

Sri Lankan identity in Architecture: Perceptions of lay people on designed Sri Lankan house

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Abstract - Architects often face the challenge of understanding and meeting the preferences of their clients, ensuring that their designs align with the client's expectations. One key preference commonly expressed by Sri Lankan clients is the desire for a 'Sri Lankan identity' or a distinct architectural style that reflects their culture. However, there is uncertainty regarding whether these clients have a clear understanding of their own requirements or can effectively communicate their ideas to the architect. This study aims to explore the perceptions of lay people regarding the concept of 'Sri Lankan identity' in architecture, specifically in the context of designing Sri Lankan houses aiming to shed light on the complexities of translating cultural identity into architectural design. Qualitative data were collected using researcher made structured interviews conducted among selected 82 people from 22 districts in Sri Lanka, as well as Sri Lankans living abroad who have experience in house design. Purposive sampling method was used to select the above sample. The interviews consisted of structured questions divided into three parts: demographic data, identification of general ideas on 'Sri Lankan identity' and perceptions on designed Sri Lankan house. The data were analysed qualitatively as a thematic analysis. This study suggests that there is no universally agreed-upon definition for a house with 'Sri Lankan identity'. Further, this research contributes to the understanding of the complex nature of Sri Lankan architectural identity and context sensitivity in architectural design practices.

Keywords – Sri Lankan Identity, Perceptions of Lay People, Sri Lankan context, Residential Architecture

I. INTRODUCTION

The process of architectural design involves a delicate balance between expertise of the architect and aspirations of the client/user. Achieving this balance requires a thorough understanding of the preferences, desires, and expectations of client/user. In the Sri Lankan context, one of the main preferences expressed by the client/user seeking to design a house is the desire for a distinct 'Sri Lankan identity' or an architectural style that reflects their own cultural heritage. However, it is often unclear whether these clients possess a comprehensive understanding of their own requirements or can effectively articulate their ideas to the architect. Consequently, architects face the challenge of interpreting and translating these preferences into practical design solutions that satisfy the needs of client/user.

Unfortunately, researchers have not paid considerable attention on lay people's perception of 'Sri Lankan Identity' in architecture so that the above mentioned challenge can

be overcome. Within this context, what Sri Lankan lay people (clients /users who are not expert in Architecture) perceive as 'Sri Lankan Identity' in residential architecture was found as the research question of this study. The objective of the study is to find out how lay people perceive 'Sri Lankan identity' in residential architecture and what kind of architecture they expect as a designed Sri Lankan house. The findings from this research will provide insights into the perceptions of lay people regarding the incorporation of 'Sri Lankan identity' into architectural design, thus contributing to a better understanding of their needs and expectations. These insights can aid architects in delivering more satisfactory services that align with the desires of their clients seeking to create a unique Sri Lankan house.

II. BACKGROUND AND LITREATURE REVIEW

A. Sri Lankan Identity in Architecture:

The concept of 'Sri Lankan identity' in architecture encompasses the cultural, historical, and traditional elements that define the unique architectural style of Sri Lanka. The term 'identity' has been defined by using many definitions in different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, political science and built environment (Torabi et al., 2013). Moreover, many scholars have defined identity in architecture in different ways. Torabi et al. (2013) describe architectural identity as a reflection of the community it represents, acting as a certificate of the homeland's identity. Wickramage (2021) highlights the importance of reflecting on the past when defining the identity of the built environment, noting that the loss of architectural identity can lead to a loss of overall cultural identity and instability within the nation. Wijethunga (2021) emphasizes the close relationship between identity and traditions, as they provide a distinct identity to society. Factors influencing the creation of architectural identity have been identified by Torabi et al. (2013). These factors include time organization, semantic organization, spatial organization, general design principles, building materials, relationship with context, and building shape and form. Dayarathne (2006) describes traditional vernacular dwellings, consisting of single or two rooms, open verandas, elevated plinths, and decorative elements such as wooden pillars and plasterwork. Sri Lankan vernacular architecture has also been affected by several internal influences throughout the history. Silva (1990) highlights the traditional houses of Sri Lanka, which originated from Buddhist philosophy and reflected the simplicity and impermanence of life.

