Reviewing the Concept of Privacy and Sense of Belonging to Place in Modern Houses (Case Study: Houses in Sirjan, Iran)

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Abstract

Architecture is the art of building places which are felt and understood by human and are then integrated with their mind and that using them man can give environment a new identity. As a result, it can be said that the mission of architecture is to create meaningful and private places. Iranian traditional architecture contains lessons in this regard. One of the noteworthy points in this context is techniques applied in designing houses that through establishing a sense of ownership, privacy, and subjective memories, have strengthen a sense of emotional security in individuals and provided the possibility of comfortable and sustainable life for men. Iranian houses with historical background and abundant significance are physically and functionally noted and unfortunately, they have taken away from their historical identity. In the current study, in order to return these houses into early historical identity, in addition to identify these houses, both a sense of belonging and effective factors in creating privacy at home are investigated. Today, with the entrance of cultural elements of other countries, especially Western countries, our culture and consequently, our architecture have experienced changes and its manifestation has been ignored in today's architecture in the principle of confidentiality, visual security, audio security and olfactory security which is tried to be solved in this study.

In this study, in addition to literature review and survey of maps and photos, field understanding has also been carried out and in order to quantitatively examine the criteria, the direct method of questionnaire has been used whose result along with the results from the questionnaire, adjustment and analysis of maps are presented in the present study.

Key words: Architecture, Housing, Sense of Belonging, Sirjan

Introduction

"Architecture has a language through meaningful forms. Considering the character of each building or architecture can make us familiar with the spirit and meaning mixed with it which has divine and natural origins" (Pourmand et al., 2010: 88). "Man has different images of different places in mind. His feelings can affect his perceptions on environment and formation of mental image on the place. It is the mental images of human which give identity to a place (Sarmast and Motvasli, 2010: 135). Real belonging to a place depends on the correct location and orientation of environment that can form the character of the place. One of the reasons for the sense of alienation and disorientation to contemporary places may pertain to the fact that in today's world, orientation is only paid attention to and no action is taken place to identify the environment. Identification means the sense of friendship with environment which becomes the internal sense of belonging and psychological dependence and creates the sense of emotional security and enjoyment of the place (Pourmand et al (2010: 89). "One of the most important psychological aspects of environment and architecture and design of internal spaces is the prediction of privacy (Ghahri, Nozari Asb-e Marzi, Jafarian Samarin, and Hatami Marzouk, 2013, p. 49). "Iran's past architecture had been combined with privacy and introversion" (Pirnia, M. 1999, P. 89) Iranian introverted houses scattered all over Iran prove this fact. The concept of privacy is first reviewed in general and in architecture and then, this basic issue is evaluated in Sirjan's houses as case study.

Methodology

In the current study, the combined method in case study has been used. Thus, descriptive technique, questionnaire and analytical methods and ultimately logical reasoning have been applied. Also, in the description of stages and procedures of doing this study, library study, observation, field survey, and comparative investigation are used.

Objectives

In the present study, we try to find components creating effective privacy on psychological wellbeing at home in a way that we can investigate (1) effective criteria on supplying wellbeing, and security at home, (2) achievement of the model of today's houses.

Basic theoretical concepts

Definitions and concepts of house

The issue of housing is wide and complex and has various aspects. Today, it is as a physical place and shelter that provides basic and fundamental human needs such as sleep, diet, rest and protection against weather conditions and that psychologically creates internal confidence in a person. With the change of life style, the concept of "housing unit" and "housing" have replaced for "house" and "residence". Here, five definitions of house have been provided:

The first definition: home is the place where the residents do not feel upset and inside of the house or where women and children live should have many varieties for themnot to feel fatigue (Pirnia M, 1999, p. 154).

The second definition: house is a cover establishing the correct relationship between external environment and human biological phenomena in accommodation with some conditions. In a house, there should live an individual or family i.e. he should be willing to walk, lie down, see and think (Le Corbusier, 1975, P.45).

The third definition: house is the center of world for the residents and the most prominent building in strengthening space for its neighborhood (moor, 1974, p. 50).

The fourth definition: house is an institution not structure in the first step and this institution has been created for very complex purposes. Since the construction of a house is a cultural phenomenon, its form and spatial organization is strongly influenced by the culture it depends on. Even at that time when house was as a shelter for early men, the concept of function was not summarized on the pure benefit on function. The shelter aspect of house was raised as an implicit, necessary and passive task The positive point of the concept of house was to create a favorable environment for family life as a social unit (Rapoport, 1969, pp. 50-60).

The fifth definition: among from surrounded spaces, house is the nearest space related to man where he is daily affected by it and affect it. It is the first space where human experiences a sense of spatial belonging and the set of five senses involve in it and is used to in a short time. Thus, there are different views in dealing with housing. These views in fact reflect the social and economic conditions of any society that given the facilities, they cover all or part of residential needs in a period of social evolution. Therefore, dealing with housing differs at various times, spaces and conditions of the society. So, the limitation of objectives of meeting the living- residential needs should be clear and specified.

