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## Original Research Article

# Investigating the Effects of Lifestyle on the Spatial Organization of Contemporary Iranian Houses

(Case study: Living Spaces in Pahlavi-era Houses in Urmia, Iran)\*

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## Abstract

**Problem statement:** Lifestyle refers to the interactions of biological, social-cultural, and economic factors and their effects on the living models of people in society. One example of this interaction is the quality of the living environment and the spatial organization, which consequently affects house architecture.

**Research objective:** The main goal of the study was to explore the effects of lifestyle on the spatial configuration of Pahlavi-era houses by emphasizing living spaces in Urmia City houses.

**Research method:** This study is descriptive-analytical. The study was performed using library and field sources. In this connection, 18 houses in Urmia City were selected in purposive and convenience sampling for analysis.

**Conclusion:** Findings showed that over time various spaces of houses have undergone changes, with rooms turning into living-, bed- and launch rooms and extroversion into introversion. The early Pahlavi-era plan model consisted of a central courtyard and rooms accessible through corridors, as courtyards later became separate spaces and the living area took center stage. Living spaces have become integrated into other spaces and their decorations have included translucent walls, cement floors, and plaster-worked materials. The living spaces of this era were rectangular and involved separating doors, hence adjoining the bedroom, hall, and kitchen sections. Various activities such as taking rest and eating used to be performed in the living space, which was connected to outdoors via the balcony, terrace, and courtyard. These findings showed that space design and spatial arrangement were the influence of the lifestyle and culture of residents, and for this, it is pivotal to understand its characteristics and improve the lifestyle.

**Keywords:** *Pahlavi era, Spatial organization, Lifestyle, Living space.*

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## Introduction

The spatial organization refers to a network that manages the mode of connection and arrangement of spaces and masses. This network indicates the way spaces are placed next to each other, forming an entity called

spatial organization. Spatial organization functions like an invisible network that encompasses all the micro-spaces of a house. On one hand, this network is connected to the macro spatial organization that manages urban spaces and neighborhood units, and on the other hand, it regulates the communication system between internal elements of the space. Therefore, this network is not only part of a larger system (macro spatial network) but also structures the relationships of spatial subsystems (micro-spaces) (Haeri Mazandarani, 2009, 173). Building a house without the order and organization derived from enduring signs and elements of architecture is very challenging. From our perspective, creating a space with a specific identity is a matter that requires serious attention, because currently, many people are designing and constructing houses that lack identity and are undefined (Mises, 2015, 167). The role of the home as the most important living space to provide an environment compatible with human lifestyle is extremely important. However, in the modern era, with the expansion of identity-less construction styles, all constructions have become the same. By neglecting user needs, problems such as reduced satisfaction, loss of cultural and spatial identity, and changes in residents' social behaviors have emerged. Iranian architecture has always possessed a specific and continuous process, maintaining a logical relationship with periods before and after itself. The first changes and transformations in Iranian architecture were more prominent in arts like painting and decorations. Nevertheless, the beginning of the transitional period in Iranian architecture should be attributed to the Qajar era, a period where these changes became more pronounced during the first and second Pahlavi periods (Yazdanfar & Faryabi, 2021, 198). During these three periods, Iranian architecture was weakened, and processes of adaptation, imitation, and ultimately eclecticism in Iranian architecture began. Iranian architecture experienced numerous transformations and changes from its beginnings until the Qajar era. However, from that period onwards, due to introduction of the Western culture into Iranian architecture, traditional architecture came into conflict with Western architecture. The term "contemporary architecture" refers to the Pahlavi era, which is a period

of transformation in Iranian architecture and is noteworthy from many perspectives. During the Pahlavi period, there was a desire for globalization of architecture on one side and attention to Iranian or national design on the other. In this era, imitation of Western architecture progressed more rapidly (Elahizadeh & Sirousi, 2014, 34), to the extent that the use of recurring architectural patterns in form, decorations, construction quality, and materials indicated nationalism in Pahlavi-era architecture. The second Pahlavi period under Mohammad Reza Shah's rule, compared to the 50s, 60s, and 70s, was one of the important periods in contemporary world history in terms of intellectual and technological developments and naturally influenced Iran at that time. With the start of the innovative Reza Shah government, the modernization process began (Kami Shirazi et al., 2018, 34). Reza Shah knew that one way to emerge from the chaotic situation of that era was to create reforms and modernization in all areas. The presence of educated individuals who had studied in the West beside the Shah, as people who could implement many modernization programs, was one of the main characteristics of this period (Hedayat, 1966). The primary characteristics of contemporary architecture are pluralism, multiplicity, eclecticism, and diversity of perspectives. The tendency towards a global perspective occurred with a departure from the past and history, and in most cases, it happened without theoretical awareness and understanding of concepts, turning into blind imitation. The result was an identity-less, eclectic architecture (Yazdani Rostam & Khalilian, 2021, 1). This period is characterized by the conflict of values, thoughts, theories, architectural ideas, and diversity in architectural and urban planning processes and styles. This diversity and contradiction are influenced by various factors that have emerged in architecture. During the Pahlavi era, drastic transformations occurred in the application of international and local-traditional architectural approaches, resulting in the emergence of a monumental-oriented style. Therefore, spacious designs as well as the observation of the privacy of exterior and interior spaces and adherence to principles and relationships in the period before the first and second Pahlavi eras transformed into confused and disorganized architecture. Overlooking and lacking

awareness of residents' needs, as well as disregarding their lifestyle, have caused problems such as losing cultural and spatial identity, reduced satisfaction, and changes in residents' social behaviors. That is why studying various dimensions of residential spaces influenced by different societal phenomena is considered in such a way that, with fundamental changes in the lifestyle of society members, the lifestyle itself is transformed, and these changes in housing architecture take shape proportionate to new needs and desires. These changes are directly related to architecture. Considering the lifestyle, one can create changes in the design and construction of spaces to ensure compatibility with the cultural needs and values of society. Therefore, examining and understanding spatial and cultural factors that impact architecture can lead to improvement and appropriate development in space design and construction. The present study aims to explore how lifestyle affects the spatial organization of contemporary Iranian houses, focusing on the living room in Pahlavi-era houses in Urmia city. In line with the research objective and question, the study first addresses the research background. Then the research method is explained, and in the theoretical foundations chapter, Pahlavi architecture and its developments are examined. Additionally, the study focuses on lifestyle and its relationship with house architecture and spatial organization. In the final section of the theoretical foundations chapter, explanations about the living room are provided. In the findings chapter, the authors introduce and analyze Urmia houses, considering the research objective and question.

