

The Concept of Neighborhood and its Constituent Elements in the Context of Traditional Neighborhoods in Iran

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ABSTRACT

Starting each human life and communicating with others begin with the neighborhood. High quality in a neighborhood can quickly affect the entire city from different aspects, and ultimately, improve the quality of life of citizens. In this paper, the concept of neighborhood has been explained both literally and in terms of content. Term neighborhood in English has different equivalents. Also in terms of content, there are many definitions of neighborhood, each of which has assigned different roles to urban neighborhoods. After defining neighborhood and examining its characteristics, we introduced the elements constituting the neighborhoods, which can be generalized in the design of all neighborhoods in cities. Finally, the concept of neighborhood in the historic cities of Iran and their characteristics was examined. It becomes clear that the principles used in the design of historic neighborhoods are fully consistent with the general aspects of neighborhood design.

Key words: Neighborhood, Traditional Architecture, Iran, Concept

Introduction

The growth of urban population and increasing immigration from the rural areas to the metropolises - especially in developing countries - has caused numerous problems in cities, due to more attractiveness and amenities of the cities, and has caused the first and most significant impact, *i.e.* low quality of life in urban areas. Meantime, urban neighborhoods have been associated with the greatest challenges.

More attention to this urban element in total can have positive outcomes so that factors such as the physical, social, cultural, administrative promotion can quickly spread to the entire city.

The definition of neighborhood has not yet been clarified, and there is much disagreement among experts about this word, so that four words can be used as its equivalent. On the other hand, different roles have been assigned to it in terms of content, which should be exactly understood for citizens, especially city managers.

From the physical perspective, every neighborhood has components that require special attention in order to improve their quality of life.

In Iran, historic neighborhoods have offered a wide range of capabilities in terms of function, and while meeting the basic needs of the residents, have

accompanied social security, ecological safety and finally quality improvement of the environment.

Attention to the physical characteristics of responsive historic neighborhoods and the use of their characteristics in contemporary neighborhoods can help alleviate many of the current problems, so it is necessary to fully explore the features - the issue which is the objective of this research.

Literal meaning of the term neighborhood:

In English, there are four equivalents for the word neighborhood, which consists of "neighborhood unit", "district", "quarter", and "community". Although each of them has been used instead of the neighborhood in different texts and resources, there are also differences between them in size, population, function, and so on.

The characteristics of each of them and also their literal meaning are explained here.

Neighborhood unit:

One of the words that are used instead of Mahalleh (in Persian) is the term neighborhood. The concept of neighborhood unit has its roots in the distant past and has been the basic concept of most urban development projects in the past centuries.

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Cowan, Quoting Runes and Schrickel, notes that the history of neighborhood unit in Kyoto, Japan, dates back at least to the year of 793. He also quotes from Thomas More's Utopia that any utopia is divided into four sections ... but if the neighborhood units are better organized, they will be formed on the family basis.

Cowan believes that Ebenezer Howard's initial table on garden city in 1898 showed such city is divided into sections, each with a population of about 5000 people [4].

Clarence Arthur Perry (1872-1994) became one of the principle theorists of and advocates for the traditional neighborhood as a basis for the planning of new towns and urban areas and for the redevelopment of blighted slums. His advocacy of the neighborhood unit as a principle element of planning was based not only on his academic interests, but also on his direct experience as sociologist-in-residence for the Russell Sage Foundation's model garden suburb of Forest Hill Gardens in New York, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and Grosvenor Atterbury (begun in 1909)[13].

Here, it is necessary to examine the relevant principles of neighborhood units:

Size:

A residential unit development should provide housing for that population for which one elementary school is ordinarily required, its actual area depending upon population density.

Boundaries:

The unit should be bounded on all sides by arterial streets, sufficiently wide to facilitate its bypassing by all through traffic.

Open spaces:

A system of small parks and recreations spaces should be provided, planned to meet the needs of the particular neighborhood.

Institution sites:

Sites for the school and other institutions having service spheres coinciding with the limits of the unit should be suitably grouped about a central point, or common area.