Another important factor is the factors affecting the formation of housing and housing architecture (author understanding).
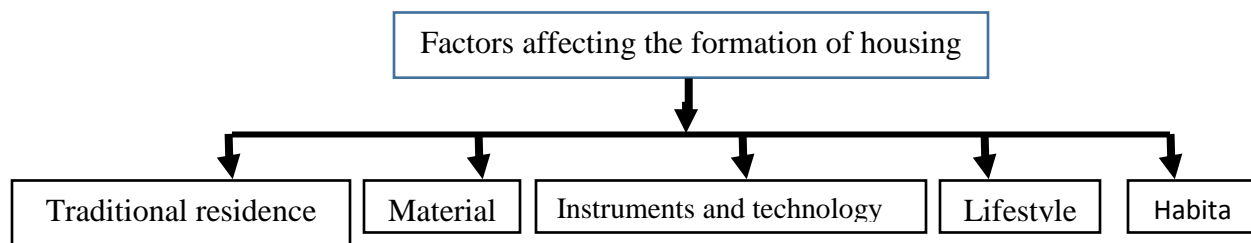
Figure 1:

Figure 1

Privacy

Of effective factors to create good mental wellbeing in house is privacy. "Privacy creates boundary; however, only separation is not sufficient. It is true that privacy creates a halo and prevents others; however, in addition to maintaining man's integrity, it keeps privacy others' privacy from being observed (Okhovat, 2013: P.89).

Irwin Altman defines privacy as "individual control of others access to his or her team". This definition has two important parts; the first part defines privacy as the ability to withdraw or isolate yourself from others and indeed refers to isolation and loneliness according to the desire of individual. Altmans' other important aspect is the ability of making spaces private to supply information about ourselves. Therefore, privacy-setting is a kind of dynamic process opening / closing to others (Cooper: 1986: 23).

Privacy and territory is one of the most important points providing privacy and security. Controlling territory through holding space by specific area is possible. Territory can be private (such as private open spaces of collection), semi-private (such as internal and external communal areas) and public (such as spaces of streets and sidewalks). Meanwhile, semi-private territory is often vague and usually poorly cared and maintained.

Personal spaces and territories are behavioral mechanisms controlling privacy. Crowd or lack of sense of control can prevent from disturbing the privacy. Perhaps, all humans want to both communicate with others and hide some aspects of their personality from others while some environmental features such as the lack of separated wall in school or office may not permit to control information that others gain from us. Designs that consider both factors presented in Altman's definition and yet paying attention to this point that privacy has different interpretations for different individuals with different cultures offer optimal privacy. For example, single-student dormitories create more privacy than double-student dormitories for students and the wall around an individuals' office can increase a sense of privacy for him (Altman, 2003, p. 178).

"The need for privacy have different reasons among people with different cultures. These reasons can be generally divided into three main categories: cultural, social and climatic reasons that in different territories with cultures and conditions governing on society, each of them can be noted in that place and its own cultural actions and apart from individuals in others culture. We can have privacy only if we respect the privacy of others" (understanding of the author).

Sense of place

 "In addition to the physical elements, environment includes messages, meaning and mysteries that people decode, understand and judge it based on roles, expectations, motivations and its other factors. This general sense created after perception and judgment on a special environment in person is called sense of place. Sense of place is an important factor in the coordination of person with environment and causes better utilization of environment, customer satisfaction, ultimately their sense of belonging to the environment and the continued presence in it" (Sarmast and Motevasseli, 2010: 136).

 "The sense of place not only causes proper coordination and function of human and architecture space but also is a factor for feeling security, pleasure and emotional perception of individuals and assists to their sense of belonging to a place" (Ibid: 137).

Sense of belong to a place

 "Sense of belong to a place is a level higher than the sense of place that has a determinative role in enjoyment and continuity of the presence of human in space. Belonging to a place created based on a sense of place is beyond the awareness of settling in one place. This sense leads to the link of a person to a place where man considers him a part of the place and based on his experiences of signs, meanings, functions and character, a role is imaged for himself and the place will be respected for him" (STEEL, 1981, 44).

Introducing Sirjan (Measuring the quality of the studied limitation)

Questionnaire filled in the diagrams and samples investigated in this study has been conducted in Sirjan. Sirjan is one of the cities in Kerman located in the

west of the province. Sirjan is between the central and eastern Zagros Mountains and its most important highlands include Panj Kouh, Chahar Gonbad and Eyn ol Baqar mountain. The lowlands and flat lands of the city include Kafe Namak in the West and Ebrahimabad Fertile plain in the East of the city. Sirjan weather is mild and dry and is relatively mild in summer, cold with snow and rain in winter and rain in spring.

Data analysis of the questionnaire

In this study, Sirjan Engineering Disciplinary Organization members have been considered as the statistical population and the sample size was considered 100 people taking into account the error of 5% and using Cochran formula.

