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Architectural Identity and Urban Growth: A Review of Residential Architecture in Lagos Mainland Since Independence

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Abstract

This review investigates the evolution of residential architectural identity in Lagos Mainland, Nigeria, from the post-independence period to the present. It critically synthesizes literature from 2022 to 2025 to examine key housing typologies including tenement housing, duplexes, gated estates, and high-rise apartments and their transformation under the pressures of urban growth, socio-economic change, and cultural shifts. The study reveals that while residential design has diversified, it often reflects class stratification, inadequate planning enforcement, and a gradual erosion of vernacular identity. Common themes emerging from the literature include the dominance of informal housing, socio-economic influences on design, the tension between modernization and cultural continuity, and the rise of gated communities as expressions of security and exclusivity. The review identifies significant gaps in research, particularly regarding long-term user satisfaction, climate-sensitive design, and culturally responsive planning. It concludes with recommendations for more inclusive urban design policies, stronger regulatory frameworks, and empirical research that bridges tradition with contemporary housing needs in Lagos Mainland.

Keywords: Architectural identity, residential architecture, Lagos Mainland, urban growth, post-independence, housing typologies, housing policy, urban inequality

Introduction

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, the architectural landscape of Lagos has undergone significant transformation, shaped by rapid urbanization, shifting socio-economic conditions, and evolving cultural preferences (Bello, 2021). Nowhere is this transformation more evident than in Lagos Mainland, a densely populated zone that blends historical tenement housing with contemporary gated estates and high-rise developments (Tickell, 2025). As Lagos transitioned from a colonial capital to a megacity, residential architecture evolved in response to increasing population pressures, land scarcity, economic stratification, and aspirations for modern living (Afinowi, 2022). These architectural changes are not merely functional they also reflect the city's identity, values, and patterns of growth over time. Despite the visible shifts in architectural forms across Lagos Mainland, there remains a fragmented understanding of how residential typologies have evolved in response to urban growth and cultural identity. Most existing studies focus on planning failures or slum proliferation without holistically reviewing the architectural typologies that have emerged over time such as the "face-me-I-face-you" tenements, duplex housing, and gated communities. This lack of consolidated knowledge hinders effective policy formulation and architectural responses to the unique urban challenges facing Lagos Mainland.

This study aims to critically review the evolution of residential architectural identity in Lagos Mainland since independence, with a focus on how urban growth has influenced housing typologies.

The specific objectives are to:

i. examine key residential typologies that have emerged over time;
ii. analyze the socio-cultural and economic drivers of architectural change; and
iii. identify trends, challenges, and knowledge gaps in the literature that shape Lagos Mainland's residential architecture.

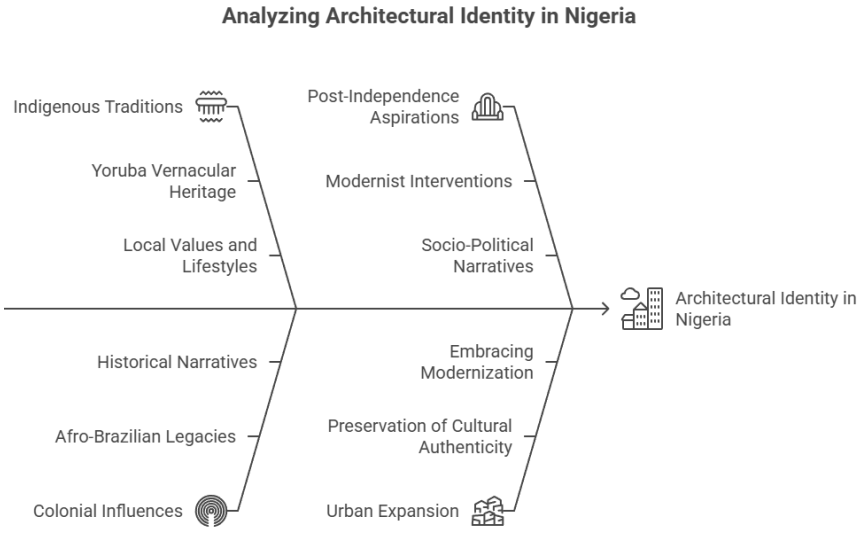
This review focuses on residential architecture within the Lagos Mainland Local Government Area, specifically examining developments from 1960 to the present. It does not include non-residential architecture such as commercial or institutional buildings. While comparative insights may be drawn from other parts of Lagos or Nigeria, the core analysis remains anchored in the spatial and socio-cultural context of Lagos Mainland. The review synthesizes scholarly articles published between 2022 and 2025, alongside select foundational literature that provides historical context. By providing a synthesized understanding of residential architectural evolution in Lagos Mainland,

