

Manuscript title: Mapping the Evolution of Gentrification in Southern Africa: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Gentrification has led to subtle shifts in the urban landscape, which has affected the economic and social status of African cities. Despite the displacement of low-income communities, disruption of local cultures, and exacerbation of socioeconomic inequalities caused by gentrification in African cities, research on this issue remains relatively scarce compared to the Euro American studies. Thus, this systematic literature review explores the current state of gentrification studies within Southern Africa. The investigation employs bibliometric analysis and the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta- Analysis (PRISMA) protocol to systematically analyse the art of knowledge on the evolution of gentrification scholarship in Southern Africa. VOSviewer version 1.6.20 software was utilised to analyse and visualise trends, citations and authorship. Drawing from 32,539 articles published on the Scopus database, the evolution of gentrification literature through relevant keywords, co-occurrences and co-citations was assessed. Findings revealed a count of 148 articles published in Southern Africa with more emphasis on urban planning and neoliberal policies. The growing body of gentrification research in Southern Africa highlights an increasing recognition of the importance of understanding urban transformation processes in this region. The variability in research focus and publication trends suggests differing regional perceptions and prevalence of gentrification issues. This disparity underscores the need for more localised and context-specific studies to fully grasp the dynamics at play.

Keywords: Gentrification, Euro-American, Southern Africa, PRISMA, VOSviewer, Bibliometric Analysis

Introduction

In the 1960s, British sociologist Ruth Glass introduced the term “gentrification”. This originally depicted the substitution of older working-class residences with middle-class housing in inner city London in the 1950s and 1960s (Guan & Cao, 2020). After Ruth Glass introduced the concept of “gentrification”, urban geographers from Anglo-American backgrounds have extensively studied this phenomenon. While gentrification has historically been prevalent in cities of the Global North, such as in the United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US), it has now spread to cities of the Global South, primarily represented by Brazil, India, South Africa, and China (Lui et al., 2019; Visser & Kotze, 2008). The reason for this spread has been the increase in the number of cities worldwide championing revitalization initiatives within their inner cores to counter inner-city deterioration and pursue sustainable development models, aiming to draw affluent residents into these urban neighbourhoods. These trends demonstrate that gentrification is impacting countries across the global north and south, indicating a universal trend in this phenomenon (Lui et al., 2019). While cities in the global south are generating new forms of urbanism, there has been speculation that these cities are essentially an embellishment of the Anglo-American model of gentrification (Visser & Kotze, 2008). Thus, the understudied concept of gentrification is contextually aligned with both Local Agenda 21, which promotes stakeholder involvement and participation in all decision-making processes, and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, which emphasises improving quality of life in cities and fostering robust rural-urban planning and linkages (Sarfo et al., 2023).

Gentrification is a complex urban phenomenon which has posed challenges in its description over the years. For instance, Visser and Kotze (2008) define gentrification as the transformation of middle-income or vacant land in the inner city into middle-class residential or commercial areas, effectively replacing the existing population with

a wealthier demographic. According to their description, gentrification is recognised as a significant and often rapid process that holds the key feature of transforming the physical, economic and social aspects of inner-city neighbourhoods. It revitalises community infrastructure or converts vacant spaces into habitable areas through either an adaptive or a revanchist standpoint (Mashayamombe & Vally, 2020). Slater (2012) defines gentrification as often taking place in urban areas marked by previous neglect in infrastructure, opening doors for lucrative redevelopment. This process typically prioritises the interest of business and policy elites, often at the detriment of urban inhabitants grappling with job insecurity, unemployment and social marginalization. According to Hamnett (2008), gentrification extends beyond merely class or income dynamics; it is intricately tied to the emergence of fresh cultural and residential preferences. Yet, cultural influences alone are unlikely to drive significant gentrification on their own.

The process of gentrification has led not only to affluent households, but also to institutions, businesses and developers relocating to certain neighbourhoods. This results in demographic, cultural and physical transformations, as low-income neighbourhoods are converted into higher-value areas, often catering to either the middle-class or the elite parts of society (Hwang, 2016). Despite the ongoing trend of professionals and managers relocating from inner cities to suburbs, they seem to be supplanted by an even greater influx of young professionals, managers and workers in finance, business services, as well as the cultural and creative sectors (Hamnett, 2008). Lees et al., (2008) argue that gentrification has evolved into a state-driven, worldwide urban strategy in the global north characterised by a competitive pursuit to establish appealing, distinctive and secure environments tailored as playgrounds for affluent residents and visitors, often associated with or benefiting from global capital institutions. However, in the African cities, it is unfolding through a wider array of approaches such as urbanisation which is propelled by the concurrent growth of both traditional and modern spatial economic changes. Cities are undergoing transformation through the expansion of manufacturing and heavy industry, alongside the rise of high-tech offshoring, outsourcing activities and smaller clusters of service sector innovation (Lees et al., 2008). Gentrification in the African cities is lined with industrialisation, modernisation and the pursuit of modernity. It occurs alongside, suburbanisation and coincided with the rise of slums in the global south, a distinguishing factor from gentrification in the north (Lees, 2014). While some contend that social mixing and better access to cultural, environmental, and other resources for lower-income residents who stay in their neighbourhoods can help reduce social, physical, and health inequalities, previous research suggests that, in certain cases, residential socio-economic segregation is actually growing in gentrified neighbourhoods (Cole et al., 2021).

In certain instances, gentrification can be attributed to the actions of the state, as seen in examples of state-led gentrification in the USA and UK. Some countries incite gentrification instead of directing it, while in other cases such as in Switzerland, the state is uncertain about gentrification (Lees, 2012). The phenomenon of gentrification once considered an occasional and localized peculiarity in the housing markets of select command-center cities has not evolved into a widespread urban strategy supplanting liberal urban policies. Its scope is no longer confined to Europe, North America, or Oceania; instead, the impetus behind gentrification has become universal with its occurrence extending globally (Smith, 2002). Moreover, it is intricately intertwined with the networks of global capital and cultural exchange. Ghertner (2015) observes that gentrification is also found in Luanda, Rio de Janeiro,

and Mumbai and further argues that the forced displacement linked to land upgrading and privatization in post-socialist and post-colonial cities is often disregarded in studies of gentrification. For example, Visser and Kotze (2008) identify the emergence of new-build and office transformation forms of gentrification as drivers of the redevelopment of Cape Town's inner city in South Africa. They argue that this new wave of gentrification plays a crucial role in urban regeneration efforts. However, while there have been minor changes in the urban landscape within African cities, it is crucial to differentiate gentrification literature from the Euro-American and Southern African perspectives. Instead, greater attention should be given to gentrification in the Southern Africa.

