

## The Spatial and Cultural Configuration of the Family in the Context of the Islamic City: The Case of Pervari

İslam Şehri Anlayışı Bağlamında Ailenin Mekânsal ve Kültürel Konumlanışı: Pervari Örneği

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### Makale Bilgisi / Article Information

**Atıf / Citation:** Gülderen, Ahmet - Göksoy Sevinçli, Berfin. "The Spatial and Cultural Configuration of the Family in the Context of the Islamic City: The Case of Pervari" *Şırnak Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 37 (Ekim 2025), 204-225.

### ABSTRACT

*Date of  
Submission*  
03.05.2025

*Date of Acceptance*  
02.08.2025

*Date of  
Publication*  
15.10.2025

**Keywords:**  
Islamic History,  
Islamic City,  
Family,  
Modernism,  
Globalization,  
Pervari,  
Descriptive  
Analysis.

The research examines the impact of the Islamic city concept on the spatial and cultural identity of families in the Pervari district. An Islamic city is not merely a settlement consisting of buildings; it is a living form that protects privacy, fosters social solidarity, and inscribes spiritual values into space. In the study that sought to answer the question "How does the Islamic city concept in Pervari affect the spatial and cultural positioning of the family?", a qualitative method was adopted. Semi-structured interviews conducted with 17 participants were evaluated using the descriptive analysis technique. The importance of this research is to reveal that the Islamic city concept is not only a historical model, but also a vibrant structure in terms of today's family structure and social organization. In the face of the transformative effects of modernization and globalization, scientifically documenting local experiences aimed at preserving spatial order and social structure will contribute to the relatively limited literature on the sustainability of the Islamic city and the family. The findings show that mosque-centered settlement patterns, courtyard houses, and common social areas both protect family privacy and strengthen social ties. However, this traditional structure has gradually eroded under the influence of modernization and globalization, resulting in a visible increase in individualization, spatial alienation, and cultural fragmentation. Giving more importance to local culture and family values in spatial planning will strengthen social solidarity. In this respect, the study also prepares the groundwork for new discussions on integrating traditional family-centered urban textures into modern urban planning.

### ÖZET

*Geliş Tarihi*  
03.05.2025

*Kabul Tarihi*  
02.08.2025

*Yayın Tarihi*  
15.10.2025

Araştırma, İslam şehir anlayışının ailenin mekânsal ve kültürel kimliği üzerindeki etkilerini Pervari ilçesi örneğinde incelemektedir. İslam şehri, yalnızca binalardan oluşan bir yerleşim yeri değil; mahremiyeti koruyan, toplumsal dayanışmayı destekleyen ve manevi değerleri mekâna nakşeden bir yaşam formudur. "Pervari'de İslam şehri anlayışı ailenin mekânsal ve kültürel konumlanışı üzerinde nasıl bir etki oluşturmaktadır?" sorusuna yanıt aranan çalışmada nitel yöntem benimsenmiş; 17 katılımcıyla gerçekleştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler betimsel analiz tekniğiyle değerlendirilmiştir. Bu araştırmanın önemi, İslam şehir anlayışının sadece tarihsel bir model değil, günümüz aile yapısı ve toplumsal örgütlenmesi açısından da canlı bir yapı olduğunun ortaya koyulmasıdır. Modernleşme ve küreselleşmenin dönüştürücü etkileri karşısında, mekânsal düzenin ve sosyal yapının korunmasına yönelik

**Anahtar Kelimeler:**  
İslam Tarihi, İslam  
Şehri, Aile,  
Modernizm,  
Küreselleşme,  
Pervari, Betimsel  
Analiz.

yerel tecrübelerin bilimsel olarak belgelenmesi, literatürü sınırlı olan İslam şehri ve ailenin sürdürülebilirliği konusuna katkı sunacaktır. Bulgular, cami merkezli yerleşim düzeni, avlulu evler ve ortak sosyal alanların hem aile mahremiyetini koruduğunu hem de toplumsal bağları güçlendirdiğini göstermektedir. Ancak bu geleneksel yapı, modernleşme ve küreselleşmenin etkisiyle giderek aşınmış, bireyselleşme, mekânsal yabancılaşma ve kültürel parçalanmada gözle görülür bir artış yaşanmıştır. Mekân planlamasında yerel kültüre ve aile değerlerine daha fazla önem verilmesi, toplumsal dayanışmayı güçlendirecektir. Çalışma bu yönüyle aile merkezli geleneksel şehir dokularının modern kent planlamasına entegre edilmesine dair yeni tartışmalara da zemin hazırlamaktadır.

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic cities are places where beliefs, cultural values, and social relations are engraved in space and life is shaped in a holistic order. In the historical process, mosques, bazaars, and neighborhoods have not only been physical spaces but also carriers of the social structure. The family is the main element determining both spatial and social organization by being at the center of this structure. In Islamic cities, the courtyard structure of houses, narrow streets, and privacy-protecting arrangements have served to protect family life.

Modernization and globalization processes have transformed this traditional structure and led to significant changes in urban planning, social relations, and family structures. In Türkiye, especially after 1950, rural and semi-urban areas have been affected by modern transformation, and traditional Islamic city codes have weakened.

The Pervari district of Siirt province draws attention as a unique settlement that embodies the Islamic city concept at the local level. The neighborhood-centered location of mosques, the street order of houses, and the patterns related to family life contain living examples of traditional Islamic city culture. However, in Pervari, the changing urban space with modernization in recent years has also brought about social transformation. For all these reasons, Pervari was chosen as a sample for the research in terms of determining the inherent richness and developing suggestions that will positively influence the transformation. The aim of this research is to examine the effects of Islamic city elements on the spatial and cultural positioning of the family in Pervari and to reveal the transformative effects of modernization on these elements. The importance of this study lies in its revelation of the Islamic city-family relationship, which is currently underrepresented in the literature, through a small-scale settlement using current field data.

