

Critical Parameters Influencing Community Engagement in Affordable Housing: A Thematic Review of Urban India

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1. ABSTRACT

Affordable housing remains a major challenge in rapidly urbanizing Indian cities. While numerous policies and programs seek to increase housing supply, growing evidence suggests that the success of affordable housing initiatives depends not only on physical provision but also on the nature and quality of community engagement embedded within housing processes. This study undertakes a thematic review of literature to identify and synthesize the critical parameters influencing community engagement in affordable housing in urban India. Relevant national and international studies were systematically reviewed and analysed using a thematic approach. The findings indicate that community engagement is shaped by interconnected social, economic, institutional, environmental, and technical parameters. Social dimensions such as participation, empowerment, inclusivity, trust, leadership, and conflict resolution form the foundation of engagement. Economic factors including housing cost burden, income affordability, access to finance, and livelihood linkages influence residents' capacity to participate meaningfully. Institutional coordination, policy clarity, and accountability mechanisms establish the governance context for engagement, while environmental and locational factors affect residential stability and satisfaction. Technical aspects related to housing quality, construction technology, life-cycle affordability, and post-occupancy performance further shape lived experiences and perceptions of housing initiatives. The study highlights the absence of integrated frameworks linking these dimensions and underscores the need for holistic, multi-parameter approaches to community engagement. The findings provide a conceptual foundation for future empirical research and support the strengthening of affordable housing policy and practice.

KEYWORDS

Community Engagement; Affordable Housing; Urban India; Thematic Review; Housing Policy; Participation; Housing Quality; Urban Development

2. INTRODUCTION

The need for appropriate and reasonably priced housing in cities has increased due to India's rapid urbanization over the last few decades. A significant amount of the metropolitan population, notably low-income groups (LIG) and economically weaker sections (EWS), still struggle to find affordable, suitable, safe, and conveniently located dwelling. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Rao & Biswas, 2021; Agarwal et al., 2022) Although national, state, and local governments have implemented a number of housing programs and policy measures, the continuation of housing shortages and the growth of informal settlements show that current strategies are not sufficiently dealing with the multifaceted nature of the issue. (Gopalan, 2014; Rana & Rana, 2016). In many cities, these challenges are experienced differently across neighborhoods, making local context particularly important.

Increasing the supply of housing is no longer seen as the only way to provide affordable housing. It is becoming more widely recognized as a multifaceted problem involving organizational coordination, social inclusion, economic accessibility, environmental suitability, and technological quality. (Agarwal et al., 2022; Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024).

In light of this more comprehensive perspective, community involvement has become an essential part of housing availability. It is often acknowledged that involving communities in the planning, design, implementation, and administration processes helps to guarantee that housing solutions are more in line with the real needs and goals of inhabitants. (Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011; RaviSree & Brar, 2022).

Housing developments in metropolitan settings that overlook the opinions as well as experiences of the people they are aimed at frequently encounter issues like low acceptance, poor upkeep, social unrest, and limited sustainability over the long run. (Davison et al., 2016; Jiwane, 2021). On the other hand, initiatives that meaningfully engage communities typically show higher levels of satisfaction, more social cohesiveness, and increased adaptability over time. (Johar, 2017; RaviSree & Brar, 2022).

The conceptualization and operationalization of community engagement differ greatly amongst research studies, despite this rising understanding. While some studies focus on deeper types of involvement like co-design, collaborative decision-making, and community-led development, others approach engagement exclusively as consultation or participation during planning stages. (Bradley, 2023; Madden & Marcuse, 2016; RaviSree & Brar, 2022). Furthermore, a variety of literary works, including those on urban planning, housing policy, social development, and architecture, address the elements that influence community engagement. Due to this, there is no systematic review of the factors that consistently affect community involvement in affordable housing initiatives, and current knowledge is scattered. (Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011; Agarwal et al., 2022).

This picture is further complicated by the unique challenges presented by the urban Indian setting. Social inequality and the capacity of institutions are impacted by rapid population increase, shifting populations, land shortages, regulatory limitations, and market-driven development patterns. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Rana & Rana, 2016). Even though many research has looked at different elements of these problems, there is still a need to organize this scattered evidence.

