
Typology of School-Mosque in Ilkhani, Timurid, Safavid and Qajar Eras

Ladan Asadi*, Hamid Majidi

Department of Architecture, Art and Architecture Faculty, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran

Email address:

Asadi0596@mshdiau.ac.ir (L. Asadi), ha.majidi86@gmail.com (H. Majidi)

To cite this article:

Ladan Asadi, Hamid Majidi. Typology of School-Mosque in Ilkhani, Timurid, Safavid and Qajar Eras. *International Journal of Science, Technology and Society*. Special Issue: Research and Practice in Architecture and Urban Studies in Developing Countries. Vol. 3, No. 2-1, 2015, pp. 143-149. doi: 10.11648/j.ijsts.s.2015030201.37

Abstract: Mosques were the first place used for education in the first centuries of Islam. Although in later periods, independent schools were created, due to religious instructions performed in schools, mosques and schools rejoined in different ways, and the school - mosque appears in Islamic architecture. However, little attention has been paid to this type of architecture. This study aims to investigate the emergence of religious educational centers in different historical periods, i. e. Mosque-Schools. The main objective of the study is to analyze the typology of these mosque-schools. Using descriptive-analytical research method, as well as literature review and field studies, this article aims to investigate the innovations and changes made in the general plan of mosque-schools in Ilkhani, Timurid, Safavid and Qajar Eras. To achieve this, one school has been selected in each era. At the end, regarding the theoretical framework of the study, the general features of these mosque-schools within different eras have been presented and discussed.

Keywords: Mosque-School, Ilkhanid, Timurid, Safavid, Qajar, Architecture

1. Introduction

Islam has always emphasized greatly on learning and education. According to Muhammad, profit of Islam (PBUH), the scientist's pen is superior to the martyr's blood (Amoli 2012). Muslims has been always learning and gaining knowledge in accordance with their religious teachings; thus there is a direct and strong relationship between religion and knowledge in Islam, and a common place was created for both education and religion propagandizing; it can be said that in the first four centuries after the advent of Islam, the most important secondary use of the mosques was education (Halen Brand, 1994). In the mosque the classes were formed in circles and the prophet taught the religious teachings for all new Muslims; thus, the mosque was considered as a common environment for education and prayer (Kiani, 1998).

Another Hadith from Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, which represents mosque's association with education is as follows: "...everyone who enters the mosque in order to learn or teach the goodness is like a Mujahid working for God." (Halen Brand, 1994: 107).

With the advent of Islam in Iran, knowledge prospered,

research and training centers emerged; they were at their onset the continuation of those traditionally circles of debate and lessons used to be held in mosques. In mosques, each circle was identified by the name of the course it represented, such as jurisprudence circle, hadith circle and etc. (Soltanzadeh 1985, 92). Moghaddasi, the famous geographer in the fourth century AH enumerated the formation of 120 teaching circles at Cairo's Grand Mosque (Halen Brand, 1994: 107). Eventually, due to large number of students, and some conflicts between religious and educational functions in mosques, and the sequential problems caused by them, an independent building was allocated to education and Islamic architecture found its way to school environments (Soltanzadeh 1985, 92). Regarding religious education, there is an inextricable relationship between religion and knowledge on the one hand, and schools and mosques on the other hand; and a structural connection has also been established between teaching and prayer environment.

2. Review of Literature

School has been studied by some researchers of Islamic architecture, as one of the elements of Islamic architecture. Halen Brand has studied school as well as other elements of

Islamic architecture, in all Islamic countries, and Pirnia has introduced it within the Iranian Islamic architecture; each one devoted part of their books to this type of architectural structure.

Soltanzadeh (2000), which examined the mosque-schools in Tehran regarding their configuration, he reached to a categorization. Zarrinchian (1998), in a study titled as "The Relationship between Mosque and School" examined the semantic features and functions in each environment.

Sheikhholhokamaee (2002), also explained in his study about the dedication letters of Memar bashi mosque-school. Mollazadeh, (2002) in a book entitled "Schools and Religious Monuments" have mentioned all schools Iran like an encyclopedia. Kazemi (2011) in a paper titled as "The Recognition of the Association between Religious School and Mosalla in Yazd Mosall" has also studied the relationship between educational and prayer spaces in a case study.

