RESILIENCE AND LIVABLE CITIES IN A WARMING WORLD

A FESTSCHRIFT IN HONOUR OF

TPL. DR. JOSHUA ADEWUMI ADEBISI FNITP, RTP



EDITED BY

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Editors:
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CHAPTER
07

URBAN AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INCLUSIVE PLANNING POLICIES IN LAGOS AND IBADAN, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Over the years, urban agriculture has emerged as a potential approach to promoting food security, livelihoods, and sustainability in rapidly growing urban areas. Yet, its role in promoting social justice is not uniform and contingent on planning processes, governance and institutional settings. By comparing inclusive planning policies in Lagos and Ibadan, this study seeks to understand the links between urban agriculture and social justice. Drawing on the theoretical tenets of the Right to the City, Spatial Justice and Urban Political Ecology, the study uses a comparative mixed-methods approach. 240 urban farmers were surveyed in a sample of farming clusters using descriptive analytics, composite indices and multiple regression analysis. The results show marked differences between the cities. Ibadan exhibits higher levels of access, participation and social justice, while Lagos has a more formalised, exclusionary planning system. The regression analysis shows access to resources is the most significant predictor of social justice, followed by participation and institutional support, with 61% of the variability explained. This research concludes urban agriculture is a social justice outcome only when supported with inclusive planning that provides equitable access to resources, participation and institutional support. It calls for the institutionalisation of urban agriculture in planning, better access to land for small producers, and integration of urban agriculture with sustainability and resilience strategies in the face of climate change.

Keywords: Urban agriculture; social justice; inclusive planning; spatial justice and urban governance

1.0 Introduction

Urban agriculture has become an important element in sustainable urban development, especially in rapidly urbanising areas of the developing countries, where conventional food supply systems are often inadequate to meet the rising demand (Gbadamosi & Akanmu, 2023; Kennard and Bamford, 2020). Growing and more densely populated urban areas and the associated increase in food prices have placed tremendous strain on traditional food supply chains, leading to challenges in food security, livelihoods and environmental sustainability. In this context, urban agriculture offers a different avenue for increasing food security, livelihoods and environmental sustainability in urban areas. In sub-Saharan Africa, where urban poverty and inequality are rife, urban agriculture, particularly, benefits household resilience and reduces vulnerability to food insecurity (Chari and Ngcamu, 2022).

Beyond the economic and environmental benefits, urban agriculture is part of broader socio-political and spatial dynamics that underpin access to resources and opportunities in urban areas. Social justice in urban areas goes beyond the fair distribution of resources to include who has a say in decision-making and who is included in the city's life and livelihoods (Pickles et al., 2025). In this context, urban agriculture offers a powerful avenue to explore issues of justice, inclusiveness and empowerment. Inequitable access to the productive resources of land, water, credit and institutional infrastructure is one way in which inequalities are reflected in planning systems and governance arrangements (Umar and Nyanga, 2023).

In many developing countries, especially in Africa, urban planning has historically overlooked informal livelihood-based practices such as small-scale urban agriculture. These systems, which are often rooted in colonial planning traditions, favour formal urban land uses like residential, commercial and industrial, at the expense of multifunctional and adaptive land uses (Mutopo, 2023). This means that urban agriculture is often confined to informal areas, which limits its inclusion in formal planning systems and its capacity to contribute to urban development (Ajisope, 2023). This is both spatial and institutional exclusion, as urban agriculture is often not properly recognised or supported in urban economies through regulatory frameworks.

This means that planning policies and governance shape the association of urban agriculture with social justice. When planning processes are participatory, urban agriculture can be equitable and offer marginalised people the chance to access resources, livelihoods and political processes. However, exclusionary planning can perpetuate inequality by denying access to land and institutional resources, which excludes small-scale farmers and informal practitioners (Aremu and Olayiwola, 2025). In this regard, Lagos and Ibadan offer contrasting contexts for examining these processes. Lagos, the biggest city and economic centre in Nigeria, has a dense population and land scarcity, with a highly formalised urban planning framework that favours large-scale economic activities and efficiency (Lawanson et al., 2025). This can lead to the marginalisation of informal forms of agriculture and small-scale farmers in urban planning (Dancey, 2024). By comparison, Ibadan has a more fluid urban space, where informal land-use practices and customary land rights provide opportunities for more people to engage in urban agriculture, albeit with minimal institutional backing (Kasim et al., 2023). These variations lead to different pathways of interaction between urban agriculture and inclusive/social justice.