## 1. Literature Review

An Islamic city concept is not only a physical settlement model, but also a way of life where social, cultural, and religious values are embodied in space. In this understanding, the city is a place where people integrate on the basis of belief, belonging, and social relations, and the space is the carrier of the moral order.<sup>1</sup> In Islamic cities, structures such as mosques, bazaars, and madrasahs have both functional and symbolic values, supporting social unity and everyday life.<sup>2</sup> These structures are located in the city center and represent an order that increases the participation of the individual and the family in religious and social life and provides family privacy.<sup>3,4</sup>

The concept of privacy is one of the fundamental principles of the Islamic city. Elements such as houses with inner courtyards, designed in a way that they are not directly visible from the outside, and windows that do not face each other, aim to protect family privacy. This spatial understanding is not only physical but also cultural and religious code.<sup>5</sup> Since the family is the fundamental building block of society in Islamic cities, spatial arrangements are designed in accordance with this importance. The courtyard structure of the houses protects family privacy, while the neighborhood structure strengthens neighborly relations. The needs of families are met with education, health, and social service units gathered around the mosque, while social integrity is also ensured.

With globalization, traditional values have been replaced by modern lifestyles in Islamic cities.<sup>6</sup> Modernization and the spread of Western-centered urbanization practices contradict the spiritual and social values offered by the Islamic city structure, encouraging individualization, anonymity, and social disintegration. Cities no longer target communities but individuals, and public spaces lose their functions of symbolic representation and cultural belonging.<sup>7</sup> The spatial standardization and digitalization brought about by globalization cause the weakening of family ties and the fading of local identity. In this

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Columbia University Press, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> MÜcahit Navruz, "A Historical Perspective Through the Lens of the Islamic City Theory: Konya Example." *Kent Akademisi* 17/6 (2024), 2404-2424.

<sup>3</sup> Ashraf M. Salama, "Urban Traditions in the Contemporary Lived Space of Cities in the Arabian Peninsula", *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, 26/2 (2015), 7–22.

<sup>4</sup> Nezar AlSayyad, *Cities and Caliphs: On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism* (Greenwood Press, 1991), 13-18.

<sup>5</sup> Ariani Mohammad Dini, et al., "Principle of privacy in Islamic Architectural Design Context: A Systematic Literature Review", *Int. J. Acad. Res. Business Soc. Sci* 13 (2023).

<sup>6</sup> Patrick Lantschner, "Intractable Cities: Urbanism in the Islamic Sphere of the Later Medieval Mediterranean World", *Al-Masāq*, 36/3 (2024), 211-234.

<sup>7</sup> Berfin Göksoy Sevinçli, "Türkiye'de İslam Şehirlerinin Şehircilik Anlayışı ve Dönüşümü: Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu Örnekleri (Konya: Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, Institute of Social Sciences, PhD Thesis, 2022), 43.

context, considering the basic principles of Islamic city understanding in urban planning is a necessity for both ensuring the sustainability of the city and re-strengthening the family structure.<sup>8</sup>

The basic codes of Islamic cities were determined in Medina and served as a reference in the development of cities such as Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, and Fez in the following centuries.<sup>9</sup> According to Cansever (1996), the mosque in Medina is not only a place of worship but also as a centre for education, justice, solidarity, and representation. The plan of the houses was determined according to the principle of privacy, with compliance with the family structure observed. Justice and moderation were reflected in the city plan's spatial arrangement.<sup>10</sup> When we refer to an "Islamic city" today, most of the principles mentioned (privacy, central mosque, neighborhood, street texture) are direct extensions of Medina.

The word Medina is related to the concept of "civilization" in terms of its origin. The Arabic word "medīne" (مدينة) means "city" and is derived from the root "mdn", which also means "to settle" and "to reside".<sup>11</sup> This etymological commonality suggests that Medina is not only a settlement, but also a manifestation of civilization, characterized by the permeation of Islamic values into its space.

Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad's conversion of Yathrib into "Medina" with the migration was not only a geographical change but also an attempt to establish a new civilization. Islam did not become urban in Medina. Islam, which was urban due to its emphasis on worship, transformed Medina into a city.<sup>12</sup> Despite strong conceptual and historical associations, Islamic cities have not been studied in sufficient depth in modern urbanism literature. This deficiency results in the neglect of both the specific principles of the Islamic city model and the lessons that can be learned from Islamic cities in response to modern crises, as emphasized by Zeghlache and Khodja (2015).<sup>13</sup> A summary of the studies on Islamic cities in the literature is given in the table below.

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<sup>8</sup> Salama, "Urban Traditions in the Contemporary Lived Space of Cities in the Arabian Peninsula", 7-22; Dini, "Principle of privacy in Islamic Architectural Design Context: A Systematic Literature Review", 738-757.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Bertram Serjeant, *İslam Şehri*, (trans. Elif Topçugül) (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1993).

<sup>10</sup> Turgut Cansever, *Kenti Düşünmek*. (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> Nebi Bozkurt-Mustafa Sabri Küçükbaşcı, "Medine", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Toshihiko İzutsu, *Kur'an'da Dinî ve Ahlâkî Kavramlar*, (trans. Kürşat Atalar) (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 2024); İbrahim Kalın, *Barbar, Modern, Medenî: Medeniyet Üzerine Eleştirel Bir İnceleme*. (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2020).

<sup>13</sup> Hamza Zeghlache, "Impact on the Islamic City of Tunisia with the Coming of the European System of Urban Regulation," *International Transaction Journal of Engineering Management & Applied Sciences & Technologies*, 8/2 (2017), 99-113.