3. Mosque-Schools in Iran

There are not many mosque-schools in Iran, but they are all significant for including simultaneous performance of educational and religious activities and allocating a separate part of corporal environment to each performance, their specific yet diverse environment, also manifested the ingenious creativity of the Iranian artists and architects in the space creation areas (idea, process, ornamentation) (Haj Seyed Javadi, 1999).

Important aspects of the school-mosques in Islamic cities, especially in Iran, are their special status in terms of location, navigation, and adjacency and etc. Sometimes the location has been a determining factor in the survival and prosperity or stagnation and destruction of the school over time after the death of its founder. For example, many schools built on residential neighborhoods were abandoned and gradually demolished after the death of the founders, while those schools built along bazars and in the main squares of the cities, due to their specific urban status, were in a much better situation and have been the center of attention of authorities, shop keepers, and other people for years (Haj Seyed Javadi, 1999).

4. Types of Mosque-Schools Regarding Their Origin and Founders

Iranian Mosque-Schools regarding their origin of foundation are categorized into two groups: 1) governmental schools and 2) public schools, each category had special characteristics considering foundation, purposes, the realm of authority, and the duration of prosperity.

4.1. Governmental Mosque-Schools

Special importance and the specific socio-political role of religious schools always made them the center of attention of kings, ministers and dignitaries at different periods of time; each one according to their needs and power, to implement their political intentions, have built one or more mosques and predicted specific endowments for the administration and

funding. In these schools, there were specific regulations and requirements for instructors and students, and the teaching and the study permit were issued only by the permission of their founders (Haj Seyed Javadi, 1999).

4.2. Public Mosque-Schools

Another category of religious schools was formed by the benefactors and scholars. Teaching and studying in these schools needed no specific requirements and permissions, just observing the rules in Islam and Sharia sufficed. These schools often appeared as public authority centers against those centers of state power. This group of religious schools were formed at the beginning and during the reign of the tyrant and bloodthirsty kings of Abbasid and were in the form of private and hidden circles of lessons, but gradually took the form of scientific-educational centers often built adjacent to religious centers and holy shrines of Imams (Haj Seyed Javadi, 1999).

5. Functional Typology of Schools

According to its name, the functional system of school must meet the needs of those who use that architectural building in order to learn and gain knowledge. The system is shaped according to the needs of the habitants in the building, and at school the needs are based on an educational and religious system. In Iranian architecture many spaces are multi-functional and a combination of multiple functions is obvious in most buildings.

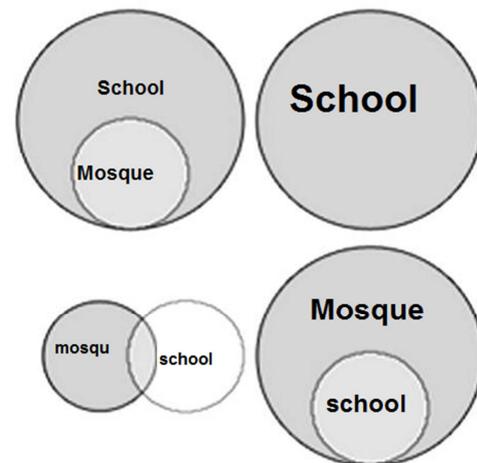


Figure 1. The functional system of school.

The functional system of school can be divided into several sections. School, mosque-school, school-mosque, Mosalla-school, and tomb-school.

5.1. School

The term school in functional Typology is used for a building which provides the needs of the students who live and study there. As an instance we can refer to those schools where prayer space is not public and is designed only for the use of their residents.

5.2. Mosque School

The term mosque-school in functional Typology is used for a building which meets all the religious needs of people and also is used by students for learning and studying. In such buildings, the priority is the mosque, i. e. the building is actually a mosque and is known as a mosque by people. In these buildings there are several rooms on the second floor or in the corners of the sub axes of Myansra where a few students live; these rooms may be the only common point between the building and a school. Hakim Mosque in Isfahan can be noted as an example of this type where a number of rooms exist on the ground and second floor.