Local shops:

One or more shopping districts, adequate for the population to be served, should be laid out in the circumference of the unit, preferably at traffic junctions and adjacent to similar districts of adjoining neighborhoods.

Internal street system:

The unit should be provided with a special street system, each highway being proportioned to its probable traffic load, and the street net as a whole being designed to facilitate circulation within the unit and to discourage its use by through traffic [13].

District:

The term district is one of the other words that are used as the equivalent of Mahalleh. Cowan has extracted different meanings cited by different authors for this word.

In the first definition, he regards it as an area under a specific activity. Such areas are known as one of the fundamental elements of the organization in the new urban development.

He, quoting McLaughlin, defines the neighborhood as an urban area that has been organized in the range of major human activities, and believes that although neighborhoods can prevent a range of activities of a neighborhood unit, their primary activity is supported by the uses at the neighborhood level. Areas related to theaters, medical facilities and college campuses are among the examples that can be cited.

He, quoting Kevin Lynch, defined neighborhood as follows: medium to large-sized sections of cities that have two-dimensional context and that the people who subjectively enter it have common and diagnosable features. He quotes from the urban working group that introduces the neighborhood at the scale of a city that has a population between 9000 to 40000 people with a radius of 2 to 6 km.

Finally, Cowan quotes Hildebrand Frey that an urban neighborhood may consist of four or five neighborhoods with a total population of 25000 to 35000 people, and four or five neighborhoods should ideally form a small city [4].

Quarter:

The third term that is used instead of Mahalleh is the term quarter, which is derived from the word "quatre" meaning four or "quartier" meaning quarter. Cowan wrote the definition of quarter as follows: A distinct district of a city. Since the 1980s, UK planners and urban designers have taken to identifying quarters as a way of reinforcing local distinctiveness. Birmingham was an early example, with its Jewellery, Gun and Chinese Quarters. To the architect and urban designer Leon Krier, quarters are central to planning and designing cities. A large or a small city can only be recognised as a large or small number of urban quarters. Krier said "each quarter must have its own center, periphery and limit. Each quarter must be a city within a city. The quarter must integrate all daily functions of urban life (dwelling, working, leisure) with a territory dimensioned on the

basis of the comfort of a walking man; not exceeding 35 hectares in surface and 1500 inhabitants". In the context of Poundbury, Krier has defined a quarter as consisting of 700 dwellings [4].

Community:

The last word that is used as an equivalent of Mahalleh is community. Community plays important role in social life balance in cities as main element of urban space [8]. The word community is rooted from the Latin word "communitas" meaning camaraderie (fellowship) in the fourteenth century. Cowan offers five definitions of it:

1. A grouping of people with common interests:

To describe this definition, Cowan, quotes the following sentence from Detr, any group of individuals with a common bond above the family unit and below the first level of municipal administration. It is primarily those people living or working in a defined area... in general the people intended to benefit from regeneration and local services.

As defined by the New Economic Foundation, Cowan considers community as a social network of relationships defined by a significant level of shared interest and commitment.

Cowan, quoting AmitaiEtzioni, defines community as a combination of two elements: first, a network of relations affected among a group of

people, *i.e.* The relations that are more often reciprocal and reinforce each other, rather than they are just against each other or in a chain manner; and the second, indicator of commitment to a set of common values, manners and meaning as well as common identity and history in a particular culture.

2. A place and its people:

New urbanists specify that a community must be a sustainable human habitat which is complete and compact.

3. A place where people live:

In this sense the term does not imply any particular closeness or interaction between the residents.

4. A group of people living under the same government:

Example: It is a high priority for this government to sort out the planning system because of the important effect it has on the community as a whole.

5. The opposite of an institution (such as a hospital or prison)[4]:

In conclusion, the features that exist in the four words are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Equivalents of the term Mahalleh, and their characteristics.