While urban agriculture is increasingly recognised in sustainable development agendas, there is a paucity of empirical evidence on the effects of planning policies on the social justice outcomes of urban agriculture in Nigerian cities. Previous research has primarily centred on the economic and environmental benefits of urban agriculture, there has been less emphasis on governance arrangements, social participation, and social justice (Ogunsesan, Tejuosho, Animashaun & Adeleke, 2026); Moragues-Faus, 2020). This is important in the context of global development agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, that prioritise inclusive, resilient and sustainable urban development. This research contributes to this knowledge base by exploring the links between urban agriculture and social justice in a comparative study of Lagos and Ibadan. The study in particular focuses on understanding the role urban agriculture plays

in the provision of social justice in both cities. It also assesses the ways in which planning policy frameworks shape inclusive urban agriculture, compare urban governance and its impacts on inclusive urban development. Through a combination of empirical investigation and theoretical contributions, the study builds on the idea that urban agriculture is not simply a coping mechanism but a means to promote inclusive and just urban development through appropriate planning policies.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual, Empirical and Theoretical Reviews

2.1.1 Urban Agriculture, Urban Planning and the Making of Urban Inequality

Urban agriculture has evolved from a survival coping strategy to a formal part of the urban systems in the developing countries. It involves the production, processing and sale of agricultural products in urban and peri-urban areas and plays a variety of roles, including food production, employment and environmental management (Gray et al., 2020). Research evidence shows that urban agriculture improves household resilience, food security and diversity, and localised food provisioning, particularly among the urban poor (Jensen and Orfila, 2021). But its impacts are not equitable, and heavily reliant on institutional and spatial contexts.

Meanwhile, urban planning regimes are vital to these processes. Planning systems control land use, dictate the types of activities that can take place and influence resource access, hence shaping the ability to integrate urban agriculture into urban development. In many post-colonial urban settings, planning frameworks are based on modernist ideas of functionalism and economic efficiency, which tend to exclude informal and livelihood activities, including urban agriculture (Babalola, 2023). Consequently, urban agriculture is often left out of planning frameworks and confined to marginal or transitory places. Such exclusion is part of the larger dynamics of urban inequality, in which access to resources is mediated through the market and state regulation. In highly commercialised urban systems like Lagos, land is seen as a commodity, leading to competition between agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The empirical evidence supports the view that planning policies in Lagos prioritise commercial and residential uses, restricting access to land for smallholder farmers and urban agriculture, thereby limiting the spatial spread of urban agriculture (Olumba et al., 2021). As a result, urban agriculture is largely relegated to peri-urban areas and informal land use and is susceptible to displacement, marginalisation and neglect in urban policy.

By comparison, cities with more flexible planning regimes have greater participation in urban agriculture. In Ibadan, poor institutional development and low land values enable urban agriculture to coexist with residential land uses (Adewoyin, 2025). This facilitates more access by a diverse group of actors, including women and low-income households, and helps embed urban agriculture into livelihoods. But the lack of institutional recognition in such environments poses potential challenges for tenure security, infrastructure provision and sustainable development. These examples indicate that urban agriculture is embedded in socio-spatial systems shaped by structural injustice and inequality. Urban inequality is, therefore, not just an economic process but

also relates to planning, governance and institutional priorities. Exclusionary planning systems thus perpetuate inequality by denying access to land and involvement in decision-making. Alternatively, more adaptable systems may increase access but may lack institutional infrastructure for their continued growth.

This approach to understanding urban agriculture points to its ambivalent nature and offers opportunities for livelihood, food security and social inclusion. On the other hand, its potential for equitable development depends on the extent to which it is supported by planning regimes. This highlights the need to consider urban agriculture not just as a technical or economic practice, but also as a socio-spatial process that is informed by power, institutional and governance relations.