**Table 1.** Literature Table

Year	Author(s)	Method	Theme
2020	Bahrami-Atasinbar	Historical analysis	This study examines the spatial transformation of Hamedan during the Pahlavi period, showing how the traditional Islamic city texture changed under the pressure of modernization.
2020	Manan et al.	Qualitative research	The study highlights a mismatch between the ideal Islamic city model and its actual practice in Banda Aceh, attributing the lack of social participation to poorly accepted, top-down city regulations.
2020	Naranjo	Archaeological analysis	Using archaeological analysis of ceramic findings from Calatrava La Vieja, this study examines the cultural transitions between the pre-Islamic and post-Islamic periods in the region.
2020	Iturriaga	Historical analysis	This study focuses on how the legacy of Nasrid-era city planning in Granada affects the perception and preservation of traditional Islamic aesthetic values in the contemporary city.
2023	Al Kuni, Refeat	Literature scan	This paper identifies and analyzes the criteria for sustainability and durability that are characteristic of Islamic cities.
2024	Leeson	Historical analysis	The study analyzes the structures of information production and management within early Islamic cities.
2025	Hammad et al.	Content analysis	In Islamic cities, where privacy and community solidarity are important, contemporary housing forms encourage individualization and physical separation, which can erode the community spirit.

As it can be seen in the table above, the subject of the Islamic city has been studied from various aspects, but the family context has not been sufficiently deepened within a holistic framework. Naqizadeh (2014) argued through documentary analysis that original Islamic criteria should be decisive in the definition of Islamic cities; he highlighted family-oriented structures such as mosque-centeredness and neighborhood culture in urban planning.<sup>14</sup> Salama (2015) addressed the problems of harmonizing Islamic cities with modern urbanism through a case study, stating that individualization and modern transportation-oriented planning weakened the neighborhood structure and consequently family ties.<sup>15</sup> Mardani(2015) classified the Islamic city from different perspectives (form, structure, content). Although the family is not directly addressed in the study, the content-oriented approach points to the importance of Islamic city design based on family privacy and social fabric.<sup>16</sup>

Pakseresht and Bassols (2020) identified the existence of traditional Islamic spatial codes in Iranian cities through historical analysis, emphasizing that family privacy is a fundamental

<sup>14</sup> Shahab o-din Naqizadeh - Javad Sadegh Saberi, "Reflecting to Explanation of Islamic City's Authentic Concept", *Journal of Civil Engineering and Urbanism*, 4/4 (2014), 378–381.

<sup>15</sup> Salama, "Urban Traditions in the Contemporary Lived Space of Cities in the Arabian Peninsula", 7–22.

<sup>16</sup> Seyedeh Zahra Mardani, "The Classification of Thinkers' Views in the Field of Studies of Islamic City", *The Monthly Scientific Journal of Bagh-e Nazar*, 12/35 (2015), 65-74.

element in urban planning.<sup>17</sup> Fard (2020) discussed the role of ritual spaces in the construction of social and religious identity in Islamic cities through conceptual analysis; the emphasis on family is addressed indirectly through collective worship and social rituals.<sup>18</sup> Göksoy-Sevinçli (2022) discussed the destructive effects of modernization on Islamic urban values through document analysis. It was stated that modern urbanization weakened privacy, community solidarity, and family structure.<sup>19</sup> Al Kuni and Refaat (2023) did not directly emphasize the family structure, but emphasized through a literature review that the preservation of space in Islamic cities is critical for the continuity of the social structure.<sup>20</sup> The literature review shows that religious and cultural values are at the basis of the socio-spatial organization of Islamic cities. However, these studies have mostly remained at the conceptual or historical level. Studies based on field data on the subject are limited. In this context, the research conducted specifically for Pervari offers an original and significant contribution to the literature in terms of examining the effects of the Islamic city concept on the spatial and cultural identities of families in small settlements today with field data.

## 2. Method

In this study, a qualitative research method is adopted to answer the question: How does the concept of an Islamic city affect the spatial and cultural position of the family in Pervari? Specifically, the research employs a qualitative case study design. A case study is an approach that facilitates an in-depth, multifaceted exploration of a complex issue in its real-world context.<sup>21</sup> This design was deemed most appropriate for this study as it allows for a holistic investigation of the positioning of the family within the bounded system of the Pervari district.

Qualitative research was preferred because it provides an in-depth understanding of social phenomena. In the study, semi-structured interviews allowed participants to express their experiences and opinions in a flexible manner. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in

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<sup>17</sup> Sahar Pakseresht- Manel Bassols, "From the so-called Islamic City to the Contemporary Urban Morphology: The Historic Core of Kermanshah City in Iran as a Case Study", In *24th ISUF International Conference, Valencia* (Vol. 27), (2020), 689-696.

<sup>18</sup> Abarghouei Fard, Hamideh, and Seyed Amir Mansouri, "Reviewing the Constituent Components of the Spatial Organization of Iranian City after Islam in the 9th–14th AH Travelogues", *Manzar, the Scientific Journal of Landscape* 13/55 (2021), 20-29.

<sup>19</sup> Göksoy Sevinçli, "Türkiye'de İslam Şehirlerinin Şehircilik Anlayışı ve Dönüşümü: Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu Örnekleri", 2.

<sup>20</sup> Al Kuni-H. Refaat, "Explanation of Urban Resilience Criteria in an Islamic City", *International Journal of Urban Management and Energy Sustainability* 5/1 (2023), 55–70.

<sup>21</sup> John Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (Sage publications, 2014).

locations convenient for the participants, such as their homes or workplaces. Each interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes. With the participants' permission, all interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accurate transcription, and supplementary field notes were taken by the researcher during and after the conversations. The semi-structured interview guide was organized around the main themes of the study, including questions about spatial order, the role of shared spaces, cultural identity, and the perceived impacts of modernization and globalization on family and community life.