In this study, a systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis of published literature are utilised. By conducting a systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis, it becomes possible to examine the phenomenon of gentrification, the advancements in gentrification knowledge and explore the diverse trends in the evolution of relevant research in Southern Africa. Additionally, this approach allows for the assessment of the scientific impact of research and sources in the field (Uribe-Toril et al., 2018). The abstracting index used in this paper is Scopus. The paper commences with an overview of gentrification and briefly touches upon gentrification in Southern Africa. This is followed by the data acquisition and methods section which describes how data for this study were collected. The bibliometric analysis method discusses the PRISMA approach used in this study followed by the results and discussion section of the study. The full text literature reading on gentrification is discussed followed by the trend analysis and the overall conclusions from the study.

Data acquisition and methods

Scopus was used in this study because of its inclusivity of data and high reliability. It has a wide range of sources, encompassing nearly 25 000 journals published by over 5000 international publishers, with a primary focus on periods from 1996 onwards (Magadán-Díaz & Rivas-García, 2022). Though other databases such as Web of Science (WOS) could have been used in this study, Scopus was used and yielded more accurate results compared to WOS which is more scientifically focused. All studies pertaining to the research were considered for review without any specified limitations on publication years, and data were searched and retrieved on 21 June 2024. The initial primary search keyword employed was "gentrification", which produced a total of 34,739 documents, of which 10 were duplicates and removed. 34,729 documents were used for this study. After scrutinizing the title, abstract and keywords of each document and refining the global scope of gentrification, 2190 documents were excluded due to ineligibility for the current review. Following PRISMA guidelines, the present paper considers a total of 32,539 eligible documents for review. To further refine the results, the keyword "Africa" was added to the search and the study was limited to English language only, resulting in 4635 documents, of which 10 were duplicates and therefore removed. 4625 documents were used for this study. After scrutinizing the title, abstract and keywords of each document and refining the scope of gentrification in Africa, 4258 documents were excluded due to ineligibility for the current review. Following the screening process, 367 documents proceeded to the eligibility stage for further consideration. Lastly, the additional keyword "Southern Africa" was included, leading to identification of 194 documents. After scrutinizing the title, abstract and keywords of each document and refining the scope of gentrification studies in Southern Africa countries, only four- South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia And Zambia-appeared in the Scopus database. These countries are likely more frequently studied due to

accessible data, leading to the exclusion of 46 documents due to ineligibility for the current review. Following PRISMA guidelines, the present paper considers a total of 148 eligible documents for review.

The data obtained from the search were saved and exported into CSV Excel used to present publication numbers per year and the most cited articles. The data were then saved as a plain text document and imported into VOSviewer for analysis and visualisation of the results. This allowed for a detailed examination of the obtained data.

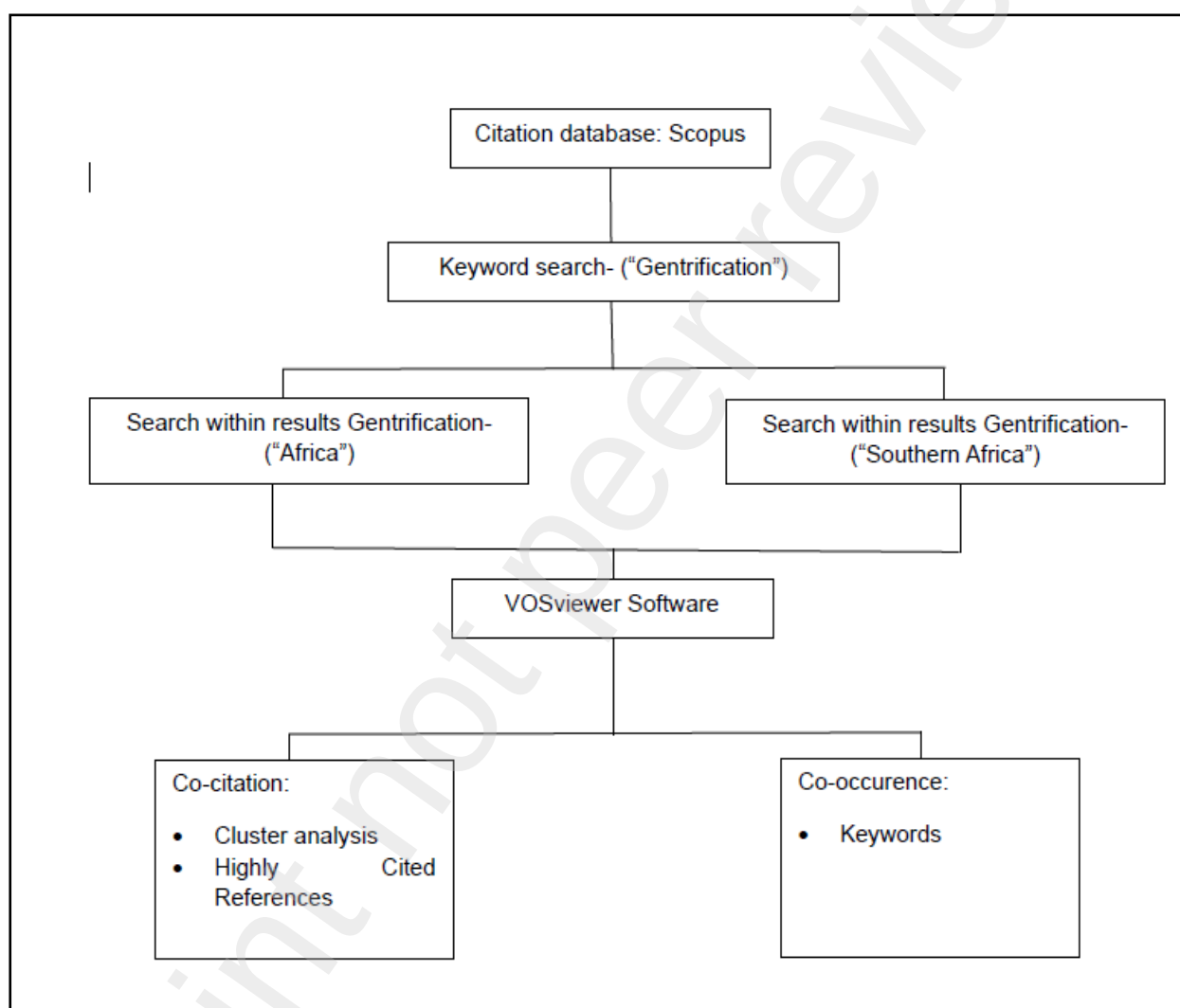


Fig. 1 Bibliometric review used for this study

Table 1 displays the terminology employed by VOSviewer to analyse data. Excel was used for data analysis, while VOSviewer (visualising scientific landscapes) software was employed to cluster the co-occurrences, co-citations and most productive institutions in the field of gentrification. The authors employed co-occurrence analysis to identify the predominant themes within a research domain (Mishra et al., 2023). The software was chosen for its graphical depiction of bibliometric networks, mapping relationships, visualising keyword similarities and identifying commonly used terms by scholars in a specific field (Baffoe & Kintrea, 2022). VOSviewer also

visualises clusters and citation strength, providing a methodology for high-quality, detailed reporting and analysis (Uribe-Toril et al., 2018).