2.1.2 International and African Experiences: Informality, Inclusion and Institutional Paradoxes

Research studies from around the world show that urban agriculture occurs in diverse institutional contexts and yields different outcomes in terms of inclusion, sustainability and justice. In developed countries, urban agriculture has increasingly been integrated into formal urban planning, as part of strategies for sustainability and resilience (Ghahremani et al., 2024). In cities like Toronto, New York and Berlin, policies have been developed to encourage the creation of community gardens, urban farms and local food systems, which are often linked with urban green infrastructure and climate change adaptation strategies (Cohen, 2022). This has led to environmental, social and food security benefits, especially in disadvantaged areas. But the institutionalisation of urban agriculture has also received attention. New research indicates that urban agriculture can be inscribed into neoliberal urban development agendas to support processes such as green gentrification and spatial exclusion (Cohen, 2022). Here, urban agriculture can be used to improve urban visuals and sustainability while displacing or excluding the poor. This shows that institutional recognition does not necessarily equate with social justice.

Urban agriculture in the developing countries is largely informal and livelihood-focused. Research from African cities like Accra, Nairobi and Kampala shows that urban agriculture plays a key role in livelihoods, food security and poverty resilience of the urban poor (Ogunsesan, Tejuosho, Animashaun & Adeleke, 2026; Gbadamosi & Akanmu, 2023; FAO, 2022). Hence, urban agriculture is an integral part of informal economies and falls outside formal policy and regulatory frameworks. The informality of urban agricultural practice in African cities is a mixed bag. On the one hand, it reduces the barriers to entry and facilitates widespread participation, especially by marginalised people who may not have access to the formal workforce or credit. On the other hand, it leaves its practitioners vulnerable to a range of risks, including insecure tenure, limited access to credit, inadequate infrastructure and the risk of eviction (FAO, 2022). Hence, informality both fosters inclusion and limits potential for sustainability and growth.

Research in Nigeria shows that urban agriculture continues to play a significant role in livelihoods, especially among low-income populations, offering income diversification, food security and environmental benefits (Onyenekwe et al., 2025). But the impacts of these benefits can vary between urban areas. The high value of land, rigid

zoning laws and competition from urban development limit urban agriculture in Lagos. Planning regulations favour developmental activities leaving little room for smallholder farmers, and perpetuating inequalities (Boamah et al., 2020). Government agricultural projects tend to promote capital-intensive farming practices, further entrenching the exclusion of informal and smallholder farmers.

In contrast, Ibadan has a more inclusive, but informal, urban agriculture system. Informal land-use practices, land prices and customary tenure facilitate greater inclusion, especially among women and poor households (Mpigi, 2020). Ibadan's urban agriculture intermingles more with residential and peri-urban spaces, allowing households to engage in agriculture and other activities. But the lack of formal institutional arrangements means access to finance, infrastructure, and policy is limited. These case studies highlight an important point from the empirical research: neither formal nor informal systems necessarily lead to socially just outcomes. On one hand, formality offers institutional support and stability, but on the other hand, it can create regulatory barriers that marginalise groups. And while informal systems increase accessibility, they may lack institutional strength and capacity for sustainability. As such, recent research highlights the importance of moving beyond dichotomies between formal and informal systems toward an integrated approach. Urban agriculture can be viewed as a continuum in which formal and informal levels coexist (McClintock et al., 2021. Planning needs to consider embracing the inclusivity of informal systems and the stability and support provided by formal systems.

In general, empirical evidence from around the world and in Africa shows that urban agriculture has great potential to contribute to social justice, but this is contingent on governance arrangements, planning frameworks and institutional frameworks. The case studies on Lagos and Ibadan offer an opportunity to explore further how these elements interact to shape access, participation and equity in urban agriculture.

2.1.3 Theories of Urban Agriculture, Social Justice and Power

The interactions between urban agriculture and social justice can be examined through theories that explain the production, allocation and struggles over urban space, resources and processes. In this study, we take an interdisciplinary approach, using the Right to the City, Spatial Justice and Urban Political Ecology to explore how planning systems shape access, participation and equity in urban agriculture systems. The Right to the City, first expressed by Henri Lefebvre and elaborated by Mark Purcell, offers a normative perspective on urban inclusion and the right to the city (Olsson and Besussi, 2023). It stresses the importance not only of access to the urban, but also of the right to participate in the processes that make the city. For urban agriculture, this suggests the need for participatory governance and planning processes. Inclusive governance is essential for urban farmers to have the opportunity to influence urban planning and access resources for livelihoods. This is especially true of more centralised, technocratic planning systems where power is centralised within the state. The concept thus informs the participation aspect of this study, highlighting the importance of governance inclusion to achieve social justice.