Pervari's unique combination of geographical, social, and cultural characteristics makes it an ideal case study for revealing the effects of an Islamic city on the family. To enhance the transferability of the findings, this study provides a thick description of the research context. The selection of Pervari as the study site is justified by its unique position as a small-scale settlement in southeastern Türkiye that retains significant tangible and intangible elements of the traditional Islamic city model. This includes its mosque-centered neighborhood structure, privacy-oriented domestic architecture, and strong community ties that are increasingly encountering the transformative pressures of modernization. This specific socio-cultural context makes Pervari an information-rich case for exploring the research question in depth, and the detailed descriptions throughout the manuscript are intended to allow readers to assess the relevance of the findings to other settings.

The study group was defined as the adult population residing in the Pervari district. From this group, participants were selected using a purposive, maximum variation sampling strategy. This strategy, as noted by Creswell (2014), is ideal for exploring a central theme from diverse perspectives.<sup>22</sup> To achieve this variation, we purposefully distributed our sample across different settings representing the core tensions of the study: the Şakiran neighborhood (n=6) was selected as it most vividly illustrates the traditional urban fabric; the Aydın neighborhood (n=5) was chosen as a primary example of modernization's impact; and the Gazi and Kale neighborhoods in Beğendik town (n=3 each) were included to provide a comparative perspective. To further ensure a rich and multifaceted dataset, the selection also sought to include individuals from various social roles and professions within the community.

Participants were individuals who had been living in Pervari for at least 5 years, ensuring their capacity to observe the social and cultural dynamics of the region was reflected in the

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<sup>22</sup> Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*.

research. The study was conducted with 17 participants. A sample size of 17 participants was determined for this study, which follows within the range (15-25) proposed by Guest et al. as sufficient for achieving data saturation in qualitative research.<sup>23</sup>

The data, collected between January 1 and February 28, 2025, were analyzed using thematic analysis, a widely used qualitative method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning, or ‘themes,’ within data.<sup>24</sup> This process involved several stages: first, familiarizing ourselves with the data by reading through the transcripts multiple times; second, generating initial codes from the data; and third, searching for, reviewing, and naming the themes that emerged from these codes. The resulting themes, as presented in the findings section, directly address the research question concerning the family’s spatial and cultural positioning in the context of the Islamic city.

**Table 2.** Demographic data of participants

Category	Opinion/Judgment	Number	Percentage (%)
Educational Status	High school	4	23.53%
	Licence	9	52.94%
	Degree	4	23.53%
Age Groups	30-40	9	52.94%
	40-50	4	23.53%
	50-60	3	17.65%
	60+	1	5.88%
Life expectancy in Pervari	Born and bred	14	82.35%
	To a large extent	3	17.65%
Living Status of Family Members	Family members live in Pervari	11	64.71%
	Some of the family members are in Pervari	5	29.41%
	Few of the family members are in Pervari	1	5.88%

The participants have a high level of education, with an age range of 30-60+, and their spatial attachment is strong. Their family structures are closely related to the local space. This situation provides a strong sociological basis for understanding how the continuity of family and space is preserved in the Islamic city.

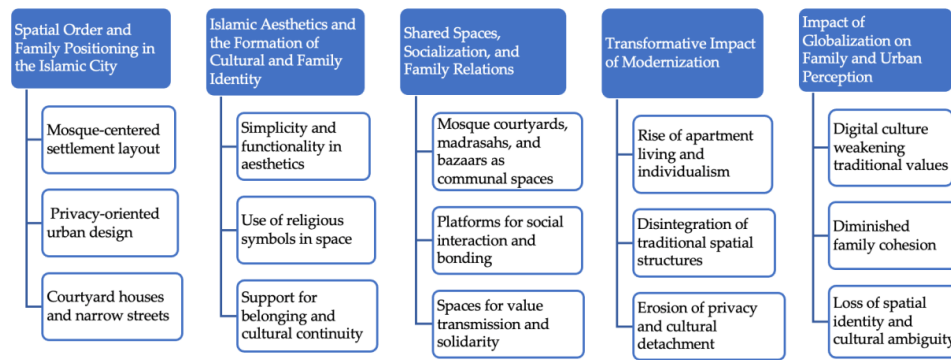
### 3. Findings and Discussion

This study employed a thematic analysis of the interview data to explore how the concept of the Islamic city influences the family's spatial and cultural positioning.

<sup>23</sup> Greg Guest at all, "How Many Interviews are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability", *Field methods* 18/1 (2006), 59-82.

<sup>24</sup> Virginia Braun-Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology", *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3/2 (2006), 77-101.

**Figure 1.** The positioning of the family in the Islamic city: research themes and main concerns



Each theme reflects the dynamic interaction between the city and family life, showing how the traditional Islamic city structure supports family values and how modernization and globalization have the potential to transform this structure.

### 3.1. Spatial Order and Family Perception in the Islamic City

In an Islamic city, the mosque is at the center of the spatial order. In the past, mosques were not only places of worship, but also had multi-faceted functions such as education, health, justice, and social assistance, but with modernism, mosques have lost their multi-functional aspect. The bazaar surrounding the mosque is the place of trade conducted with moral principles. Outside the bazaar, there are houses built with care for privacy. Houses protect family life from external influences and strengthen neighborly relations. Green areas in the city (Islamic gardens) are not only aesthetic; they also serve the function of contemplation, rest, and socialization. This entire structure is established within a moral and functional integrity that centers on the mosque.

These findings align with the work of AlSayyad(1991), who emphasizes that the spatial organization in Islamic cities is consciously shaped to support social relations and family privacy. AlSayyad emphasizes that the spatial organization in Islamic cities is consciously shaped to support social relations and family privacy.<sup>25</sup> The findings obtained in the Pervari example show that the mosque-centered settlement plan, narrow streets, and courtyard houses are decisive in protecting, privacy, and shaping family life.