this review contributes to architectural scholarship, urban planning, and policy discourse in Nigeria. It helps identify the intersection between built form, cultural expression, and urban pressures informing future residential design and sustainable housing interventions. The study also offers a baseline for further empirical research on housing satisfaction, planning policy, and architectural identity in rapidly growing African cities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework: Defining Architectural Identity in the Nigerian Context

Architectural identity encompasses the distinctive features of a built environment that reflect the cultural, historical, and environmental characteristics of a place (Alnaim, 2024). In Nigeria, architectural identity is deeply rooted in indigenous traditions, colonial influences, and post-independence aspirations. It is expressed through elements such as building form, materials, layout, ornamentation, and spatial relationships that embody local values and lifestyles. In the context of Lagos Mainland, architectural identity represents a tapestry woven from Yoruba vernacular heritage, Afro-Brazilian colonial legacies, and modernist interventions introduced after independence (Akinmolayan, 2023). Understanding architectural identity in this setting requires considering both physical forms and the socio-political narratives that shape them. As Nigeria's urban areas expand, debates around preserving cultural authenticity while embracing modernization have become central to architectural discourse (Ezeudu & Chukwudubem, 2024).

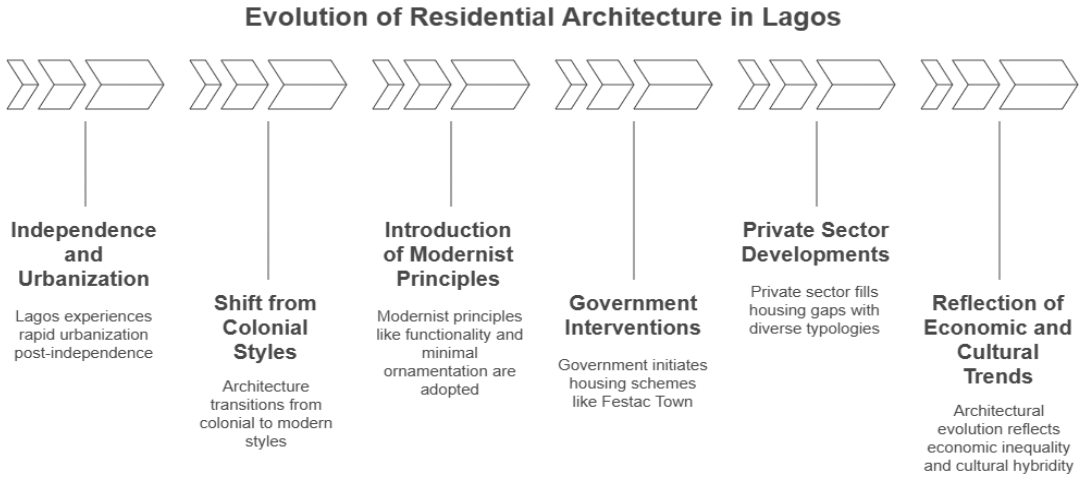


Source: (Ezeudu et al.,2024: Akinmolayan,2023)

The Evolution of Residential Architecture in Lagos Post-Independence

Following independence in 1960, Lagos experienced rapid urbanization fueled by population growth, rural-urban migration, and administrative centrality (Alabi, 2021). The

residential architecture of Lagos evolved in response to these pressures, shifting from colonial low-rise bungalows and Afro-Brazilian townhouses to mass housing schemes, informal settlements, and mixed-income estates. The post-independence era saw the introduction of modernist principles functionality, minimal ornamentation, and the use of concrete as a solution to housing shortages (Ugah, Babalola & Ekeh, 2024). Government interventions in the 1970s and 1980s, such as Festac Town and low-cost housing schemes, attempted to standardize residential layouts but often fell short of demand. Over time, private sector developments filled the gap, resulting in diverse typologies ranging from high-rise apartments to gated estates (Jimmy, 2024). This architectural trajectory in Lagos Mainland reflects broader patterns of economic inequality, policy shifts, and cultural hybridity.