Table 1 Terminology employed by VOSviewer

Terms	Description
Cluster	A collection of objects integrated into a map, typically consisting of a main item accompanied by additional items
Link	A relationship between two items or their connection, such as the co-occurrence of keywords
Link Strength	A distinctive feature of each individual link is that, in case of co-authorship links, higher values indicated a greater quantity of publications that the two scholars have collaborated on
Items	Items of focus such as journals, scholars, keywords, and authors

Source: (Nyathi et al., 2022).

Bibliometric Analysis

Bibliometric analysis finds extensive application in assessing the progress of scientific research across diverse fields (Zheng et al., 2021). It offers valuable insights into a scientific field and utilises statistical techniques to precisely evaluate and quantify the volume and growth trajectory of publications within an academic discipline (Baffoe & Kintrea, 2022). To ensure comprehensive outcomes for the study, this paper employed bibliometric analysis and Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta- Analysis (PRISMA) protocol that included full text reading. Bibliometric analysis was chosen because it enabled the assessment of developments in gentrification knowledge Globally, in Africa and in Southern Africa as well as the scientific impact of research and sources (Uribe-Toril et al., 2018).

PRISMA was selected due to its evidence-based nature and its ability to provide a minimum set of items for the study. The PRISMA statement comprises a checklist of 27 items and a four-phase flow diagram (refer to Fig. 2). We used the guidelines of PRISMA because this approach offered an enhanced precision in identifying the sample database and was useful for the critical assessment of published systematic reviews (Maier et al., 2020).

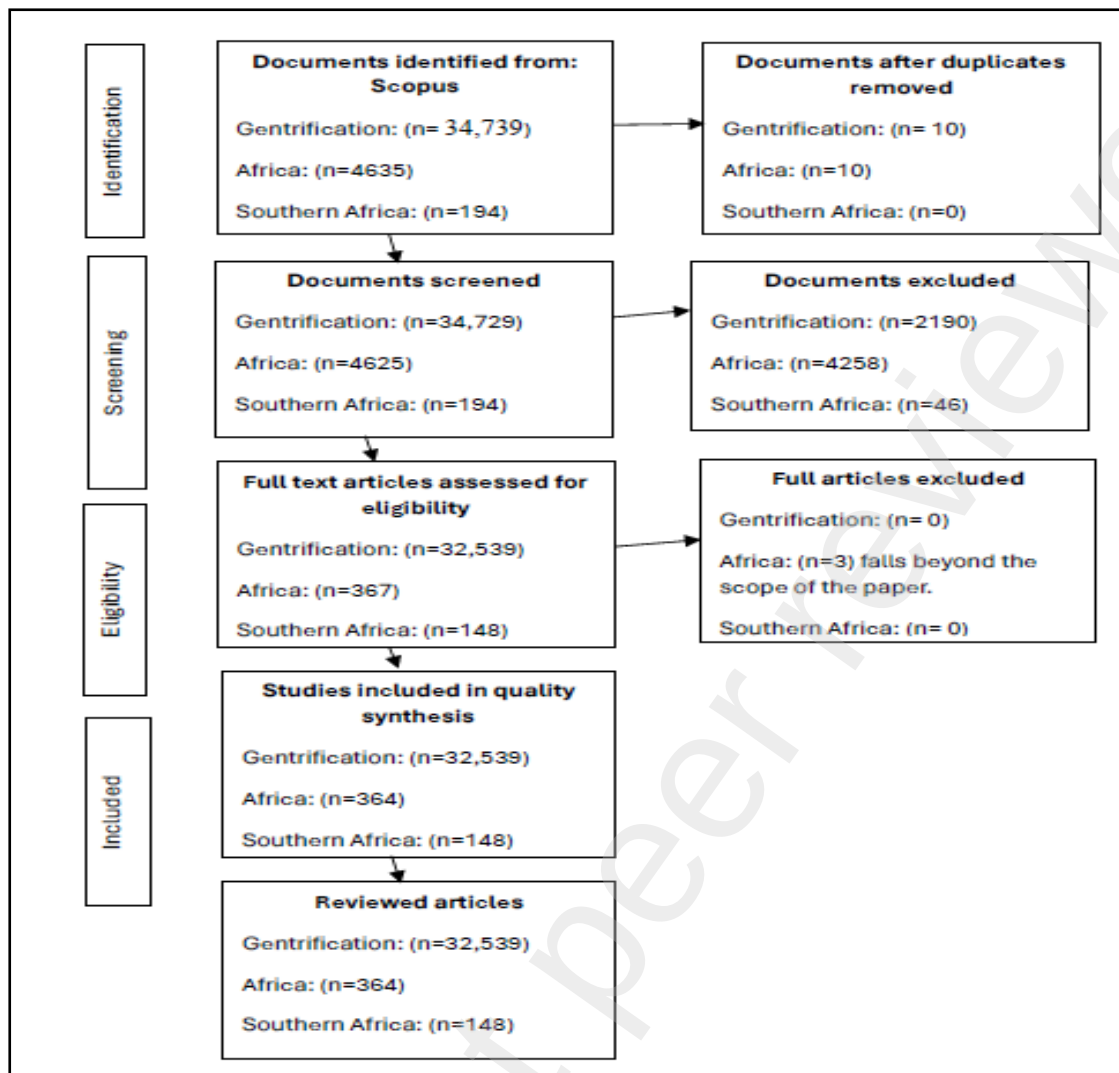


Fig. 2 The PRISMA flow diagram employed to identify, screen and include papers for the bibliometric review

The initial stage of the PRISMA approach involved identification of articles that were relevant to gentrification. Considering the vast quantity of published documents, we conducted a search in the Scopus database specifically targeting documents with the keywords “gentrification”, “Africa”, and “Southern Africa” appearing in all fields. On April 22, 2024, the initial literature search was conducted and by using various filters we obtained a total of 34,739 documents. We restricted the selection to documents written exclusively in the English language, but we did not discriminate on the document type. Subsequently, in the next step, we excluded documents that were duplicates and eliminated a total of 10 documents, leaving a database of 34,729. Next, we eliminated papers from the selected set that were not relevant to the study. The remaining documents were examined by reviewing their titles, abstract and keywords to assess their alignment with the objective of this study. Several documents were excluded from this study as they belonged to unrelated fields such as medicine, computer science, business management and accounting. Additional articles merely mentioned gentrification, Africa or Southern Africa but were irrelevant to the study and hence were excluded. As a result of this process, a database of a total of 32,539

documents was obtained. There were no previous studies found in the search conducted on gentrification using bibliometrics, particularly in Africa and Southern Africa.