The colonial period in Sri Lanka had a significant influence on vernacular architecture, leading to the emergence of

hybrid architectures that blended local and colonial identities (Wijethunge, 2012). Jones (2015) explores the negotiation of domestic material culture between Western modernity, indigenism, and the remnants of colonization during the post-colonial period.

B. The Role of Lay People in Architectural Design:

Being the clients / users, the role of lay-people is significant in the process of architectural design especially regarding residential design. The involvement of lay people in architectural design revolves around their interaction and communication with designers. Norouzia et al. (2014) identify factors that can lead to frustration and misinterpretation between lay people and designers, including communication difficulties, lack of feedback, and changing needs expressed by lay people. Nasar (1989) observes that preferences for house designs vary among lay people based on factors such as occupation, education and age.

Lay people perceive and interpret architectural designs differently from architects. Hershberger (1969) notes that architects and lay people have vastly different perceptions of physical aspects in architecture. Bazdan (2018) suggests that lay people perceive architectural designs more subjectively, based on personal preferences and aesthetics, often due to a lack of knowledge. Ghomesh (2012) emphasizes the importance of considering lay people's perceptions in architecture, particularly in the design of houses.

C. Perceptions of Lay People on Designed Sri Lankan House:

The perceptions of lay people on designed Sri Lankan houses may encompass their subjective understanding and preferences. Lay people tend to focus on aesthetics and their own personal preferences when assessing architectural designs (Bazdan, 2018). Research has shown that architects and lay people perceive physical aspects of buildings differently (Hershberger, 1969). The perception of architectural designs by lay people is influenced by factors such as gender, age, education level, and mood (Gifford, 1980).

Understanding the perceptions of lay people regarding designed Sri Lankan houses is crucial for architects and designers. Lay people's perceptions provide valuable insights into their expectations and preferences, helping architects create designs that better align with the desires of their clients (Ghomesh, 2012). By considering and incorporating lay people's perceptions, architects can bridge the gap between their professional expertise and the lay people's preferences, resulting in more satisfying architectural designs. However, significant studies on perceptions of lay people on designed Sri Lankan house cannot be found.

III. METHODOLOGY

To address the research question, a qualitative research approach was employed, specifically using researcher made structured interviews. This methodology was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of lay people regarding 'Sri Lankan identity' in architecture and their preferences for designed Sri Lankan houses.

A total of 82 participants was selected for the study using purposive sampling method that include individuals from diverse backgrounds and regions in Sri Lanka. Efforts were made to include participants with different ages, occupations, levels of education and recent experience in house design. This diverse sample provided a comprehensive range of perspectives on the topic.

The structured interviews were guided by a set of predetermined open-ended questions that cover three main areas: (1) Demographic information of participants (2) General idea of Sri Lankan Identity of a house and (3) Perceptions on a designed house with Sri Lankan identity. The interviews were conducted in a comfortable and private setting, allowing participants to express their thoughts openly. The researcher created a conducive environment that encourages participants to share their experiences, opinions, and insights.

Thematic data analysis was employed to identify recurring themes and patterns within the data. The transcripts were carefully reviewed and coded to extract meaningful categories and concepts related to the topic.

The analysis involved organizing the coded data into themes, which then were reviewed and refined to establish connections and relationships. Interpretations were made based on the identified themes, supporting the research objectives and addressing the research problem.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research was carried out using researcher-made structured interviews conducted among 82 participants who were selected as the sample. The results were analysed in the same three main areas of the interview structure.

A. Demographic Data Analysis:

The demographic data collected includes age, occupation, education background, living district, race, and religion. These variables provide a comprehensive overview of the participants' characteristics, which can influence their perceptions and preferences.

1) *Age:* The majority of participants (36.59%) fall within the age range of 31-40 years, followed by 28.05% in the age range of 41-50 years. This indicates that the study encompasses a relatively wide range of age groups, ensuring a diverse perspective on the topic.