In some school mosques the two functions have been merged so that giving the priority to one is difficult. These buildings, unlike former types of buildings, are known as mosque-school among people and the two mentioned functions have been merged in them with no functional interference of any function in the other. The functional organization in these mosque-schools has reached its consummation and these buildings can be considered as the pinnacle of architectural design of mosque-school. Aqa Bozorg mosque-school in Kashan, Seyed in Esfahan, Sheikh Abdul Hussein Tehrani and etc. can be referred to as some examples. The two functions of education and prayer, albeit functionally independent, are in different ways associated to each other.

5.3. School-Mosque

The term school-mosque in functional typology can be used for buildings whose functional priority is school where the combination of functions are organized so that it can provide the needs of the school residents and the only common functional feature of these buildings with mosque may just be part of their prayer room that was used in different periods for prayer purpose.

Many schools are also used as mosques; this may be due to the lack of mosques and adequate prayer spaces to meet the religious needs of the people in the context of the region, or in some cases in the dedication letter of the building, the religious function may be mentioned. In Salehieh Qazvin, the two functions of school and mosque work well together, but a separated entrance has been allocated to each, and the people who want to use the building for religious affairs, enter the building through a specific door.

5.4. Mosalla-School

Such a functional organization has been rarely seen in schools, and that is why we cannot categorize it as a single type. Here we mention one as an example.

Yazd Mosalla-School, is located in the new Moslla space, near Mir Chakhmaque square and still used by students of religious sciences.

5.5. Tomb-School

Due to various reasons, it is also difficult to categorize this kind as a separate type in schools functional system, but if we

want to use the term it can be said that, the term is used for schools which are associated with tombs in two ways. The first are those schools which after several years from their foundation became the tomb for their founders. In these cases a single room in the school is taken as the founder's tomb.

6. The Schools in Islamic Period

6.1. Ilkhani Era

Mongol raids destroyed many buildings in Iran. Most of the remained buildings have been constructed after the Mongol raids (Houshyari, 2013: 42). Baba Qasem or Imamieh School is one of the schools in Ilkhani era. It has a four- porch plan and is located in Isfahan. There is a domed house towards the qibla with an altar placed within. As seen a place for prayer is prominent in this Ilkhani School; however, this place is completely enclosed within the school area with no separate exit and is only for the use of the school residents. It can also be used as Madras. The domed house and altar can be seen in other Ilkhani schools which was typically aligned with qibla, like those in Ilkhani school of Shah Abolgasem Taraz, in Yazd (Houshyari, 2013: 42).

6.2. Timurid Period

This period can be considered as the golden age of Iranian schools (Halen Brand, 1994: 293). Ghiasiyeh Khargerd School has four domed houses built on its four corners of which the two on both sides of the entrance are larger and more distinguished. One of these two domed houses was used for prayer with a qibla not that much accurate (Godar 1989, 244). The tiled altar with its Mogharnas works in eastern domed house proved this; it has also been mentioned as a mosque (Blair and Bloom, 1995, 61). These two domed houses are directly linked to the outside, but the entrance porch is the only possible entrance; thus a kind of separation between the prayer and education space is visible in this school (Okin, 1987: 54).

6.3. Safavid (1501-1722 AD)

With the spread of Shiism, a new environment was created for growth and prosperity of art, architecture, and education. However no major change was made in the basis of education. Actually Safavid era was the period of evolution and perpetuate in educational environment in Iran. Meanwhile education system was better organized in comparison with the previous periods. The schools were administered by religious ulema, this brought a better integration in the school organization; thus, Safavid era was the most comprehensive and most integrated period in the history of education in Iran. With the improvement of the educational system, schools also benefited from this evolution. In Iran the Safavid schools have been identified as classic schools. Architecture of these schools like those in the past periods was according to that four porch pattern with no important innovation; there was however a more precise organization in plan and building components (Mahdavinezhad. 2013: 7).

6.4. Qajar Era

Despite its pretention to being religious and great communications with ulema, Qajar dynasty failed to give a religious tent to its rule. Religious schools in this period, compared to those in the Safavid period, were less prospered. With the expansion of economic and political relationships between Iran and Islamic countries, opportunities were made for Iranians to become more familiar with European culture and civilization. Establishment of Darolfonoon School and publication of Journal are of important events occurred in Qajar period. This school was the first cultural effort the government made toward establishing a school for educating the experts (Kiani, 2000: 131).