In light of this, this research conducts a thematic evaluation of an array of literature in order to pinpoint and summarize the crucial factors influencing community involvement in affordable housing in urban India. The study aims to give a clearer conceptual basis for comprehending how community participation functions inside affordable housing environments by grouping current data into logical thematic groups. The final analysis is meant to assist upcoming research investigations and aid in the creation of integrated frameworks that can direct practice, planning, and policy.

3. OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to build an in depth and systematic understanding of the crucial factors influencing community involvement in affordable housing developments in urban India. The study strives to provide an integrated perspective on how various social, economic, institutional, environmental, and technical elements impact community involvement processes and outcomes by integrating insights from an array of existing studies.

The study is directed by the following set of objectives in order to accomplish these objectives:

1. to examine an array of research on affordable housing and community involvement in urban settings, nationwide as well as globally.
2. To determine important factors related to community involvement in affordable housing from a variety of academic viewpoints.

3. To arrange the determined parameters into appropriate underlying groups.
4. To investigate how these factors work together to affect how well the community is involved in affordable housing initiatives.
5. To draw attention to gaps in the existing literature and suggest future lines of study.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section analyze existing literature on community engagement in affordable housing by organizing key findings into thematic categories. Instead of presenting studies chronologically, the assessment adopts a thematic structure to highlight recurring patterns and conceptual linkages.

4.1.1 Community Participation and Empowerment

Among the most important aspects of community engagement in affordable housing is involvement of the community, according to the research. Involvement is becoming characterized as inhabitants' capacity to impact the development, design, and execution of decisions rather than just being present at gatherings or discussions (Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011; RaviSree & Brar, 2022; Johar, 2017; Joshi & Deshmukh, 2023).

Empowerment and involvement are strongly related. The process by which people acquire the self-assurance, competence, and competence to participate in housing-related decisions is known as empowerment. A greater feeling of ownership over housing projects results from empowered communities' tendency to go beyond passively accepting solutions created by others and starts to express their own objectives. (Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, 2019; Jiwane, 2021; RaviSree & Brar, 2022).

4.1.2 Informed Engagement and Capacity Building

Understanding housing procedures and having access to information are essential for meaningful involvement. Numerous studies indicate that inhabitants frequently encounter obstacles due to a lack of knowledge about housing projects, financial systems, and construction-related technical factors. (Joshi & Deshmukh, 2023; Jiwane, 2021; Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011).

Communities become more knowledgeable and productive when they receive assistance via training courses, monetary literacy programs, and awareness campaigns. By empowering citizens to assess options, pose insightful concerns, and offer suggestions, capacity building improves the quality of participation. (RaviSree & Brar, 2022; Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, 2019).

4.1.3 Inclusive Engagement and Gender Sensitivity

The involvement of communities is most successful when it is inclusive, according to studies. Participation from women frequently results in more informed choices and wider social advantages, according to findings on the subject. (RaviSree & Brar, 2022; Johar, 2017).

In addition to gender, minoritized groups like immigrants, senior citizens, and informal laborers must be taken into account for inclusive involvement. Participation practices may mainly represent the opinions of more influential inhabitants if conscious efforts are not made to incorporate these groups. (Bradley, 2023; Madden & Marcuse, 2016).

4.1.4 Trust, Social Cohesion, and Community–Institution Relationships

Participation results are significantly influenced by the level of trust between communities and the operating entities. Research indicates that residents are more probable to be sceptical of and resistant to new housing efforts when they have encountered disagreement or discontent with housing authority. (Ruming, 2011; Davison et al., 2016; Goetz, n.d.).

On the other hand, open dialogue, frequent engagement, and sensitivity to community issues support the steady growth of social cohesiveness and trust. (Abiddin et al., 2022; Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011).

4.1.5 Community Leadership and Local Governance

Community-centred groups, residential groups and local authorities frequently serve as intermediaries between householders and outside parties. Effective administrators are able to coordinate involvement, advocate for the greater good of the community, and resolve conflicts. (Joshi & Deshmukh, 2023; Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action, 2019).

Involvement procedures may grow exclusive, reducing the array of views in making decisions, especially in situations where governance is shaky or controlled by a limited number of people. (Bradley, 2023).