Table 01: Summary of respondents according to the age

Age	%
21-30 Years	24.39
31-40 Years	36.59
41-50 Years	28.05
51-60 Years	4.88
61-70 Years	1.22
Above 70 Years	4.88

2) *Occupation:* The participants' occupations reveal a diverse range of professional backgrounds. Engineers (21.95%) and university academics (14.63%) form the

largest groups, followed by construction-related professionals (12.20%), schoolteachers (9.76%), and bankers (9.76%). This distribution suggests that the participants possess a certain level of knowledge and expertise in their respective fields, which may influence their perceptions of architectural design.

Table 02: Summary of respondents according to the Occupation

Occupation	%
University Academics	14.63
School Teachers	9.76
Engineers	21.95
Bankers	9.76
Doctors	2.44
Construction Related Professionals	12.20
Other	21.95
Unoccupied	7.32

3) *Education Background*: The participants' education backgrounds indicate a higher level of educational attainment, with the majority holding either a bachelor's degree (34.15%) or a Master's/MPhil degree (29.27%). This suggests that the participants have a certain level of educational exposure that may shape their perceptions and understanding of architectural design.

Table 03: Summary of respondents according to the Education Background

Education Background	%
GCE (A/L)	19.51
Certificate/ Diploma	9.76
Bachelor's Degree	34.15
Master's/ MPhil	29.27
PhD	7.32

4) *Living District*: The participants were distributed across various districts in Sri Lanka. Colombo (12.20%), Gampaha (9.76%), and Kandy (7.32%) have relatively higher representation, indicating the inclusion of participants from urban and suburban areas. Further, 7.32% participants live abroad. The inclusion of participants from different districts ensures a diverse range of perspectives influenced by regional contexts.

Table 04: Summary of respondents according to the Living District

Living District	%	Living District	%
Colombo	12.20	Batticaloa	2.44
Gampaha	9.76	Ampara	3.66
Kalutara	4.88	Trincomalee	2.44
Kandy	7.32	Kurunegala	6.10
Matale	2.44	Puttalam	3.66
Nuwara Eliya	1.22	Anuradhapura	3.66
Galle	4.88	Polonnaruwa	2.44

Matara	3.66	Badulla	3.66
Hambantota	3.66	Moneragala	2.44
Jaffna	2.44	Ratnapura	4.88
Vavuniya	1.22	Kegalle	3.66
Migrated Sri Lankans			7.32

5) *Race and Religion*: The majority of participants identified themselves as Sinhala (75.61%) and Buddhist (69.51%). Tamil participants accounted for 12.20%, followed by Muslims (10.98%). This distribution reflects the ethnic and religious diversity of Sri Lanka, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions and preferences of different cultural groups.

Table 05: Summary of respondents according to the Race & Religion

Race	%	Religion	%
Sinhala	75.61	Buddhist	69.51
Tamil	12.20	Hindu	12.2
Muslim	10.98	Christian	7.32
Other	1.22	Islam	9.76
		Other	1.22

B. General Idea on Sri Lankan Identity of a House

The participants were asked to provide their general idea on Sri Lankan identity of a designed house. The majority of respondents (29.27%) perceived the designed Sri Lankan house as being built for personal preferences without considering Sri Lankan identity. This suggests a disconnection between the perceived 'Sri Lankan identity' and the design choices made. On the other hand, a significant portion of respondents (26.83%) identified the Sri Lankan house as having vernacular influence, indicating an appreciation for traditional architectural elements. A smaller percentage of respondents (4.88%) associated the house with colonial influence, possibly misidentifying certain colonial features in these houses as Sri Lankan traditional architecture. Additionally, some respondents (24.39%) recognized a fusion of vernacular and modern features, while a minority (2.44%) saw the house as a modern design catering to contemporary Sri Lankan society. A considerable proportion of respondents (12.20%) expressed no clear idea or understanding. (Table 06)