7. Baba Qasem (Imamieh) School - Ilkhani Era

Baba Qasem or Imamieh School is one of the Ilkhani schools with a four-porch plan in Isfahan. The school has a domed house towards the qibla within which an altar is located. So a place for prayer can be clearly seen in this Ilkhani School; but this place is completely within the school area with no separate exit and is allocated only to the school residents. It can also be used as Madras, the prayer space in ilkhani schools is prominent because they were going to be the tomb for their founders (Houshyari, 2013: 42).



Figure 2. The Ghiasiyeh school Khargerd (<http://tarikhnameh.persianblog.ir>).

8. Ghiasiyeh Khargerd School in Khaaf, Timurid Period

Ghyasiyeh Khargerd School is located in Khaaf, a small village about 150 kilometers south of Mashhad. The building was built in the year 1444/848 on an order by Ghiyasuddin Bir Ahmad Khafi the Minister of Shahrukh Sultan of Timurid, and by the architects and the artists of that time, Ostad Qavammuddin and Ghiyasuddin Shirazi (Kiani, 1991).

There is a small space for prayer in Ghyasiyeh Khargerd School which is designed for the school residents and is not for public use, other spaces are organized to provide the needs of students (their educational and everyday needs of

life). In this school the main axis is not aligned with Qibla (Hassas, 2011: 6).



Figure 3. Ghiasiyeh Khargerd School (source: the author).



Figure 4. Ghiasiyeh Khargerd School, Khaaf (<http://4iranian.com>).

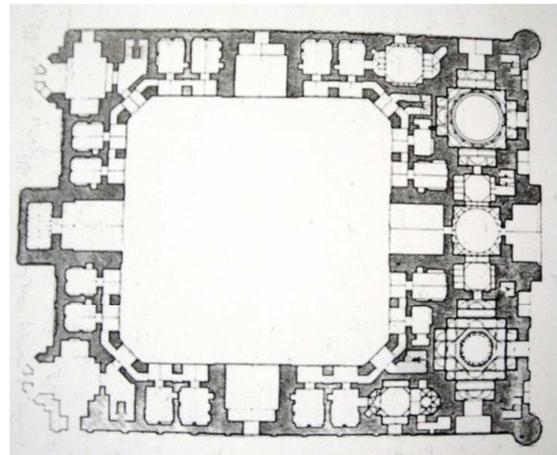


Figure 5. The Plan of Ghiasiyeh Khargerd School. (<http://www.safar-online.com>).

This four-porch school has an entrance in south that leads to a square vestibule. There are also two domed shape spaces on both sides of the entrance porch which are decorated with ornamental plastering. The exterior facade of the school is beautifully designed that made it visible from distance, like a diamond, the exterior sides of the school entrance are encompassed by rectangular vaults. The praiseworthy façade of Ghiasiyeh Khargerd School is short and wide, an elegant gateway is situated deeply in the building, the symmetric walls on both sides of the entrance decorated with sharp headed vaults, are actually two

rectangular frames which lead to short lateral towers. The building façade altogether induces a horizontal, sleeping position which was a quite new aspect in Timurid architectural style (Khazaei, 2009).

Ghiyasiyeh Khargerd School has four domed houses built on its four corners of which the two on both sides of the entrance are larger and more distinguished. One of these two domed houses is for prayer with a qibla which is not that much accurate (Godar 1989, 244). The tiled altar with its Mogharnas works in eastern domed house is a proof of this; it has also been mentioned as a mosque (Blair and Bloom, 1995, 61). These two domed houses have direct exits to the outside, but the entrance porch is the only possible way to enter; thus a kind of separation between the prayer and education space is visible in this school (Okin, 1987: 54).



Figure 6. Navab Mosque- School in Mashhad (before and after reconstruction) source: <http://basarnews.ir>.