In this questionnaire, to examine the above-mentioned criteria, the house's spaces were divided into two parts:

1. Internal spaces (bedroom, living room, gust room, kitchen, warehouse)

2. External spaces (yard, lobby, stairs-box, and elevator)

And, the amount of the sense of security, wellbeing and comfort of residents in different parts of the house were investigated.

1. In which one of the following spaces do you feel independent more and free from observation by others (visual privacy)?

A. Internal spaces: bedroom, living room, gust room, kitchen

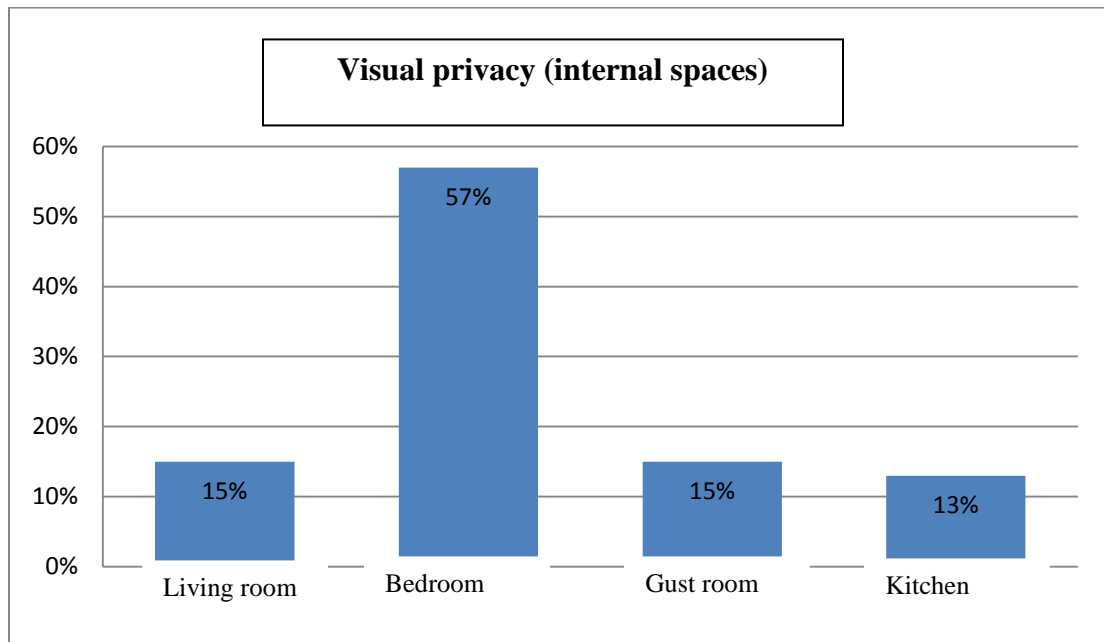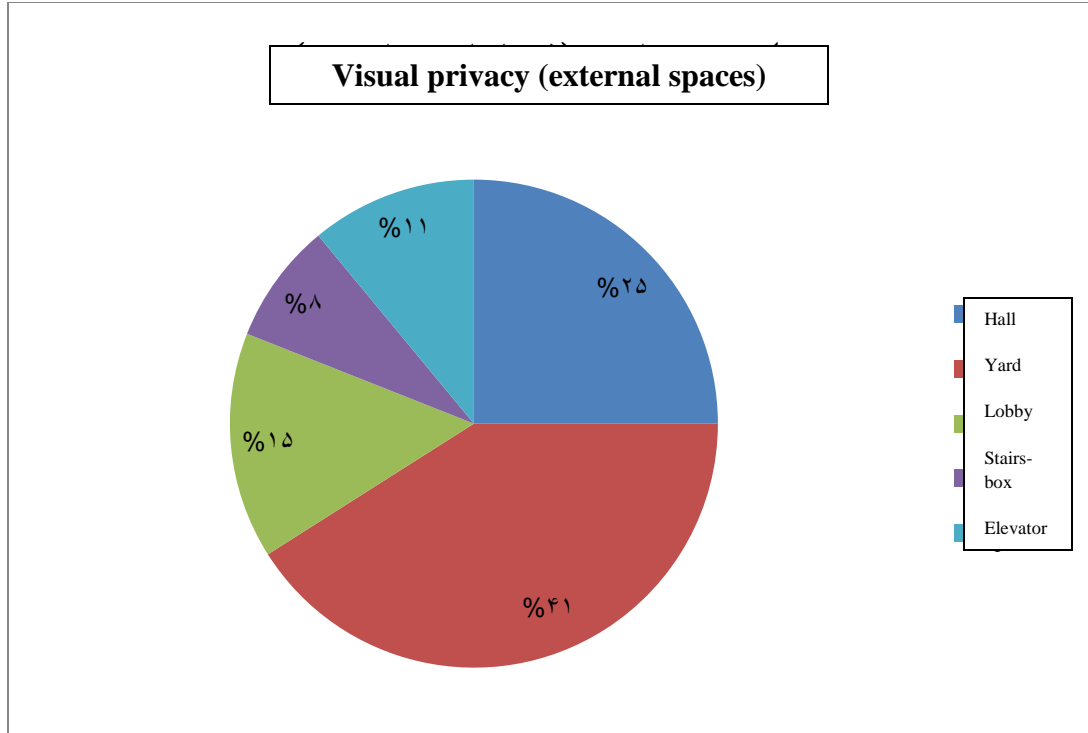B. External spaces: yard, lobby, corridor, stairs-box, elevator

Figure 2: Visual privacy in internal spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure 2, bedroom (57%), living room and gust room (each one 15%) and kitchen (13%) have respectively been identified as internal spaces in where statistical sample members feel independent and free from observation by others more (visual privacy).

