

Cultural Changes and Flexibility in Residential Architectural Design

Assist.Prof. Dr. Alaa Shatwan

**Assistant Professor – Interior Design Department- College of Art and Design–
University of Jeddah- Jeddah-Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.**

ashatwan@uj.edu.sa

Abstract

Owning an apartment is the first choice for some citizens in the big cities of Saudi Arabia for financial and cultural reasons. Considering cultural changes in residential design is mandatory as culture has a significant impact on the users' needs at home. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the perceptions of women of apartment design in Jeddah city, which is the second major city in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and contains the highest number of sale apartments. It aims to identify design issues in terms of apartment layout and flexibility. This research used a mixed methodology qualitative and quantitative that involved interviews with four groups of married women. The data was analyzed both descriptively and statistically using NVivo and SPSS software. The findings strongly reveal that the interior layout of residential apartments shows no consideration for the perception of women. They claim that the dead reception area takes up a considerable amount of the total apartment space. This indicates that cultural changes such guest reception at home affect the inhabitants' needs at home. However, these needs are not considered in the design of apartments for sale. It also highlights the importance of spatial flexibility. Additionally, it was found that neither the age of the building nor the cost of the apartment results in a difference in the architectural layout of the apartments. Therefore, this study recommends that architects consider flexibility in their design of sale apartments to allow the users to change the interior layout according to their needs.

Keywords

Residential design, Women's needs, Home layout, Culture, Flexibility.