9. Navab School, Mashhad, Safavid Era, 1086 AH

Salehieh or Navab School is located on the northern part of Olia (Naderi) Street in Mashhad. Its architectural style is Isfahani. According to an inscription on its gateway, this school was built in the reign of Shah Soleiman, one of the Safavid kings, in 1086 AH. It has two floors and 84 rooms for student's residency which are still being used. The founder is Abu Saleh Razavi one of Mashhad nobilities and Sadat. He is

also known as Navab. That is why this building is known as Salehieh Navab or Navab (Bemania, 2013: 22).

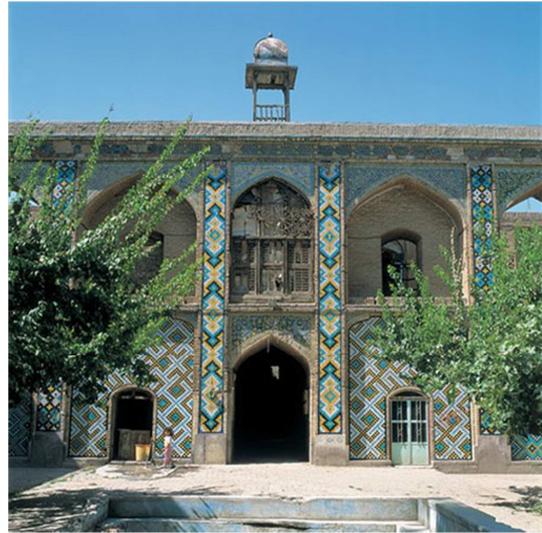


Figure 7. Sardar Mosque - school, Qazvin (Source: <http://seeiran.ir>).

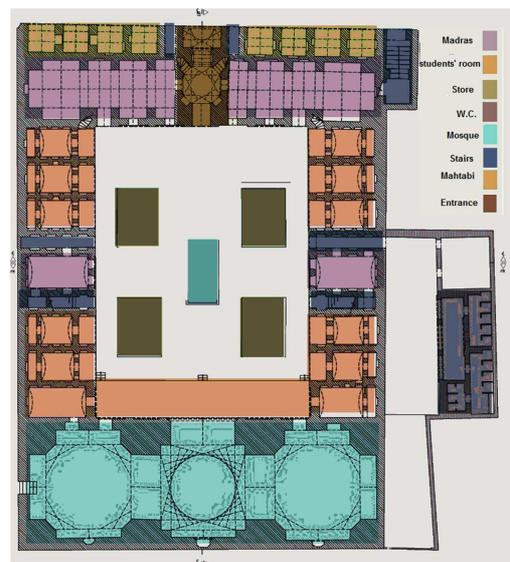


Figure 8. The ground floor plan.

10. Sardar Mosque - School, Qazvin, Qajar Era, 1231 AH

Sardar Mosque - school is located in Tabriz Street and Qmlaq district in Qazvin. Sardar School and Mosque used to be one of the most beautiful and privileged schools in the city. This building was built in 1231 AH by Hassan Khan and Hussain Khan Sardar rulers of Fath Ali Shah Qajar. The building plan is square-rectangular and the building is built in two floors. The entrance gate is located in the north and the middle of school and after a small vestibule leads to the courtyard. The school has a central courtyard and the plinth of the building is made of stone; the rest made of lathed bricks and decorated with colorful tiles. All around the school yard in four sides are decorated with inscriptions and lyrics of Mohtasham Kashani in nasta'liq in white color on purple tiles. There are 32 rooms in the western and eastern parts of the two earrings, connected to small porches; at the middle there is a small Madras or a large room and on its both sides are two narrow earrings which are the corridors of the second floor. There are also three rooms in the corridors leading to the earrings. Each room despite a separate back room, has a platform which is half a meter high and six square meters area (Mahdavinezhad, 2013: 11).

The school prayer space is located exactly on the main axis which is aligned with the Qibla and at the end of south side

extended across the whole width of the building and is the largest space in the school. The Prayer room at these schools is designed for the use of more people than just the residents of the school and is more public (Hassas, 2014: 6).