Figure 3: Visual privacy in external spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure 3, yard (41%), hall (15%), lobby (15%), elevator (11%) and stairs-box (8%) have respectively been identified as external spaces in where statistical sample members feel independent and free from observation by others more (visual privacy).

2. Where do you prefer to talk with your friend (Audio privacy)?

A. Internal spaces: bedroom, living room, gust room, kitchen

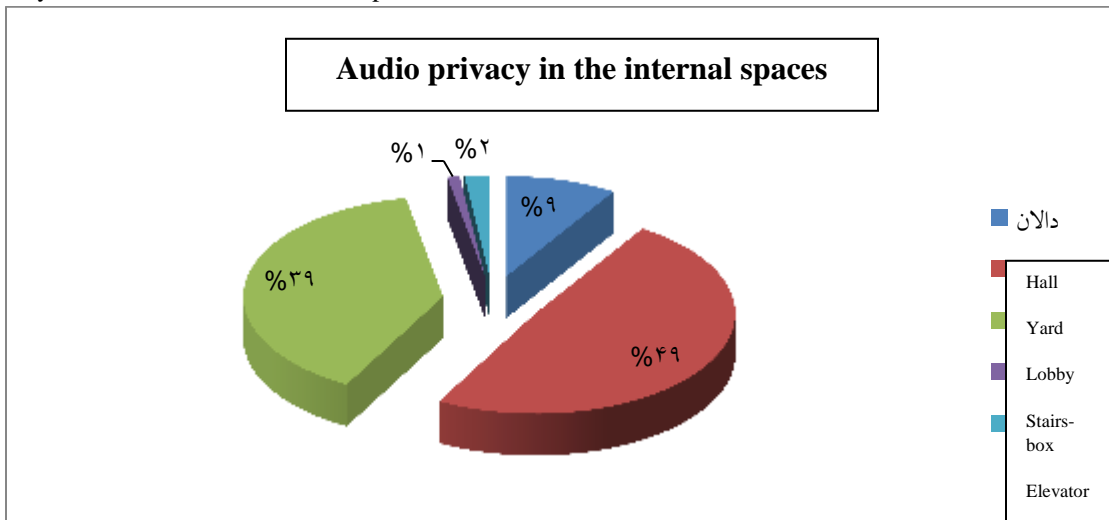B. External spaces: yard, lobby, corridor, stairs-box, elevator
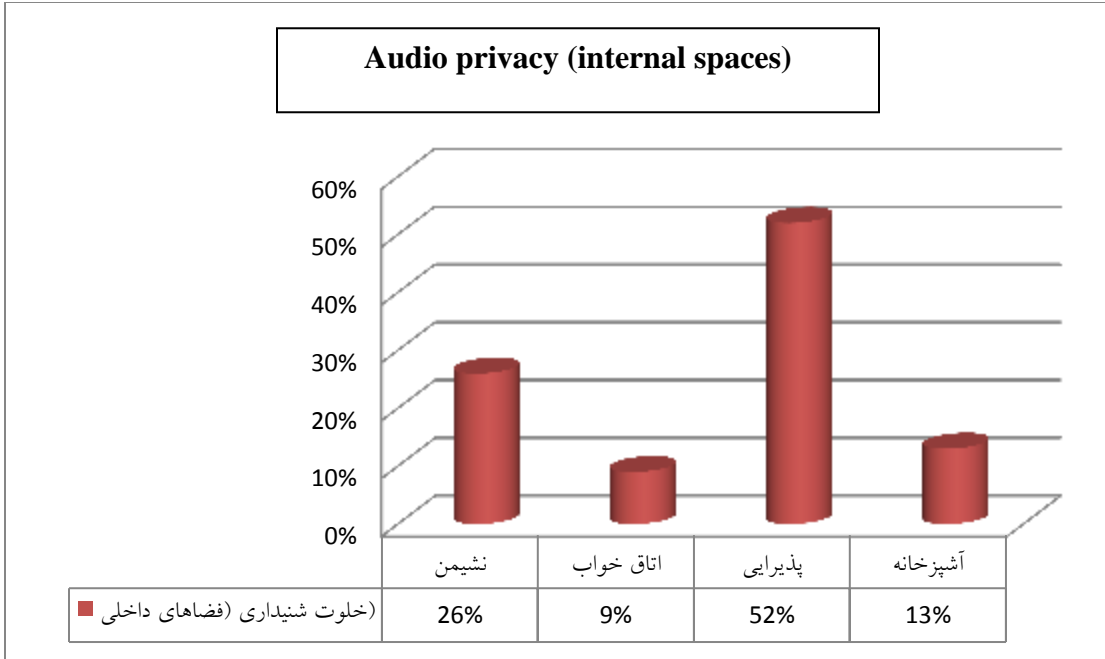
	Living room	Bedroom	Gust room	Kitchen
Audio privacy (indoor spaces)	26%	9%	52%	13%