Neighborhood unit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The recognizable section of an urban area; an area of mixed use - A varied, dynamic, social and economic location that can be recognized by its residents and residents of the entire community - A region with a balance of human activities around a specific center - A place for friendly social networking - It depends on municipality to provide its services. - The elements that always exist in this region include primary school, small parks and playgrounds, local shops and residential environment. - A place where parents, children and neighbors are able to creatively spend their time in a happy manner. - Local stores provide and focus on the diverse needs of residents. - Its formation is based on the performance range of an elementary school. - It has a basic population of 5000 people, with an area of approximately 64 hectares.
District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An area dominated by a particular activity - Their primary activity is supported by the uses at the neighborhood level. - Medium to large-sized sections of cities, with common and recognizable features - The population is between 25000 and 35000 people. - Four or five sections ideally form a small city.
Quarter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A specific area of a city - Regional differences can be strengthened by identifying them in the city. - It has a unique center, environment and limits. - It contains all the activities of urban life (housing, work, recreation). - It has an area of 35 hectares, and a population of 1500 people.
Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A group of people with common interests and relationships, above the family and below the first municipal plan - People who work and live together in a defined area. - A network of relationships defined with a significant level of common interest and commitment - Sustainable human settlement, as complete and compact

What are obtained as common features in the different definitions presented from four equivalents of the term Mahalleh include the following cases.

1. Urban neighborhood is an identifiable region with specified boundaries and a specified center
 2. Urban neighborhood causes to happen the daily activities of living such as residence, work and recreation within it
 3. To meet the daily needs of residents, urban neighborhood has facilities and centers providing service
 4. Urban neighborhood is a place of social interaction and face to face communication between residents.
- Finally, it is important to note that neighborhood is essentially a spontaneous community and cannot be created by planners.

The only thing they can do is to provide physical facilities through the design of an area that provides a feeling of living in a separate place for residents. In addition, community facilities such as schools and playgrounds should be properly established in them [6].

Content meaning of neighborhood:

In studies conducted by different scholars, there are various views on the neighborhood, in which a variety of definitions in terms of content meaning can be offered in the area:

Neighborhood as a spatial unit:

Depending on different scales that are used by people and/or organizations, neighborhood is defined as follows,

Neighborhood is a set of small group of buildings that are privately owned

Neighborhood as a homogeneous unit, which is uniform in the section of houses

Neighborhood as a unit whose institutions are shared by residents

Neighborhood as a suburb or an area in a big city

Neighborhood as a natural unit, which has specific physical boundaries that are marked on the map [6].

Neighborhood as a social unit:

As a social unit, neighborhood comes from the ecological perspectives in the United States, which considers neighborhood as a product of the processes of natural selection and competition [11]. If the neighborhood is seen as a social unit, neighborhood will be defined by a set of social relations.

A neighborhood is the primary form of social organization, which includes the people who have common roots and history.

Action and interaction in neighborhood create cooperation, intimacy, and a sense of belonging and cooperation. Urban neighborhoods create solidarity

between people through kinship, proximity, or common interests; and neighborhood institutions create a sense of spatial and social identity for people.

Identity of neighborhood and sense of community seem to have the following specified values:

1. Support of collective conditions by residents
2. Providing a basis for collective action

Residential stability and consistency can create the development of interpersonal networks among neighbors, and also provides social belonging and community participation [2].

Neighborhood as a network of communication:

Neighborhood is defined as a space in which relationships are formed. The presence of organizations, associations and patterns of land use provides a basis for communication between people. Also, membership of an ethnic group and or communication with the public agencies makes the relationship between people. So in this case, the activity space defines the boundaries of the neighborhood.

These boundaries are defined by the various social players, including guilds such as real estate developers, banks, city planners, and service providers, as well as by constituencies, schools, parks, police districts, areas covered by social services organizations and other local agencies [3].

Neighborhood as a cultural unit:

Neighborhood can be defined by ethnicity, lifestyle or human races. When the physical boundaries are consistent with cultural characteristics, it is possible to easily define the neighborhood [7].

Neighborhood as a political unit:

Urban neighborhood is an organization that manages itself. This management can be done by the political organizations of the neighborhood management, but at best, the management should be closely associated with the residents and their participation in decision making and management of their neighborhood.