Results and discussions on bibliometric analysis

While gentrification is a relatively recent research concept in the Global South, its interpretation has seen a significant surge in recent years; nevertheless, a scarcity of literature exists regarding the processes of gentrification in Africa and Southern Africa. This section of the paper presents the results and discussion pertaining to the aforementioned observations of the limited literature on gentrification in the region. It examines knowledge structures and the advancement of research fields. The subsequent presentation and discussion focuses on the findings derived from analysis of the Scopus database.

Distribution of gentrification Research in Africa

Fig. 3 illustrates the results obtained for the annual number of Gentrification publications in Africa and Southern Africa between 1993 and 2024. For context, the overall gentrification research in Africa was analysed and results showed that the first publication on the topic was by Garside in 1993 which discusses the residential changes that have occurred since 1980 in the inner-city suburb of Woodstock, Cape Town, in South Africa and on how gentrification processes have reshaped the class composition of this inner-city suburb (Garside, 1993).

Over the period 1993-2002, the number of publications on gentrification remain relatively low, ranging from zero to two publications per year with the years 1994 and 1995 being the only year with zero publications. This period could be considered as the foundational years where the topic was gaining initial scholarly attention. In 2003, there is a noticeable increase in the number of publications. Significant growth is observed starting in 2003 with five publications but there is a decrease to zero publications in 2005. Between 2006 and 2011 there is a slight increase in the number of publications on gentrification studies. In 2012, the number of publications reached 12, marking a substantial increase compared to previous years. This period marks the beginning of significant academic interest and growth in research on gentrification in Africa. Post-2013, the number of publications sees rapid growth. In 2014, the publications spik to 17 publications and this upward trend continues. The years 2017 to 2023 show exponential growth, with 2019 having 17 publications and 2023 peaking at 39 publications. Reflecting a growing recognition of the importance and relevance of gentrification studies in Africa. In 2024, there is a decline to 22 publications from the peak of 39 in 2023, this could be due to changes in research funding, shifts in academic interest or global events affecting research output.

The top ten publishers were Urban Forum (25), South African Geographical Journal (15), Urban Studies (10), Urban Book Series (9), Urbani Izziv (9), Cities (7), Sustainability Switzerland (6), African Journal of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure (5), Geojournal library (5) and Geojournal library (5). Of the top ten countries that published the most articles related to gentrification in Africa, South Africa was leading with 283 publications (77%) and Cape Verde was last with 147 publications (40%) in Scopus.

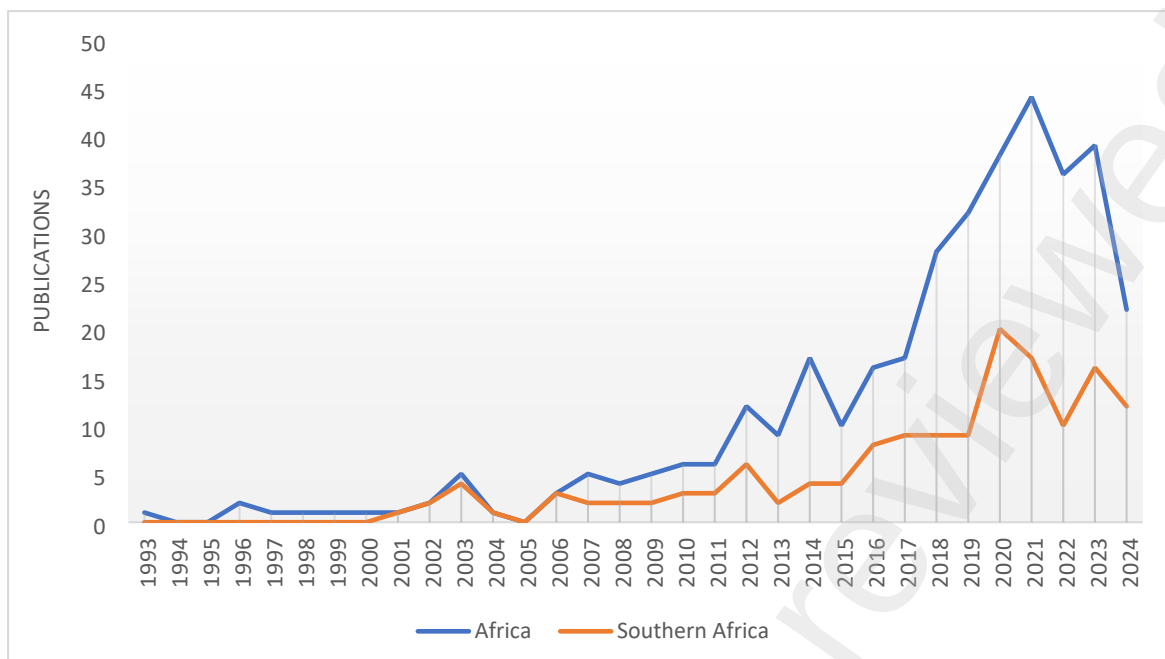


Fig. 3 The annual number of Gentrification publications in Africa and Southern Africa from 1993 to 2024

For Southern Africa, between 1993 to 2000, there were no publications related to gentrification in Southern Africa during this period. The first publication appears by Donaldson in 2001 and explores how the suburb of Clydesdale in Pretoria is navigating challenging and opportunities of urban change, with a focus on balancing planned development, addressing inner-city issues and incorporating innovative projects like the Minolta Loftus mixed-use development and lastly, explores the urban conservation strategies that could be implemented within the context of a city influx (Donaldson, 2001). Between 2001 and 2010, there was a gradual increase in the number of publications. Starting with one publication in 2001, the numbers rose intermittently, reaching a peak of four publications in 2003 and three publications in 2010. Between 2011 and 2024 there was a significant increase in the number of publications, from 2011-2015 the number of publications fluctuated between two and six with a notable peak of six in 2012. There was a consistent rise in publications between 2016 and 2019 with publications steadily increasing from eight in 2016 and nine in 2019. There was a sharp increase in 2020 with 20 publications, the highest in the entire study period. This could be attributed to the initiation of gentrification in the Global South countries only around the 21st century (Lees, 2012) This peak is followed by a slight decline in 2021 (17 publications) and moderate fluctuations in the subsequent years, with 10 in 2022, 16 in 2023 and 12 in 2024.