To complement this approach, Edward W. Soja's notion of Spatial Justice is concerned with spatial equity, or the fairness of the distribution of resources and

opportunities in space (Shoeibi, 2022). Spatial justice builds on traditional distributive justice theories by acknowledging that spatial organisation (such as zoning, land-use and infrastructure provision) is an important factor in inequality. Urban agriculture is a spatial activity, dependent on access to land, water and other geographically located resources. When these resources are constrained in specific locations or by market mechanisms, access is limited, contributing to socio-spatial injustices. In highly commodified urban spaces like Lagos, access to land for agriculture is constrained by competing land uses and regulatory controls, restricting access by the poor. By contrast, looser spatial structures (as seen in Ibadan) allow greater access, but without structural guarantees. This approach underpins the access component of this research and the importance of resource distribution for social justice.

While the Right to the City and Spatial Justice stress participation and distribution, Urban Political Ecology brings a critical perspective on power, governance and the political economy of urban resource distribution. This approach, pioneered by researchers like Nik Heynen, Maria Kaika and Erik Swyngedouw, views urban space as a socio-natural system influenced by political, economic and environmental factors (Wang et al., 2025). It balances the relationship between access to resources and power relations, which favour elite interests at the expense of the marginalised. For urban agriculture, this approach highlights the multiple interests vested in urban land use, such as real estate, infrastructure and environmental policies. These interests shape policy and affect the institutional support to urban farmers. This perspective is considered in the institutional support aspect of the research, highlighting the fact that governance and policy settings enable or hinder inclusive outcomes.

These three theoretical approaches offer an integrated view of the interaction between urban agriculture and social justice. They show that the outcome of social justice depends on the interplay among three processes: resource access, governance participation and institutional support. Each of these processes influences the other, with a lack of access to resources limiting participation and a lack of institutional support limiting access and participation. This theoretical integration importantly highlights that urban agriculture is not, in and of itself, a social justice mechanism. The implications of urban agriculture are dependent on the systems in which it occurs. In exclusionary systems, urban agriculture can perpetuate inequities by limiting access and participation. In more inclusive systems, it can be a transformative platform to increase equity, empowerment and livelihood opportunities. Therefore, this holistic approach offers the theoretical backdrop for the conceptual model in this research, which explores the effects of access, participation and institutional support on the social justice outcomes in urban agriculture.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual, empirical and theoretical insights from the previous sections inform the development of an integrated framework to understand the nexus between urban agriculture and social justice. The evidence shows that urban agriculture does not necessarily advance social justice; rather, its impact depends on planning and governance systems and institutional arrangements that shape access to resources, participation and benefits (Cohen & Garrett, 2021; FAO, 2022). The combined insights

of the Right to the City, Spatial Justice and Urban Political Ecology are integrated to conceptualise urban agriculture as a socio-political system that enhances social justice through three pathways: access to resources, participation in governance and institutional support. These are the ways in which planning and governance policies and practices shape equity and inclusion in the city.

Access to resources is the first pathway of the framework. This includes access to land, water, credit and agricultural inputs, necessary for successful urban agriculture. From a spatial justice standpoint, the fair distribution of these resources is a key element in addressing socio-economic inequality and allowing for participation (Wang et al., 2025). Market and regulatory barriers to access limit the inclusive of urban agriculture and its ability to engender social justice. The second pathway is participation in governance and concerns the degree of involvement in decision-making processes among urban farmers. Examples include involvement in planning, membership in cooperative societies and participation in programs. The Right to the City approach stresses that decision-making is key to equity (Kasim et al., 2023). Greater participation leads to empowerment and ensures the planning process takes local needs into account, while lesser participation restrains marginalised groups' ability to shape urban development.

Also, institutional support is the third pathway, referring to the roles of policy, governance and infrastructural arrangements that support urban agriculture. Urban Political Ecology emphasises the role of institutional and power relations in determining access to resources and opportunities (Umar and Nyanga, 2023). Institutional support encompasses access to extension, training, financial and policy support. Institutional support helps build sustainability and scale, while a lack of it undermines urban agriculture as a development approach. The three aspects (access, participation and institutional support) are considered as independent (but related) variables that affect social justice. Social justice is the dependent variable, measured through equitable resource distribution, inclusion of marginalised groups, increased income and perceived fairness. This multidimensional conception of social justice is consistent with characterisations that emphasise its distributive and procedural aspects (Babalola, 2023). Thus, the conceptual model assumes that planning and governance systems affect access, participation and institutional support, which, in turn, affect social justice. Essentially, these dynamics are contingent on the contexts in which they operate and differ across cities, as shown in the cases of Lagos and Ibadan.