## Research Question

How does the lifestyle affect the living room's spatial organization and design in Urmia's houses of the Pahlavi era?

## Research Background

Rezaei et al. (2022), in an article analyzing and evaluating Iranian house architecture during the first and second Pahlavi periods (1926-1979), concluded that Iranian architecture became chaotic and disorganized in the late Qajar era and early Pahlavi period. Pahlavi architecture witnessed the simultaneous construction of buildings,

each representing a specific ideological school from Iranian history. Younesi et al. (2023) examined the reflection of lifestyle changes in the architecture of houses for occupational classes in Iranian oil companies before the 1950s. Based on the research results, changes in consumption, leisure, culture, and identity components had the most significant impact on the lifestyle of residents of the Abadan Oil City Company. Hendou et al. (2021) studied the impact of spatial system changes in Mashhad's houses on contemporary lifestyle. The research results indicate that during the first Pahlavi period and the first half of the second Pahlavi period, more changes occurred in open spaces like courtyards, terraces, and verandas, with the least changes in living rooms and bedrooms. However, from the second half of the Pahlavi period until now, attention to interior spaces, especially public and semi-public spaces like living and reception rooms, has increased. Ehsani Oskouei & Mahdinejad (2024), examined the development of a conceptual model explaining the design qualities of residential apartment rooms related to young Iranian women's lifestyles. According to the results, current social, economic, and cultural conditions in Iranian society have led individuals in this social group to adopt a specific lifestyle and influence their housing preferences. Sheikh Akbari et al. (2024), in an article on the impact of a progressive lifestyle on privacy in extroverted houses of the first Pahlavi period in Tehran, investigated and identified privacy characteristics in houses built under the influence of modernist lifestyle during the first Pahlavi period in Tehran. The results indicate that modernization and lifestyle concepts can be divided into three main categories: nonconformity, human-nature-architecture, and individualism, each describing different aspects of privacy. Generalov & Generalova, (2020) examined people's lifestyles as a primary factor influencing various characteristics of residential and multi-purpose buildings. The results indicate that living standards, lifestyle, quality of life, and people's customs significantly impact the selection of high-rise buildings, apartment size and type, number and quality of services, and functional elements, contributing to creating a modern and comfortable living environment in the city. Regarding

Pahlavi era developments, reference can be made to Kiani (2004) 's book "Architecture of the First Pahlavi Period: Transformation of Thoughts and Emergence of Contemporary Iranian Architecture (1299-1320 Solar Hijri)" which explores contemporary Iranian architectural and urban development in ten chapters. Also, in Ghobadian (2013) 's book "Stylistics and Theoretical Foundations in Contemporary Iranian Architecture," the author examines architecture in three sections: the Qajar period, the first and second Pahlavi periods, and the post-Islamic Republic era. Each section initially addresses the political, historical, social, and cultural conditions of the time, then delves into urban planning and architectural issues. The similarities and differences of each period are precisely explained and elaborated. Bani Masoud (2009), in the book "Contemporary Iranian Architecture: Struggling between Tradition and Modernity," explores the evolution of Iranian architecture and the significant effects of Western architecture on it in seventeen chapters, covering the Qajar, Pahlavi, and post-Islamic Revolution periods.

**Research Method**

The present study is descriptive-analytical. Initially, a descriptive method was used to examine the relationship between lifestyle and architecture, followed by an analysis of contemporary Iranian architecture and prevalent styles during the Pahlavi period. In the second stage of the research, information about residential houses in Urmia City was collected, and an analytical method was employed to study Pahlavi-era houses in the city. In this stage, architectural lifestyle components were extracted from theorists' perspectives and analyzed in Urmia's Pahlavi-era houses. A significant portion of the study was conducted by examining documents, records, and architectural plans in the Cultural Heritage Organization's archive, along with field surveys of Urmia's houses. Ultimately, 18 residential buildings in Urmia were selected through purposive and accessible sampling. The research attempted to choose buildings from the same geographical area, as few Pahlavi-era structures remain due to extensive demolitions. To examine the role of lifestyle in shaping the spatial organization of living rooms in contemporary

Iranian houses, architectural components related to lifestyle in Urmia's Pahlavi-era houses were investigated, with results summarized in a table. Fig. 1 illustrates the research process. Among the factors effective on house spatial organization - such as economic, cultural, political, social, technological, and lifestyle factors - this study selected lifestyle and its impacts on house spatial organization.