Source: (Jimmy et al., 2024: Alabi 2021)

Typologies of Residential Architecture in Lagos Mainland

Lagos Mainland features a wide spectrum of residential typologies, each shaped by economic class, land availability, family structure, and urban growth patterns (Aliu, 2024). These typologies reflect both continuity and change, accommodating varying household sizes and evolving lifestyles. Four dominant types tenement housing, duplexes/semi-detached units, gated communities, and high-rise blocks offer insight into the spatial and social realities of the area.

Tenement Housing ("Face-me-I-face-you")

Tenement housing, colloquially known as "face-me-I-face-you," is one of the most prominent and enduring typologies in Lagos Mainland (Aliu, 2024). These buildings consist of rows of single rooms arranged along a shared corridor or courtyard, with communal bathrooms and kitchens. Originating in the post-colonial era as affordable

housing for low-income earners and migrants, tenements are dense, economical, and socially interactive (Maina, Weldeghebrael, Frediani & Uduku, 2024). However, they are often associated with overcrowding, poor sanitation, and inadequate infrastructure. Despite their drawbacks, they remain a critical component of Lagos's informal housing market and provide shelter for a significant portion of the population.

Duplexes and Semi-detached Units

The growth of the middle class and increased private investment in housing, duplexes and semi-detached units have become popular in Lagos Mainland (Ajaero, 2024). These typologies typically occupy larger plots and offer improved spatial organization, privacy, and aesthetic appeal. Their designs often incorporate modern finishes, security features, and internal amenities that reflect upward social mobility. Found in planned neighborhoods or as infill developments in formerly low-density zones, duplexes represent a shift toward individualized housing and a desire for prestige. They also signal a transformation in family structures, with nuclear households replacing extended family living patterns common in tenements.

Gated Communities and Estates

Gated residential estates have proliferated across Lagos Mainland as a response to rising security concerns, land commodification, and lifestyle preferences among the upper-middle class (Yakubu ,2024). These developments are characterized by controlled access, uniform building styles, internal infrastructure, and communal amenities. Often developed by private firms, gated communities offer a sense of exclusivity, orderliness, and modern urban living. However, they also contribute to spatial segregation and reinforce class divides, especially when juxtaposed with informal settlements. Architecturally, they mirror global housing trends while adapting to local climatic and cultural needs.

High-rise Residential Blocks

High-rise apartments, though more common in Lagos Island, have gained traction in parts of Lagos Mainland, especially in areas such as Surulere, Yaba, and Ebute-Metta. These buildings are designed to accommodate more residents on smaller land parcels, addressing issues of land scarcity and urban sprawl (Oyalowo, 2022). Initially championed by government-led housing projects in the 1970s, high-rise blocks now feature in private developments, particularly for rental or short-let purposes. While they offer vertical density and improved access to views and airflow, concerns around maintenance, lift services, and community cohesion persist.

Urbanization and Housing Demand in Lagos Mainland

Lagos Mainland has experienced intense urbanization over the past six decades, resulting in increased housing demand, land competition, and informal development (Olajide & Lawanson, 2022). The population explosion has far outpaced the supply of adequate housing, leading to a proliferation of unregulated buildings and slums. The inadequacy of urban planning, infrastructure, and enforcement has exacerbated overcrowding and strain on existing residential typologies. Urbanization has also prompted adaptive reuse of buildings and densification of formerly low-density areas (Kostourou, 2021). As developers respond with duplexes, apartments, and mini-estates, the urban form continues to evolve sometimes at odds with sustainability and liveability goals.

Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Influencing Residential Design

Residential architecture in Lagos Mainland is not only shaped by spatial logic but also by cultural values, economic status, and social practices (Owamoyo & Tabibi, 2023). Extended family structures, religious beliefs, and communal living traditions influence design decisions such as the inclusion of verandas, inner courtyards, or external kitchens. Economic constraints often dictate material choices, building heights, and spatial organization. For instance, low-income families may favor compact, rentable structures like tenements, while wealthier individuals pursue larger, more private units. The desire for status and modernity fuels investment in duplexes and gated estates, even as affordability and space-sharing remain dominant among the majority (Ronan, 2022). These socio-economic dynamics create a mosaic of residential patterns that blur the lines between formal and informal, traditional and modern.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative literature review approach to explore how residential architecture in Lagos Mainland has evolved since independence. The review aims to identify trends, typologies, and socio-cultural influences shaping architectural identity within the context of urban growth.