3.0 Materials and Methods

3.1 Study Area

The research was undertaken in two major cities in southwest Nigeria (Lagos and Ibadan) that were identified as having contrasting planning and governance systems and spatial features important for urban agriculture. Lagos, the nation's largest metropolitan region (based on population and economic activity) and economic capital, is experiencing rapid urbanization and is densely populated, with competing land uses. It has a very formal planning system that favours commercial and residential uses, often at the expense of urban agriculture. This results in urban agriculture in Lagos being restricted to peri-urban areas like Ikorodu, Epe and Badagry.

By contrast, Ibadan has a more porous urban fabric, with relatively low land values and weak urban planning. Retention of traditional land tenure allows agricultural activities to coexist with urban and peri-urban residential activities. This contributes to greater access and participation, but it also comes with weak institutional frameworks. The research site, with these two cities, offers a comparative perspective on the impact of planning on access, participation, and social justice for urban agriculture.

3.2 Methodology

This research uses a comparative, mixed-methods design that combines quantitative and qualitative analysis to understand the links between urban agriculture and social justice. The mixed-methods design is suitable because it accommodates both quantitative (e.g., access to land, income) and qualitative (e.g., participation and perception) components of social justice. The comparative approach facilitates an exploration of differences and similarities between Lagos and Ibadan and how these differences in urban planning and governance affect inclusive urban agriculture. Although there is no formal register of urban agriculture in Nigeria, calculation of sample size was done by identification of population of urban and peri-urban farmers within agricultural clusters was done.

The National Population Commission (NPC) and urban development projections were used to estimate the population. Given the population of Lagos (over 20 million) and Ibadan (3-4 million), and that between 3% and 8% of the urban population is engaged in urban agriculture (FAO, 2022; Cohen, 2022), the size of the urban farmers' population is large in both cities. For practical purposes, accessible clusters that engage in urban agriculture were selected. Selected areas in Lagos are Ikorodu, Epe, and Badagry while in Ibadan, Moniya, Apete, and Ologuneru were selected. The accessible population in these clusters was estimated at 40,000 farmers in Lagos and 15,000 in Ibadan. A sample of 240 (120 in each city) was arrived at using Yamane's (1967) formula:

$$[n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}]$$

With a 5% margin of error, the sample size for large populations would be around 400, but 240 was chosen for comparison and practical considerations. (This is statistically sound and is in line with similar urban research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The samples was taken across the six clusters in equal proportions (40 respondents per cluster) and was therefore representative. However, a multiple-stage sampling technique was adopted. Purposive sampling was first used to select agricultural clusters with urban farming. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents within the clusters. This guarantees relevant and representative samples. Primary data was gathered through field Survey by administering structured questionnaires on urban farmers to understand resource access, governance, institutional support and social justice. Also, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with planning officials, extension officers and cooperative leaders was done to gain insight into institutional and policy aspects, while secondary data sources include planning reports, policy documents and literature.

The research uses composite indices based on Likert scales (1 = very low to 5 = very high) to measure variables:

i. Access Index (AI): land, water, credit and input access
ii. Participation Index (PI): involvement in decision-making, being a member of a cooperative, and engaging with the government
iii. Institutional Support Index (ISI): extension, training and policy support
iv. Social Justice Index (SJI): inclusion, equity, income increase and perceived fairness

The indices were calculated based on means for comparison.

Tests of the instrument's reliability were conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, with scores of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978) and indicative of good internal consistency. Content validity was achieved by ensuring the study aligned with previous research and theoretical frameworks, while construct validity was established through the association of variables with the Right to the City, Spatial Justice and Urban Political Ecology perspectives. Data were analysed using Descriptive analysis (mean and percentage), Composite indices (AI, PI, ISI, SJI) and Multiple regression analysis (to test the model):

$$[SJI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 AI + \beta_2 PI + \beta_3 ISI + \epsilon]$$

Thematic analysis of qualitative interview data was used to understand institutional and governance arrangements.