“The mosque is in the center in every sense. The interiors of the houses, the number of rooms, the number of floors of the houses not exceeding one or two, the windows not facing each other, the narrow streets... all these were shaped according to the values of Islam.” (K4)

<sup>25</sup> AlSayyad, *Cities and Caliphs: On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism*, 13-33.

The expression clearly demonstrates that Islamic urban architecture is based on the principles of privacy and community. The spaces serve not only to shelter but also to convey value and protect religious sensitivities.

Similarly, the harmony of the spatial order in the city with the family structure is expressed as follows(K5):

“The rooms of the houses were accessed from the courtyard, couples had separate rooms, and extended family life was prevalent.”

The data reveal the intertwining between space and family structure. It is understood that the “introverted house architecture” frequently encountered in Islamic cities aims to protect the family within itself and to ensure privacy. Thus, while the spatial order indirectly directs the position of women in the public sphere, it also determines the boundaries of the family’s private space.

Contrary to modern urban planning approaches, in the Islamic urban understanding, architecture is not only a physical settlement but also a reflection of moral and social norms. Therefore, space becomes a “field of meaning” that carries the values of the family and society.

“The shape of the place should be in accordance with the principles of Islam. Then there will be order in the city, not just buildings.”(K14).

Indeed, the findings regarding the centrality of the mosque, the privacy order, and the plan of the houses are consistent with the Islamic city model in the literature. For example, Çelik (2012) and Belge (2023) emphasize that Islamic cities are built on the triad of “spirituality, belonging, and privacy” and that these three values directly shape the family structure.<sup>26,27</sup> Therefore, Pervari has historical and sociological value as a concrete reflection of the Islamic city concept.

### **3.2. The Impact of Islamic Urban Aesthetics on Familial and Cultural Identity**

The aesthetic structure of Islamic cities is not only a physical form, but also carries a deep meaning in terms of identity, belonging, and value<sup>28</sup> transfer. The interviews reveal that aesthetic elements—architecture, the use of natural materials, and symbolic layout—are practical in the construction of identity at both individual and familial levels.

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<sup>26</sup> Celaleddin Çelik, “İslam Şehri’nden Şehir İslamı’na: Tarihsel Tecrübeden Sosyolojik Pratiğe Şehrin Medeniyet Kodları”, *Milel ve Nihal* 9/3 (2014), 137-156.

<sup>27</sup> Rauf Belge, “Çıkmaz sokakların oluşumu: İslam ve Batı Şehirlerinin Mukayesesi”, *Mukaddime* 14/2 (2023), 199-226.

<sup>28</sup> Naqizadeh-Saberi, “Reflecting to Explanation of Islamic City’s Authentic Concept”, 378–381.

“The domes of mosques and tombs represent Tawhid, the unity of Allah. Islamic cities are simple and related to the transience of worldly life.”(K13)

The expression suggests a strong connection between aesthetics and faith; the city form is, in fact, the face of faith reflected in space. According to this understanding, the city is a spiritual ground in which the family grows, shapes its values, and reproduces itself. In an Islamic city, symbols also affect the family.

“Calligraphy, rumi and, palmette decorations are widely used in mosques. It is both aesthetic and educational.” (K8)

This statement emphasizes that aesthetics has an educational and moral function; the family’s and society’s understanding of beauty is shaped by these architectural symbols. It is also frequently stated that simple architecture and functionality are the result of a religious principle.

“Islam discouraged exaggeration. Houses were simple. There were water pools inside mosques for ablution. The aim was not to show off, but to address the need.” (K4)

The simple architectural approach is directly related to the modest lifestyle of families. Aesthetics here means not only beauty but also morality and consistency of identity. The modesty of houses and the fact that people live by purifying themselves of excesses support the formation of the family structure in a modest, solidaristic, and contented manner. In this context, aesthetics reinforces the family’s sense of visual and spatial belonging and ensures the sustainability of cultural identity. The fact that stone houses, earthen plasters, courtyards, and local motifs are still visible in areas such as the Şakiran Neighborhood demonstrates how deeply this identity is intertwined with space.

All these statements indicate that Islamic city aesthetics structure family identity not only formally but also morally and socially. It can be emphasized that the influence of architectural symbols on cultural identity and family structure in Islamic cities is simplicity and morality.

### **3.3. Contribution of Common Spaces to Family and Social Relations**

In the Islamic city concept, shared living spaces are not only places of worship; they are also vibrant areas of social interaction where social integration, cultural continuity, and family relations are nurtured. This finding is supported by the work of Salama(2015), who emphasizes the multifaceted structure of public spaces in traditional Islamic cities. Indeed,

Salama<sup>29</sup> emphasizes the multidimensional structure of public spaces in traditional Islamic cities. Common areas, such as mosques, madrasahs, and bazaars, are dynamic environments where families gather for worship and socialization and where intergenerational value transfer occurs.

“Mosques had not only religious but also social functions. Weddings, condolences, children’s education, and celebrations took place here.” (K7)

This statement reveals that mosques are not only places of worship; but also places of socialization and solidarity where families participate collectively. Families who gather around mosques, especially during Eid prayers or holy nights, both engage in religious practices and strengthen their social bonds in these areas. Similarly, the multifaceted structure of madrasahs is also emphasized:

“Madrasah teachers would resolve family disputes and treat patients. In other words, the madrasah was a counseling center.”(K16)

The expression shows that Islamic places play a guiding role in family matters and have essential functions that strengthen family ties in this respect. Not only religious buildings, but also public green spaces, coffeehouses, streets, and mosque courtyards are elements that support the social context of the family.

“There were tea houses and shops around the mosque. After prayers, conversations, shopping... Life was there.”(K12)

The statement reveals that the space functions as a multi-purpose social center. Experiences such as women gathering in courtyards and in front of houses and children growing up playing in mosque gardens show how common spaces are decisive in the social and familial organization of the Islamic city.