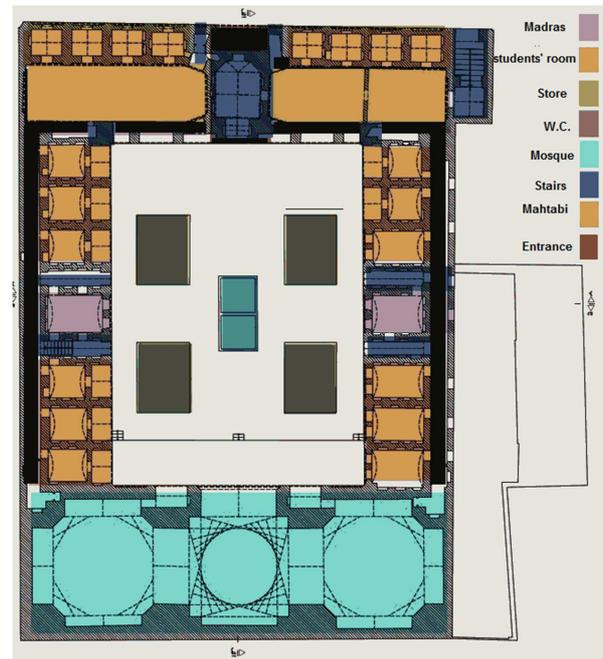


Figure 9. The first floor plan.

Table 1. Overview of the results.

Period	Ilkhanid	Timurid period	Safavid period	Qajar period
School Name	Baba Qasem School (Imamieh)	Ghiyasiyeh School Khargerd	Nawab School Mashhad (Salehiya)	Sardar School of Qazvin
Year of construction	72AH / 703 AD	842 to 848 AH	1086 AH	1231 AH
Location	Isfahan	Khargerd Khaaf	Mashhad	Qazvin
Architect	Muhammad ibn Omar al-Sheikh	Qavam al-Din Shirazi & Qiath al-Din Shirazi	Abu Saleh Razavi of Mashhad nobility and Sadat	Hasan Khan and Hussain Khan Sardar of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar rulers
Geometry	An almost rectangular map	rectangular	rectangular	Square- rectangular
Pattern	Four-porch pattern	Four-porch pattern		Four-porch
Style and method		Azari style	Isfahani architectural method	
The number of floors	Two floors	Several rooms in two floors	Two floors	Several rooms in two floors for students residency
Function	The prayer space is completely encompassed within the school.	There are two mosque-like spaces on both sides of entrance porch.	Madras also known as prayer place was located on the northern porch on the ground floor, above which on the upper floor was the library.	for every two schools for training there was one domed house for prayer.
Area		An area with domed ceiling at the four corners.	Courtyard: 30*36 meters	With central courtyard
Entrance		The main entrance is a vestibule which leads to a spacious room from both left and right side.	The Entrance is located at the current location and has a beautiful gateway decorated with tilea and Mogharnas.	The main entrance is located on the north and in the middle.
Colors and Building materials		A coating of tiles and bricks in plaster mortar.	Brick, mud. The school floor is covered with bricks	The plinth of the building is made of stone; the rest made of lathed bricks.
Architectural elements	Including the entrance, vestibule, porch, courtyard, rooms on two floors, domed house, and altar.	A courtyard, four porches and rooms on two floors, the entrance vestibule.	Northern and southern symmetrical porches around which are rooms on two floors.	domed house, altar, Shabestan, vestibule
Decorations	It is beautifully Decorated with tile and parts of the porch and	In terms of ornamentation and tiling is among the	The exterior and interior view of the building are decorated with colorful	Decorated with colorful tiles. Inscriptions with lyrics

Period	Ilkhanid	Timurid period	Safavid period	Qajar period
	its vaults are covered with mosaic tiles in seven colors. The four porches are Also decorated with inscriptions in Mqly (masonry) and made the school so beautiful.	masterpieces of the 9th century AH.	mosaic tiles and inscriptions are very beautiful, And inside the porches and the outside coatings of walls are adorned with a combination of brick and tile.	of Mohtasham Kashani in nasta'liq in white on purple tiles

