

Harmony and Heritage: A Comparative Analysis of Religious, Social, and Cultural Celebrations at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and the Al-Shorta Mosque in Egypt

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ABSTRACT:

This study explores the complex dynamics of celebration in these two well-known mosques. Our main goal is to provide a thorough comparative study, investigating the connections between religious rituals, social gatherings, and cultural celebrations in these various religious settings. By utilizing a mixed-methods approach that includes questionnaires, interviews, and on-site observations, we want to identify distinctive trends and variances in the festivities that take place at the Al-Shorta and Sayyida Nafisa mosques. According to preliminary results, these mosque communities' identities are shaped by a variety of religious rites, social interactions, and cultural events. This study adds to our knowledge of the crucial role mosques play in community dynamics and has implications for promoting harmony and protecting cultural heritage. By comparing and contrasting the two, the research seeks to shed light on how these festivals affect social cohesiveness and cultural preservation. By recognizing the importance of religious, social, and cultural factors, this study aims to improve the conversation about community life that revolves around mosques. Our findings may influence research in the future, direct community development programs, and foster cross-cultural understanding, underscoring the significance of these festivities in forming the cohesiveness and cultural legacy of Egyptian mosque communities.

Keywords:

Religious Practices, Religious Celebrations, Social Celebrations, Community Engagement, Cultural Celebrations, Community Development.

1. Introduction

The study explores how religious, social, and cultural festivals at two prominent mosques in Egypt reveal the complex cultural tapestry and communal dynamics. The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and the Al-Shorta Mosque are important hubs for shaping and conserving the cultural and religious identities of their respective communities. By comparing and contrasting religious, social, and cultural festivities, this analysis aims to reveal the commonalities and distinctive ways that religion is expressed in these hallowed places.

The Sayyida Nafisa and Al-Shorta Mosques offer a fascinating context for comprehending the harmony and cultural legacy that characterize the surrounding towns. The project intends to provide insights into the complex interactions between religious observances, social interactions, and cultural expressions by analyzing and comparing the celebrations held at various mosques. Examining these festivities in the context of both mosques offers a chance to recognize the importance of these cultural customs in building harmony, protecting legacy, and advancing a common sense of identity. The research will shed light on the complex interactions that exist between the mosques, the community, and the larger cultural setting, providing a more profound comprehension of the dynamic interaction between tradition and contemporary religious expressions.

The research aims to contribute to the wider body of knowledge on community dynamics, religious studies, and cultural heritage through this comparative approach. The study intends to provide useful insights into the rich and linked fabric of Egyptian society, where harmony and heritage intersect in the center of religious and cultural traditions, by dissecting the intricate details of celebrations at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and the Al-Shorta Mosque.

1.1 Research objective

The main objective is to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of religious, social, and cultural celebrations at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and the Al-Shorta Mosque. To identify similarities and differences in practices, traditions, and community dynamics. ensuring a systematic exploration of religious, social, and cultural celebrations at the selected mosques and facilitating a nuanced comparative analysis Specific Objectives can be organized into several sections as follows:

A. Interconnected Analysis: To identify and analyze the interconnectedness of religious, social, and cultural celebrations at both mosques. To explore how religious practices influence social and cultural dynamics. To investigate the role of cultural heritage in shaping religious and social interactions.

B. Community Perspectives: To gather and compare community perspectives on the significance of celebrations at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and the Al-Shorta Mosque. To explore community members' perceptions of the impact of celebrations on their lives. To investigate the level of community participation and satisfaction.

C. Harmony and Heritage Impact: To assess the overall impact of religious, social, and cultural celebrations on fostering harmony and preserving heritage within the mosque communities. To examine how these celebrations contribute to a sense of unity and inclusivity. To evaluate the effectiveness of the mosques in preserving cultural heritage.

1.2 Research Method:

This methodology will guide the systematic investigation of religious, social, and cultural celebrations at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and the Al-Shorta Mosque, providing a robust framework for gathering and analyzing valuable insights that can be organized into the following key sections:

1- Research Design: Selection of a comparative research design to analyze religious, social, and cultural celebrations at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and the Al-Shorta Mosque.

2-Data Collection Methods: a. Interviews: Development of interview questions focusing on religious, social, and cultural celebrations. Conducting one-on-one interviews with key informants and community members.

b. Surveys: Designing surveys to collect quantitative data on participants' experiences and perceptions and distributing surveys to a representative sample of mosque attendees.

c. Observations: On-site observations during religious, social, and cultural events to capture qualitative insights. Development of an observation protocol to systematically record details.

3- Data Analysis: a. Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis of qualitative data from interviews and observations. It is identifying patterns, themes, and cultural nuances.

b. Quantitative Analysis: Statistical analysis of survey data to derive quantitative insights. Using appropriate statistical tools to interpret numerical findings.