Table 06: Identification of House with a Sri Lankan Identity

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Perceived as a house with vernacular influence	26.83%
Perceived as a house with colonial influence	4.88%
Perceived as a house which has a fusion of vernacular (or traditional) and modern (or colonial) features / Pseudo traditional	24.39%
Perceived as a modern house which fulfills the needs of contemporary Sri Lankan society	2.44%

Perceived as a house built for personal preferences / Nothing concerned for Sri Lankan identity	29.27%
No idea / Idea is not clear	12.20%

C. Perceptions on a Designed House with Sri Lankan Identity

The participants' perceptions on 'Sri Lankan identity' of designed houses were assessed across 12 areas/topics. The findings in each area can be analysed and discussed individually, highlighting the similarities, differences, and preferences among lay people.

Based on the obtained results, the findings for each category of perceptions on the designed house with Sri Lankan identity were analysed.

1) *External Appearance*: When examining the external appearance, the results indicate a diverse range of perceptions. The highest percentage (39.02%) associated the external features with houses that have a fusion of vernacular and modern (or colonial) elements, implying a blending of architectural styles. A significant proportion of respondents (34.15%) believed that the design reflected personal preferences rather than a concern for Sri Lankan identity. A smaller percentage associated the external features of vernacular houses (4.88%) and also modern houses for contemporary society (7.32%). However, a notable portion (12.20%) had no clear idea or understanding regarding the external appearance of a house with Sri Lankan identity.

Table 07: External Appearances

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Perceived as external features of Sri Lankan vernacular/ traditional houses	4.88%
Perceived as external features of Sri Lankan colonial houses	2.44%
Perceived as external features of houses which have a fusion of vernacular (or traditional) and modern (or colonial) features / Pseudo traditional	39.02%
Perceived as external features of modern houses which fulfill the needs of contemporary Sri Lankan society	7.32%
Perceived as external features of houses built for personal preferences / Nothing concerned for Sri Lankan identity	34.15%
No Idea / idea is not clear	12.20%

2) *Internal spaces and interrelationship between spaces*: In terms of internal spaces and their interrelationship, the majority of respondents (53.66%) perceived the design as reflecting personal preferences rather than aligning with Sri Lankan identity. Some respondents (21.95%) recognized a fusion of vernacular and modern (or colonial) elements in the spatial arrangement. A smaller percentage associated the internal spaces with vernacular houses (7.32%) or modern houses for contemporary society (7.32%). Surprisingly, no respondents associated the internal spatial

arrangement with colonial houses, and 9.76% had no clear idea or understanding.

Table 08: Internal spaces and interrelationship between spaces

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Perceived as internal spatial arrangement of Sri Lankan vernacular/ traditional houses	7.32 %
Perceived as internal spatial arrangement of Sri Lankan colonial houses	0.00 %
Perceived as internal spatial arrangement of houses which have a fusion of vernacular (or traditional) and modern (or colonial) features / Pseudo traditional	21.95 %
Perceived as internal spatial arrangement of modern houses which fulfill the needs of contemporary Sri Lankan society	7.32 %
Perceived as internal spatial arrangement of houses built for personal preferences / Nothing concerned for Sri Lankan identity	53.66 %
No idea / Idea is not clear	9.76 %

3) *Material Use*: The results for material use indicate a significant proportion of respondents (43.90%) perceived a mix of materials used in houses with a fusion of vernacular/ traditional and modern elements. However, a considerable percentage of respondents (19.51%) believed that the materials used were based on personal preferences rather than being concerned with Sri Lankan identity. Some respondents (21.95%) associated the materials with modern or contemporary building materials, while a smaller proportion (9.76%) recognized materials used in vernacular/ traditional houses. A minority (4.88%) had no clear idea or understanding regarding the material use.