Hypotheses Development

Drawing from the conceptual framework, the research puts forward the hypotheses:

H_1: Urban agricultural resources positively and significantly impact social justice.
H_2: Governance participation is positively and significantly related to social justice.
H_3: Institutional backing positively and significantly impacts social justice.

Analytical Model

To test the relationships between the variables, multiple regression model was used:

$$[SJI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 AI + \beta_2 PI + \beta_3 ISI + \epsilon]$$

Where:

SJI = Social Justice Index (dependent variable)
AI = Access Index
PI = Participation Index
β_0 = Constant
β_1–β_3 = Regression coefficients
ε = Error term

This model offers a quantitative approach to evaluate the impact of access, participation and institutions on social justice. It also allows us to determine the key factors that influence equity within urban agriculture. Also, the research was complied with ethical guidelines. It ensures voluntary participation, informed consent and confidentiality of participants.

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 The socioeconomic profile of the respondents

The results on the socio-economic characteristics show that urban agriculture is mostly practised by women in both Lagos (57.5%) and Ibadan (61.7%). This supports the notion of urban agriculture as a gendered livelihood activity, especially for low-income populations, in which women engage to secure livelihoods and food (FAO, 2022). Also, the age distribution reveals that the majority of respondents are in the economically active group (36-55 years), and urban agriculture is mostly engaged in by working-age people who juggle farming with other livelihoods. It suggests it is a complementary livelihood strategy in urban areas. Also, anotable difference between the two cities is that primary involvement in farming is lower in Lagos. The percentage of primary agriculturalists is higher in Ibadan (48.3%) than in Lagos (36.7%), reflecting Ibadan's more agricultural urban economy and greater access to agricultural land. The proportion in Lagos can be explained by the peri-urban nature of the clusters sampled, and implies that urban agriculture follows a spatial gradient from an ancillary activity in the urban core, to more intensive farming in the peri-urban locations. This suggests urban agriculture is a means of economic inclusion for women and the working-age population.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Lagos (%)	Ibadan (%)
Male	42.5	38,3
Female	57.5	61.7
Age (18–35)	28.3	34.2
Age (36–55)	51.7	49.2
Age (56 and above)	20.0	16.6
Primary occupation (farming)	36.7	48.3
Secondary occupation	63.3	51.7

Source: Field Survey 2025

4.2 Access to resources (Access Inde - AI)

The findings in Table 2 reveal a significant difference in access to resources between Lagos and Ibadan, with Ibadan scoring higher on all resource indicators. The gap is largest for access to land, with a low mean of 2.4 in Lagos and 3.8 in Ibadan. This is due to the high cost of land, competition and restrictive land-use policies in Lagos, which constrain small farmers' access to land. Both cities have limited access to credit, especially in Lagos, suggesting the financial marginalisation of urban farmers. This indicates that there are spatial and institutional constraints to urban agriculture. The results show how unequal resource allocation affects access within a Spatial Justice framework. The limited access in Lagos feeds socio-spatial inequalities, while Ibadan's less formal approach increases access. This evidence supports the view that access to resources is an essential factor in the social justice of urban agriculture.

Table 2: Access to Urban Agriculture Resources

Indicator	Lagos (Mean)	Ibadan (Mean)
Access to land	2.4	3.8
Access to water	2.9	3.5
Access to credit	2.1	2.8
Access to inputs	2.6	3.4
Composite AI	2.5	3.4

Source: Field Survey, 2025

4.3 Political Participation (Participation Inde - PI)

Ibadan has a much higher level of participation than Lagos, particularly in terms of decision-making. Lagos' relatively low participation score (2.0) reflects a highly technocratic and centralised urban planning system in which decision-making is mainly in the hands of the state. Instead, Ibadan has a community-based governance system and cooperative networks, which enhance participation. These networks enable urban farmers to participate more effectively in governance. From a Right to the City perspective, low participation in Lagos is a barrier to accessing opportunities and changing the city. In contrast, increased participation in Ibadan leads to greater inclusion although within informal structures. These insights indicate that participation is an important facet of social justice, shaping empowerment and responsiveness.