Although there is a general increase in the number of publications, Southern Africa does not reflect the same degree of increase as Africa as a whole. The research focus on Southern Africa show variability, with certain years receiving more attention but not reflecting a consistent upward trend. The results indicate a growing interest and expanding body of research on gentrification in Africa, with notable acceleration in recent years. However, Southern Africa, while part of this broader trend, shows a more variable pattern in specific research focus. This disparity might indicate regional differences in the prevalence or perception of gentrification issues, or it could reflect different academic focuses or resources.

Keyword co-occurrence analysis

A co-occurrence analysis of author keywords amongst gentrification studies in Southern Africa was performed. A trend map was generated using comprehensive counting method which relied on bibliographic data from the co-occurrence of keywords employed by authors from Southern Africa, based on the 148 publications listed in the Scopus database. The results produced five clusters represented by red, green, blue, yellow and purple. In the red cluster, the main noticeable keywords are Airbnb, Cape Town, neoliberalism, second homes, small towns, South Africa and tourism. This cluster considers gentrification in Cape Town and uses the case study of Bo- Kaap to illustrate how gentrification impacts the ability of the community in Cape Town to maintain its social fabric and character (Michell & Le Roux, 2022). Gentrification in Cape Town areas such as De Waterkant, Silo District, Woodstock and District six have also been well documented in literature (see Visser, 2016; Ordor et al., 2002; de Barros, 2021 & Rassool, 2019). Visser (2002), in his paper highlights an issue that relates to rural gentrification in South Africa and states that for a long time, there has been a focus on supporting the continued existence of quintessential rural towns; with popular media buzzing of stories of affluent urbanites seeking a slower pace by purchasing second homes or retiring in idyllic towns. In their article, Khambule et al., (2024) highlight that unlike many African gentrification cases driven by government urban renewal projects, Orlando West and the Vilakazi precinct (situated in Soweto, Johannesburg) transformation stemmed organically. Private individuals capitalised on the area's rich history and the opportune arrival of democracy in the mid-1990s, fostering a tourism-driven gentrification process.

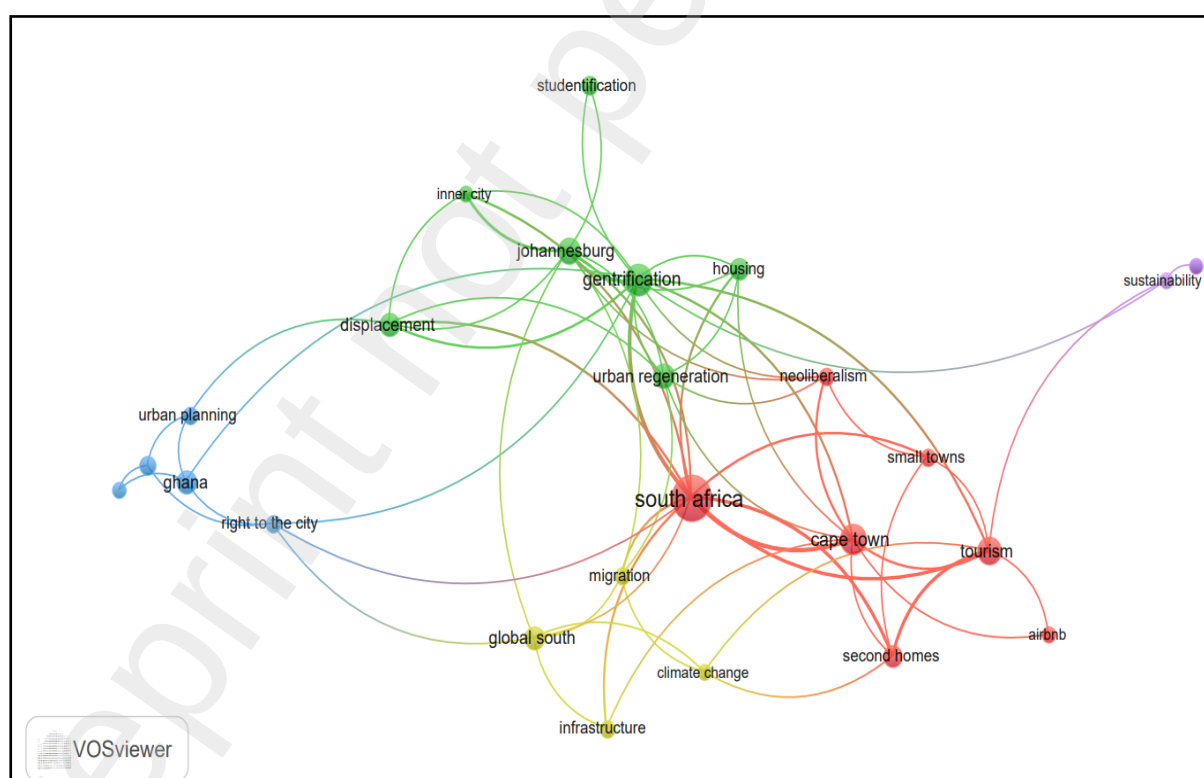


Fig. 4 Co-occurring keywords in gentrification in Southern Africa on the Scopus

Connected to the red cluster is the green cluster. The green clusters noticeable keywords are displacement, gentrification, housing, inner city, Johannesburg, studentification and urban regeneration which are all

intrinsically connected. Gentrification has become one of the most debated forms of urban renewal, it has been argued that it is a direct result of government efforts for urban regeneration and it transforms central city areas, powerfully reshaping their physical landscape, economic base and social fabric (Visser & Kotze, 2008). Sifolo (2020) argues that to cultivate a locally relevant practice within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, tourism – a crucial pillar of economic growth – can play a significant role in urban regeneration and gentrification. In a book chapter, Ah Goo (2018) states that the social impacts of gentrification, including potential class conflict and displacement of lower-income residents, contribute to its contentious role in urban regeneration and while gentrification is a recent development in South Africa, it carries the risk of displacing low-income residents in the inner city, who might struggle to find alternative affordable housing. Mashayamombe & Vally (2020) explore how the rise of private student housing driven by gentrification and a growing student population has affected student homelessness in Pretoria's Hatfield and Hillcrest neighbourhoods. The influx of students can reshape suburban identity. As they become a larger demographic they may influence local businesses and amenities to cater more to student needs, this shift can attract private developers to invest in student-oriented housing, potentially impacting the original character of the neighbourhood. However, in African cities such as Bulawayo, the current urban policy framework does not incorporate studentification into the urban fabric (Matamanda et al., 2021).