11. Discussion and Conclusion

Iranian art and architecture have enjoyed a great endurance throughout history. This art represents the way of thinking, the worldview, religious beliefs, and traditions of the people in the country. A glimpse into the development of architecture in Iran indicates that the architects of the country, whether from building a simple shelter or building the biggest and the most magnificent works of architecture, were not just after simple targets such as solving functional problems, but all human's physical and mental needs were significant for them. Iranian architects, considering climatic conditions and geography of this vast territory, have prospered and achieved innovations, and in each period created a describable masterpiece. Based on the studies done in this area, it can be said that mosque-school is an architectural space which is used for both religious and educational functions, and the spaces within the building are of almost the same significance. This kind of space is known as mosque, school, or school-mosque. The investigated samples can be categorized into three types, the first type which is the most popular, are those mosque-schools with a single plan but separated functions. The second category includes those mosque-schools where the religious and educational functions are merged. Entering these buildings, we can see both religious spaces like Shabestan and educational spaces including Madras and the student's rooms altogether. The third category which is less popular than the previously mentioned categories, are those school-mosques which have separated spaces for each function. In this category the school and mosque spaces, without any interference, are related to each other through a common space.

Acknowledgements

This paper is taken from Hamid Majidi's master thesis entitled "The Campus of the Faculty of Quranic Sciences of Mashhad University" at Islamic Azad University of Mashhad and is guided by Professor Ladan Assadi.

References

- [1] Amoli, S. H. (2012). *Jame Al - Asrar va Manbao Al - Anvar*. Translated Muhammad Reza Jozi. Tehran. Hermes Publishing Co.
- [2] Beller SH, Bloom, J. M. (1995). *Islamic Art and Architecture*. Translated Ardeshir Araqi (2002). Tehran. Soroush.
- [3] Bemanian, M. R. Momeni, K. Soltanzadeh, H. (2013). *A Comparative Study of Architectural Design Features of Mosque-Schools in Qajar Era and Safavid Schools*. Armane Shahr Journal of Architecture and Urbanism, No. 11, P 15-34.
- [4] Godar, A. (1987). *Iranian Works*. Translated Abolhasan Sarveghad Moghaddam. Islamic Research Foundation. Mashhad, Iran.
- [5] Haji SeyedJavadi, F. (1999). *Mosque Architecture*, Tehran Conference Proceedings of the Mosque, Past, Present, and Future. Tehran Art University.
- [6] Halen, B. R. (1994). *Islamic Architecture*. Translated Iraj Etesam. (2011). Tehran. Information Technology Organization of Tehran Municipality.
- [7] Hassas, N. (2014). *Spatial Elements of Schools and Their Use in Architecture*. The First International Conference of New Horizons in Architecture and Urbanism, Tehran, Iran.
- [8] Houshyari, M. M. (2013). *School Mosque Typology in Islamic Architecture (The Relationship Between Education and Prayer Space)*. Two- Quarterly of Iranian Architectural Studies. No. 3. P. 37-53.
- [9] Kiani, M. Y. (1998). *The history of Iran Architecture in Islamic Period*. Tehran. SAMT Publishing Co.
- [10] Kiani, M. Y. (1998). *The history of Iran Architecture in Islamic Period*. Tehran. 2nd Ed. SAMT Publishing Co.
- [11] Khazaei, M. (2009). *Structure and motifs of the Timurid schools in Khorasan*. Two - Quarterly of scientific - Research of Islamic Art Studies. No. 11.
- [12] Kiani, M. Y. (1998). *The history of Iran Architecture in Islamic Period*. Tehran. SAMT Publishing Co. Research and Development Center of Human Sciences, Tehran, Iran.
- [13] Mahdavi Nejad, MJ. Ghasempour Abadi, M. H. Mohammad Levi shabestary, A. (2013), *Typology of School Mosques in Qajar era*, Islamic Iranian City Studies, No. 11. P. 5-15.
- [14] Okin, B. (1987). *Timurid Architectur in Khorasan*. Translated Ali Akhshiri. Tehran. Islamic Research Foundation.
- [15] Soltanzadeh, H. (1987). *Schools were Established in Iran from Antiquity to Darolfonoon*. Tehran. Negah Publishing Co.
- [16] <http://seeiran.i>.
- [17] <http://basarnews.ir>.
- [18] <http://www.safar-online.com>.