**Theoretical Foundations**

**• Architecture of the Pahlavi era**

The early 20th century (1921-1941) witnessed profound transformations in Iran's social and political fabric. The rise of the Pahlavi dynasty marked a significant turning point. The encounter between Iran and the West led to a cultural clash, manifesting in the emergence of modern architecture in Iran. This trend created an environment ripe for social and political advancements (Mirgozar Langaroudi et al., 2019, 64). During the early Pahlavi period, despite changes in construction styles and the utilization of new materials, architectural developments were largely in line with the preceding Qajar era (Bani Masoud, 2021, 63). However, the rise of a new, enlightened class, including academics, teachers, and lawyers, propelled a shift towards a modern way of life in Iran. This societal transformation was driven by the influx of Western goods and industrial products, coupled with the growing adoption of European culture and lifestyle (Ansari, 2019, 50). Motivated by this modernization initiative, the government fostered changes in housing patterns (Ahmandnezhad et al., 2024, 96). Embracing the ideals of progress and modernity, the Pahlavi government clashed with traditional forces,

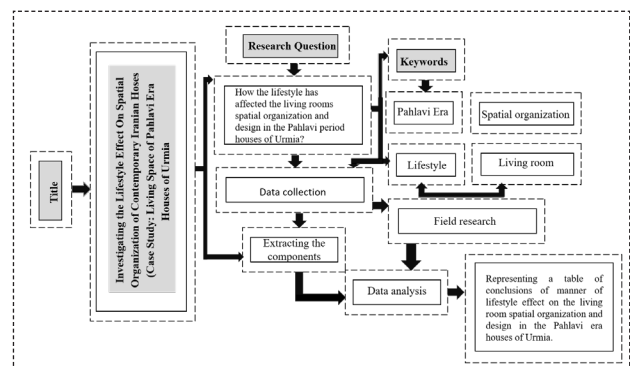


Fig. 1. Research process. Source: Authors.

aiming to dismantle certain institutions, practices, and values associated with the past. This modernizing force played a pivotal role in altering societal norms and values, as well as impacting architectural trends (Khorsandnikoo & Sabokrou, 2023, 86). Increased communication with the West under the second Pahlavi rule saw a significant rise in the import of modern materials and technologies to Iran, with workshops and factories dedicated to the production of new construction materials. In this era, modern architecture was recognized as a global avant-garde style marginalizing the traditional designs and materials. However, the introduction of new technology did not mean the complete elimination of traditional elements, and some of these elements remained in architecture (Sardari et al., 2023). During the first and second Pahlavi periods, nationalism in architecture emerged with a symbolic and archaic approach. Architects from the association of graduate architects, such as Anvar Zaher and Nader Khalili, tried to integrate the concepts of modernism with the past (Kakavand et al., 2023). In the second Pahlavi period (1320 to 1357 AH), Iranian architecture was influenced by the late modernism of Western architecture (Kamel Nia & Mahdavi Nejad, 2011). This period was influenced by European styles such as the International Style, the Bauhaus school, and the works of architects such as Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Alvar Aalto. These effects led to the emergence of semi-modernist architecture in Iran, which combined modern principles with local characteristics (Bani Masoud, 2009). In this period, architects such as Hushang Seyhoun, Ali Sardar Afkhami, Nader Ardalan, Kamran Diba, and Hossein Amanat founded a new type of Iranian modern architecture. Ghobadian calls this style “Iranian modernist architecture” in which tradition and modernism are considered simultaneously in the design of buildings (Ghobadian, 2013). During this period, the interior design of buildings changed to a modern style. Buildings were divided into two or more reception rooms based on scale, and one of the main features of this architectural style was long, monotonous corridors with numerous rooms on either side (Shoormeij, 2023). In the following, Fig. 2 presents the trends and styles of

the first and second Pahlavi periods, as well as some of the architectural and physical characteristics of buildings during the Pahlavi period. In the Pahlavi period, laws were also enacted regarding architectural design, which affected house architecture, including the following: North-south orientation (Vatankhah & Aghvami, 2013), windows opening to the street (the beginning of a new transformation in housing design), map preparation for each city, prohibition of building single-story houses next to important streets, European-style apartment houses with the ground floor with commercial use and the upper floors residential use, introduction of modern water supply, electricity supply, and infrastructure provision methods, and urban changes, approval of the Law on Architecture and Building Systems to preserve national and traditional principles in architecture by the Supreme Council of Urban Planning and Architecture of the country, development of regulations for projecting elements into streets by the municipality, such as balconies, and approval of the first comprehensive urban plan in 1970 (Mohajer Milani & Aeinifar, 2021), approval of the comprehensive plan in 1968, and in this period, the role of the courtyard was also reduced from a social-physical center to a private open space (Azad et al., 2018). Also, during the first and second Pahlavi periods, with the establishment of the university system in architectural education, the role of traditional architects gradually decreased, and they were employed as executors in the service of educated architects (Safaeipour, 2022). However, traditional master builders continued to play a role in brick ornamentation and the restoration of historical buildings (Kiani, 2007). They were able to create a balance between

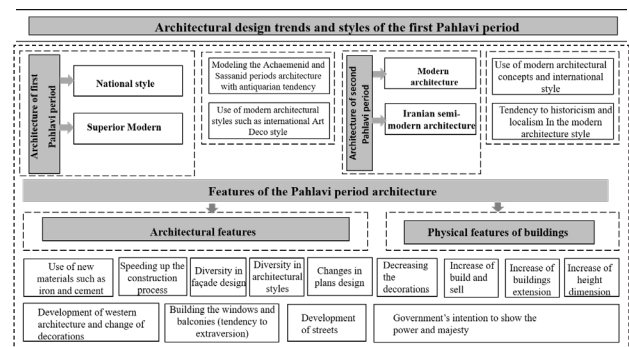


Fig. 2. Architectural styles and trends and the physical characteristics of the Pahlavi era’s architecture. Source: Authors.

traditional architecture and new industrial architecture with their artistic facade design, and they also played an important role in the restoration of historical buildings (Rahimnia et al., 2017). The architects of this period in Urmia include Mashhadi Mohammad Hossein Memar (Molla Ousta), Memar Saber Maleki, Memar Sultan Ali Hosseinpour, and Memar Noorollah Mamakani.

