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Trendy use of balconies in residential buildings

Rohini and Dr. D Sumathi

Abstract

Balcony has the equal importance as the other rooms. A balcony increases the amount of space offered by a room or an apartment, and can make a room seem larger than it is. Balconies add architectural interest to a building and offer additional design options that include color, balustrade and platform shape and decorative gardens and plants. The main reason for the study is to bring out the importance and trendy usage of balconies in residential buildings as it also plays an important role in the house.

Keywords: outdoor spaces, Balconies, Residential design.

Introduction

Residential design is the design of the interior of private residences. As this type of design is very specific for individual situations, the needs and wants of the individual are paramount in this area of interior design (Piotrowski, 2004) ^[1]. Today's outdoor spaces are designed for living and extend the living areas of our homes out-of-doors. It connects a home to its environment; creates a private space for residents and guests to enjoy the natural world; and encourages us to fully inhabit the space outside the house, whether we are strolling along a path, relaxing on a porch, or simply sitting on a bench contemplating patterns of sunlight and shadow (Hamilton, 2001).

Balcony as a passive design strategy is defined as "a platform projecting either from an inside or an outside wall of a building". A balcony can provide various benefits from the aspects of social, economy and environmental, for examples, it provide private outdoor spaces, enhanced the monetary value of a building and provides protection from extreme outdoor climate, respectively. Balconies can function as a room extension and provide outdoor living space for rooms located on upper storey (<http://www.99acres.com/articles/balcony-takes-the-centre-stage-in-home-selection-process.html>).

Objectives

- To find out the socio economic profile of the households
- To understand the change in taste and preferences in terms of usage of balcony space
- To study the materials used in designing balconies
- To develop a plan for trendy balcony plan using AutoCAD and 3Ds max software's.

Methodology

The study was done in Coimbatore city among households and a trendy balcony plan was designed by using AutoCAD and 3Ds max software. The study was carried out in Coimbatore City as the investigator was familiar with this area and was able to establish good rapport with the people in the selected study area. For the study, one hundred households who owned the balcony were selected by using purposive sampling techniques. Interview method was adopted for the collection of data.

Developing a Plan for Trendy Balcony

The investigator designed a plan with the guidelines of a Designer in an authorised CAD centre. After gathering the information, investigator made an effort to design a plan using AutoCAD and 3Ds max software. The plan is given under result and discussion.

Result and discussion

A. Household survey

A household survey was conducted to find out the extent of methods and materials used in the balcony space by the selected households. This phase of the findings present the data received from the households.

Socio economic details

Interior design is an art and science. Its concept was developed in an individual is influenced by the age, type of family, educational qualification and income of the family of the selected families. These details are discussed under Table 1.

Table 1: Socio Economic Details

Details	Percentage (N:100)
Type of family	
Nuclear family	58
Joint family	42
Age group	
Above 50	33
25-50	40
Below 25	27
Educational status	
SSLC	26
HSLC	33
UG	29
Above UG	12
Income of the family	
30,000 – 50,000	29
50,000 – 1,00,000	49
Above 1,00,000	22

The table indicates that nuclear family was 58 per cent higher than joint family which was 42 per cent, it was observed that 33 per cent were possessing undergraduate degree, 29 per cent completed higher secondary. The income of the family members were Rs50,000 – Rs1,00,000 were upper middle class 49 per cent, 29 per cent were lower middle class range Rs.30,000 – Rs.50,000 and higher class are above 1,00,000 were 22 per cent respectively.

Details of the balcony

The details such as design of balconies, number of balconies and their types, area and height, cantilevered distance and style of the balconies were shown in the Table 2.