According to what was presented in conjunction with the content meaning of urban neighborhoods, it can be concluded that to call every space as neighborhood, there should be two things:

1. Spaces and places that partly are residential, and are used as settlements by the neighborhood residents, as well as service spaces such as educational, cultural and commercial spaces.
2. The social space in which relationships, boundaries and social networks are placed will lead

to establish social interaction, civic engagement, and face to face encounter.

The elements constituting neighborhood:

The Roman city was divided into four quarters by its two main streets, the *cardo* and *decumanus*, which crossed at right angles. Evidence of this quartering of the city is to be seen in many cities of Roman foundation, such as Lucca, which are still important urban centres today. Alberti refers to many ancient authorities, including Plutarch and Solon, to whom he attributes the notion of dividing the city into areas for different groups. For example, according to Alberti: "Curtius writes that Babylon was divided into a number of separate quarters . . ." and "Romulus separated knights and patricians from plebeians; and Numa divided the plebeians according to their respective employments"[1]. The classical tradition which divides the city into quarters was

probably based upon the observation of the natural or unplanned cities of the Ancient World. Cities which appear to develop without the conscious intervention of man are organized into clearly defined neighborhoods or quarters. The city in the pre-motor car age developed naturally in the form of a cluster of quarters. The quarter as a major structuring element of the city is not so characteristic of the modern motorized [9]. It is clear that there are changes in neighborhood contexts from the ancient times to the modern era, but neighborhood has had certain structural elements that have shaped them in each period. These structural elements include the entrance to the neighborhood, local access network, neighborhood center and residential spaces (Figure 1).

A summary of the constituent elements of neighborhood structure and their characteristics can be seen in Table 2.

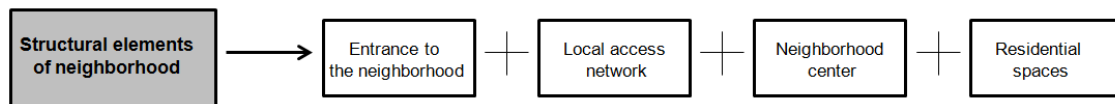


Fig. 1: Elements constituting the neighborhood structure.

Table 2: constituent elements of neighborhood structure and their features.

Structural elements	Characteristics
Entrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It represents the identity and character of the whole - It is a unique element, with a design that is completely dependent on the context of both sides (neighborhood and town) - It is a joint between semi-public life in neighborhood and city life - In addition to being unique, it must never be forgotten
Streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After lanes, they are most abundant in the city - They were called neighborhood passages (<i>gozar</i>) or orders (<i>raste</i>) in the past - They are the backbone of neighborhoods - They are a place of passage for neighborhood residents, which provide a context for social interaction. - The expectations of local streets include relaxation, intimacy and safety
Neighborhood center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is a gathering place for business or service activities, which is daily or weekly used by residents of neighborhood - It is a place of concentration for a small and cohesive society, which promotes social contacts among neighbors and an urban and neighborhood sense - It has functioned as the heart and core of neighborhoods
Residential Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - House is a basis for shaping neighborhoods - Neighborhoods were finally formed by getting houses and residential complexes together - The quantity and size of urban and residential elements vary from neighborhood to neighborhood

The concept of neighborhood in the urban context of Iran:

In the traditional context of Iran, a neighborhood is the original cell of the city, settlement of a specific ethnic group, race, religion or sect. In its process of formation, the urban society colored by tribal system was created by the sets that were known as neighborhoods.

Since the beginning of the construction of Islamic cities and even before Islam, each clan or tribe built a separate neighborhood in each city, under family circumstances, common interests and kinship networks.

The need for internal cohesion on the one hand, and the delimitation of its own social group against others in the other hand justify the need for relative self-sufficiency on the necessary services and facilities.

Socio-cultural cohesion leads to create a psychological factor belonging to neighborhood, observe the united customs by the people, and create the sense of difference to residents of other neighborhoods.