#### • Lifestyle and home

The authors in this section discuss the concept of “lifestyle” and the views of various theorists in this field. They also examine the relationship between this concept and the home. This term (Lifestyle and its Concept) was first used by Alfred Adler, an Austrian psychologist. Alfred Adler defined lifestyle as a description of each individual’s personality that takes shape during childhood and influences their behavior and reactions in adulthood. From Adler’s point of view, the central personality is the lifestyle. In other words, this style represents the way a person chooses to respond to the world around them (Nejadpour et al., 2022). Two different interpretations of the concept of lifestyle have been presented. In the first interpretation, which began in the 1920s, lifestyle is considered a symbol of wealth and social status, and it is often used as an indicator for determining social class. However, in the second interpretation, lifestyle is considered a new social form that only finds meaning in the context of the cultural changes of modernity and consumer culture (Naderi, 2022). The term “lifestyle” generally refers to the way people choose to behave or engage in activities to distinguish their personality from others (Rapoport, 1969). Today, the term lifestyle has been widely adopted in common usage and is used to describe homes and amenities. In general, the concept of lifestyle encompasses a wide range of material and subjective issues. This concept includes patterns of social relationships, entertainment, fashion consumption, and attire, as well as the attitudes, values, and perspectives of individuals and the groups to which they belong (Kharazmi & Moradi, 2023). Lifestyle refers to a set of actions that a person performs. These actions are not accepted for the sake of fulfilling basic needs but for the sake of displaying individual identity in a material form (Giddens, 1991). From Bourdieu’s point of view,

the concept of lifestyle includes various factors such as the combination of capital, tastes, and dispositions, as well as the nature of various fields, including sports, music, food, politics, language, decoration, and taste (Taslami Tehrani, 2023). The meaning of lifestyle is related to the choice of ideal qualities and activities in life. In other words, lifestyle represents the performance of various tasks and distinctive signs that are depicted in a specific spatial structure and means the choice of ideal qualities and activities in life, which are represented in a specific spatial structure (Bourdieu, 1984, 24). In this approach, the house is recognized as a representative space for individuals’ interactions and behaviors toward each other and as a place that is constantly changing. Given the type of life, spatial organization, and its elements, the house can meet the needs and expectations of the family. Among the thinkers who have addressed the relationship between lifestyle and housing style are Giddens, Bourdieu, Segalen, Rapoport, Pourdehimi, Chapin, Swell, Berger, Van Hooten, and Hojrup. Bourdieu defines lifestyle as being related to possessions such as houses, cars, furniture, and distinctive activities such as dress and taking care of one’s appearance. He also examines the relationship between lifestyle and the house in the division of interior spaces, especially in the division of private and public spaces. Peter Berger has also done extensive research on the relationship between lifestyle and housing and believes that the modernization of life is accompanied by economic growth (Ebrahimi et al., 2017a). From Pourdehimi’s point of view, the choice of environmental qualities, quality of life, activities, and how they are carried out determines one’s lifestyle (Ebrahimi et al., 2017b). Lifestyle as a part of culture has a significant impact on the quality of life and the built environment. This concept takes shape in built environments based on values, ideals, ideas, and schemas and manifests itself in different societies. The most important point in terms of lifestyle in built environments is that this style is not limited to one space, but rather emerges at different scales and environments, and for this reason, it has a great deal of diversity (Rapoport, 1998). Based on the research conducted, lifestyle can be categorized based on three factors: social, economic, and cultural. The economic factor refers to the

occupation and social class of the father of the family. The social factors include the family structure, social relations, family marriages, and similar matters. The cultural factor also deals with concepts such as privacy, religion, and other aspects. Concerning the definitions and concepts inferred from them, the lifestyle components are presented in Fig. 3.

The home and housing are of great importance for survival and life, and they also affect our history, culture, and daily lives. Home is a space that shapes and influences the wholeness of a person’s being and lifestyle (Fazeli, 2008, 32). The spatial configuration of the house and its interior design can significantly enhance or weaken the culture of the inhabitants. The shape and structure of houses in a region can have a major impact on people’s lifestyles and social interactions (Babakhani et al., 2021, 163). According to Duncan, for many people, the home is the most important and valuable personal asset through which they can express their identity. This place is used to show social class, lifestyle, and personal taste to others (Yazdanfar & Faryabi, 2021, 200). The concept of lifestyle-based housing is based on the idea that people spend most of their time at home in different areas. These areas include rooms that function naturally and harmoniously with each other. For example, in a typical home, the kitchen, dining room, and private living room are part of what is called the “social space,” and this space is usually where group activities and family gatherings take place (Sedaghati, 2024, 171). For example, we need to design environments in a way that aligns with or adapts to our choices (Yzadanfar et al., 2020, 200). In his study, Rapoport examined the relationship between lifestyle patterns and house form, showing how basic daily needs

such as eating, sleeping, and sitting, as well as factors such as family structure, the role of women, and the issue of privacy, influence the choice of location, materials, house shape, and its architecture. He ultimately states that while the influence of traditional social factors on common house-building methods has declined, it cannot be said that physical factors alone determine the shape of the house. This is because new sociocultural factors have gradually replaced the old ones (Kooti et al., 2024, 44). The culture and daily life of humans are closely linked to housing, so much so that housing is no longer merely a means of survival; rather, it has exerted its requirements and influences on all aspects of human existence and lifestyle (Ayazi et al., 2024, 62). In the following, in Fig. 4, the views of some theorists on the relationship between house architecture and lifestyle are presented. Also, in Fig. 5, the relationship between lifestyle and the spatial organization of the house is discussed.