Table 09: Material Use

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Perceived as materials used in Sri Lankan vernacular/ traditional houses	9.76
Perceived as materials used in Sri Lankan colonial houses	0.00
Perceived as a mix of materials used in vernacular (traditional) and modern houses	43.90
Perceived as modern/ contemporary building materials	21.95
Perceived as materials used according to personal preferences / Nothing concerned for Sri Lankan identity	19.51
No idea / Idea is not clear	4.88

4) *Building Technology*: Regarding building technology, a significant portion of respondents (21.95%) associated the design with modern/ contemporary building technologies, suggesting a preference for modern construction methods. However, the majority of respondents (51.22%) had no clear idea or understanding about the building technology used. Some respondents recognized a mix of technologies used in houses with a fusion of vernacular/ traditional and modern elements (9.76%), while a small percentage

associated the technology with vernacular or traditional houses (4.88%). Interestingly, no respondents associated the technology with colonial houses.

Table 10: Building Technology

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Perceived as technology used in Sri Lankan vernacular/ traditional houses	4.88%
Perceived as technology used in Sri Lankan colonial houses	0.00%
Perceived as a mix of technologies used in vernacular (traditional) and modern houses	9.76%
Perceived as modern/ contemporary building technologies	21.95%
Perceived as technologies used according to personal preferences / Nothing concerned for Sri Lankan identity	12.20%
No idea / Idea is not clear	51.22%

5) *Response to Sri Lankan physical, cultural and religious contexts:*

5a) *Response to Sri Lankan Physical Context:* Concerning the response to Sri Lankan physical contexts, respondents exhibited varying perceptions. A significant proportion (26.83%) believed that the house should be located in the middle of the land, prioritizing space around the house. Others thought the house should be situated with a front garden (17.07%) or a back garden without concerning for the surroundings. (9.76%). However, a substantial portion of respondents (26.83%) expressed a lack of concern for the surroundings, suggesting an outward-looking house in the middle of land. A minor percentage (14.63%) recognized the necessity of responding to the physical context, (nearly vernacular) while others had no clear idea or understanding (14.63%).

Table 11: Response to Sri Lankan Physical Contexts

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Response to physical context is perceived as necessary and should be done according to the condition of site and surroundings. (nearly vernacular)	14.63%
Response to the surroundings is not concerned and the house should be built in the middle of the land having enough space around the house. (rural/ outward looking)	26.83%
Response to the surroundings is not concerned and the house should be located having a front garden. (suburban/ outward looking)	17.07%
Response to the surroundings is not concerned and the house should be located having a back garden. (urban/ inward looking)	9.76%
Response to physical context is not necessary/ Not concerned as a part of identity	9.76%

Response to the surroundings is not necessary. Responding to the land is only concerned. (modern/ alien)	7.32%
No idea / Idea is not clear	14.63%

5b) *Response to Sri Lankan Cultural Contexts:* The results show a lack of consensus regarding the response to Sri Lankan cultural contexts. A significant percentage of respondents (51.22%) had no clear idea or understanding about the cultural context's role in the design. Some respondents (14.63%) believed that cultural context should be reflected through the addition of antiques and traditional elements, while others (17.07%) perceived cultural context as unnecessary or solely dependent on internal planning. A smaller portion (12.20%) saw cultural context as necessary and should be reflected through the entire house. No one has identified response to cultural context as not compulsory and choice of inhabitant.

Table 12: Response to Sri Lankan Cultural Contexts

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Response to cultural context is perceived as necessary and it should be reflected from the entire house.	12.20%
Response to cultural context is not perceived as compulsory and a choice of the inhabitant/ owner of the house.	0.00%
Response to cultural context is perceived as depending on internal planning.	4.88%
Response to cultural context is not perceived as a part of identity of a house at all. (nearly modern)	17.07%
Response to cultural context is perceived as necessary and it should be reflected by adding antiques and traditional elements. (pseudo-cultural/ pseudo-traditional)	14.63%
No idea / Idea is not clear	51.22%

5c) *Response to Sri Lankan Religious Contexts:* The response to Sri Lankan religious contexts also exhibited diverse perceptions. A considerable percentage of respondents (36.59%) believed that the design should incorporate a shrine room or prayer room to reflect religious context. However, a significant proportion (24.39%) viewed religious context as unnecessary and not integral to the house's identity. Some respondents (9.76%) perceived the need to reflect religion through the outer appearance or the addition of religious elements, while others (9.76%) believed that a spiritual atmosphere expected from the user's religion should be created. A minority had no clear idea or understanding (19.51%).