Table 2: Details of the Balcony

Balcony details	Percentage (N:100)
Balcony is designed by	
Civil engineer	41
Interior designers	35
Architect	13
Family members	11
Number of balconies	
1	45
2	32
Above 2	23
Type of balcony	
French balcony	64
Decorative open balcony	21
Open grill balcony	15
Area of the balcony (in sq.ft)	
Below 50	36
50-100	54
Above 100	10
Height of the balcony (in ft)	
10	88
10-15	12
Cantilevered distance of the balcony(in sq.ft)	
5	47
7	32
Above 7	21
Style of balcony	
Fully opened	57
Partially opened	32
Fully closed	11

Majority of the balconies were designed by the civil engineers 41 per cent, Most of the people preferred French balcony 64 per cent. Area of balcony through the survey was found that at most houses had balconies 54 per cent with area of 50 – 100 sq. ft. The heights of the balconies were maximum of 10 ft 88 per cent. The cantilevered distance of the balcony was at most given to five feet 47 per cent. Around 57 per cent chose fully opened balcony.

Socio economic details

Interior design is an art and science. Its concept was developed in an individual is influenced by the age, type of family, educational qualification and income of the family of the selected families. These details are discussed under Table 3.

Table 3: Socio Economic Details

Details	Percentage (N:100)
Type of family	
Nuclear family	58
Joint family	42
Age group	
Above 50	33
25-50	40
Below 25	27
Educational status	
SSLC	26
HSLC	33
UG	29
Above UG	12
Income of the family	
30,000 – 50,000	29
50,000 – 1,00,000	49
Above 1,00,000	22

In the 21st century, family type from joint to nuclear families has changed due to change in place and location, life style, work, etc; has brought the change in the style and standard of living. Through this survey, the investigator found out that nuclear family was 58 per cent higher than joint family which was 42 per cent. Education is an important aspect to judge ones quality of life. It is heart – warming to note that the maximum number of respondents surveyed were educated till undergraduate level. However, it was observed that 33 per cent were possessing undergraduate degree, 29 per cent completed higher secondary. The income of the family members were Rs50,000 – Rs1,00,000 were upper middle class 49 per cent, 29 per cent were lower middle class range Rs.30,000 – Rs.50,000 and higher class are above 1,00,000 were 22 per cent respectively.

Materials and used for balconies

Details of plumbing

The plumbing details from the households was collected to know the type used. Through the survey concealed piping covered 54 per cent and exposed piping covered the majority around 46 per cent.

Lighting for balcony

Households used spotlight for their balconies 37 per cent, 25 per cent pendent lighting, 23 per cent general lighting and 15 per cent of decorative lighting were used.

Details of flooring type

Majority used tiled flooring as it was easy to maintain and is save in the movement 27 per cent, marble flooring 26 per cent, concrete flooring 22 per cent, bamboo flooring 15 per cent and wooden flooring 10 per cent.

Accessories used in balcony

Accessories in balcony add beauty and good appearance. The different accessories like hanging flower pots around 47 per cent was at most used by households, birds cage by 32 per cent and 21 per cent of bamboo banging chair respectively.

B. Designed Plan for Trendy Balcony

The investigator designed a plan with the guidelines of Rema Devi. S, designer, USAM CAD centre. After gathering the information, investigator made an effort to design a plan with balcony using Auto CAD and 3Ds max software.



Area of the house:

730 Sq. ft



3D View of Balcony



Front view of Balcony

Modern materials and Finishes Used in Trendy Balcony Plan

- Stainless steel
- Metal
- Bamboo flooring
- Hardwood
- Fibre glass
- Aluminium panel
- Reinforced concrete
- Spot light
- Wood light fittings
- Hanging flower pots
- Teak wood

Conclusion

Balcony is an important part in outdoor space of a building. The use, purpose and materials in balconies as outdoor spaces are something that differs from person to person. It is an area where it can be used in different ways depending upon the taste and preferences, convenience of the individuals. The beauty of the house is absorbed by the balcony and everyone wants it in their house. The use of balconies is taken into account for the centuries. It is a great place for those who love to spend time in peace and silence.

Reference

1. Prianto E, Depeeker P. Balcony – the open design and internal division for homes, SLAK publishers, 2004. 40-49.
(<http://www.99acres.com/articles/balcony-takes-the-centre-stage-in-home-selection-process.html>).