4.1.6 Conflict Resolution and Negotiation

Due to conflicting interests, limited resources, and modifications to current lifestyles, disputes commonly occur in inexpensive housing projects. Research shows that disagreements frequently arise throughout the process of execution and after-occupation phases. (Abiddin et al., 2022; Davison et al., 2016).

Communities are better able to handle these disputes and preserve social equilibrium when they have internal channels for communication, conciliation, and bargaining. (Abiddin et al., 2022; Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011).

4.2. ECONOMIC PARAMETERS

4.2.1 Housing Cost Burden and Income Affordability

The link between housing expenses and family income has an important effect on home accessibility. A significant amount of low-income homeowners' income is frequently spent on rent, mortgage payments, utilities, and upkeep, as the research repeatedly highlights. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Garg et al., 2022; Rao & Biswas, 2021).

Economic strain and the likelihood of being homeless are both increased by elevated housing expenses. This financial strain has a direct impact on economically disadvantaged groups' capacity to maintain decent housing and take part in group initiatives pertaining to building housing and maintenance. (Gopalan, 2014; Kleshcheva, 2021; Arnerić et al., 2024).

4.2.2 Access to Housing Finance

Because of their inconsistent income, lack of financial security, and short credit records, families with low incomes continue to have unequal opportunities for official residence funding. Multiple research studies demonstrate how financial

limitations limit prospects for possession and involvement in official housing schemes. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Garg et al., 2022; Rao & Biswas, 2021).

It has been demonstrated that subsidy programs, interest rate assistance, and inventive funding techniques increase affordability and increase EWS and LIG households' accessibility to home loans. (Jadhav et al., 2022; Gopalan, 2014; Rana & Rana, 2016).

4.2.3 Construction Cost and Economic Viability

The viability of affordable housing projects is greatly impacted by increasing costs of construction associated with workers, supplies, and acquiring land. High building expenses frequently result in sacrifices in dwelling size, quality, or location, according to studies. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Chouksey et al., 2022).

Both the continuation of housing initiatives and builders' desire to contribute are impacted by their financial stability. Financially unsustainable ventures tend to be delayed or delivered partially, which erodes community trust and involvement. (Rana & Rana, 2016; Jadhav et al., 2022).

4.2.4 Employment Opportunities and Livelihood Linkages

It is often acknowledged that one of the most important aspects of affordability is the geographical link between areas of employment and cheap dwelling. For families with low incomes, living distant from their places of employment increases commuting costs and time expenditure. (Afshan & Sinha, 2023; Dutta et al., 2021).

Research indicates that affordable housing developments that take into account the closeness to livelihoods and areas of revenue generation enhance residential stability and happiness. (Afshan & Sinha, 2023; Agarwal et al., 2022).

4.2.5 Macro-Economic Conditions

Wider economic issues like population growth, unemployment, price inflation, and overall economic development have an impact on housing availability and affordability. Quantitative study indicates that changes in important economic measures have an impact on investment patterns, housing prices, and construction activities. (Kleshcheva, 2021; Arnerić et al., 2024; Johnson & Heinz, 2007).

These macroeconomic factors influence the climate in which community engagement occurs because financial difficulties may restrict both organizational capacity and family participation. (Johnson & Heinz, 2007; Kleshcheva, 2021).

4.3. POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL PARAMETERS

4.3.1 Institutional Coordination and Governance Structure

A number of organizations are involved in the delivery of affordable housing, including state and federal governments, housing agencies, urban local bodies, financial institutions, and private developers. The research emphasizes how these entities' poor coordination frequently results in splintered execution postponements, and overlapping duties. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Rana & Rana, 2016; Gopalan, 2014).

Effective organizational management enables more transparent communication with the community and more reliable project execution. When roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communities are better able to communicate with implementing agencies and comprehend housing-related programs. (Jadhav et al., 2022; Agarwal et al., 2022).

4.3.2 Policy Clarity and Regulatory Framework

Multiple investigations highlight how complicated regulatory procedures, frequent policy changes, and incorrect guidelines for affordable housing lead to confusion for both providers and recipients. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Rana & Rana, 2016).

A well-established and transparent legal framework that promotes stability helps future-proofing. Clear policies increase community involvement and trust by facilitating better understanding of project timeframes, eligibility requirements, and subsidy arrangements. (Gopalan, 2014; Jadhav et al., 2022).