The third cluster which is blue in colour is centred on Ghana, informality, right to the city, urban planning and urban politics. The blue cluster is closely related to the yellow cluster on themes such as climate change, global south, infrastructure and migration. With an emphasis on economic competitiveness, neoliberal urban policies in Southern African countries and mainly in the case of Masvingo city in Zimbabwe, often prioritize creating sanitized and well-managed cities to attract investment and project a global image, potentially neglecting the needs of existing residents (Average, 2020). However, these policies often lead to gentrification and the homogenization of cities, which act as tools of exclusion (Mitchel, 2003). As a result, the urban poor are frequently prevented from asserting their rights to the city due to these exclusionary measures (Average, 2020). Neluheni & Boshoff (2022) use the case study of Maboneng in South Africa's Johannesburg area to highlight how urban regeneration (also regarded as a form of urban planning) and gentrification often further exacerbate economic inequalities within cities. While developers and those who can afford rising property values profit, low-income residents may be pushed out due to increasing rents and living costs. Gentrification can also be an unforeseen consequence of well-intentioned policies such as increasing urban density, revitalising inner cities and preserving historical areas, even though these might have unintended negative effects (Donaldson et al., 2013).

The fifth cluster is centred on two items, sustainability and urbanisation. Charisa & Nel (2021), argue that Zimbabwean cities are diverse and influenced by various factors including urbanisation, macroeconomic conditions and political dynamics. These practices fail to establish sustainable urban land markets due to numerous challenges, including insecure tenure, an ability to adapt to social and economic environmental changes, a lack of political will and institutional issues where land-use policy changes are frequently driven by elite interests, disadvantaging the poor. Boyle et al., (2018) state that urban redevelopment strategies must be based on principles of urban governance, participatory action and an understanding of market dynamics; without these collaborative procedural frameworks, urban regeneration projects will struggle to achieve comprehensive sustainability.

Fig. 4 serves as an effective tool for illustrating the advancements in gentrification research in Southern Africa, showcasing the prominent connections between the most commonly used terms in this study and highlighting specific clusters. The term “South Africa” stands out as a central theme within the map. Larger circles indicate higher weights assigned to the respective items, while the lines between the items represent the links between them. The distance separating two keywords reflects the relationship between the keywords in terms of their co-occurrence. Keywords with a greater number of co-occurrences are positioned closer to each other on the map. South Africa and Gentrification are the most researched keywords, with an occurrence of 5 and total link strength of 29.

Co-citation of gentrification research

Fig. 5 delineates the scope of gentrification research in Southern Africa through four distinct focal points. The primary focal point, represented in green, is followed by subsequent points in yellow, red and blue. To assign accurate classifications to each cluster, a thorough examination and analysis of the original papers within each cluster were conducted.

The primary cluster (green) encompasses research subfields focused on urban geography, tourism gentrification, socio-spatial dynamics, urban and regional planning, environmental impacts of tourism and small-town regeneration. The secondary cluster (yellow) signifies subfields related to urban geography, spatial planning and development, infrastructure development and urban migration. The red cluster represents research concentrated on housing policy, urban regeneration, socio-economic impacts, urbanisation and sustainable urban development. Finally, the blue cluster pertains to subfields such as urban resilience, housing, governance, policy and informal economies.

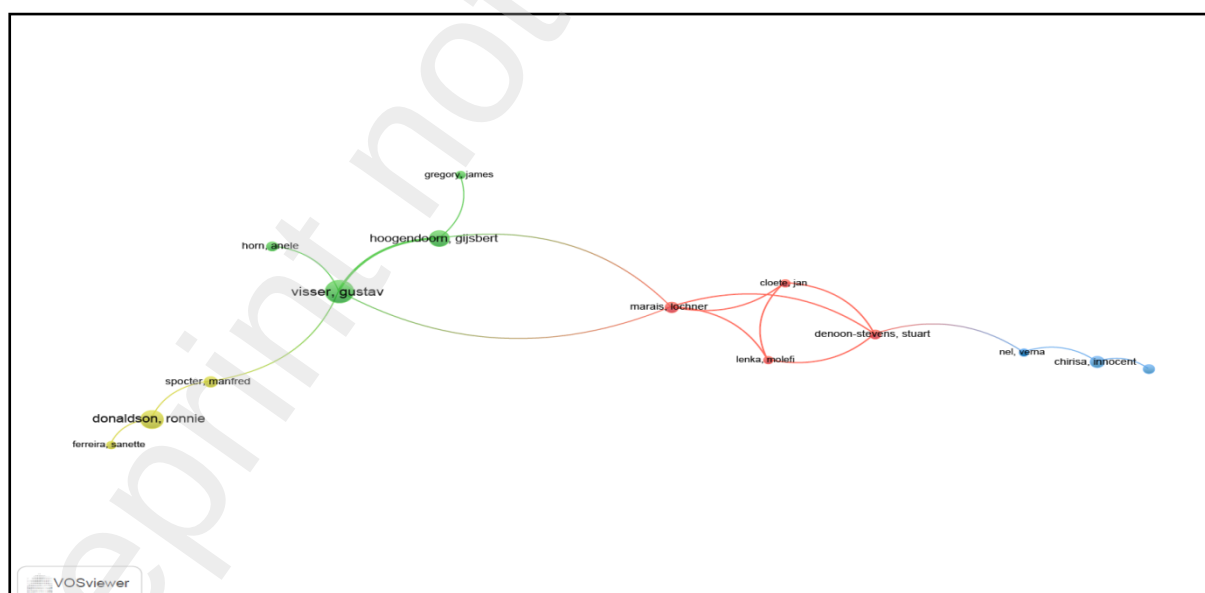


Fig. 5 Co-citation clusters of gentrification research

The authors within each cluster play significant roles in shaping the research landscape of their respective subfields. For example, Visser, G (with 166 citations) in the green cluster, Donaldson, R (with 87 citations) in the

The ranking order remains unchanged due to the University College London, United Kingdom's high strength link of four which contribute to its higher ranking. In contrast, Stellenbosch University and Walter Sisulu university had a lower strength ranking of one, the lowest amongst the seven institutions.