Within the organic social relations, there is so much cultural homogeneity in the neighborhood that class difference between rich and poor does not reach the depth that we are witnessing today. The poorest

to the richest people lived in a neighborhood together.

Social relations were gently effective in forming and strengthening neighborhood and defined the communication network, neighborhood center, and other physical elements such as water storage, mosque, *Hosseinieh* (mounth), *Saqakhaneh* and bathhouse.

In such economic circumstances and because of the need to have relative self-sufficiency, special economic facilities were established in each neighborhood, which included a center to provide all the daily and short-time necessities of neighborhood, so that daily service could start from the passages and end to the orders. However, as the linchpin of the city's business and economy, market supplied the economic needs of the entire city or region.

As a spatial embodiment of social-economic circumstances of the community, the physical context of neighborhood had specific cohesion and homogeneity. In other words, the above factors created physical elements of neighborhood, and all of these elements in residential centers created the

environment that was representative of the mutual relations between residents in their daily interactions.

The hierarchy in the configuration of access spaces was one of the most important factors to identify in the neighborhood context.

Any connection between the residential units was established by a private blind alley or by a semi-private space, *i.e.* a lane. As we move from the blind alley to a lane, social relations of individuals increased from an extended family or several simple families in the blind alley to more families in lane; and as we pass lanes and passages and get the original small squares (*Meydanche*), there even were more collisions and subsequently social relations of neighborhood residents.

According to the above matters, it can be concluded that, in the past, neighborhood offered a proper function as the settlement in the form of urban cells under economic-social conditions of its own time; and the changes created over time in its elements have been due to changes in economic-social relations in general and changes in local conditions in particular [10].

Table 3: Characteristics of traditional neighborhood in urban context of Iran.

Traditional neighborhood in the urban context of Iran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As the original cell of city, it has been the settlement of people of ethnic, religious or particular sectarian group - The need for a relative self-sufficiency on the required services and facilities was felt in it - Although there is class difference in certain neighborhoods, they had a cultural homogeneity - Social relations have been effective in the formation of the neighborhood skeleton - The physical context of neighborhood possessed homogeneity - Hierarchy existed as an identity-creating factor in the formation of spaces available
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The physical characteristics of neighborhoods:

The physical characteristics of the residential neighborhood have depended on several factors, including geographical and climatic characteristics, economy and population, base of city in the administrative organizations, socioeconomic situation of neighborhood's residents, building materials and techniques, etc. As the geographical and climatic factors contribute to the formation of residential areas, they also have an effect on how the housing units have accumulated and placed in relation to each other.

Formation and type of facilities (especially urban ones) have been also influenced by the above factors. For example, in the fertile areas of Iran such northern provinces, where residents of the neighborhood or the house easily supply the necessary water from river or the city, or in areas where access to drinking water was possible by digging shallow wells (like Isfahan), water of public reservoirs was not needed in neighborhood, but in cities such as Yazd and Nain where there was no such possibility, the residents of neighborhoods had to provide the required water through rivers and streams originating from aqueducts and cisterns, which were filled by the rivers and streams.

The extent and size of the neighborhood, which was influenced by the factors above, was very varied.

On the other hand, every neighborhood has the semi-autonomous state in the administration of internal affairs and the provision of their needs.

Each residential neighborhood, while being connected to the city market or the main road leading to the market by a main road, kept itself away from its public and dynamic space.

The interior of each neighborhood had a semi-public aspect and was placed in the way that there is less traffic for outsiders than the public centers of the city, and thus provided a relatively quiet and semi-private space for their residents.

People and especially women at times of the day, especially in the evenings spend part of their leisure time by being gathered at the entrance to the houses. The platforms built along some of the entrances were responsive to such small gatherings.

Interior face of neighborhood offered a coordinated and proportionate perspective, and there were fewer houses to be different from the other houses in terms of height. The entrance to the house, of course, was largely excluded from it, and any entrance space was more or less representative of the economic and social situation of the residents.

The uniformity and coordination of the feature of neighborhood in the areas of houses were replaced by inconsistency and diversity.