4.3.3 Government Schemes and Program Design

India's vast government housing schemes are one of the key pillars of the country's affordable housing supply. According to research, the plan layout influences both the construction of dwellings and the kind of community involvement integrated into the execution procedures. (Jadhav et al., 2022; Gopalan, 2014).

Initiatives that include consumer assistance, dispute resolution, and following occupancy support tend to foster greater community engagement than those that primarily focus on statistics output targets.. (Rana & Rana, 2016; Agarwal et al., 2022).

4.3.4 Public–Private Partnerships and Market Engagement

Public-private partnerships are frequently marketed as a way to raise private capital and technological know-how for low-cost housing. According to the research, models can increase the availability of affordable housing, but they may also create conflicts between social and commercial interests. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Rana & Rana, 2016).

The results of involvement by communities are influenced by the framework of PPP(Public-private partnerships) agreements. Projects that incorporate social responsibility, openness, and economical considerations are more likely to be accepted by community members. (Gopalan, 2014; Agarwal et al., 2022).

4.3.5 Land Policy and Development Controls

Development of affordable housing is heavily influenced by the availability of land and land-use restrictions. Research shows that environmental clearances, floor space index limitations, zoning laws, and land conversion procedures frequently limit supply and raise costs. (Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Rana & Rana, 2016).

Affordable housing can be made possible without sacrificing planning standards through adaptable and well-thought-out land regulations. Increased community awareness and involvement are supported by easily accessible details about where projects are going and land choices. (Jadhav et al., 2022).

4.3.6 Monitoring, Accountability, and Feedback Mechanisms

Monitoring systems, social audits, and post-occupancy assessments are examples of institutional accountability tools that are crucial for maintaining community involvement. Research indicates that consistent feedback gathering and attentiveness to community issues enhance citizens' and institutions' trustworthiness. (Jiwane, 2021; Agarwal et al., 2022).

On the other hand, community members frequently feel left out of continuing decision-making when there is no further communication once the project is finished. (Jiwane, 2021).

4.4. ENVIRONMENTAL AND LOCATIONAL PARAMETERS

4.4.1 Location Suitability and Accessibility

Affordable housing scheme' locations have a significant impact on the daily lives and employment prospects of their occupants. Studies repeatedly shows that families with limited resources face added time and cost pressures when they live distant from public transit, medical services, schooling institutions, and employment areas. (Afshan & Sinha, 2023; Dutta et al., 2021).

Improved residential prosperity and security are typically supported by projects that are harmonious into already-existing urban regions, which in turn enhances people' connection to their communities and participation in community processes. (Afshan & Sinha, 2023; Agarwal et al., 2022).

4.4.2 Infrastructure Services and Basic Amenities

One of the most important factors influencing the functionality and liveability of homes is the availability of efficient infrastructure facilities such water supply, hygiene, energy supply, drainage, management of waste, and transportation links. (Afshan & Sinha, 2023; Agarwal et al., 2022).

While efficient infrastructure increases trust in projects related to housing and their executing institutions, poor amenities frequently become a cause of discontent and dispute. (Jiwane, 2021; Agarwal et al., 2022).

4.4.3 Natural Environment and Environmental Risk

Families with lower incomes are especially impacted by environmental risk factors such as prolonged exposure to environmental contaminants, extreme temperatures, and floods. Research indicates that the long-term sustainability of affordable housing developments is enhanced by risk-focused designing and environmentally friendly choice of sites. (Ramzanpour & Rahimi, 2023; Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024).

People are more inclined to make financial and emotional investments in their houses and neighborhoods when they believe that their surroundings are secure and conducive to wellness. (Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024).

4.4.4 Surrounding Land Uses and Neighborhood Context

Feelings of potential, security, and reputation are influenced by the types of land usage in the area. According to studies, mixed-use and socially connected neighbourhoods facilitate improved daily interactions and accessibility to amenities. (Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024; Agarwal et al., 2022).

On the other hand, secluded or marginalized areas may exacerbate social exclusion and damage ties to the community. (Bradley, 2023).

4.4.5 Open Spaces and Public Realm

Accessibility to public places, parks, and outdoor spaces fosters both physical and social well-being. According to research, well designed public spaces encourage frequent encounters between residents and strengthen social networks. (Ramzanpour & Rahimi, 2023; Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024).