Full text analysis

This paper provides perceptions into the various types of gentrification research conducted from the Southern African perspective through full-text reading of the publications retrieved from the Scopus database. The literature generated from the dataset provides indication on the identification and incorporation of gentrification within geography research, development planning, social change, social sciences, regional regeneration, and the development of gentrification governance and policy in Southern Africa. Moreover, it provides the affects and types of gentrification and also provides possible solutions to these effects. The readings from a Southern African perspective with high citations give a clear indication of how gentrification has been acknowledged and studied over the years. Visser & Kotze (2008) in their study state that while gentrification is a rather complex phenomenon that has been difficult to explain, the development of this phenomena as an urban process in South Africa has occurred in two phases. The first phase ranging from the 1980's to the early post-apartheid years and the second phase since 2000 which has been induced by the state through various urban redevelopment initiatives (Visser & Kotze, 2008). Donaldson (2009) states that the processes of middle-class in-migration or colonisation and working-class displacement result in a "change in the class composition of an area," specially making it more "middle-class." This is how rural gentrification is quite similar to urban gentrification. Nevin (2014) makes an example of Maboneng precinct situated in South Africa's Johannesburg areas and states that while Maboneng precinct may be studied through gentrification processes, it is more than just an area experiencing urban regeneration and rejuvenation or gentrification where space has instantly become shared. Maboneng reveals a "constructed mutuality," which is a problematic and manufactured form of cohabitation that persists even as shared space becomes increasingly organic. Because it has been linked to working-class evictions and class tensions, gentrification is a divisive type of urban renewal (Ah Goo, 2018).

Lemanski (2014) conceptualises the resales of state subsidised houses (by low-income beneficiaries to businesses and wealthy families) in South Africa as a form of hybrid gentrification and argues that hybrid gentrification reveals that theories rooted in certain empirical locations are enriched by analyses from elsewhere. According to Boyle et al., (2018) market-driven sustainability tools contribute to "green gentrification," where environmental amenities are developed or restored, leading to significant social and economic inequality. Working-class and minority communities lose access to these amenities as they are displaced by wealthier residents. Ironically, this process can turn the restoration of natural amenities into an environmental disaster for these marginalised groups.

Even though gentrification has been widely documented in the developed world mainly in the US and UK, there is paucity of literature on gentrification in the African continent. The paucity in literature on gentrification in the African continent may be due the fact that various African nations experience land annexations produced by offshore interests, known as investments or land grabs (Geisler, 2015). Furthermore, the ever-increasing population in Botswana and South Africa has resulted in lower-income groups selling their homes to middle-income group resulting in gentrification (Sifolo, 2020); which has been the case in South Africa where landowners

have the power to control employment and income levels, thereby affecting economic sustainability. López-Morales (2015) further argues that gentrification in South Africa is seen by the loss of the use of value of land, environmental key resources, access to mobility and public services experienced by the poor who live in urban areas which are now desirable for political and economic goals. Whereas in Zimbabwe, gentrification has been state-led with an example of the 2005 Operation Murambatsvina which aimed to restore order in the country's urban areas by excluding the poor from the city and failing to cushion the evicted citizens against these changes (Chirisa, 2017). Karuri-Sebina & Beckley (2023) state that gentrification deprives locals of their sense of place, their sense of ownership, and their access to a higher standard of living, which is why it might be seen as “dignity takings”. Charisa (2017) states that gentrification is frequently caused by various factors such as access to the city in terms of proximity and transportation networks, containment of housing costs in relation to the vast real estate market, uniqueness in architectural and building merit and the accessibility of rental units in an areas that has the potential of high rates and whose buildings could be changed into apartment blocks. It is apparent from the above discussion that gentrification is often sold to us as a creative initiative or the rebirth of the central city (Lees, 2012).

Emerging trends and further research

Fig. 7 illustrates the findings from research on all existing, current and emerging trends in gentrification between 2016 and 2022. The timelines are categorised into four clusters, each represented by a different colour: navy blue, turquoise blue, green and yellow. The navy-blue cluster represents the prominent themes in gentrification research from 2016 to 2017. The turquoise blue colour represents the prominent themes from 2017 to 2018. Furthermore, the period from 2018 to 2019 is represented by the green cluster, while the years 2019 to 2022 are represented by the yellow cluster. Research from 2016 to 2017 focused on South Africa, tourism, Johannesburg, urban regeneration and the right to the city. Between 2017 to 2018, most research was based on housing and between 2018 and 2019 research focused on gentrification and migration.

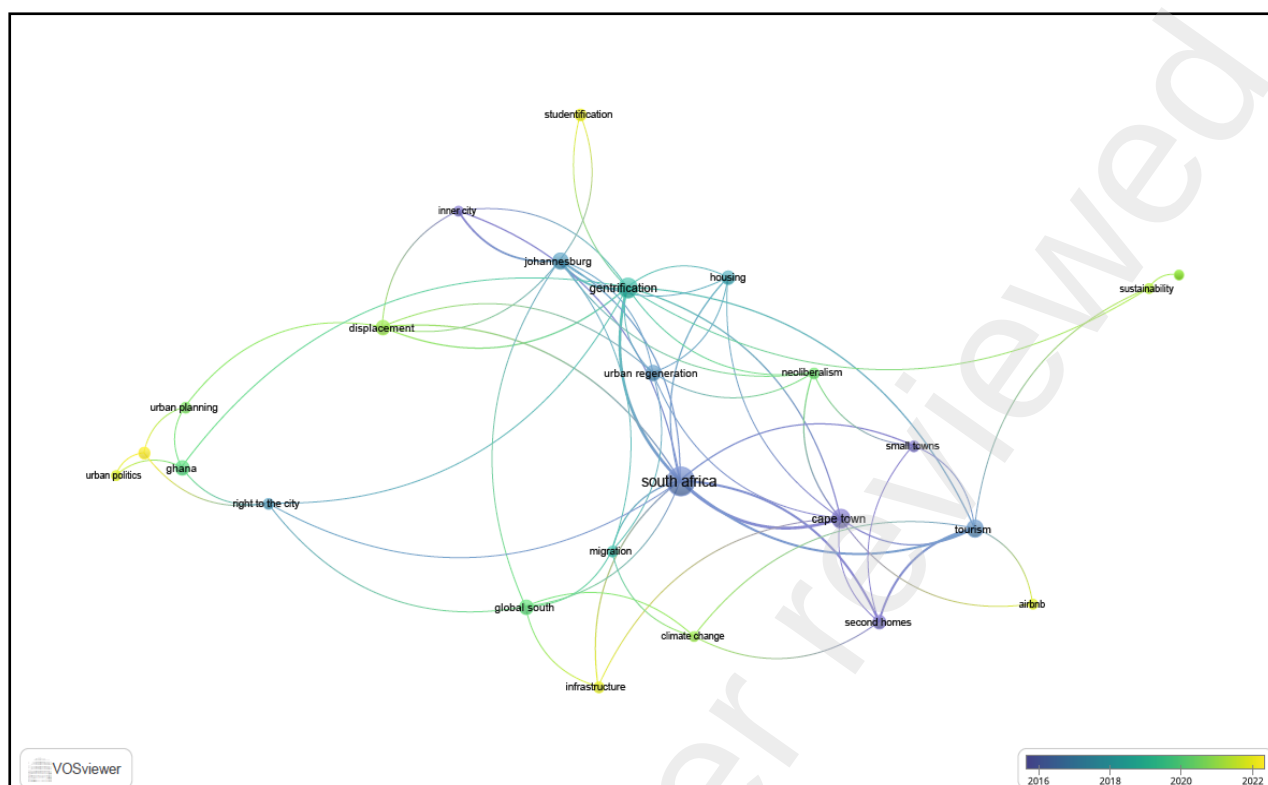


Fig. 7. Emerging trends in research on Gentrification in Southern Africa.