The area of land that was assigned to each house was proportional to the wealth of its residents.

Nobles had large houses that consist of exterior and interior parts, large yards, and sometimes a small garden attached to the house, while the low-income homes included only a few rooms and a minimum

service required. Thus, the areas of the houses were very different from each other, and varied, for example, between 60 to 600 square meters or more [12].

Table 4: Physical characteristics of traditional neighborhoods in Iran.

Physical space of traditional neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It depended on climatic characteristics, economy and population of the city, base of the city in administrative organizations, economic status situation of neighborhood residents and building materials and techniques - The varied extent of neighborhoods was affected by these features - The interior of each neighborhood had a semi-public aspect and was less used as traffic area for outsiders - The interior of each neighborhood was a quiet, semi-private space for the residents of neighborhoods - Internal face of neighborhood had a coordinated perspective - Coordination was seen less at the entrance of the house and land area of the houses
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Neighborhood-residential elements:

In the traditional urban context of Iran, city was composed of different neighborhoods that had their own residents.

The residents of every neighborhood had more relationships with the village and the tribe that they had originally belonged to it, than those of other neighborhoods. Indeed, although the neighborhoods had limited economic relationship together, they were the place of ethnic and religious conflicts and dispersals.

These ethnic and religious differences among neighborhoods had physical appearance in the city, and neighborhoods were formed as isolated and separate units so that each had its separate elements. The physical elements of the neighborhood will be later explained.

A) House:

As the smallest unit in the city, house in old context of Iranian cities had the same features that can be found in the neighborhood and the city. House was an administrative, social and economic unit that worked in direct link with the neighborhood and the city.

The exterior and interior parts of a dwelling unit had the following characteristics associated with the service sector: the former was the workplace of husband and the reception of guests, and the latter was the place of living and solitude, dormitory and kitchen of family. The link between the two spaces and outer space was created established by a porch.

B) Porch (Hashti):

Porches were the small roofed spaces that connected the door of lane to indoor space via one or two curvature. Entrance was normally placed at the end of house, behind which a porch that was open to the outside of the house was built.

The side opposite to the entrance door in the porch was normally closed; and it was not possible to

see the courtyard from the lane; and thus the privacy of home was reserved.

Two platforms, called *Pirmeshin*, were built on both sides of the door to the lane, which was a place for passersby to seek shelter against sun and rain, while being used by the habitants of the house. Typically, these platforms were also used to sit for neighbors to talk with landlord.

C) Sunshade:

Due to climatic or static factors, there were also covered corridors that were called sunshades.

In terms of function, the sunshades can be divided into two categories:

- 1) Sunshades that have residential uses on their roofs, and typically were rooms with one or two openings, which were placed on the sunshades, with a proper view to the lane
- 2) Sunshades that only had a structural function and seem to be the paths that have linked two houses on both sides of the lane.

D) Sargozar:

In place of crossing few streets, small squares were formed, which were called *Sargozar*. In this space, there were typically a few shops, *Saqakhaneh* and perhaps mosque and bathhouse that was designed to meet the daily needs of neighborhood residents.

E) Vashodgah:

Typically, in the intersections of minor streets, small squares were created by the construction of the houses at a further distance. This location was used for drying coal or animal excrement for winter fuel.

F) Neighborhood center:

In the intersections of the orders of the neighborhood, a space was formed, which is called neighborhood center. In this site, the general and short-term requirements of residents were provided

at a level higher than *Sargozar*, in which there normally were mosque, bathhouse, *Takiyeh*, school, water storage and etc.[10].

Features of neighborhood centers and elements shaping it:

In the traditional context of Iranian cities, every neighborhood has an almost independent state to meet service and social needs, and has the facilities and equipment required by the residents.

From the physical viewpoint, these institutions and equipment were in the space that provided the best possible mode of access for all residents. For this reason, the neighborhood centers were formed at the junction of the main roads of neighborhood and, in most cases, in the physical center of the neighborhood.