• **Living room**

The living room is a private and intimate space in the house. The living room is usually simpler than the reception room and is where family members and guests gather. These rooms were designed to be very simple in terms of decoration (Azad & Sadeghi Pei, 2011, 89). From the late 19th century, the distinction between public and private spaces began though it gradually faded. During this period, we witnessed the emergence of the multi-purpose living room in the middle class. The term “living room” came into existence at this time and was initially used to distinguish between a room that was formally used for entertaining, i.e., the parlour<sup>1</sup>, and a room that the household used as a living room for work and leisure (Cromley, 1990). According to historians, various developments led to the middle class’s preference for the multi-purpose living room. On the one hand, the size of houses decreased due to the allocation of more budget for home technology and cars in the early 20th century, leading to a reduction in the number of rooms. Additionally, the decrease in the number of children per household and the elimination of storing household products also reduced the number of rooms needed (Wright, 1983). The living room is mainly used as a place for family members to gather and socialize for leisure

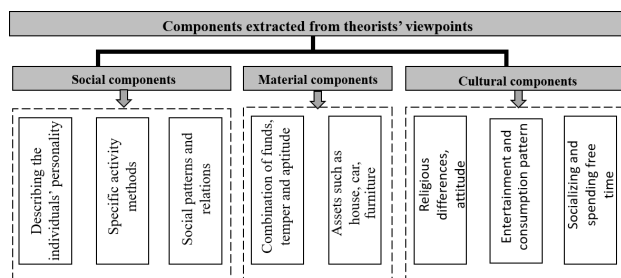


Fig. 3. Components extracted from the theoreticians’ point of view in terms of the lifestyle. Source: Authors.

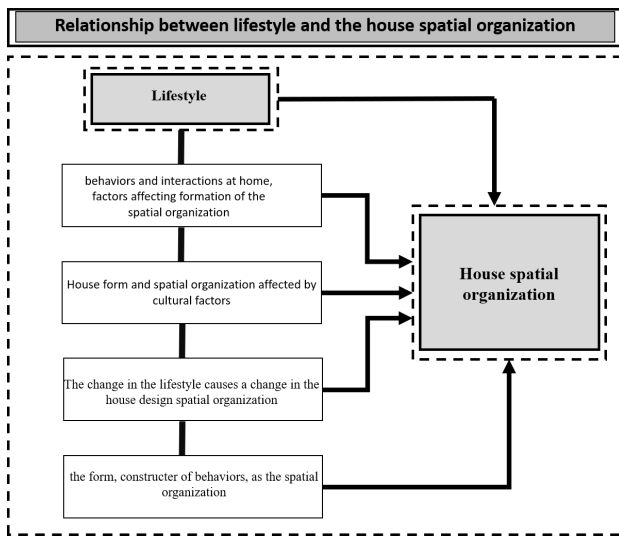


Fig. 4. The relationship between the lifestyle and house architecture from the theorists' point of view. Source: Authors.

Relationship between lifestyle and house architecture from theorists' viewpoint				
Abrin	Hojrup	Salagen	oswel	Lawrence
Lifestyle in forms of residence place, local participation, type of home	The change in home priorities is related to the income level, workplace, and individual work style.	The relationship between the lifestyle and the house derives from the division of the house's interior space and its division into public and private spaces.	The components of lifestyle are understood in relation to the act of living, the type of house, living room furniture and other effects.	The manner of behaviors order and activities in a diverse environment and lifestyle play a central role in understanding and using the space.

Fig. 5. The relationship between the lifestyle and spatial organization of the house. Source: Authors.

activities. This space should provide a physical location where interpersonal communication with others takes place (Amaturo et al., 1987). Therefore, communication and interaction are the two main activities that usually take place in the living room. This suggests that the living room can have a relatively less formal atmosphere. The furniture arrangement in the living room reflects the family's personality and preferences. Differences in the design of living rooms evoke different physiological responses among residents. According to Tsunetsugu's study in 2005, rooms with specific furniture arrangements can lead to different behaviors among users. Homeowners can create a suitable environment for interacting with guests through furniture arrangements (Saruwono et al., 2012, 190). Also, in Iranian architecture, the rooms and the outdoor space, which were connected to the lush courtyard, had a visual connection with each other. Openness and having a view of nature are characteristics of Iranian architecture. The

name of each room was determined by the number of doorways that opened onto the central courtyard, such as Seh-dari (three-door), Panj-dari (five-door), and Haft-dari (seven-door). The She-dari was usually used as a private room or bedroom, while the Panj-dari room could be used as a living room or guest room, and sometimes had a "Shah-neshin"--a space above the room that was used as a place for guests to sit (Bemanian & Zandi, 2017, 91). In the following, Table 1 provides some examples of living rooms from the Pahlavi period. Also, in Fig. 6. The characteristics of living room spaces during the Pahlavi period are described based on the information in Table 1.

### Findings

#### • Evolution of urmia houses

During the Qajar and Pahlavi dynasties, Urmia was known as one of the important cities of West Azerbaijan in Iran. Given the arrangement of traditional houses and the observation and examination of old houses, the evolution of houses can be divided into two historical periods: Period 1) From the early Qajar period to the early Pahlavi I period. Period 2) From the early Pahlavi period to the Pahlavi II period. At the beginning of the Pahlavi I period, the houses followed the traditional Iranian pattern and had internal and external spaces. However, as the Pahlavi II period approached, this pattern faded and eventually disappeared completely during this period, and the houses took on a more extroverted form. Regarding the architects of the Pahlavi period in Urmia, we can mention the late engineer Mohammad Shirin Sokhan, one of whose buildings is house number (14), which has been analyzed. Also, house number (15) was built by the late Khalil

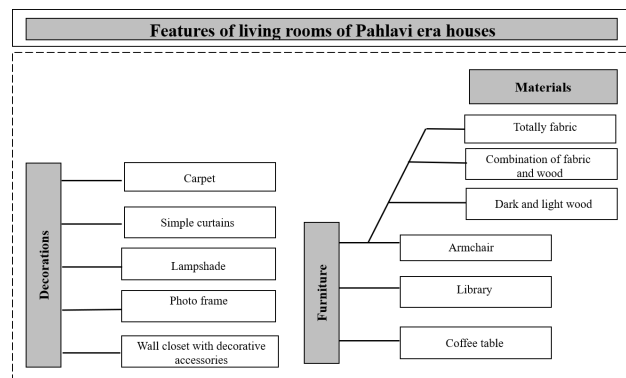




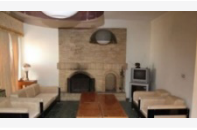




Fig. 6. Characteristics of the living room during the Pahlavi period. Source: Authors.