Table 13: Response to Sri Lankan Religious Contexts

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Response to religious context is perceived as creating a spiritual atmosphere expected from the religion of the user.	9.76%
Response to religious context is perceived as unnecessary and not as a part of identity of the house.	24.39%
Response to religious context is perceived as necessary and religion should be reflected from the outer appearance or by adding religious elements. (pseudo-religious)	9.76%
Response to religious context is perceived as necessary and religion should be reflected by adding a shrine room/ prayer room inside or outside of the house.	36.59%
No idea / Idea is not clear	19.51%

6) *Response to Sri Lankan Climatic Condition:*

6a) *Facilitating Light and Ventilation:* Regarding light and ventilation, respondents favored a combination of traditional and contemporary methods (36.59%) or contemporary methods alone (19.51%) to facilitate light and ventilation in the house. A smaller percentage (12.20%) believed that traditional knowledge should be used exclusively. A minor proportion (2.44%) did not associate light and ventilation with the house's identity, and a significant portion (29.27%) had no clear idea or understanding.

Table 14: Facilitating Light and Ventilation

Category of Responses	% of Responses
House should be totally facilitated with natural light and ventilation using traditional knowledge	12.20%
House should be facilitated with light and ventilation using both traditional contemporary ways.	36.59%
House should be facilitated with light and ventilation using contemporary knowledge.	19.51%
Facilitating light and ventilation is not a part of identity	2.44%
No idea / Idea is not clear	29.27%

6b) *Weather Protection:* Respondents had varied perceptions of weather protection in relation to the house's identity. A considerable proportion believed that both traditional and modern methods could be followed (19.51%) or modern methods alone (14.63%) to ensure weather protection. Some respondents (17.07%) perceived weather protection as important and suggested following traditional methods. However, a minor percentage (2.44%) did not consider weather protection as part of the house's identity, while a significant portion (46.34%) had no clear idea or understanding.

Table 15: Weather Protection

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Weather protection is perceived as important and traditional methods can be followed.	17.07%
Weather protection is perceived as important and both traditional and modern methods can be followed.	19.51%
Weather protection is perceived as important and modern methods can be followed.	14.63%
Weather protection is perceived as unimportant/ not a part of identity	2.44%
No idea / Idea is not clear	46.34%

7) *Other Sri Lankan/ Traditional Concepts:*

7a) *Role of Astrology in Creation of a House with Sri Lankan Identity:* The role of astrology in house creation garnered varying perceptions. A substantial percentage of respondents (31.71%) believed that astrology should be moderately used or considered as a valuable traditional knowledge to some extent. Others (29.27%) saw astrology as playing a major role in house creation and should be followed. A minority (19.51%) considered astrology unnecessary and devoid of any role in creating a Sri Lankan house, while some respondents (7.32%) viewed it as a personal choice. A notable portion (12.20%) had no clear idea or understanding.

Table 16: Role of Astrology in Creation of a House with Sri Lankan Identity

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Astrology is perceived as playing a major role in creation of a house and it should be followed.	29.27%
Astrology is perceived as a subject which should be moderately used or considered as a valuable traditional knowledge to some extent.	31.71%
Astrology is perceived as a subject which should not be followed in creating a Sri Lankan house / It does not have any role	19.51%
Astrology is not perceived as a part of Sri Lankan identity and as only a personal choice.	7.32%
No idea / Idea is not clear	12.20%

7b) *Traditional Sustainable/Eco-Friendly Concepts:* The majority of respondents (75.61%) perceived traditional sustainable and eco-friendly concepts as important in house construction and advocated for their extensive use. A smaller percentage (7.32%) acknowledged the importance of these concepts but noted the challenges of incorporating them into contemporary houses. A negligible proportion (0.00%) considered traditional sustainable and eco-friendly concepts as unimportant regarding identity, while some respondents (17.07%) had no clear idea or understanding.