In Islamic cities, common spaces play a vital role as carriers of community spirit, family ties, and social order. However, interviews indicate that these spaces have lost mainly their vitality today. Most participants state that family relations, which were once shaped around mosques and madrasahs, have weakened today due to factors such as digitalization, migration, and individualization. It is thought that this transformation will weaken the unifying role of city spaces within families.

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<sup>29</sup> Salama, *Urban Traditions in the Contemporary Lived Space of Cities in the Arabian Peninsula*, 7-22.

### 3.4. The Impact of Modernization on the Perception of Family and Islamic City

Modernization leads to radical transformations in the physical fabric of cities as well as in social and family organizations. The interviews clearly reveal that elements such as privacy, neighborhood, social unity, and belonging, which are at the center of the Islamic city concept, have weakened due to modern construction and lifestyles.

“Neighborhood culture is gradually weakening. There is no privacy left. Housing does not bring people together, it separates them.”(K15)

It is understood from the expression that social ties are transforming. With the disintegration of the neighborhood fabric, the family structure also faces risks such as isolation, individualization, and loss of contact. The situation points to a modern city structure that contradicts the basic principles of the Islamic city understanding. A participant’s statement regarding the impact of modernization on the cultural structure is as follows:

“Crafts have disappeared, religious habits have diminished, modern life has closed individuals in.”(K9)

The expression indicates that modernization is a process that leads to the loss of meaning. In this context, the city is no longer a carrier of values, but a pragmatic and identity-less area. Considering that identity is the totality of answers given to the question of who you are and who you are from, it can be said that loss of identity<sup>30</sup> is a serious problem that can cause the loss of family values.

Another participant explains the motivation behind modern construction as follows:

“Multi-storey reinforced concrete buildings built in the Aydin district are generally for commercial purposes. They have nothing to do with cultural codes.”(K5)

The statement reveals that the understanding that reduces the city and housing to a commercial commodity also has a negative impact on family life. The increasing alienation in multi-storey buildings, the weakening of neighbourly ties, and the absence of common areas restrict the areas where families can spend time together; thus, the principle of “unity” at the centre of the Islamic city vision is disrupted. K10, who uses the expression;

“Unplanned, devoid of aesthetics, soulless”

For modern buildings, it attributes the disappearance of spatial aesthetics specific to Islamic cities to the extinction of the spiritual climate and loss of identity.

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<sup>30</sup> Bozkurt Güvenç, *Türk Kimliği: Türk Tarihinin Kültür Kaynakları*, (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2003), 3.

These findings are consistent with the literature. Zayyad and Sinclair (2017)<sup>31</sup> and Saliba (2016)<sup>32</sup> emphasize the identity crises, spatial alienation, and belonging problems experienced by Muslim societies due to the influence of modernism. Göksoy Sevinçli (2022)<sup>33</sup> states that modern urban development processes have seriously eroded the traditional Islamic city fabric and the family structure at its center. The Pervari example also shows that modernization has led to disintegration in the local family structure in terms of language, behavior, and lifestyle.

The modernization process erodes the physical and social codes of the Islamic city concept in cities with traditional identities, such as Pervari; it transforms the family spatially and socially. Apartmentization, individualization, and the dissolution of family ties are seen as consequences of modernization.

### 3.5. The Change of Islamic City Spaces in the Globalization Process

Globalization has a direct impact on local cultural textures as well as religious places and the family structures that are shaped around these places. The interviews reveal that the symbols and lifestyles associated with the Islamic city concept are beginning to dissolve, along with global values, media representations, and economic imperatives. This transformation has been expressed strikingly(K3):

“People are no longer looking for solutions to their problems in mosques, but on the internet.”

The expression reveals not only a behavioral change but also a shift from a faith-centered lifestyle to an individualistic, pragmatic one. While the function of traditional places of faith, such as mosques and, is weakening, digital environments are becoming areas of individual reference.

Another participant describes the impact of globalization on spatial practices as follows:

“Mayors go abroad and implement projects they see in Pervari. But this is against the spirit of the city.”(K2)

The statement shows that shaping urban planning according to universal norms produces results that are incompatible with local family structure and religious sensitivities. Another critical effect of globalization is the break in the transfer of values between generations.

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<sup>31</sup> Sabeen bin Zayyad-Brian R. Sinclair, “Culture, Context + Environmental Design: Reconsidering Vernacular in Modern Islamic Urbanism”, *Urban Design in the Arab World: Re-conceptualizing Boundaries*, ed. Robert Saliba (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), 337-352.

<sup>32</sup> Robert Saliba, *Urban Design in the Arab World: Reconceptualizing Boundaries* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>33</sup> Göksoy Sevinçli, “Türkiye’de İslam Şehirlerinin Şehircilik Anlayışı ve Dönüşümü: Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu Örnekleri”, 2.

“Cultural decay is slower but noticeable. Children forget traditions, and families are unable to intervene.” (K9)

Degeneration is observed not only in behavioral but also in spatial context. The replacement of old mosque courtyards, neighborhood coffee shops, and madrasah gardens with anonymous, multi-purpose but unidentified spaces leads to the loss of areas where families spend time together and transfer values. The participant’s statement summarizes the situation:

“If we cannot protect our cultural heritage, the concept of an Islamic city will disappear day by day.” (K5)

The expression shows that the process of globalization not only brings about cultural diversity and technical development but also has a weakening effect on the Islamic perception of space, community awareness, and family ties.

The life forms introduced by globalization are reshaping space, belonging, and family relations in settlement areas that bear the identity of an Islamic city, causing this disintegration in family identity and fractures in the sense of belonging. It should also be taken into account that all of these developments are happening rapidly due to the effects of digitalization. Pervari is an example that both resists and is affected by this transformation.