A total of 15 peer-reviewed journal articles were systematically reviewed. The selected literature spans the period 2022 to 2025, a time frame chosen to capture contemporary developments in residential architecture, urban growth patterns, and socio-cultural dynamics in Lagos. This period reflects current academic discourse and policy shifts relevant to the evolving housing landscape in the region.

Relevant studies were identified based on their focus on residential architecture in Lagos Mainland and their alignment with key themes such as housing typologies, urbanization, socio-cultural influences, and architectural identity. Literature was sourced from reputable academic databases including Google Scholar, ResearchGate, MDPI, and SpringerLink.

The search strategy employed keywords such as: *"Lagos Mainland housing," "face-me-I-face-you," "gated communities Lagos," "architectural identity Nigeria,"* and *"urban residential growth Lagos."*

Inclusion criteria:

i. Peer-reviewed, full-text articles published in English between 2022 and 2025.
ii. Studies focused on residential developments in Lagos Mainland or closely related urban contexts.

Exclusion criteria:

i. Articles focused on non-residential buildings.
ii. Studies outside the Nigerian or West African urban context.
iii. Non-peer-reviewed or inaccessible full-text materials.

From each article, relevant data such as housing typology focus, year, methodology, and key findings were extracted. The articles were then grouped and analyzed thematically to identify emerging patterns and insights regarding architectural identity, residential forms, socio-economic drivers, and urban transformation in Lagos Mainland.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section synthesizes insights from the reviewed literature to critically evaluate the evolution of residential architectural identity in Lagos Mainland. Drawing on diverse studies published between 2022 and 2025, it explores how residential typologies have responded to the city's rapid urbanization, socio-economic shifts, and cultural transformations since independence. The discussion is organized around key thematic areas trends in housing form, informal density, socio-cultural influences, gated development, and policy implications culminating in the identification of research gaps and directions for future inquiry.

Over the decades, Lagos Mainland has witnessed a pronounced shift in housing typologies from communal, compound-style tenement buildings of the 1960s to contemporary duplexes and gated communities. Tenement housing, such as the "face-me-I-face-you" typology, was primarily driven by affordability, extended family living, and the need for social interaction through shared courtyards and facilities. In contrast, modern duplexes and gated estates reflect aspirations for privacy, social status, and security often featuring enclosed layouts, controlled access, and internalized amenities. This transformation illustrates a deeper evolution in planning priorities, where socio-cultural inclusivity has given way to spatial exclusivity and market-driven development models.

PAPER 1: An empirical review on affordable housing estate using vernacular architecture in Lagos State. EKSU Journal of the Management Scientists. (*Hassan, T. H., Adewumi, B. J., & Olukunga, O. A. (2024).*

In *"An empirical review on affordable housing estate using vernacular architecture in Lagos State,"* Hassan et al. (2024) investigate how vernacular design principles inform affordable housing projects in Lagos. They begin by identifying traditional architectural elements such as native materials (mud, clay, bamboo), courtyard configurations, and passive cooling systems that were historically prevalent in Nigerian residential design. The authors perform a systematic review of case studies, government reports, and peer-reviewed literature, synthesizing lessons from past and present housing projects. Their findings stress the relevance of integrating vernacular features into modern housing estates to promote thermal comfort, reduce energy consumption, and reinforce cultural authenticity. The paper explores how estate developers have selectively adapted courtyard layouts and local materials but often neglect ongoing maintenance and stakeholder engagement, resulting in rapid degradation. Hassan et al. conclude with policy recommendations advocating multi-stakeholder collaboration, capacity-building programs for contractors, and regulatory frameworks to ensure vernacular elements persist throughout the operational lifespan of these estates.