Table 17: Traditional Sustainable/ Eco-Friendly Concepts

Category of Responses	% of Responses
Traditional sustainable/ eco-friendly concepts are perceived as important in house construction and to be used as much as possible.	75.61%
Traditional sustainable/ eco-friendly concepts are perceived as important in house construction and difficult to be used in contemporary houses for several reasons.	7.32%
Traditional sustainable/ eco-friendly concepts are perceived as not important in house construction regarding identity.	0.00%
No idea / Idea is not clear	17.07%

Overall, the analysis of the results reveals a diverse range of perceptions and understandings regarding the identification of a house with Sri Lankan identity. While some respondents recognized the importance of incorporating vernacular or traditional elements, others preferred a fusion of vernacular and modern features or focused on personal preferences without considering Sri Lankan identity. The responses also highlight the varying perspectives on external appearances, internal spaces, material use, building technology, response to physical, cultural, and religious contexts, as well as light and ventilation, weather protection, astrology, and traditional sustainable/eco-friendly concepts.

V. CONCLUSION

In this study, the objective was to find out how lay people perceive 'Sri Lankan identity' in residential architecture and what kind of architecture they expect as a designed Sri Lankan house. In conclusion, the findings provide valuable insights into the perceptions and categorizations of a house with Sri Lankan identity. The results demonstrate a diverse range of opinions and understandings among respondents, reflecting the complex nature of defining and identifying Sri Lankan architectural identity.

The analysis of responses on the identification of a house with Sri Lankan identity revealed that there are multiple categories under which such houses can be classified. These categories include houses with vernacular influence, colonial influence, a fusion of vernacular and modern features, houses fulfilling contemporary needs, and houses built based on personal preferences without considering Sri Lankan identity. This suggests that there is no singular, universally agreed-upon definition of what constitutes a house with Sri Lankan identity.

Furthermore, the investigation into perceptions on various aspects related to the design of a house with Sri Lankan identity shed light on respondents' viewpoints. It is evident that opinions differ regarding external appearances, internal spaces, material use, building technology, response to physical, cultural, and religious contexts, as well as considerations for light and ventilation, weather protection, astrology, and traditional sustainable/eco-friendly concepts. The diverse range of responses underscores the complexity

and multidimensionality of Sri Lankan architectural identity.

These findings emphasize the need for a nuanced and context-specific understanding of Sri Lankan identity in architecture. It is clear that there are no fixed or universally applicable guidelines for designing a house with Sri Lankan identity. Instead, it is crucial to consider and respect the diversity of perspectives, preferences, and cultural contexts within Sri Lanka when conceptualizing and creating architectural designs.

Architects, designers, and policymakers should engage in dialogue and collaboration with local communities, taking into account the rich cultural heritage, historical influences, and evolving societal needs. By acknowledging and incorporating various elements and design considerations that resonate with different aspects of Sri Lankan identity, it is possible to create architectural spaces that reflect the country's heritage while meeting contemporary requirements.

In conclusion, this research contributes to the understanding of the complex nature of Sri Lankan architectural identity and emphasizes the importance of embracing diversity and context sensitivity in architectural design practices. It serves as a foundation for further exploration and development of architectural principles and guidelines that honor Sri Lankan identity while responding to the evolving needs and aspirations of its people.

It is important to acknowledge that this study focuses on lay people's perceptions regarding "Sri Lankan identity" in architecture and designed Sri Lankan houses. The findings may not be generalizable to all Sri Lankan individuals or architects. Additionally, the sample size of 82 participants may limit the scope of the study, and other subjective factors such as cultural and regional variations could influence the findings.

Despite these limitations, this qualitative research approach using structured interviews provided valuable insights into the perceptions of lay people on "Sri Lankan identity" in architecture and designed Sri Lankan houses. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of the preferences and needs of clients seeking to create a distinctively Sri Lankan house, facilitating improved communication between architects and their clients.

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