Table 1. Characteristics of the living room during the Pahlavi period. Source: Authors.

Furniture	Decorations	Image
The living room has all fabric furniture and a modern-style coffee table, as well as a small bookshelf	Carpet on the floor, carpet as decoration on the wall, use of small paintings and decorative items, and simple curtains with a combination of dark and light colors	
Circular arrangement of completely fabric-covered furniture with a dark and light color scheme. The coffee table in front of the sofa is a combination of wood and glass	Two wooden wardrobes, light-colored walls, a red carpet, and light-colored metal curtains	
Furniture with a combination of fabric and wood, and a side and front table for the sofa	Rug and painting with a black frame, a sculpture on the wall, and a lampshade	
Some furniture pieces are made with dark wood, while others are made with integrated materials, and there is a wooden and glass coffee table in front of the sofa	Red carpets and teal rugs are used to cover the floor of the wall cabinets for decorative items, as well as decorative paintings on the wall, and flowers and plants	
Furniture with a combination of wood and fabric materials, with dark and light coloring, and a wooden table	Chandelier, bright curtains, fireplace, dark-colored floor materials	
L-shaped arrangement of furniture with a coffee table in front of the sofa, using a combination of dark and light materials	Dark and light-colored carpets, a built-in wardrobe for placing photos and decorative items, simple curtains, a chandelier	
The living room furniture is in the form of cushions	There is a decorative vase and a clock on the wall	

Hashempoor. Both architects have passed away, and it is not possible to interview them. Some other architects were not willing to be interviewed. Other architects of this period in Urmia include Engineer Homayoun Movassaghi and Engineer Assadollah Shahrestani.






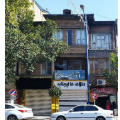







• **Presentation and review of samples**

From the early 1930s, and especially in the 1940s and 1950s, Iranian students who went abroad to study, along with foreign architects and researchers, left behind the traditional Iranian Qajar architecture and moved towards a Western style and pattern. Many construction projects during this period were designed and executed by students of the Faculty of Fine Arts, which led to the ignorance of past architects. For this reason, this period is known as the

period of integration of Iranian and Western architecture. In the present study, the houses that have been selected as samples are no exception to this rule. In Table 2, 18 houses have been chosen as case studies from the Pahlavi period of Urmia, selected purposefully for analysis from areas close to each other.

In this section, Tables 3, 4 & 5 examine the evolution of the living room space in Urmia houses in terms of quantitative and qualitative characteristics (shape, form adjacency, and location). Due to the age of the houses, some of them are unoccupied, and in some cases, the houses have been converted to other uses while retaining the original plan. In houses where images were not available, permission to take photographs was not granted.

Table 2. Case studies. Source: Authors.

House number	Antiquity	Location	Picture
1	The late Qajar's – Pahlavi	Majidi Afshar house, Kashani St	
2	The late Qajar's – Pahlavi	Ansari house, Madani Street 2	
3	The 20s	Dezhbani alley, Imam street	
4	The 20s	Kashani St	
5	The 20s	Atai St	
6	The 20s	Sardaran St	
7	The 20s	Sardaran St	
8	The 20s	Sardaran St	
9	The 30s	Danesh St	
10	The 30s	Dere Chayi Street	
11	The 30s	Dere Chayi Street	
12	The 30s	Dere Chayi Street	
13	The 40s	Paul Qoyoun	

Rest of Table 2.






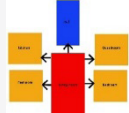

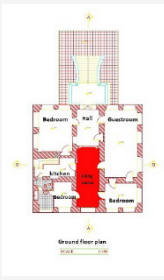
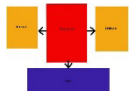



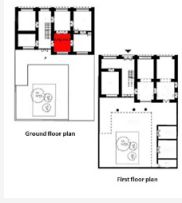
House number	Antiquity	Location	Picture
14	The 50s	Daneshkadeh Street	
15	The 40s	Dezhban alley	
16	The 50s	Ammar St	
17	The 50s	Paul Qoyoun	
18	The 50s	Beheshti St	

Table 3. Evolution of living room space (Houses from 1300-1320 AH). Source: Authors.

House number	Decade	Living room quantitative and qualitative characteristics				Image	Plan
		Shape and form	Adjacency	Location of adjacency	Adjacency diagram		
1	1300	Rectangle	Bedroom, kitchen, hall Reception room	Floor			
2	1300	Rectangle	Room, yard	First floor			
3	20	Square Closed	Hallway, room, yard	First floor		-	

Rest of Table 3.

House number	Decade	Living room quantitative and qualitative characteristics				Image	Plan
		Shape and form	Adjacency	Location of adjacency	Adjacency diagram		
4	20	Rectangle Closed	Kitchen, room	First and second floors			
5	20	Rectangle Closed	Hallway, kitchen	Ground floor			

Table 4. Evolution of living room space (Houses from 1320 to 1330 AH). Source: Authors.

House number	Decade	Living room quantitative and qualitative characteristics				Image	Plan
		Shape and form	Adjacency	Location of adjacency	Adjacency diagram		
7	20	Rectangle Closed	Ground floor: kitchen and bathroom, yard First floor: room	Ground and first floors			
8	20	Rectangle Closed	Ground floor: kitchen and room, yard First floor: room, reception, and porch	Ground and first floors			
9	30	Rectangle	Bedroom, porch entrance filter	Ground and first floor (type plan)			
10	30	Rectangle	Kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom	Ground and first floors			
11	30	Square Closed	Bedroom	First floor			

Rest of Table 3.