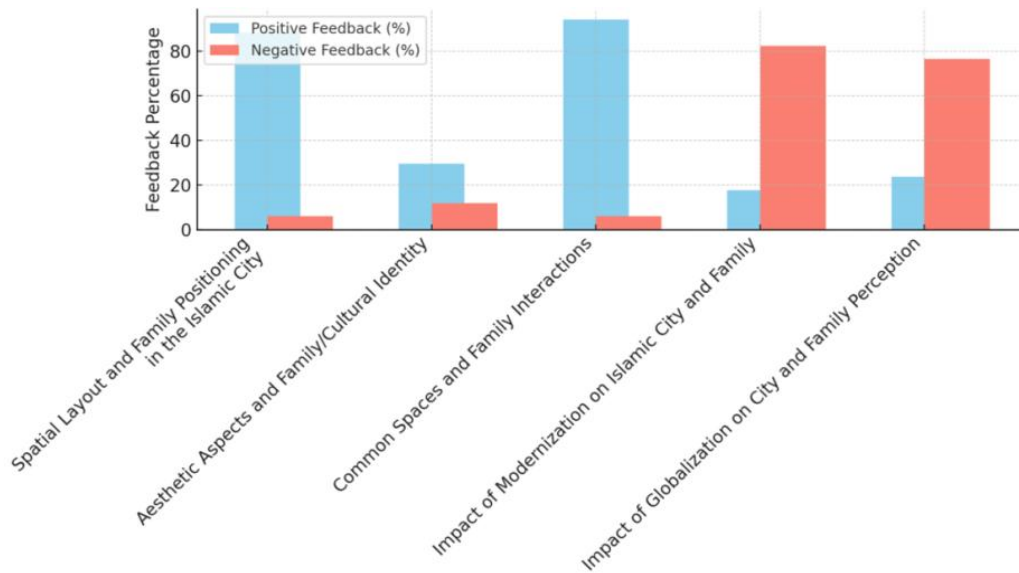
**Table 3.** Distribution of thematic findings

Theme	View / Interpretation	N	%
Spatial Organization and Family Structure in the Islamic City	Islamic values are most visibly reflected in urban settings that emphasize privacy, modesty, and moral integrity. These settings typically feature courtyard houses, inward-facing architecture, and narrow streets that act as spatial extensions of communal ethics.	15	88.24%
	Cities in which religious institutions are central are perceived as spaces where prayer, education, and social life converge, forming a cohesive and spiritually oriented environment for family life.	1	5.88%
Islamic Aesthetics and the Formation of Familial and Cultural Identity	Cities rooted in Islamic principles are characterized by architectural moderation, avoiding extravagance while cultivating a sense of spiritual and visual harmony. Ornamentation is symbolic, often reinforcing ethical norms and family cohesion.	5	29.41%
Public Spaces, Socialization, and Family Bonds	Courtyards of mosques, madrasahs, and city squares serve as central venues for religious gatherings and intergenerational interaction. These places foster strong communal ties through shared rituals like celebrations, condolences, and festive events.	16	94.12%
	Although symbolic structures such as mosques remain, their function as active social hubs has diminished. Contemporary uses of these spaces often fall short of supporting collective family engagement.	1	5.88%
Modernization and Its Transformative Effects on Islamic Urban Life and Family	Participants widely expressed concern that urban planning has shifted away from Islamic principles, favoring commercial interests over community cohesion. Apartment living, individualism, and loss of neighborhood intimacy were cited as factors weakening familial and spiritual bonds.	14	82.35%
	A minority of participants noted that modernization—if carefully managed—can align with Islamic spatial values. They emphasized increased comfort, improved public amenities, and inclusive planning that supports women and children, potentially enriching contemporary Islamic cities.	3	17.65%
Globalization and Changing Perceptions of Family and City Life	Participants frequently reported a breakdown of traditional authority and neighborhood ties due to digital influences and cultural imports. Family members are increasingly isolated, and Islamic urban identity is perceived as fading beneath global consumerism.	13	76.47%
	Some participants viewed technological advancements as opportunities to renew religious practice and family values through digital means. They argued that the issue is not modernization itself, but how it is harnessed within Islamic ethical frameworks.	4	23.53%

The findings show that the Islamic urban understanding in Pervari is still strongly preserved in spatial and cultural terms; however, modernization and globalization processes have led to certain disintegrations in family structure and urban identity.

Participants emphasized that common spaces and aesthetic, in particular, play a key role in supporting the family structure, and that modernization and globalization present dynamics that both threaten this structure and can support it when managed correctly.

**Figure 2.** Participant Feedback Distribution



The figure displays the positive/negative feedback rates provided by participants on various themes related to the Islamic city and family structure. The graph reveals striking differences and distinct trends between the themes. The theme “Spatial Order and Positioning of the Family in the Islamic City” received a high rate of positive feedback from the participants (88.24%). This finding suggests that the spatial organization of the Islamic city model remains suitable for contemporary family structures. A high rate of positive feedback (94.12%) is also seen in the theme “Common Spaces, Socialization and Family Relations”. This shows that public spaces such as mosque courtyards, madrasahs, and bazaars still maintain both their religious and social functions and continue to strengthen family ties. The theme “Islamic City Aesthetics and the Formation of Cultural and Familial Identity” draws attention with a lower rate of positive feedback (29.41%). This result shows that traditional Islamic city aesthetics (architectural simplicity, religious symbols, moderate ornamentation, etc.) have partially weakened in the modern period, and their influence on family structure has decreased.