Figure 4: Audio privacy in internal spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure 4, gust room (52%), living room (26%), kitchen (13% and bedroom (9%) have respectively been identified as internal spaces where statistical sample members prefer to talk with their friends (audio privacy).

Figure 5: Audio privacy in internal spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure 5, yard (49%), lobby (39%), hall (9%), elevator (2%) and stairs-box (1%) have respectively been identified as external spaces where statistical sample members prefer to talk with their friends (audio privacy).

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3. In which of the following spaces do you have more olfactory well-being? (Olfactory privacy)

A. Internal spaces: bedroom, living room, gust room, kitchen

B. External spaces: yard, lobby, corridor, stairs-box, elevator
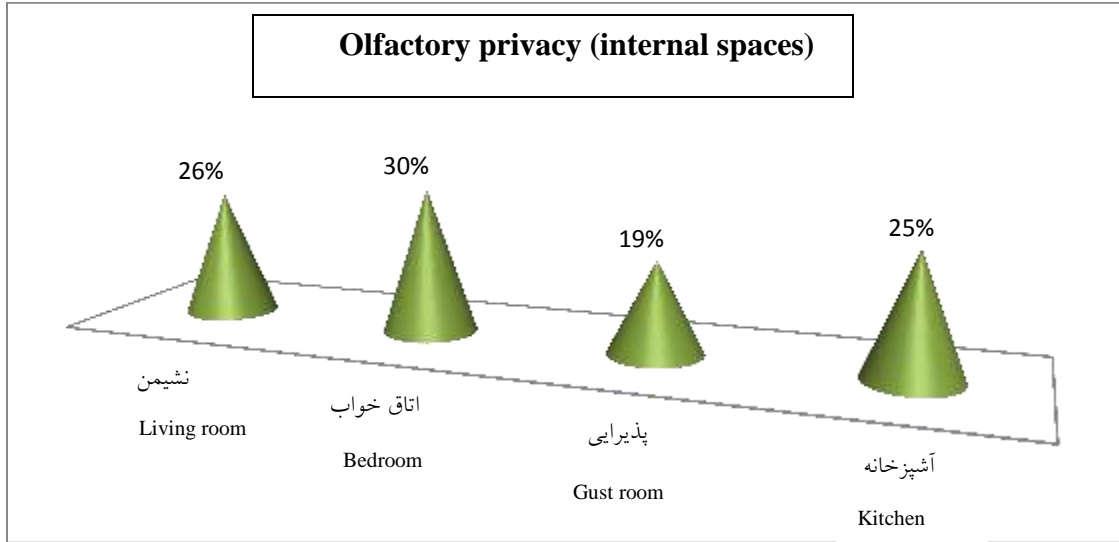

Figure 6: Olfactory privacy in the internal spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure 6, bedroom (30%), living room (26%), kitchen (25%) and gust room (19%), have respectively been identified as internal spaces where statistical sample members had more olfactory well-being (olfactory privacy).
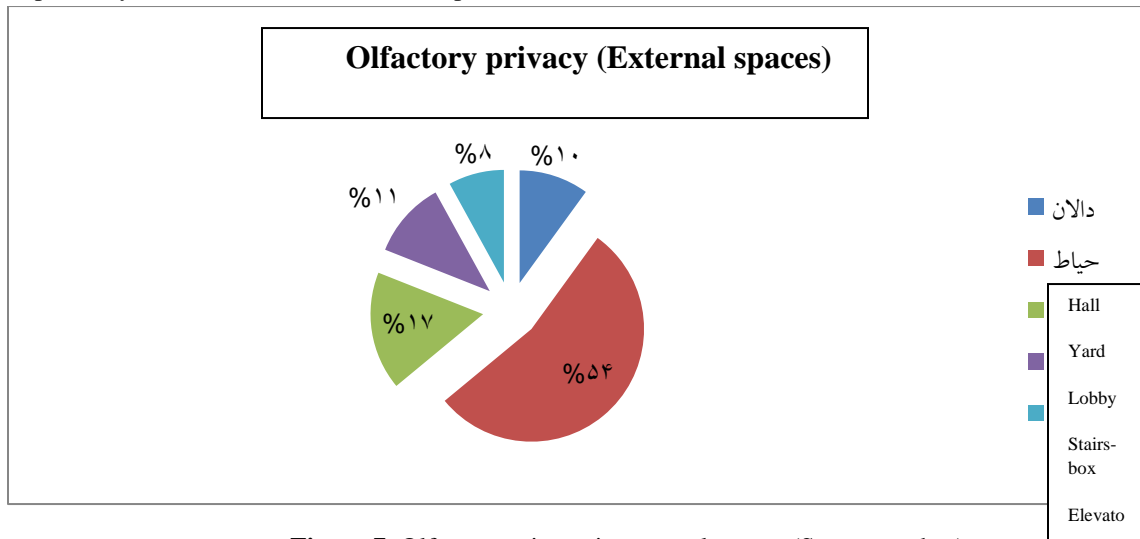