PAPER 2: Appraising alternative building technologies adoption in low-cost housing provision to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11. *(Ebekozien, A., Aigbavboa, C. O., & Samsurijan, M. S. (2023).*

In *"Appraising alternative building technologies adoption in low-cost housing provision to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11,"* Ebekozien et al. (2023) explore why alternative building technologies (ABTs) like compressed earth blocks, prefabricated panels, and recycled-material bricks have not been widely adopted in Nigeria's low-cost housing sector. Using semi-structured interviews with 50 stakeholders (developers, architects, policymakers), augmented by developer surveys, the study employs thematic analysis to uncover significant obstacles.

The authors found that regulatory uncertainty, high initial costs, lack of technical expertise, and conservative perceptions from developers and end-users significantly impede ABT uptake. Despite demonstrating cost savings, environmental benefits, and potential to speed up construction, ABTs are undermined by fragmented value chains and weak policy incentives. Ebekozien et al. recommend targeted intervention strategies such as pilot demonstration sites, formalized technical training, subsidy incentives, and streamlined regulatory approval processes to boost stakeholder confidence and mainstream ABTs in affordable housing.

PAPER 3: Sense of security and production of place in gated communities: Case studies in Lagos, Nigeria. International Journal of Property Sciences, 13(2), 1–14. *(Adetokunbo, A. (2023).*

In *"Sense of security and production of place in gated communities: Case-studies in Lagos, Nigeria,"* Adetokunbo (2023) analyzes how architectural form reinforces psychological perceptions of safety and community within gated residential estates in Lagos Mainland. The paper features case studies of three gated developments, combining occupant interviews, field mapping, and observational surveys. The study reveals residents place high value on controlled entry points, perimeter walls, CCTV, and visual cohesion fostering an improved 'sense of place.'

Adetokunbo critically interrogates how these estates replicate global enclaved designs in Nigeria, adapting them to local needs (e.g., covered walkways for rainfall, covered balconies for ventilation). However, the study also addresses spatial exclusion: gated estates tend to separate wealthy residents from their neighbors, reinforcing social segregation. The author concludes that while gated communities meet security and status needs, they risk fragmenting urban space and omitting alternative, inclusive design models.

PAPER 4: Assessment of residential satisfaction in high-rise residential buildings: Eric Moore Towers (Mainland), Lagos. *(Alagbe, O. A., & Babajide, A. (2020).*

In *"Assessment of residential satisfaction in high-rise residential buildings: Eric Moore Towers (Mainland), Lagos,"* Alagbe & Babajide (2020) investigate how high-rise living affects user satisfaction. Through occupant surveys, structured interviews, and a satisfaction index framework, they examine factors contributing to ease of living in a 12-floor high-rise block. Key determinants include reliable elevators, waste management, security presence, and facility upkeep.

While residents acknowledge convenience due to proximity to urban amenities and better spatial distribution, low satisfaction emerges around areas like emergency readiness, service disruptions, and communal space underutilization. The authors emphasize that without continual facility management and resident engagement, high-rise design advantages become quickly undermined. Recommendations include establishing homeowners' associations, scheduled maintenance of shared systems, and designing flexible communal spaces to boost resident well-being.

PAPER 5: Exploring spatio-temporal pattern of gentrification processes in intracity slums in the Lagos Megacity. *(Ekundayo, O. (2022).*

In *"Exploring spatio-temporal pattern of gentrification processes in intracity slums in the Lagos Megacity,"* Ekundayo (2022) maps the transformation of slum settlements many of them on Lagos Mainland into upgraded housing. Using satellite imagery analysis,

geographic information systems (GIS), and field surveys, the study identifies patterns where informal compounds are replaced with duplexes, mini-estates, or commercial infill. The research highlights that while redevelopment can improve sanitation and structural resilience, it also often leads to the displacement of low-income households. Gentrification follows two patterns: piecemeal densification (upgrading within existing compounds) and large-scale redevelopment (entire blocks transformed). The paper argues for inclusive redevelopment strategies that retain affordable housing units and ensure original tenants are compensated or re-housed, maintaining social equity amidst urban transformation.