Apart from the issue of having the best access mode, which is often considered the most important factor, the position and location of neighborhood centers depended on other factors and conditions, including the location of neighborhood in relation to the city and its main roads, as well as the willingness of the founders of service spaces and residents of the neighborhood. In addition to the conditional nature of the general features of the creator of the city and the customs and beliefs of people in each neighborhood, the amount of space allocated to the service elements and facilities in each neighborhood as well as the quality and type of space depended on the economic potential and the situation of neighborhood residents on the one hand, and on the other hand, the extent of the neighborhood [12]. Figure 2 shows the elements constituting traditional neighborhoods centers in Iran.

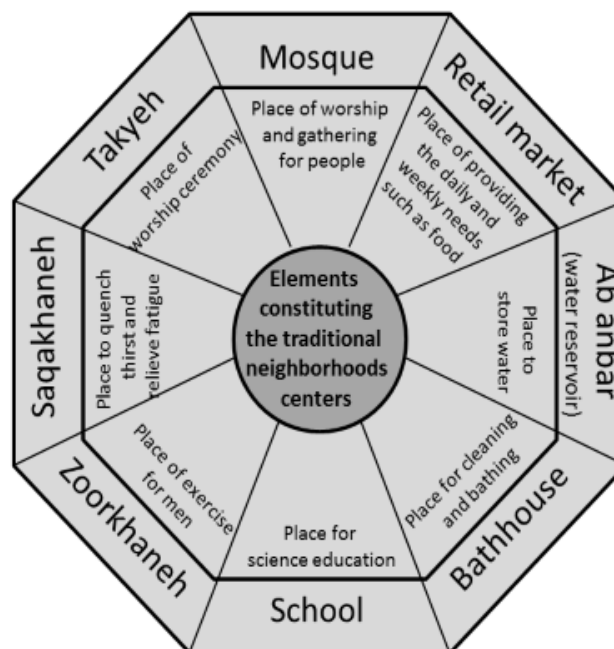


Fig. 2: The elements constituting the traditional neighborhoods centers in Iran.

Conclusion:

What was discussed in this paper was to understand the literal meaning of the word neighborhood and to provide four definitions (neighborhood unit, district, quarter and community) whose general classification along with the commonality between them was also presented. Then, the elements forming the structure of each neighborhood, which are integral parts of the neighborhood, were generally introduced.

Structural elements include entrances, access networks and neighborhood center, as well as the residential spaces of neighborhood. Finally, the concepts of neighborhood in the urban context of

Iran, the physical characteristics of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers were cited.

As the main constituent cell in each city, urban neighborhood is considered a place of residence, as well as the daily lives of many citizens. This neighborhood should be a place for encounters and social interactions between residents, and should meet their daily needs.

The first presence of children in urban spaces and communication with the outside world are experienced in the neighborhood; and the presence of elderly and greater participation of women are possible in public spaces, which is finally followed by social interactions. Although many experts do not consider the neighborhood as a pre-designed structure, it is necessary to respect the functional

principles and rules in this structure. Unfortunately, due to lack of proper planning in developing countries and lack of attention to the urban important element, current neighborhoods of these countries have declined significantly in qualitative terms, and then can no longer meet the needs of their residents and cannot be safe havens for them.

The main problems in current urban neighborhoods in Iran are the houses and apartments with divergent physical appearance, streets and lanes that are used as the shortcuts and pathways (rather than as a destination), the lack of adequate spaces for services and recreation, as well as the reluctance to engage in neighborhood-related issues, while traditional neighborhoods in the cities of Iran were faced with fewer problems and enjoyed greater responsiveness than modern neighborhoods.

According to the study in this paper, it becomes clear that the structural elements of historic neighborhoods in Iran are coordinated with the general ones and, therefore, many of the current problems can be reduced on the basis of the functions of these historic neighborhoods.

It is expected that more attention to this urban important element and its regeneration will lead to pay more attention to quality of life for its residents and to meet their needs, so that the higher quality will be spread to the entire city and more vibrant and livable cities will be created.

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