Figure 7: Olfactory privacy in external spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure 7, yard (54%), lobby (17%), hall (10%), stairs-box (11%) and elevator (8%) have respectively been identified as external spaces where statistical sample members had more olfactory comfort (olfactory privacy).

4. Are you interested in the presence of non-residents of neighborhood in the perimeter of your house: (central space)?

A. Yes

B. No
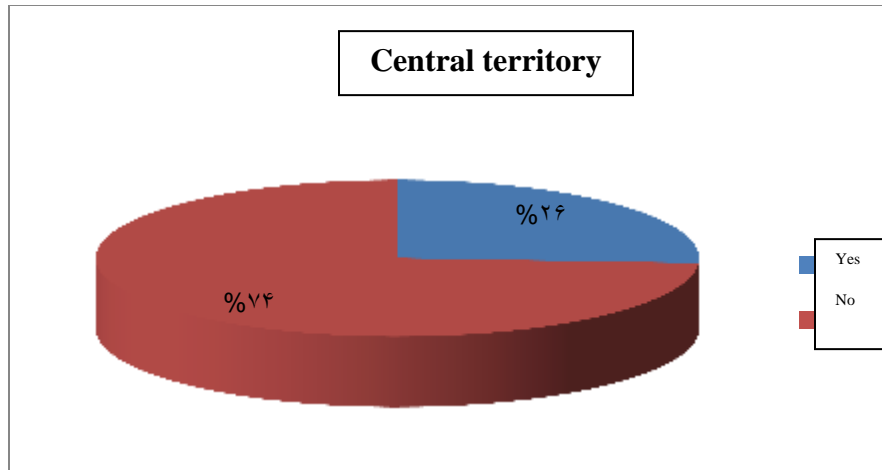
Figure 8: Central territory in the spaces of house (Source: author)

According to Figure 8, 74% of statistical sample members were not interested in the presence of non-residents in neighborhood in the space around their homes and out of them, 26% were interested in the presence of non-residents in neighborhood in the space around their homes (central territory).

5. Change in which part of the following spaces disturbs you without coordination with you? (Continuous territory)

A. Internal spaces: bedroom, living room, gust room, kitchen

B. External spaces: yard, lobby, corridor, stairs-box, elevator

	نشیمن	اتاق خواب	پذیرایی	آشپزخانه
▇ قلمرو پیوسته (فضاهای داخلی)	17%	33%	35%	15%
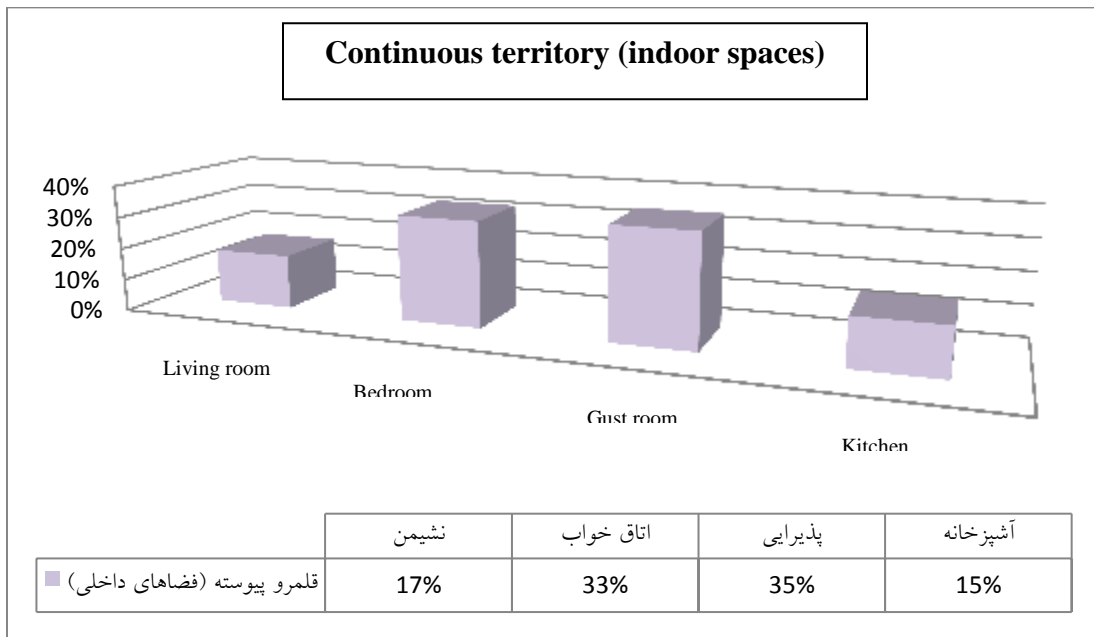
	Living room	Bedroom	Gust room	Kitchen
Continuous territory (indoor spaces)	17%	33%	35%	15%