In addition, these areas offer informal places for gatherings and social events that support official engagement systems. (Ramzanpour & Rahimi, 2023).

4.5. TECHNICAL AND HOUSING QUALITY PARAMETERS

4.5.1 Housing Quality and Habitability

A key factor in determining inhabitants' happiness, health, and general well-being is the quality of their dwelling. According to the research, low-cost housing must adhere to fundamental requirements for thermal comfort, illumination, ventilation, structural stability, and adequate space. (Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024; Agarwal et al., 2022).

Projects that offer very little shelter without guaranteeing habitability frequently cause discontent and erode public confidence in housing initiatives. On the other hand, high-quality housing promotes favorable opinions of housing projects and motivates inhabitants to make improvements to their living spaces. (Jiwane, 2021; Agarwal et al., 2022).

4.5.2 Construction Technology and Material Selection

Cost, longevity, and maintenance needs are all significantly affected by the technology and materials used in construction. Research emphasizes how crucial it is to choose economical and suitable technologies for affordable housing. (Chouksey et al., 2022; Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015).

Increased community engagement as well as awareness of housing systems can be aided by technologies that enable gradual progress or involvement of users throughout the construction processes. (Chouksey et al., 2022).

4.5.3 Life-Cycle Costing and Long-Term Affordability

In addition to the initial building costs, life-cycle pricing takes into account ongoing operating, maintenance, and repair expenditures. Low-income families are more likely to find affordable housing options with reduced life-cycle costs, more adequate according to the research. (Chouksey et al., 2022; Gopalan, 2014).

Affordable housing stability and satisfaction may be impacted by projects that neglect long-term affordability, which may seem cost-effective at first but eventually become financially problematic. (Gopalan, 2014).

4.5.4 Post-Occupancy Evaluation and Performance Feedback

It is acknowledged that post-occupancy evaluation (POE) is a useful measure for evaluating housing performance following occupancy. POE makes it possible to identify operational difficulties and design flaws based on inhabitants' experiences. (Jiwane, 2021; Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024).

Communities become more engaged and have more faith in organizations when they see that their input results in benefits. (Jiwane, 2021).

4.5.5 Flexibility and Incremental Housing Possibilities

Transitions in family size, financial status, and lifestyle demands are common in families with low incomes. These changes can be more easily accommodated by housing designs that allow for expansion over time or internal adjustment. (Chouksey et al., 2022; Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015).

Adaptive housing promotes stability and sustained engagement by lowering the possibility of undesirable informal changes and fostering long-term contentment.

Based on the thematic analysis of the reviewed literature, the identified parameters were grouped into five major thematic categories as summarized in Table X.

*Table 1. Thematic Categories and Identified Parameters
Influencing Community Engagement in Affordable Housing*

Theme	Identified Parameters
Social Parameters	Community Participation and Empowerment; Informed Engagement and Capacity Building; Inclusive Engagement and Gender Sensitivity; Trust and Social Cohesion; Community Leadership and Local Governance; Conflict Resolution and Negotiation
Economic Parameters	Housing Cost Burden and Income Affordability; Access to Housing Finance; Construction Cost and Economic Viability; Employment Opportunities and Livelihood Linkages; Macro-Economic Conditions
Policy and Institutional Parameters	Institutional Coordination and Governance Structure; Policy Clarity and Regulatory Framework; Government Schemes and Program Design; Public-Private Partnerships; Land Policy and Development Controls; Monitoring, Accountability, and Feedback Mechanisms
Environmental and Locational Parameters	Location Suitability and Accessibility; Infrastructure Services and Basic Amenities; Natural Environment and Environmental Risk; Surrounding Land Uses and Neighbourhood Context; Open Spaces and Public Realm
Technical and Housing Quality Parameters	Housing Quality and Habitability; Construction Technology and Material Selection; Life-Cycle Costing and Long-Term Affordability; Post-Occupancy Evaluation and Performance Feedback; Flexibility and Incremental Housing Possibilities

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Based on the thematic synthesis of the reviewed literature, a conceptual framework was developed to illustrate the interrelationships among the identified parameters influencing community engagement in affordable housing. The framework integrates social, economic, institutional and policy, environmental and locational, and technical parameters, placing community engagement at the center of these interacting dimensions. Rather than functioning independently, these parameters influence one another in shaping participation, trust, sustainability, and post-occupancy outcomes. The framework serves as a visual synthesis of the thematic review and provides a structured lens for understanding how multi-dimensional factors collectively shape community engagement in affordable housing initiatives.



Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Parameters Influencing Community Engagement in Affordable Housing
SOURCE: Authors Conceptualization

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative, thematic literature review approach to examine the role of community engagement in affordable housing, with a primary emphasis on the Indian urban context. Thematic literature review was considered appropriate due to the inherently multi-dimensional nature of community participation, which is discussed across diverse academic disciplines such as urban planning, housing studies, social development, public policy, and architecture. Given this interdisciplinary spread, a thematic approach allows for a comprehensive synthesis of existing knowledge rather than a narrow focus on a single variable or outcome.

The review seeks to move beyond descriptive summaries by identifying recurring patterns, conceptual linkages, and shared concerns across studies. In doing so, it enables an integrated understanding of how economic, social, institutional, and environmental factors collectively shape community involvement in affordable housing initiatives.

The study is based on a detailed review of 42 peer-reviewed journal articles, reports, and case studies published between 2010 and 2024. The objective is to identify the key parameters that consistently influence community engagement in affordable housing projects by critically interpreting and synthesizing prior research. Particular attention is given to how different scholars conceptualize participation, empowerment, affordability, governance, and housing quality, thereby developing a structured understanding of variables that repeatedly emerge as significant within the literature.

6.2 Literature Search Strategy

A systematic literature search was conducted using established academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and JSTOR, along with institutional repositories and official publications. To supplement academic sources with policy-oriented perspectives, reports and documents from international organizations and relevant government departments were also reviewed.

A combination of keywords was used in various permutations, including community engagement, community participation, affordable housing, social housing, urban housing, housing policy in India, slum redevelopment, and housing for low-income groups. The search process was iterative in nature; references cited within key publications were further examined to identify additional relevant studies.

The search initially yielded a broader pool of literature, which was progressively refined through a structured screening process. Titles and abstracts were first reviewed for thematic relevance, followed by full-text screening to ensure alignment with the objectives of the study. This stepwise approach ensured that the final selection was both comprehensive and focused.

6.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The selection of literature was guided by clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria to maintain thematic relevance and analytical rigor.

Studies were **included** if they:

- Focused on affordable housing, social housing, or housing for low-income and economically marginalized groups
- Examined community-related dimensions such as participation, empowerment, inclusion, or governance
- Addressed urban contexts in India or comparable emerging economies
- Presented empirical findings, conceptual discussions, or case-based evidence relevant to housing delivery and community engagement

Studies were excluded if they:

- Focused exclusively on high-income residential or commercial real estate
- Addressed rural housing without a community participation component
- Were unrelated to housing or urban development

These criteria were applied to ensure that the final body of literature directly addressed the research objectives and supported a focused thematic synthesis of community engagement in affordable housing.

6.4 Data Extraction and Organization

A statistical framework was created by methodically extracting and organizing data from the chosen studies. Each study's title, authors, year of publication, methodology, main conclusions, location, and significance to the research issue were all noted. This procedure made it possible to compare various studies and helped keep uniformity.

Statements and conclusions that detailed situations, tactics, or characteristics affecting housing results or community involvement received particular focus throughout this phase. These findings served as the foundation for thematic classification.

6.5 Thematic Coding and Analysis

Following the data extraction stage, the selected literature was analysed using a manual thematic grouping approach. Rather than employing formal qualitative coding software, themes were identified through careful and repeated reading of the reviewed studies. This approach was considered appropriate for a literature-based review, as it allows conceptual patterns to emerge organically from existing research while maintaining analytical flexibility.

During this process, attention was given to recurring discussions related to community engagement, housing delivery mechanisms, institutional arrangements, and spatial conditions. Studies presenting similar concerns, arguments, or analytical focus were grouped together, allowing broader thematic patterns to be identified. Through iterative comparison across sources, these groupings were refined to ensure conceptual clarity while acknowledging interconnections between themes.