Previous studies have explored the social, economic and geographical consequences of urban regeneration projects in Southern African cities like Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. These projects often resulted in the displacement of low-income residents and significant neighbourhood transformation (Visser, 2002). To address the existing gap in research, it is essential to investigate where the former lower-income classes of inner Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and other Southern African cities have relocated (Visser, 2002). The focus on policy and governance gained momentum in the early 2000s. The emerging themes from the study revealed that socio-spatial inequality, neoliberal urban policies, urban aesthetics, public space, economic development and employment influence gentrification. As a result, from 2016 the study revealed that gentrification influences large scale developments, urban resilience, social justice and disrupts spatial patterns (Ballard et al., 2021). Further research should examine the potential of these initiatives to foster inclusive urban growth and mitigate displacement associated with gentrification.

The emerging trends and future trends from 2019 focus on air bnb, neoliberalism, displacement, studentification, Ghana, informality, urban planning, urban politics, climate change, global south, infrastructure, sustainability and urbanisation. The emerging trends are due to gentrification being a consequence of urban renewal and displaced low-income residents. This displacement disrupts their social and economic support networks (Neluheni & Boshoff, 2022). Future studies should explore how resilience strategies can be incorporated into urban planning to encourage gentrification without displacing existing residents; this could be an order to stop the working class and urban poor from being displaced (Neluheni & Boshoff, 2022). Similar to the displacement of low-income residents often associated with gentrification in the global cities, many Southern African urban centers grapple

with the marginalisation of the urban poor through a “broken windows” approach to urban management (Donaldson, 2009; Nevin, 2014). The efficacy of existing policy frameworks and interventions in mitigating the adverse effects of gentrification in Southern Africa remains understudied. Rigorous evaluation of current strategies is imperative to inform the development of contextually appropriate policy solutions aimed at safeguarding vulnerable populations.

Comparative research on gentrification between Southern African cities and other global cities remain limited. Even though gentrification has developed into state-driven, global urban strategy in the global north (Lees et al., 2008); comparative studies that examine how gentrification develops in the distinct socio-economic, political and cultural contexts of Southern African cities are conspicuously lacking. This disparity makes it more difficult to make generalisations about the global processes of urban transformation and how they differ in various regions. Scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the peculiarities of gentrification in Southern Africa and how they align with or deviate from global trends by broadening their comparative studies. A growing knowledge gap exists regarding the interplay of gentrification, environmental changes and sustainability. Although a great deal of literature has been written about gentrification from the perspectives of production-side and consumption-side arguments (Visser, 2003; Smith, 2002; Smith & Phillips, 2001), it has largely neglected the ways in which environmental factors – like green gentrification, urban sustainability initiatives and climate change – intersect and impact gentrification processes. Given the increasing environmental pressures in Southern African cities, it is imperative to understand how these factors interact. By studying their relationships, we can explore the potential impact of sustainability initiatives and environmental challenges on gentrification and ultimately strive for more equitable and sustainable urban development. Policy makers can create strategies that support inclusive and sustainable development while reducing the negative effects of gentrification such as inequality and displacement.

Conclusions

This study delves into the evolution and characteristics of gentrification research in Africa, particularly Southern Africa, over the period from 1993 to 2024. Our analysis reveals that although gentrification is a relatively recent research concept in the Global South, there has been a significant surge in interest and scholarly output in recent years. Despite this growing interest, there remains a notable scarcity of literature on gentrification processes specific to Africa and Southern Africa. The first notable publication on gentrification in Africa was by Garside in 1993, focusing on residential changes in Cape Town. Initial years saw minimal scholarly activity, but post-2003, there was a substantial increase in publications, peaking in 2023 with 39 publications. Southern Africa mirrored this trend but exhibited more variability, with significant growth observed in specific years, notably 2020.

Urban forum, South African Geographical Journal, and Urban Studies emerged as leading publishers. South Africa dominated the publication landscape, accounting for 77% of the total publications, indicating a concentrated research focus in this region. The analysis identified five distinct keyword clusters, each highlighting unique aspects of gentrification research, such as tourism, urban regeneration, housing and socio-economic impacts. Cape Town, Johannesburg, and the broader themes of urban planning and neoliberal policies were central to these clusters, reflecting diverse yet interconnected research areas. Co-citation analysis revealed four primary research clusters focusing on urban geography, socio-spatial dynamics, housing policy and urban resilience. South

African institutions, particularly the University of Cape Town and the University of Johannesburg, were among the most productive in this research field, underscoring South Africa's pivotal role in advancing gentrification studies.

The growing body of gentrification research in Southern Africa highlights an increasing recognition of the importance of understanding urban transformation processes in this region. The variability in research focus and publication trends suggests differing regional perceptions and prevalence of gentrification issues. This disparity underscores the need for more localised and context-specific studies to fully grasp the dynamics at play. More comparative research between Southern African cities and global cities can provide valuable insights into the unique and shared aspects of gentrification. Exploring the interplay between gentrification, environmental changes, and sustainability remains a significant research gap. Addressing this will contribute to more comprehensive and equitable urban development strategies. Investigating the role of policy and governance in shaping gentrification processes can inform better urban planning practices that mitigate adverse social impacts.

In conclusion, while substantial progress has been made in gentrification research in Southern Africa, there is a clear need for continued and expanded scholarly efforts. By addressing the identified gaps and emerging trends, future research can contribute to more just and sustainable urban environments in the region.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Bonolo Letlape: Conceptualisation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Software, Visualization, Validation, Writing – Original draft, Writing – Review & editing. **Trynos Gumbo:** Project administration, Supervision, Resources, Writing – Review & editing. **Kammila Naidoo:** Supervision, Writing - Review & editing.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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