PAPER 6: Influences of socio-cultural experiences on residents' satisfaction in Ikorodu low-cost housing estate, Lagos State. *(Olotuah, A. O. (2022).*

In "Influences of socio-cultural experiences on residents' satisfaction in Ikorodu low-cost housing estate, Lagos State," Olotuah (2022) examines how embedded cultural practices shape residential satisfaction within low-cost housing settings. Drawing upon structured surveys and focus group interviews with 150 users of a government-built estate in Ikorodu (a part of Lagos Mainland), the paper unpacks how shared courtyard spaces foster community bonds and address privacy needs, especially among extended families. Residents expressed a strong preference for flexible interior layouts that accommodate religious and communal activities, highlighting the inadequacy of standard corridor-access designs. Olotuah concludes that culturally responsive design especially in low-cost contexts is not only desirable but critical to enhancing user satisfaction and advocating for modifications in housing policies to better reflect cultural dynamics.

PAPER 7: Built-in flood risk: The intertwinement of flood risk and unregulated urban expansion in African cities. *(Andreasen, M. H., Agergaard, J., & Allotey, A. N. M. (2023).*

The study "Built-in flood risk: The intertwinement of flood risk and unregulated urban expansion in African cities" by Andreasen et al. (2023) explores the relationship between informal residential growth and flood vulnerability, with a notable focus on Lagos. Employing geospatial mapping and hydrological analysis, the authors delineate how informal structures such as makeshift tenements and duplex compounds have been erected in flood-prone areas without adherence to safe building standards. Their analysis reveals a clear correlation between rapid unchecked residential expansion and increased flood exposure, exacerbated by inadequate drainage and lack of urban planning enforcement. The study advocates for regulatory mechanisms that incorporate flood risk assessment into residential zoning and design processes particularly when upgrading or sanctioning informal settlements to foster climate-resilient housing.

The environmental risks discussed by Andreasen et al. intersect significantly with socio-cultural housing practices in Lagos Mainland. For instance, traditional residential layouts that emphasize open courtyards and communal spaces are increasingly replaced by denser

vertical structures or sealed-off estates. While these newer forms may maximize land use or enhance security, they often reduce permeability, compromise natural drainage, and exacerbate heat retention and flood vulnerability. In many cases, the erosion of vernacular spatial planning which historically accounted for climatic adaptation is linked to environmental stressors now observed in newer, unregulated developments. A stronger integration of cultural sensitivity and environmental resilience in residential design is therefore critical to addressing these dual challenges.

PAPER 8: Correlation between socio-economic characteristics and housing quality of residential neighbourhoods in Akure, Southwest Nigeria. *(Olayiwola, A. M., & Ajala, O. A. (2022).*

In their article examining Akure's residential neighbourhoods, Olayiwola and Ajala (2022) delineate how socioeconomic status influences the delivery and structure of housing, with implications for similar typologies in Lagos Mainland. Using household surveys and structural assessments across low-, middle-, and high-income zones, they establish strong links between income levels and the presence of amenities, construction quality, and space allocation. Middle-income areas typically feature better materiality and planning (including duplexes and estates), while low-income sectors contend with overcrowding and informal construction. This divergence informs the broader narrative of architectural stratification in Lagos Mainland, where duplexes and gated communities emerge in response to economic mobility and status.

PAPER 9: Dynamics of urban heat island in Lafia, Nasarawa State of Nigeria: A remote sensing analysis. *(Abimbola, O. J., Adewumi, T., & Abubakar, M. (2025).*

The paper "Dynamics of urban heat island in Lafia, Nasarawa State of Nigeria: A remote sensing analysis" by Abimbola et al. (2025) uses satellite data to document how urban densification leads to elevated surface temperatures. Although focusing on Lafia, the research is valuable for Lagos Mainland given analogous residential intensification. The study reveals that areas dominated by dense housing typologies, such as compact tenements and high-rise blocks, recorded up to 4°C higher surface temperatures compared to green neighbourhoods. The findings underscore the need to integrate green infrastructure and reflective building materials into Lagos Mainland residential design to mitigate heat stress and enhance environmental comfort.