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Figure 9: Continuous territory in the indoor spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure (9), gust room (35%), bedroom (33%), living room (17%) and kitchen (15%) have

respectively been identified as internal spaces so that without coordination, change in the decoration of that space bothers the statistical sample members (Continuous territory).
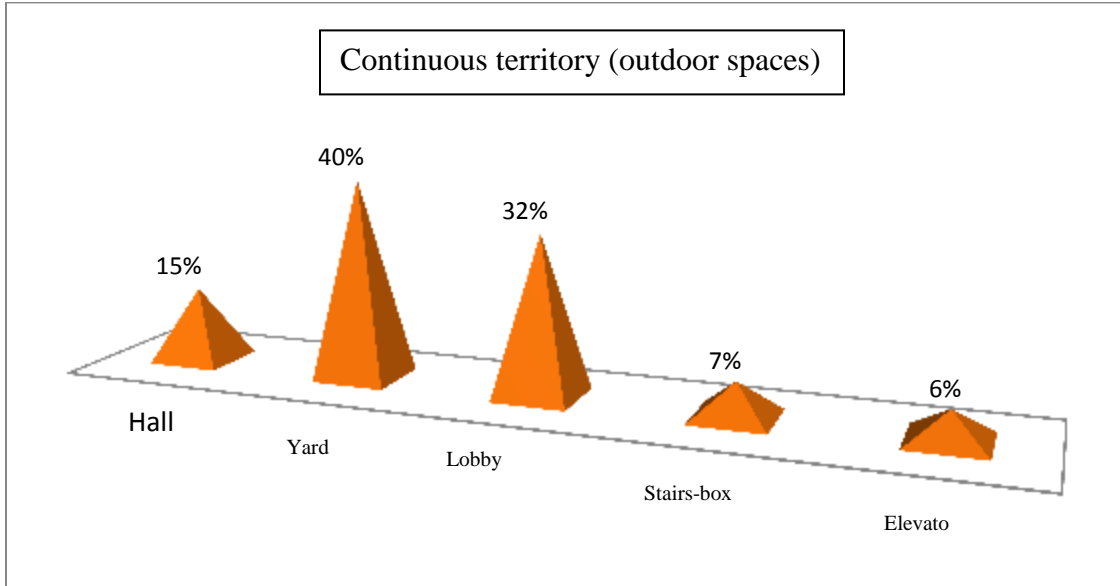

Figure 10: Continuous territory in the outdoor spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure (10), yards (40%), lobby (32%), hall (15%), stairs-box (7%) and elevator (6%) have respectively been identified as external spaces so that without coordination, change in the decoration of that space bothers statistical sample members (Continuous territory).

6. Which of the following spaces gives you more choice for the replacement in the desired space (semi-private support territory):