Table 3: Participation in Governance

Indicator	Lagos (Mean)	Ibadan (Mean)
Participation in decision-making	2.0	3.2
Cooperative membership	2.7	3.6
Participation in government schemes	2.3	3.0
Composite PI	2.3	3.3

Source: Field survey 2025

4.4 Social Justice (Social Justice Inde - SJI)

Ibadan has higher social justice outcomes across all indicators, suggesting that urban agriculture is more effective at supporting social justice in this city. The higher scores for inclusion and fairness reflect the greater participation and access. While In Lagos, lower SJI scores are due to institutional barriers, including restrictive land-use policies, low participation, and market-based planning. These limit the ability of urban agriculture to be an inclusive development strategy. Therefore, from an urban political ecology perspective, these inequalities reflect power relations that determine access to resources and opportunities. This research shows that urban agriculture can lead to social justice only with supportive planning and governance.

Table 4: Social Justice Outcomes

Indicator	Lagos (Mean)	Ibadan (Mean)
Equality in access to resources	2.3	3.5
Marginalised groups' inclusion	2.5	3.7
Income improvement	2.8	3.6
Perceived fairness	2.2	3.4
Composite SJI	2.45	3.55

Source: Field Survey, 2025

4.5 Regression Analysis: Factors that Drive Social Justice

The regression analysis shows that each of the three variables (access, participation and institutional support) has a positive and significant impact on social justice. The model explains 61% of the variance in SJI, suggesting a strong association. The strongest predictor is access, confirming the need for a more equitable access to resources. Participation is also important, stressing the importance of participatory governance. The role of institutional support, although less pronounced, remains important, underscoring the importance of policy and infrastructure.

This supports the theory and confirms that urban agriculture has multiple pathways to social justice, as shaped by planning.

Table 5: Regression Results

Variable	Coefficient (β)	p-value
Access Index (AI)	0.42	0.001
Participation Index (PI)	0.35	0.003
Institutional Support (ISI)	0.29	0.010
Constant	1.12	___
R^2	0.61	___

Source: Field Survey 2025

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This research sought to explore the link between urban agriculture and social justice in the context of inclusive policies in Lagos and Ibadan. Through a combination of empirical research and theoretical analysis, the research offers a better understanding of the role of planning systems in determining access to resources, governance and benefit distribution in urban agriculture. The results reveal that urban agriculture has a positive impact on livelihood, food security and the environment in both urban areas. But its potential for social justice varies and is closely related to the type of planning and governance systems in place. Lagos has a formalized, market-oriented system of urban planning that limits participation and access to land and resources, thereby constraining the inclusiveness of urban agriculture. By contrast, Ibadan has a more participatory and accessible planning system, supported by flexible land-use policies and social networks, albeit in a largely informal manner.

The empirical findings also show that access to resource, governance participation and institutional support are important factors in determining social justice. among these, access (especially to land) is most significant, highlighting the role of spatial justice. Participation helps to empower and ensure planning processes are responsive to local contexts, while institutional support provides the enabling framework for sustainability. The research thus demonstrates that urban agriculture is not necessarily a means for social justice. It can only be successful if the planning and governance systems are inclusive, and provide equitable access and participation. When they are inclusive, urban agriculture can be a means of achieving greater equality and socio-economic inclusion.

Therefore, the study recommends among others, a move from exclusionary, fragmented development to integrated, inclusive planning and development that incorporates urban agriculture into the city. Thus, urban agriculture should be integrated into the planning system by being included in master plans, zoning laws and urban development policies. This will legitimate urban agriculture and expand access to land, especially in heavily regulated urban areas. Also, access to land and other productive resources needs to be increased for social justice. Land-use planning should encourage mixed land uses, provide secure tenure arrangements for urban farmers, and defend peri-urban farmland from non-agricultural conversions.

Furthermore, participatory governance should be encouraged to enable urban farmers to participate in governance and planning. Involving cooperatives and other community groups will increase responsiveness and accountability. Moreover, institutions should be better coordinated to overcome the lack of coordination between agencies involved in agriculture, urban planning and environmental protection. In addition, measures should be taken to better empower women and youth, a large part of urban farmers. Access to credit, training and participating in decision-making will promote inclusion and sustainability. Again, urban agriculture should be incorporated into climate change and sustainability plans. Adopting resource-efficient farming and agroecology will increase urban resilience while contributing to environmental sustainability.

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