2. Literature Review

Dr Ahmed Mohamed Said Elsaadany's research in (April 2019) delves into a comprehensive exploration of the evolving roles and sustainable perspectives of mosques within the dynamic context of the past, present, and future. This study offers critical insights into the multifaceted nature of these religious and cultural institutions, considering their historical significance, contemporary relevance, and potential contributions to a sustainable future in urban environments [Elsaadany. A.M,2019].

Dr. Ahmed Hosney Radwan's research aims to analyze the architectural and urban design of contemporary mosques in the Islamic city context, with a specific focus on their role as public spaces. The research aims to understand how these modern mosques not only serve as places of religious worship but also act as dynamic hubs for social and community activities within the urban landscape. It seeks to shed light on the evolving nature of mosques in contemporary Islamic cities and their influence on public life. It deals with investigates the architectural and urban design of modern mosques in Islamic cities. This study highlights the transformative role of mosques as public spaces, going beyond their traditional religious function. The research delves into contemporary examples, examining how these mosques have become centers of social and community engagement, fostering a sense of belonging and interaction within the urban environment. By analyzing architectural and urban design elements, the study provides valuable insights into the changing dynamics of public spaces in Islamic cities, with mosques serving as important contributors to the communal and social fabric of these urban areas [Radwan. A.H, 2021].

Dr. Mona Helmy's research is to provide a critical perspective on mosque architecture within contemporary popular cultures. This research aims to explore how mosque architecture is portrayed and interpreted in various cultural contexts, shedding light on its representation, symbolism, and significance in a globalized world. By analyzing the intersection of mosque architecture and popular culture, the research seeks to better understand the evolving role and perception of mosques in the modern world. The research, presented at the Third International Conference of Mosque Architecture, offers a critical examination of mosque architecture in contemporary popular cultures. This study delves into how mosque architecture is perceived and represented in various cultural contexts, emphasizing its symbolism, interpretation, and relevance in a globalized society. By scrutinizing the intersection of

mosque architecture and popular culture, the research provides insights into the changing role and perception of mosques in the modern world. It contributes to a broader understanding of the cultural dynamics that shape the contemporary discourse surrounding mosque architecture [Helmy. M, 2022].

In "A Study of Al-Sayeda Zainab Mosque Impact on the Place Identity", the research explores the influence of Al-Sayeda Zainab Mosque on the identity of its surrounding place. The research investigates how this mosque shapes and contributes to the identity of its immediate environment. While a detailed summary is not available without the full paper, this study likely explores the architectural, cultural, and social aspects of the mosque, and how these elements interact with the local context to shape and define the identity of the place in which it is situated. This research contributes to our understanding of the multifaceted role that mosques play in shaping the identity of the communities and spaces in which they are located [Abouaiana. A, & Hasan. A, 2010].

The objective of Dina. K. Research-based urban design proposal for al-Sayeda Aisha Market Area," is to create a comprehensive urban design proposal for the historic al-Sayeda Aisha Market area in Cairo, Egypt. This project aims to revitalize and reintegrate this historically significant neighborhood, ensuring it aligns with contemporary urban standards while preserving its cultural heritage and fostering community engagement [Dina . K, 2016].



Fig.(1, A) [www.elhosary.com.]



Fig. (1, B) [www.healtheg.com]



Fig. (1, C) [www.foursquare.com]



Fig. (1, D) [www.arabcont.com].

Fig.1: Pictures showing: A. The Orphan Care Home in Al-Husri Mosque, B. The Medical Clinics in Mustafa Mahmoud Mosque, C. The Events House in Al-Shorta Mosque, and D. El Mosheer Tantawi Mosque.

3. CASE STUDY: The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque

The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque, located in Cairo, Egypt, is a historically significant religious and architectural landmark. It features various elements typical of Islamic Mosque design and is known for housing the shrine of Sayyida Nafisa, a prominent figure in Islamic history. Sayyida Nafisa is a descendant of Prophet Muhammad, and her shrine within the mosque is a site of great religious and cultural significance.



Fig2: A. Map Showing the Location of The Sayyida Nafisa of Mosque [Author].