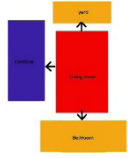
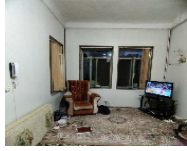

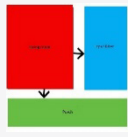

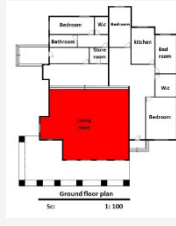
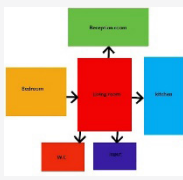
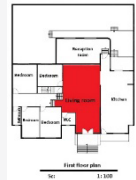

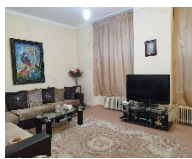

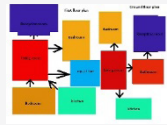


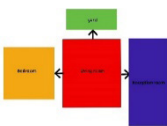

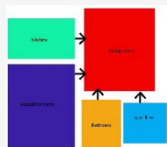

House number	Decade	Living room quantitative and qualitative characteristics					Image	Plan
		Shape and form	Adjacency	Location of adjacency	Adjacency diagram			
12	30	Rectangle Closed	Bedroom, yard	Ground and first floors				
13	40	Rectangle	Entrance filter	Ground floor				

Table 5. Evolution of living room space (Houses from 1330 to 1357 AH). Source: Authors.

House number	Decade	Living room quantitative and qualitative characteristics					Image	Plan
		Shape and form	Adjacency	Location of adjacency	Adjacency diagram			
14	50	Rectangle Open	Bedroom Kitchen Reception room Entrance Bathroom Corridor	First floor		-		
15	40	Rectangle Closed	Yard Bedroom Second floor hall, room	First, second, (and third (type				
16	50	Rectangle Open	Kitchen, bathroom, reception, and bedroom	Ground and first floors				
17	50	Square	Reception, bedroom, yard	Ground floor		-		
18	50	Rectangle Open	Reception, bedroom kitchen entrance filter	Ground floor		-		

Through the comparative analysis of the plans of the studied houses, it can be concluded that certain physical elements and spaces play a significant role in spatial relationships, human behavior, and lifestyles. These elements and spaces are analyzed in the traditional houses according to their spatial hierarchy and prioritization. Based on the results of the physical study of the houses under investigation, the exterior space, outer courtyard, inner courtyard, vestibule, and passageway are influential factors in plan changes and spatial relationships. Analysis of the studied houses showed that the role of spatial elements, the form and shape of spatial elements, the orientation of the building, the spatial hierarchy, and the location and number of entrances during the Pahlavi era influenced lifestyle and spatial relationships. In the houses of the first Pahlavi era, the separation of spaces into public and private areas increased the spatial hierarchy and reduced access to private spaces, thus increasing the privacy of houses in this historical period. However, in the second Pahlavi era, privacy decreased, and a trend towards extroversion emerged. During this period, some public spaces that served as intermediate spaces to reach private spaces were removed, and private spaces were transformed into public spaces. This resulted in a decrease in the degree of privacy and an increase in extroversion in the houses of the Pahlavi era. [Table 6](#) examines the living space of the case studies based on seven components, including decorations, the geometric shape of the living space, window height, privacy, layout, and heating system, each of which has its own sub-components.

#### • Comparison of the organization of living spaces in urmia houses during the Pahlavi era

Lifestyle encompasses the performance of daily activities to meet various human needs. These activities significantly contribute to the organization of house spaces. To this end, [Table 7](#) attempts to examine the degree of adjacency of the living space with other spaces and their influence on the formation of the living space. In the analysis conducted among the case studies in [Table 7](#), houses numbered 9, 15, 14, and 16 showed the highest degree of adjacency with spaces such as bedrooms, kitchen, reception room, bathroom, hallway, and bath; while houses numbered 5, 11, 4, and 17 showed the lowest adjacency of the

living space with other spaces. Based on interviews with residents, activities such as resting, entertaining guests, and eating were conducted in the living spaces of the homes.

#### Conclusion

The architecture, shaped by the lifestyle and beliefs of the community and influenced by spatial and cultural factors, generally leads to resident satisfaction. However, the incompatibility between housing and the residents' identity, culture, and lifestyle is a current problem. Housing, instead of addressing all human needs, primarily focuses on meeting the residents' material needs. Consequently, space design and layout are influenced by lifestyle, and in turn, impact activities and lifestyle. Since the physical characteristics of spaces are organized based on the culture of the inhabitants, understanding these characteristics is essential and improves lifestyle. This research, examining the floor plans of houses in Urmia during the Pahlavi era, reveals that over time, some spaces were eliminated, some were transformed into other spaces, and others were added. For instance, rooms in contemporary houses have become living rooms, bedrooms, and dining areas. The emergence of extroversion versus introversion was a major factor driving these changes. The results indicate that while the central courtyard pattern was still visible in the early Pahlavi era, the dominant pattern was the room, accessed via corridors. During this period, the courtyard was a separate space, losing its previous diverse functions. In the Pahlavi era, the predominant floor plan was based on the living room's position, providing access to other spaces and serving functions such as seating, resting, and dining. Comparing lifestyles in the Pahlavi era, the importance of space, both physically and in terms of lifestyle and function, highlights the courtyard, bedroom, and living room as the most important spaces in the home. In this period, due to changing lifestyles, the sitting area has merged with some other spaces. Physical surveys of sitting areas in case studies revealed that light-colored wall decorations, the use of rugs, cement flooring materials, and plaster materials were most commonly used as sitting area decorations. Furthermore, the geometric shape of most homes' sitting areas was rectangular, with a separating door to isolate the sitting area from other spaces. The sitting area most

Table 6. Examination of the physical components of the living room. Source: Authors.

