enhancing the composition of the student body can boost achievement by facilitating interactions between current students and high-achieving peers.
(Onatu et al., 2012)	Cosmo City, South Africa	Mixed-income housing and energy efficiency	Decreased carbon emissions due to the use of paraffin for heating and the implementation of environmental education programs.	Research focuses on developing building envelopes that improve lighting efficiency, insulation, and HVAC systems and incorporate motion sensors.

(Continued)

Table 3. (Continued).

Author	Context	Aim	Finding	Conclusion/ Recommendation
(Simbanegavi, 2019)	Cosmo City, South Africa	Mixed-income housing on neighbourhood house prices and investment guidelines	Results confirm that the price reduction of houses substantiates mixed-income development.	Delivering mixed-income developments through community-based Partnerships with strict monitoring.
(Trillo, 2019)	Systematic review	Mixed-income housing and its role in creating inclusive cities.	There is a disconnect between bold rhetoric and the limited impact of policies on residential segregation.	Participatory and community-based approaches are crucial for implementing mixed-income housing effectively.
(Zhang et al., 2024)	Fuzhou, China,	Sense of community in mixed-income neighbourhood	The positive influence of daily social interactions on a sense of community was exclusive to residents of market housing.	Frequent utilisation of proximal facilities can substantially improve SOC among residents,

4. Conclusions

In brief, this study systematically explores the dynamics of mixed-income housing in African cities, focusing on its potential to address housing inequality, foster social inclusion, and promote sustainable urban development. Through bibliometric analysis and systematic review, key findings emerge regarding the current state of research, including the predominance of social sciences in publications, geographical biases in study contexts, and gaps in interdisciplinary collaboration. The analysis also highlights emerging trends, such as the importance of tailored policies, community integration, sustainable financing mechanisms, inclusive urban planning, and long-term impact assessments.

This study makes significant contributions to the field by providing a comprehensive overview of mixed-income housing research, identifying critical gaps, and offering actionable recommendations. By systematically highlighting these areas, the research advances the understanding of mixed-income housing dynamics and provides a robust foundation for future investigations.

However, notable research gaps exist in understanding environmental sustainability, economic impacts, and the mechanisms behind observed outcomes. This study strongly urges policymakers and researchers to address these gaps by engaging in more diverse geographical contexts, conducting longitudinal studies, employing mixed-methods approaches, and developing comprehensive, long-term strategic frameworks. Addressing these gaps can inform evidence-based policies to promote inclusive and sustainable mixed-income housing developments in African cities, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address major global concerns. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the role of mixed-income housing in shaping the future of African cities and offers a roadmap for advancing research and policy in this critical area.

The study strongly urges policymakers and researchers to enhance policy frameworks with tailored approaches specific to mixed-income housing, foster interdisciplinary

collaboration, and promote community integration to improve social cohesion. Secondly, there is also a call for innovative financing mechanisms and long-term impact assessments using advanced analytics to ensure sustainable development. Thirdly, addressing environmental sustainability is crucial, along with increasing the representation and engagement of African researchers to provide localised insights into the subject area.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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