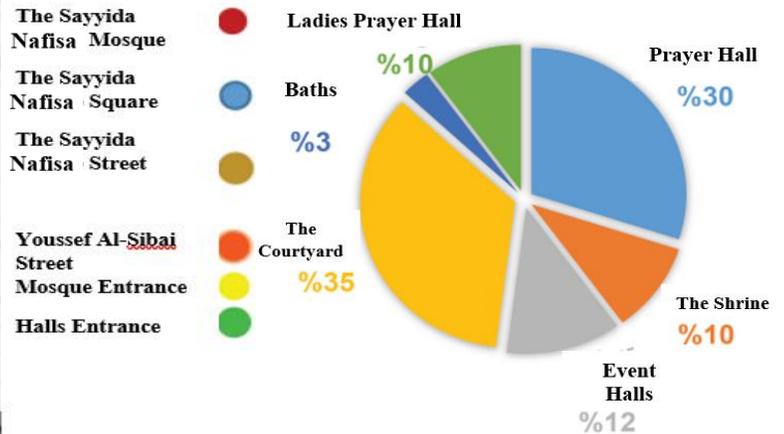
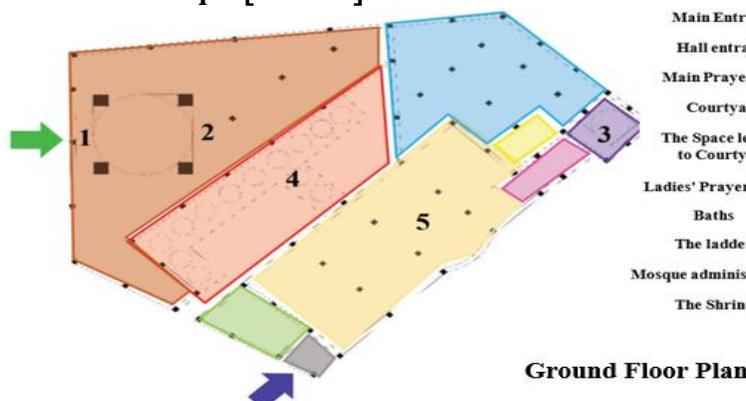
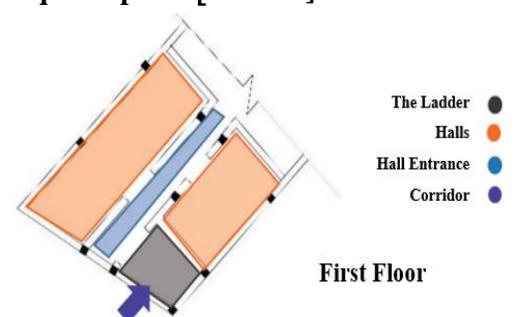


Fig 2: B Diagram Showing the Percentage the Mosque's Spaces [Author].



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor

Fig.3 Ground floor, and First Floor Plans for The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque, and The Main Entrance [Author]



Fig.4A: 3. The Shrine

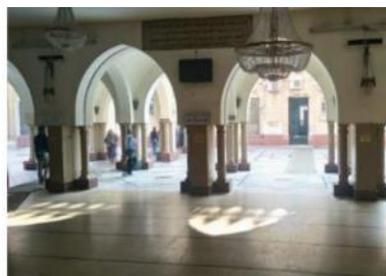


Fig.4B: 2. The Space leading to the Courtyard



Fig. 4.C: 1.The Main Entrance.



Fig.4D: 5. The Mosque's Main Prayer Hall



Fig.4E: 4. the Courtyard

Fig. 4: The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque Components [www.arabcont.com].

3.1 The Religious Activities at the Sayyida Nafisa Mosque

Especially for Sunni Muslims, Cairo, Egypt's Sayyida Nafisa Mosque is a revered religious and cultural monument. It is devoted to Sayyida Nafisa, who is said to be a Prophet Muhammad descendent. The following religious events are held in the Sayyida Nafisa Mosque as in Fig. 5,6 [O'Kane. B, 2017]:

-Daily Prayers: Local worshipers gather at the mosque for their daily congregational prayers. This is where Muslims congregate to offer their five daily prayers.

-Friday Prayers, also known as Jumu'ah: Are a unique type of communal prayer that starts at midday. A greater crowd attends the Friday teachings and prayers at the mosque.

-Religious Lectures and Classes: The mosque frequently offers educational events such as classes on Islamic law (fiqh), religious lectures, and classes on reciting the Quran.

-Unique Islamic Events: Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, which commemorate the conclusion of Ramadan and the yearly Hajj journey, respectively, are two examples of unique Islamic events that are celebrated at the mosque.

-Gatherings of the Remembrance of God (Hadhra): Are held on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for all various religious communities as (Rifa'i, Shadhiliyya, and Salihyya)

-Interfaith Dialogues: Sayyida Nafisa is one mosque that takes part in these discussions, which aim to foster mutual respect and collaboration amongst various religious communities.

-Mawlid Celebrations: On Sayyida Nafisa's birthday (Mawlid), there may be special festivities that include sermons, prayers, and social meetings. Egypt is famous for religious singing (dhikr gatherings), This happens on the 27 of December when the streets and mosques are decorated with lamps [Hawash. H, 2016].



Fig. 5: The Religious Activities Inside the Sayyida Nafisa Mosque [www.youm7.com].



Fig. 6: The Aspects of Celebrating with Mawlid in Sayyida Nafisa Mosque [www.youm7.com].