A clear negative trend was observed in the themes of modernization and globalization. Quantitative feedback indicated a high rate of negative responses regarding “The Transformative Effect of Modernization on the Islamic City and Family” (82.35%) and “The Effect of Globalization on the Perception of Family and City” (76.47%). These findings show a strong perception among participants that processes such as apartmentization, individualization, and digitalization weaken the traditional functions of the Islamic city and family relations. However, a notable nuance also emerged from the data: in both themes, a minority of participants emphasized that these changes could be managed constructively if

digital tools were directed correctly. This reveals a tendency towards selective adaptation rather than a complete rejection of change.

The strong negative perception of modernization's impact provides empirical, ground-level evidence for the arguments made by a range of scholars. The participants' concerns about the erosion of family ties and community solidarity align with the work of Göksoy-Sevinçli (2022) and Salama (2015). The sense of spatial alienation resonates with the identity crises documented by Zayyad and Sinclair (2017) and Saliba (2016). Furthermore, the shift towards individualized housing aligns with the findings of Hammad et al., who noted that contemporary housing forms can undermine community spirit. More significantly, however, the finding of a "selective adaptation tendency" introduces a critical nuance to this discussion. It suggests that residents are not merely passive victims of modernization but are active agents seeking to negotiate its terms. This notion of active negotiation resonates with recent scholarship on urban resilience and sustainability in Islamic cities, where the focus is shifting towards understanding how communities can preserve their core social structures while adapting to new realities.<sup>34</sup> This points to a community's resilient effort to forge a third way between wholesale rejection and uncritical acceptance, a key consideration for contemporary urban planning in culturally sensitive contexts.

## Conclusion

This study has demonstrated, through the example of Pervari, that the Islamic city model is not merely a historical relic but continues to serve as a living framework that shapes the spatial and cultural positioning of the family. The main finding of the study is that it reveals the deep tension between traditional spatial organization and modern dynamics. It has been determined that Islamic city codes, such as mosque-centered settlements, courtyard houses that protect privacy, and common socializing areas, still strongly support family ties and social solidarity. This structure both keeps the family in a protected private space and includes it in public life with spiritual and social integrity.

However, the study also shows that this deep-rooted structure is at serious risk of erosion in the face of processes such as apartmentization, individualization, and cultural alienation brought about by modernization and globalization. The findings extend beyond a simple "collapse of tradition" narrative and point to a more nuanced situation: one of the most striking results of the study is the hopeful expectation that participants do not see

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<sup>34</sup> Al Kuni-H. Refaat, "Explanation of Urban Resilience Criteria in an Islamic City", 55-70.

modernization and globalization as an absolute threat, but that these processes can serve Islamic values when directed correctly. This situation is of critical importance in terms of showing the potential for a dynamic "selective adaptation" that can adapt itself to time, rather than a static model.

In this context, the results of the study have important implications for urban planning and cultural policies. The findings emphasize the importance of integrating local cultural codes and family structure-specific needs into planning processes, alongside universal standards. Cities should not be designed as commodities to be consumed, but as living spaces that foster a sense of belonging and preserve a spiritual atmosphere. In particular, the principle of privacy should not be overlooked in modern residential architecture, and the transformation brought about by digitalization should be managed in a way that preserves cultural memory and strengthens family ties, which stand out as the basic conditions for this sustainability.

Although this research provides in-depth data specifically for Pervari as a small-scale reflection of the classical Islamic city model, it is a critical necessity to conduct similar studies in different geographies to explore the transferability of these findings to other contexts. Future studies can make a broader contribution to the literature by addressing the evolution of the Islamic city and family relationship in the 21st century from a comparative perspective.

<b>Article Type / Makale Türü</b>	Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi
<b>Peer-Review / Değerlendirme</b>	Double anonymized – At Least Two External / Çift Taraflı Körleme - En Az İki Dış Hakem Bu çalışmanın saha araştırması Bitlis Eren Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulunun 2024/05-1 ve E.6591 sayılı kararıyla uygun görülmüştür. Elde edilen veriler etik kurul izni kapsamında toplanmıştır. Ayrıca literatür taraması ve yayımlanmış kaynaklardan faydalanılmıştır. Çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere riayet edildiği ve yararlanılan tüm kaynakların eksiksiz biçimde kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.
<b>Ethical Statement / Etik Beyan</b>	The field research for this study was approved by the Bitlis Eren University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, with decision number 2024/05-1 and E.6591. The data obtained were collected under the ethics committee's approval. Additionally, literature reviews and published files were utilized. It is hereby declared that scientific and ethical principles were adhered to throughout the preparation of the study, and all referenced works have been duly cited in the bibliography.
<b>Plagiarism Checks / Benzerlik Taraması</b>	Yes / Evet – Turnitin.
<b>Conflicts of Interest / Çıkar Çatışması</b>	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare. / Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.
<b>Complaints / Etik Beyan Adresi</b>	<a href="mailto:suifdergi@gmail.com">suifdergi@gmail.com</a>
<b>Grant Support / Finansman</b>	The author(s) acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research./ Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.
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(Yapay Zekâ Kullanımına Dair Yazar Taahhütnamesi)

The author has declared adherence to the principles of transparency, ethical compliance, originality, and responsibility in the use of artificial intelligence tools. They have affirmed that such usage complies with ethical standards and have undertaken full academic responsibility for it. Final revisions and checks for academic compliance were carried out by the author, who assumes full responsibility for the resulting text. The signed original copy of the document is available in the journal's editorial process files. / Yazar, yapay zekâ araçlarının kullanımına ilişkin şeffaflık, etik uygunluk, orijinallik ve sorumluluk ilkelerine riayet ettiğini beyan etmiş, bu kullanımın etik ilkelere uygun olmasını ve tüm akademik sorumluluğu üstlendiğini taahhüt etmiştir. Nihai düzenlemeler ve akademik uygunluk kontrolleri yazar tarafından gerçekleştirilmiş olup, ortaya çıkan metnin tüm sorumluluğu yazara aittir. Belgenin imzalı asıl nüshası dergi süreç dosyalarında mevcuttur.

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