As a result of this process, the literature was organized into four major thematic parameters:

- **Economic parameters**, including affordability, income levels, land costs, and access to finance
- **Social parameters**, such as community participation, empowerment, inclusion, and social acceptance
- **Institutional and policy parameters**, covering governance structures, regulatory frameworks, implementation mechanisms, and institutional coordination
- **Environmental and locational parameters**, encompassing site suitability, infrastructure access, spatial integration, and environmental constraints

Within each theme, more specific sub-issues were examined, such as the role of beneficiary involvement in planning, the impact of policy design on participation, and the influence of location on long-term housing sustainability. The themes were continuously refined through cross-comparison of studies to ensure that they remained analytically distinct while collectively capturing the multidimensional nature of community engagement in affordable housing.

This thematic organization formed the basis for the structured discussion presented in the subsequent sections of the paper and directly informed the development of the conceptual framework by highlighting relationships among the identified parameters.

6.6 Reliability of the Review Process

Several readings of the chosen studies were done to improve the theme review's dependability. Rather of depending on individual finds, parameters were only kept when related concepts emerged in many sources. This made it easier to confirm that the parameters found in the literature reflect regular trends rather than outliers.

7. Research Problem

Although a considerable body of research exists on affordable housing and community participation, knowledge on post-occupancy community engagement remains fragmented and dispersed across multiple disciplines. Many studies examine social, economic, institutional, environmental, or technical aspects in isolation, with limited effort to synthesize how these dimensions put together shape community engagement within affordable housing projects, particularly in urban India. Moreover, greater attention is often given to planning and implementation stages, while comparatively less focus is placed on how engagement evolves after residents occupy housing. This lack of blend and post-occupancy-oriented analysis constrains the development of holistic frameworks that can inform policy and practice. Addressing this gap, the present study systematically reviews and organizes existing literature to identify key parameters influencing community engagement in urban affordable housing.

8. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

8.1 DISCUSSION

The thematic study shows that rather than being influenced by a single element, community involvement in affordable housing is shaped by a complex interaction of social, economic, institutional, environmental, and technical parameters. Although individual studies frequently concentrate on particular aspects, the body of research indicates that genuine involvement only occurs when several factors are addressed

concurrently. (Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011; RaviSree & Brar, 2022; Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Agarwal et al., 2022). Overall, these patterns suggest that community engagement operates through everyday practices as much as through formal mechanisms.

Involvement at the social level is based on empowerment and participation. Participation by itself, however, is inadequate if communities lack skills, expertise, or influential leadership frameworks. By boosting participation and guaranteeing that housing solutions address a range of demands, social inclusion—especially that of women and underrepresented groups—further enhances involvement. (RaviSree & Brar, 2022; Johar, 2017; Bradley, 2023; Madden & Marcuse, 2016). Residents' interpretation of regulations, initiatives, and results of projects is influenced by trust between communities and organizations, which functions as a multifaceted social determinant. (Ruming, 2011; Davison et al., 2016).

The viability of engagement is influenced by economic conditions in modest but important ways. Households' ability to dedicate time and resources to community operations is restricted by high housing costs and financial instability. Residents' opinions of whether schemes for housing actually serve their needs are influenced by factors such as financial accessibility, the closeness of livelihoods, and the economic feasibility of projects. (Gopalan, 2014; Garg et al., 2022; Rao & Biswas, 2021; Afshan & Sinha, 2023).

The environment in which participation occurs is determined by organizational and legal constraints. Communities may understand foreseeable systems created by well-coordinated organizations, transparent program designs, and clear policies. On the other hand, even when communities are willing to participate, involvement is undermined by fragmented government, unclear rules and regulations, and inadequate accountability systems. (Rana & Rana, 2016; Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Jadhav et al., 2022).

Everyday living experiences are further influenced by environmental and geographic factors. Household sustainability and contentment are supported by projects that are conveniently located, facilitated by amenities, and located in safe surrounding areas. Communities can make emotional and social investments in their surroundings when their living conditions are assured, which gradually increases participation. (Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024; Ramzanpour & Rahimi, 2023; Agarwal et al., 2022).