A. Internal spaces: bedroom, living room, gust room, kitchen

B. External spaces: yard, lobby, corridor, stairs-box, elevator
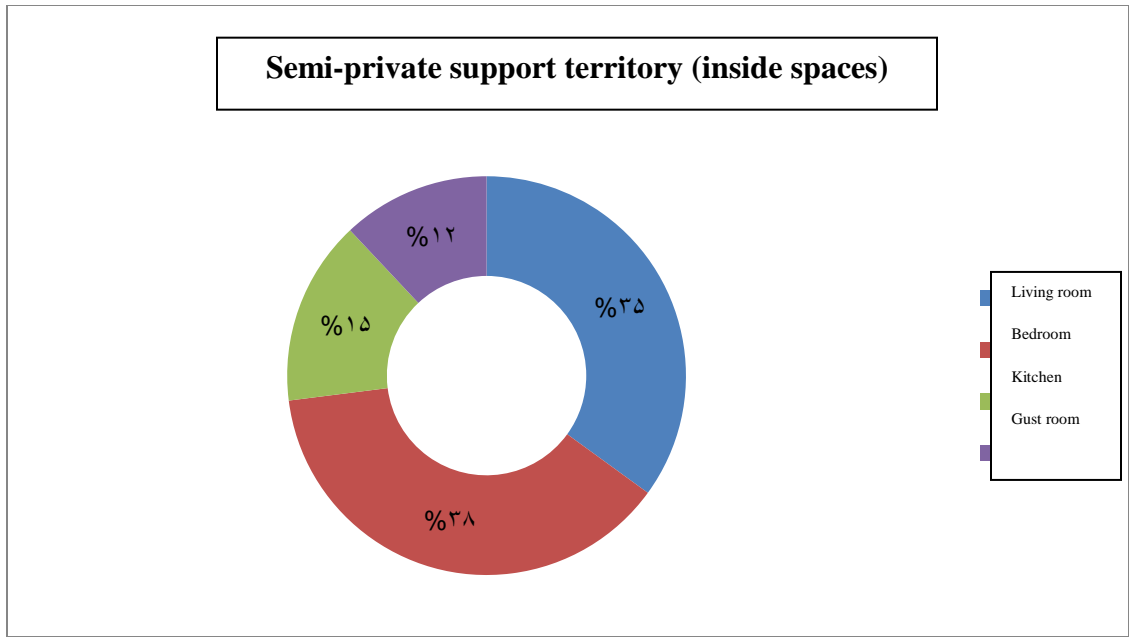
Figure 11: semi-private support territory in indoor spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure (11), bedroom (38%), living room (35%), gust room (15%) and kitchen (12%), have respectively been identified as internal spaces so that they give more choice for the placement in the desired space (semi-private s territory) to statistical sample members (semi-private support territory).
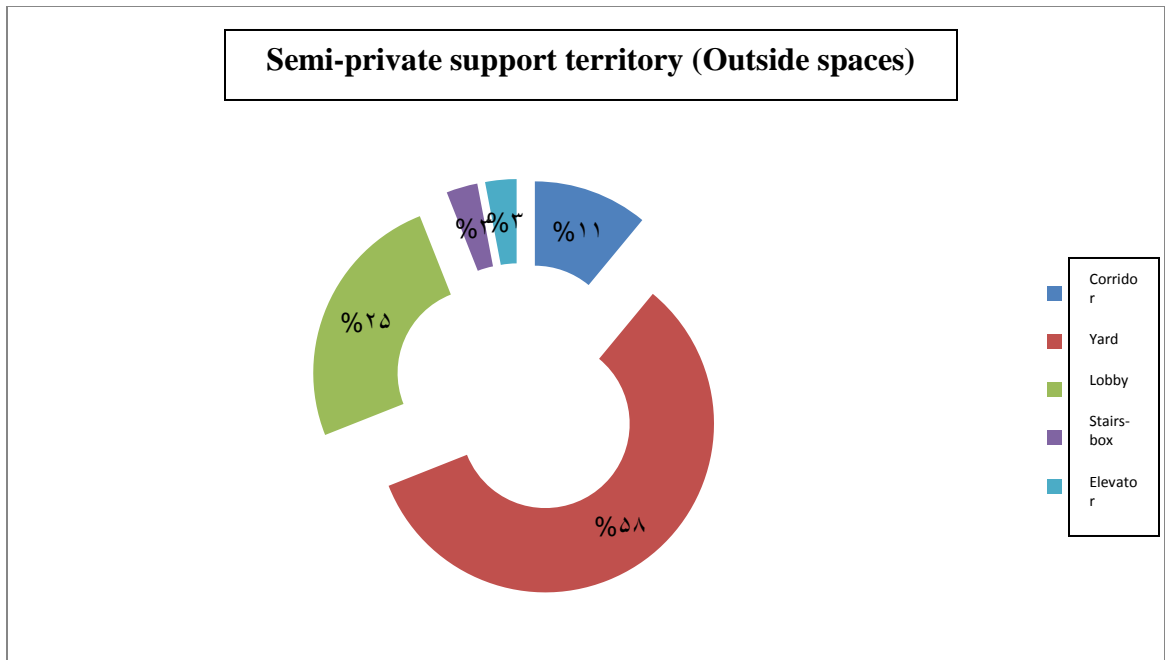
Figure 12: semi-private support territory in outdoor spaces (Source: author)

According to Figure (12), yard (58%), lobby (25%), corridor (11%) and stairs-box and elevator (3%) have respectively been identified as external spaces so that they give more choice for the placement in the desired space (semi-private support territory).

Conclusion

As it was stated, privacy can be investigated in a general classification at three levels: visual, auditory and olfactory. So, after classifying the criteria, examining the house and analyzing the concept of privacy in various aspects, the following results were obtained:

1- The distance of entrance from passageway is considered as one of the strategies used by architects to maintain the confidentiality and prevent violating the privacy of house.

2- Entrance corridor to the inner part has more twists to provide more visual security of spaces than the entrance corridor to the outside.

3- Thick walls among spaces and using sound insulation and separation of different spatial areas in house are other strategies used by architects in order to protect the visual and auditory privacy.

4- Using corridor is the most important strategy applied by the past architects to create privacy in different spaces.

5- In survey of questions, yard plays a role as an effective factor in the creation of the sense of privacy.

6- Visual privacy of rooms through opening the door into passageway and the lack of visibility from yard inside is one of the strategies used in the field of providing the visual privacy of space.

7- Bedrooms and yard are used as space that gives audience more choice as semi-private domain and observing privacy.

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