PAPER 10: ReCo: A dataset for residential community layout planning. (*Bamidele, J. A., Gbenga, T., & Abdulkareem, M. (2022).*

Bamidele et al. (2022), in "ReCo: A dataset for residential community layout planning," introduce a comprehensive open-access dataset capturing layout characteristics of various housing typologies. Compiling data such as lot sizes, built density, clustering, and open

space ratios, ReCo serves as a benchmarking tool for community-level residential design assessment. Although not specific to Nigeria, the dataset allows researchers to quantitatively compare emerging Lagos Mainland typologies such as duplex clusters and gated estates with global precedents. The authors argue this tool can guide planners and architects in critically assessing spatial configuration, walkability, and safety of housing clusters, supporting evidence-based typological analysis and policy formulation.

PAPER 11: Typological analysis of gated communities in Ibadan, Nigeria. (*Makinde, O. O., & Oladapo, O. (2024).*

In "Typological analysis of gated communities in Ibadan, Nigeria," Makinde and Oladapo (2024) deliver a comprehensive examination of residential form, layout, and social dynamics within gated estates findings that apply to emerging developments in Lagos Mainland. Through architectural surveys, resident interviews, and spatial mapping, they categorize gated communities based on plot orientation, uniform façade treatments, access control measures, and inclusion of shared amenities such as parks and recreational areas. Their study demonstrates how these gated typologies create insulated micro-environments that reflect both aspirational design qualities and socio-economic aspirations. However, the authors also critique how such estates exacerbate urban inequality by physically segregating residents and limiting public access. They ultimately argue that gated development models in West Africa must be resituated within larger urban planning frameworks to ensure integration rather than exclusion.

PAPER 12: Implications of urban expansion: Land, planning and housing in Lagos. *(Andreasen, M. H., Jenkins, P., & Nielsen, M. (2022).*

In "Implications of urban expansion: Land, planning and housing in Lagos," Andreasen et al. (2022) provide a wide-reaching analysis of Lagos's urban growth trajectory, with particular focus on housing typologies in underserved areas like Lagos Mainland. Employing policy review, land-use change analysis, and stakeholder interviews, they reveal how market-driven residential development mostly unregulated duplexes, estate infill, and informal tenements has outpaced government planning controls. Their findings show that the urban perimeter is continuously redrawn by private actors, often in flood-prone areas and without sufficient planning oversight. The study concludes by urging stronger planning institutions and contextual urban design guidelines to align residential architecture with environmental resilience and social equity.

PAPER 13: Urban planning in a context of rapid urban growth: A large-scale review of urban plans in Africa. *(Fadda, M. (2024).*

Fadda's article, "Urban planning in a context of rapid urban growth: A large-scale review of urban plans in Africa," presents a continent-wide synthesis of urban policy

effectiveness, with relevant insights for Lagos Mainland residential typologies. The author analyzes over 300 masterplans and urban development schemes, revealing a pattern of comprehensive policy frameworks that remain under-implemented due to weak governance. While formal plans often account for green spaces and mixed-use design, actual residential development tends toward informal, dense typologies such as tenements and privately driven estates. Fadda advocates for embedding adaptive governance and community participation in urban planning, in order to better align housing outcomes with design intentions and cultural identity.

PAPER 14: Converging trend of global urban land expansion sheds new light on sustainable development. *(Hu, S., Yang, Z., Galindo-Torres, S. A., Ding, Y., & Chen, D. (2023).*

In "Converging trend of global urban land expansion sheds new light on sustainable development," Hu et al. (2023) use remote sensing and global typology analysis to detect emerging convergence in residential patterns among tropical and coastal cities. Lagos Mainland's duplex clusters and emerging gated estates parallel the forms observed in cities across Southeast Asia and South America. However, the authors caution that such convergence can dilute local architectural identity unless governed by culturally sensitive regulations. Their study advocates for design codes that integrate local aesthetics, passive climatic adaptation, and community-inclusive layouts within rapidly expanding urban housing.

PAPER 15: A systematic review protocol of opportunities for noncommunicable disease prevention via public space initiatives in African cities. (*Lawanson, T. O., Foley, L., Mapa-Tassou, C., & Mogo, E. R. I. (2022).*

In "Opportunities for noncommunicable disease prevention via public space initiatives in African cities," Lawanson et al. (2022) explore how residential layout design especially in dense neighbourhoods like tenements can serve as a platform for healthier living through public spaces and walkable environments. Reviewing global and local studies, they assert that well-designed courtyards, shared recreational zones, and permeable street networks can reduce sedentary lifestyles often associated with gated or high-density compounds. The authors argue that incorporating public space design in residential developments such as tenement upgrades, duplex estates, and gated communities can foster social interaction, physical activity, and community well-being in Lagos Mainland.