Through people' actual experiences in their houses, technical and housing quality factors impact participation. Positive opinions of housing projects are influenced by low life-cycle costs, suitable construction methods, and acceptable dwelling condition. By providing avenues for inhabitants to voice complaints and encourage improvements, post-occupancy evaluation systems link technological efficiency to the dynamics of society. (Jiwane, 2021; Chouksey et al., 2022; Gopalan, 2014).

When considered collectively, these results imply that community involvement in affordable housing should be viewed as a systemic process as opposed to a particular action. Aligning social capabilities, organizational structures, economic conditions, environmental surroundings, and technical decisions results in engagement. One-dimensional approaches are unlikely to produce long-term involvement.

8.2 RESEARCH GAPS

The thematic assessment highlights a number of significant gaps that have not been fully addressed, despite the fact that a significant amount of literature discusses affordable housing and community engagement.

First, a significant amount of current research looks at institutional, environmental, social, economic, and technical aspects separately. Research frequently concentrates on a single aspect, including policy frameworks, affordability, or involvement, without methodically analysing how these factors interact. (Thwala & Aigbavboa, 2011; Gopalan & Venkataraman, 2015; Agarwal et al., 2022). Research that combines these factors into a single, cohesive framework for analysis is sparse.

Second, despite the fact that community engagement is a topic covered in numerous research, it is unclear what really qualifies as meaningful community involvement. Deeper types of involvement-like co-design, collaborative decision-making, and community-led procedures are often overlooked in favor of dialogue and meeting attendance. (Johar, 2017; RaviSree & Brar, 2022; Bradley, 2023).

Third, there is an inadequate amount of research relating community involvement to housing outcomes including long-term sustainability, affordability, quality, and liveability. Despite the widespread assumption of favourable connections, comparatively few studies systematically investigate these links. (Jiwane, 2021; Levine & Yavo-Ayalon, 2024).

Fourth, a large portion of Indian literature is still case-specific, concentrating on particular initiatives or cities. Although these studies offer insightful information, comparison or multifaceted evaluation that could facilitate more generalization is sparse. (Joshi & Deshmukh, 2023; Agarwal et al., 2022).

Fifth, there is lack of post-occupancy viewpoints regarding community involvement. Many studies focus on the planning and execution phases, paying little attention to how people's engagement changes once they move into housing complexes. (Jiwane, 2021).

Lastly, different perspectives between communities—especially those of women, immigrants, senior citizens, and other marginalized groups—receive less attention than others. To comprehend how engagement procedures impact various social groups differently, a more comprehensive evaluation is needed. (RaviSree & Brar, 2022; Bradley, 2023).

These gaps highlight the necessity for comprehensive, empirically supported research that methodically looks at the various factors impacting community engagement and how they influence the results of affordable housing.

9. CONCLUSION

Through a systematic analysis of the literature, this study aimed to identify and analyse the crucial factors impacting community engagement in affordable housing within urban India. The study shows that a variety of interconnected elements that go beyond simple concepts of involvement influence community engagement. From a practical standpoint, strengthening engagement requires sustained attention rather than one-time interventions.

Participation, empowerment, inclusivity, trust, leadership, and dispute resolution are aspects of social parameters that are essential to engagement processes.

Economic factors that affect citizens' ability to participate and their opinions of housing projects include income cost-effectiveness, housing cost burden, access to financing, and livelihood links. While environmental and geographic factors influence daily living conditions and residential stability, organizational and policy characteristics provide the governing framework in which participation takes place. Long-term contentment and daily living are shaped by quality of housing and technical factors.

The assessment emphasizes the need to understand community involvement in affordable housing as a multifaceted, systemic process. Strictly individual-focused strategies are unlikely to produce fair outcomes or long-term participation. Rather, it is necessary to implement integrated policies that concurrently address social, economic, institutional, environmental, and technical aspects.

This study offers a conceptual framework for further empirical investigation by classifying current information into theme areas. The development of analytical frameworks, evaluation instruments, and policy recommendations targeted at enhancing community involvement in affordable housing initiatives can be guided by the highlighted parameters.

In the end, increasing community engagement involves more than just strengthening engagement procedures; it also requires creating favorable circumstances that uphold the respect, stability, and agency of low-income people living in urban areas.

10. RECOMMANDATIONES

- Strengthen participatory mechanisms
- Improve post-occupancy monitoring
- Integrate community feedback in policy
- Encourage long-term engagement platforms

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