	Title	Number																		Component percentage
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
	Dark-colored walls				*				*	*										16.66%
	Bright-colored walls	*	*	*		*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	83.33%
Decorations	Wardrobe								*								*		11.11%	
	Floor material (cement)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		83.33%	
	Floor material														*		*	*	16.66%	
	Wooden doors	*	*	*	*	*	*	*										*	38.88%	
The geometrical shape of the living room	Rectangle	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	83.33%	
	Square			*							*						*		16.66%	
The size of the window	From the floor		*			*				*			*						22.22%	
	Above floor	*		*	*		*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	77.77%	
Connection with outer space	Yard		*	*		*	*	*	*			*			*		*		50%	
	Street									*									2.22%	
	Backyard						*						*						11.11%	
	Porch, terrace	*			*				*	*					*				27.77%	
Privacy	Living room or intermediate space	*	*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*		*				61.11%	
	Living room without an intermediate space							*		*	*			*		*	*	*	38.88%	
Arrangement	Furniture		*		*					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	66.66%	
	Without furniture	*		*		*	*	*	*										33.33%	
Heating system	Korsi	*	*	*		*		*	*										33.33%	
	Fireplace													*					2.22%	
	Heater				*		*		*	*	*	*							33.33%	
	Central heating														*	*	*	*	27.77%	

Table 7. Organization of the adjacency of the living room space in Urmia houses during the Pahlavi era. Source: Authors.

Title	Organization of the adjacency of the living room space in Urmia houses during the Pahlavi era																		The sum of components' percentage
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
Kitchen				*			*	*		*				*		*		*	38.88%
Bedroom	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	94.44%
Bathroom									*				*		*				16.66%
Reception	*							*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	44.44%
Dining room				*			*								*				16.66%
Water closet						*	*									*			6%.16
Corridor			*		*							*			*	*			27.77%
Entrance filter								*				*	*		*		*	*	27.77%
Balcony, terrace, porch		*					*					*		*					22.22%
Yard		*	*		*	*	*	*			*			*		*	*	*	50%

frequently adjoined bedrooms, living rooms, and kitchens. Activities such as resting, gathering, and eating typically took place in this space. According to the surveys, sitting room windows in this period were positioned above floor level, and heating systems gradually transitioned from “Korsi” (traditional Iranian floor heater) to stoves and radiators. In the houses surveyed, the connection of the sitting area to outdoor spaces was facilitated by balconies, terraces, and courtyards. The spatial organization of a house refers to the design and arrangement of the building’s interior spaces and reflects the needs, priorities, and behavioral patterns of its occupants. Lifestyle refers to a set of social, cultural, and economic habits, behaviors, and values that individuals employ in their daily lives. The connection between the spatial organization of home and lifestyle means that the layout and design of home interiors are shaped by the occupants’ lifestyle, and lifestyle changes can lead to changes in the structure and organization of spaces. During the Pahlavi era, the relationship between lifestyle and the spatial organization of the sitting room is clearly observable. Social and cultural changes resulting from modernization have impacted living patterns and spatial design. Fig. 7 addresses the relationship between lifestyle and the spatial organization of the living rooms in homes in Pahlavi-era Urmia. In addition to the influences of culture and lifestyle, the role of urban planning regulations and architectural design implemented during the Pahlavi era in altering the spatial organization of homes should not be overlooked. These regulations were particularly influential in defining how interior and exterior spaces were designed and organized. Fig. 8 shows the characteristics of living room areas in Pahlavi-era Urmia homes. Also, further studies can be conducted to investigate the level of effectiveness of modern and traditional architecture on the spatial organization of the Pahlavi era’s homes and the effects of both on the formation of interior spaces.

**Conflict of Interest**

Hereby, the authors declare that there was no conflict of interest in conducting the present study.

**Endnotes**

1. Parlour: An old term for a room for entertainment.

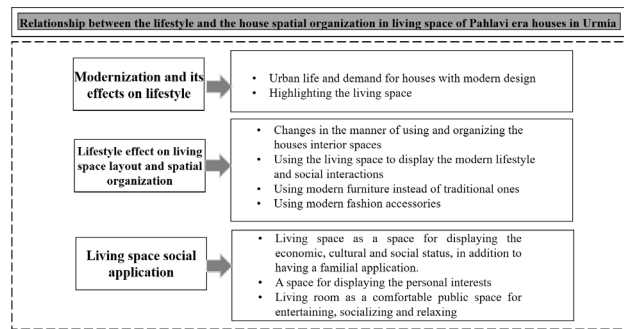


Fig. 7. Relationship between the lifestyle and spatial organization in Pahlavi era’s Urmia homes. Source: Authors.

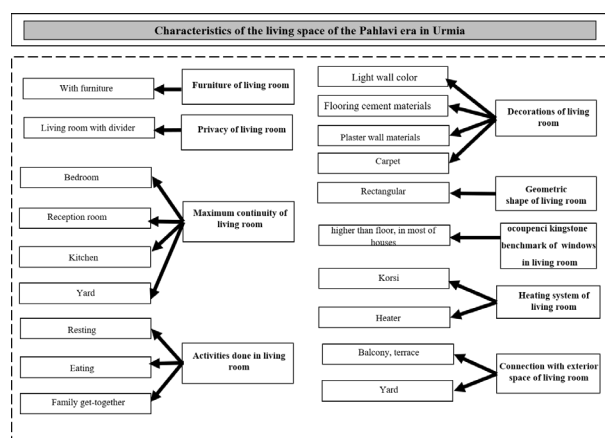


Fig. 8. Characteristics of the living rooms in Urmia homes during the Pahlavi era. Source: Authors.

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