Table 1: Comparative Summary of Themes from Reviewed Literature

Theme	Key Insights from Literature
Trends in Residential Architectural Identity (1960s–2020s)	Residential architecture has evolved from informal vernacular tenements to mid-rise duplexes and high-rise apartments. This evolution reflects socio-economic shifts, urban growth, and a desire for modernity (Hassan et al., Alagbe & Babajide).
Informal Housing and Urban Density	Tenement housing remains prevalent due to affordability and high-density needs. However, informal settlements often expand into flood-prone zones and are poorly serviced (Ekundayo, Andreasen et al.).
Design Responses to Socio-economic Realities	Housing design correlates with income levels. While low-income residents adapt to informal structures, the middle class prefers gated duplexes with better amenities and layout planning (Olayiwola & Ajala, Olotuah).
Modernization vs. Cultural Identity	New residential typologies often ignore vernacular traditions, leading to architectural homogenization. While global models are adopted, cultural loss is evident unless local design elements are preserved (Hu et al., Hassan et al.).
Gated Estates and Class Segregation	Gated communities have become aspirational models of residential living, but they foster socio-spatial fragmentation by restricting access and reinforcing social stratification (Adetokunbo, Makinde & Oladapo).
Urban Growth and Spatial Transformation	Lagos Mainland has experienced unregulated residential expansion, largely private-sector driven. Rapid land-use change has transformed low-income districts into high-density mixed typologies (Andreasen et al., Ekundayo).
Policy and Planning Implications	Although planning policies exist, they are poorly enforced. Sustainable growth is hindered by weak institutions and lack of coordination between formal planning and informal realities (Fadda, Lawanson et al., Andreasen et al. 2022).
Gaps in Current Research and Future Directions	Current studies seldom evaluate long-term residential satisfaction, cultural continuity, or health-environment relationships in depth. More empirical work is needed on cultural resilience, climate adaptation, and user-centered planning.

Source: Authors' findings

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Key Findings

This study critically reviewed the evolution of residential architectural identity in Lagos Mainland from the post-independence era to the present, with emphasis on typological

transformation and urban growth. The review revealed a significant shift from informal, compound-style tenement housing designed to accommodate extended families and affordability needs to more spatially formalized housing types such as duplexes, semi-detached buildings, and gated estates. This transformation reflects a broader socio-economic trajectory marked by increasing urbanization, rising income disparity, security concerns, and shifting aesthetic preferences. Moreover, the literature underscores that housing design in Lagos Mainland is deeply influenced by socio-cultural dynamics, class aspirations, and unregulated market forces. While modern housing typologies attempt to address density and lifestyle needs, they often do so at the expense of cultural identity, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion. The review also identified persistent gaps in planning enforcement, integration of vernacular architecture, and inclusive public space design.

Implications for Policy and Urban Design

The findings highlight the need for more responsive, equitable, and culturally rooted housing policies in Lagos. Current residential development patterns particularly the proliferation of gated estates and privately driven urban expansion have reinforced socio-spatial fragmentation and marginalized low-income populations. Urban design strategies must integrate inclusive layout planning, contextual aesthetics, and provisions for shared spaces to foster social interaction and public health. Policymakers should prioritize regulatory frameworks that balance innovation with tradition, and developers must be incentivized to adopt climate-sensitive and participatory design approaches. Importantly, there is a pressing need for coordinated planning between the public and private sectors to manage land use, mitigate informal sprawl, and support housing that reflects both economic realities and cultural values.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should adopt empirical methodologies to evaluate the long-term performance of emerging housing typologies in Lagos Mainland, particularly in terms of user satisfaction, spatial adaptability, and cultural fit. There is also a need for research exploring how climate-responsive and health-supportive design elements such as green courtyards, ventilation, and walkable environments can be integrated into both informal and formal housing. Longitudinal studies tracking the transformation of neighborhoods and the lived experiences of residents will provide deeper insights into how residential architecture shapes urban identity over time. Moreover, interdisciplinary collaboration between architects, planners, sociologists, and public health experts will enrich the discourse on sustainable and inclusive residential development.

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