

Future of Apartment in Tier –II Cities of India

Parampreet Kaur ¹

¹Amity School of Architecture and Planning, Amity University Chhattisgarh,
India

Abstract

Indian economy is growing and it is putting immense pressure on optimum utilization of resources. Land being a limited resource is of paramount importance as rightful percentage allocation of land is essential for holistic growth of a city. Metropolitan cities are growing in vertical direction where as other cities which are still developing are facing issues regarding progressive distribution of vertical and ground development. Indian real estate market is flooded with both options and it has been observed that in Tier-II cities the bend is still towards plotted development. This paper deals with the positive and negative aspect of flatted residential spaces (Apartments) and gives an insight to the issues faced by the apartment tenants which prevent further shift. This paper also discusses the importance of vertical residential spaces and suggests future scope of studies.

Keywords: Apartment, Land scarcity, Residential spaces, Tier-II cities, Vertical development

1. Introduction

Developing countries are rapidly urbanizing with exploding population (Ali,M.M, 2010). India is a developing country, with rapid growth of urbanization it is facing problems of land scarcity and limited resources. Approximately fifty percentages of population lives in cities these days and human race is depleting natural resources causing environmental degradation (Kabre,C, 2018). According to NSS 69th survey in year 2012 Pacca house accounts for 93.1 % of housing type and 61% of households are owned houses in urban areas (Government of india, 2018). To provide better facilities and combat land scarcity; development is going vertical and people are resorting to high rise offices and residential spaces. Tall buildings are efficient in incorporating large number of people in small footprint and act as a vertical transformation of horizontal expansion (Beedle LS,et al, 2007).

Choosing an apartment for residential use in metropolitan cities is not a choice, but compulsion for higher middle and middle class due to high land cost. But in a city where resources are still ample and consumer have convenient options to choose between flatted or plotted development, the decision to choose one over the other becomes difficult. There are several factors which comes into play when a family decide to buy a house, i.e., Locality, distance from workplace, price, social and physical infrastructure, family believes, religion, etc.

Factors discussed, like vicinity to social infrastructure i.e. schools, hospitals, parks, etc and distance from work are the filtering criteria which decides the area, where one can buy their new home, other factors requires a thorough understanding and a tradeoff to get to final decision. Apart from these there are numerous benefits and issue faces by every buyer, which are buyer specific and needs thorough understanding at individual basis.

Tall buildings which are usually a resultant of necessity to achieve high density development controls urban sprawl with their relative small foot print. It's a sustainable option in long run (Ibrahim, E, 2007). Apartment is defined as an individual dwelling unit, usually on a single level and often contained in a multi- unit building or development (Realtors,IREMA, 2003). Flatted and plotted development both holds some positive and negative aspects, but there is no point denying that flatted development is need of the hour for providing ample space for other activities in a city. The decision between flatted and plotted development becomes more crucial in Tier II cities where the land value is within consumers reach. This paper outlines benefits and issues faced by the buyer while selecting a home. This also discusses the scope of future studies, however the constraints like Location and distance from workplace is not considered in this study as it requires a discrete approach and may not give generalize results.

2. Discussion

There are both sides of apartment use depending upon the requirement and socioeconomic condition of an individual. On one hand it provides facilities like swimming pool, gym, tennis court and large green spaces etc at reasonable price which are usually difficult to comprehend at individual level but at the same time makes one dependable on others for their building maintenance and up gradation. Section 1.1 and 1.2 indicates the positive and negative aspects of apartments.

2.1 Positive Aspects of Apartments:

- **Economical:** Flats with similar specifications as compare to plotted development in terms of floor area, construction type and material usage are less costly due to reduced land cost.
- **Shared amenities:** Plotted development, specially individual plots due to land and money constraints put a cap on amenities like garden, swimming pool, outdoor game area, whereas as in flatted development with minimum fee one can avail most of the amenities without contributing manually for maintenance of the facility.
- **Security:** Flatted developments are usually more secure due to common security systems like cameras, guards and frequent footfalls near house. One can easily leave the house for days without considering much about theft and breakage.
- **location:** As discussed earlier that flatted development are cheaper than plotted development same holds for location, large number of flatted development can be found near the prime location in the city with reasonable price range as compared to plotted development, which are now usually located in suburban areas.
- **Accessibility:** As compared to plotted development these days' apartments are accessible via wide roads and dedicate lanes and passage for circulation, which enhance the mobility pattern in the area.

- **Maintenance of facilities and amenities :** Unlike individual house the tenant is not require to frequently contribute to the maintenance of infrastructure like water supply, street lighting, cleaning and painting of the building. A committee assigned by the building tenants look after all of these issues.
- **Thermal comfort:** Due to shared walls, roofs, floor and mutual shading, apartment gain or loss less heat hence needs comparatively smaller HVAC systems to maintain the thermal comfort inside the house (Baiz,W.H, Khoshnaw,D.S and Byze,A.H, 2016).
- **Easy availability of domestic help:** As there is large number of domestic units in a small area, it acts as a job magnet for domestic help and support staff. This in turn gives rise to cheaper labor force with large number of options.
- **Social Circle and psychological wellbeing:** As people usually share common amenities it gives rise to community development and celebrations which enhance psychological well being of tenant as well as increase the feeling of social security.

2.2 Negative Aspects of Apartments:

- **Fixed floor area:** Unlike plotted development there is no provision of increasing floor area and making new alterations as per the growing requirement of the family.
- **Rigidity of building design:** There is not much scope alteration except changing the door location and removing a wall, as any alteration in building plan will increase the chances of unaccounted load and hence reduce the stability of the building.
- **Privacy:** As most of the house share common walls, roofs and floor there is fair transmission of noise both structure and air born hence reduces the privacy of an individual. Visual transparency

further decreases the privacy quotient of the house.

- **Dependency on building committee for maintenance:** Apart from maintenance inside the individual flat, the residents are depended upon the building management committee for annual maintenance of shared facilities and regular supply of water and electricity, which some time give rise to problem faced by mass.
- **Socioeconomic status of building tenant:** Depending upon the apartment value, one can observe various strata of socio economic class living together under one roof, which in turn give rise to anti social activities and discrimination with respect to caste, eating habits, and economical standing.
- **Compact planning:** To reduce wastage of space, apartments are usually planned with less shared spaces like corridor, gallery etc which give rise to claustrophobic feeling in many occupants.
- **Building damage issue:** Seepage from one flat can interfere with the stability of adjoining flats, which give rise to numerous structural issues and need to sort at building management level to prevent further decay of the flats.
- **Limited private open spaces:** Private open spaces are imitated to balconies and some time terraces for the occupants, which in turn provide less green open spaces.
- **Less opportunity to adopt green technology:** There are fewer options to adopt for making house green as compared to plotted development where, one can install water harvesting systems and solar panels.

3. Conclusions

As major stress of urbanization is on growing cities where people are still adjusting to urban facilities and constraint, land optimization is an important concern. People of the Tier –II cities are still fiddling between plotted and flatted development, whereas the future of urbanization is towards high rise residential building to provide more open spaces for other activities. People who are accustomed to plotted development and migrated from smaller cities are hesitant to invest in an apartment. As discussed above apartment have both positive and negative aspects, now the responsibility to make wise decision lies in hand of the buyer and government to educate the mass about the benefits and repercussion of both options. Though both types of development will always be there in the city but a healthy proportion can benefit the city development many fold. Further cost benefit analysis can be done for future studies to understand this situation better. Schemes and subsidies promoting the desired type of development can be floated from government and real estate developer to further enhance the shift.

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