3.2 Social Activities in Sayyida Nafisa Mosque

The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque in addition to being the center of religious activities, also plays a vital role in a variety of social events that are integral to the community's culture. Funerals and marriage ceremonies are two of these particularly important events and highlight the mosque's function as a hub for the community. The attendees of the mosque benefit greatly from these social events in terms of developing a sense of community and a shared identity. Social activities take place in halls separate from the mosque on the first floor and have a separate administration from the mosque administration. The marriage ceremony causes some crowding in the square. Couples may go to visit the shrine and seek blessings from it [Yeomans. R, 2006].

1. Funerals:

Cultural Significance: Funerals hold a special place in the community, representing a time for mourning, reflection, and communal support. They provide an opportunity for the mosque to extend compassion and provide psychological support to the family of the deceased as in Fig.7.

Religious Observances: Sayyida Nafisa Mosque becomes a space for religious rituals and prayers, offering a sacred environment for the farewell of departed souls. The mosque community comes together to offer condolences and support to the family of the deceased.

2. Marriage Ceremonies:

Celebratory Atmosphere: Sayyida Nafisa Mosque marriage weddings are lively, happy events that unite families and the community in celebration. The mosque emphasizes the sacredness of marriage in Islamic traditions by providing a hallowed backdrop for couples to be united as in Fig. 8.

Religious Blessings: Religious rites, prayers, and the recitation of passages from the Quran are frequently included in marriage ceremonies. The spiritual atmosphere of the mosque signifies the significance of faith in married bonds and gives a significant dimension to the ceremonies of marriage.

۴. Community Dynamics:

Social Cohesion: The community's social relationships are strengthened as a result of these social activities. Funerals and marriage ceremonies turn into events when people gather together to celebrate life's major turning points as well as to share moments of joy or sadness [Ayyad. E, 2014].

Continuity Across Generations: During these gatherings, the mosque acts as a link between the generations, encouraging a sense of continuity and transferring religious and cultural traditions from one to the next.

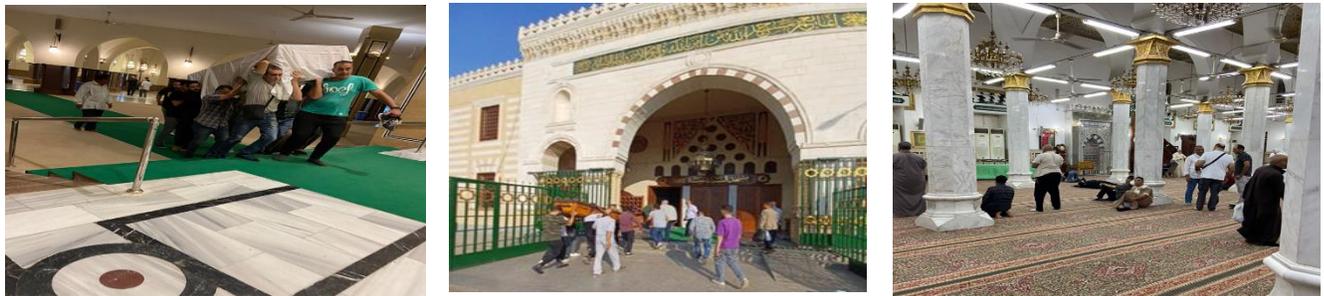


Fig 7. Funeral Ceremonies in The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque [Author].



Fig 8. The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque Marriage Ceremonies Halls [Author]

3.3 The Impact of Activities on the Urban Space of Sayyida Nafisa Mosque

Due to religious activities, the Sayyida Nafisa Mosque has a big influence on the surrounding metropolitan area. affecting the neighborhood's communal life, transportation, business, and the city's cultural character in the following ways:

-Traffic & Congestion: The mosque sees many worshipers during prayer hours, particularly on Fridays. Increased traffic and congestion in the nearby streets and communities may result. On Mawlid Celebrations days, the square is closed to car traffic using barriers as in Fig.9. Were celebrations take place in the outdoor square and are very crowded due to the gathering of a huge number there. Each method organizes its halls and services to provide food to the people, recite the Qur'an, and religious chanting, creating a different and influential atmosphere [Nourhan M. I, 2018].

-Noise and Soundscape: Religious events and the call to prayer produce noises that are absorbed into the urban environment. This acoustic element strengthens the neighborhood's cultural and religious identity.

-Identity and Landmark: The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque contributes to the local identity of the city by being a landmark and point of reference.

-Travel and Pilgrimage: Due to the mosque's religious significance, pilgrims and tourists are drawn to it. As a result, services associated with tourism, such as lodging, dining, and retail establishments, may grow. All religious communities celebrate in the square, and the square is filled with people, and street vendors spread because of the extreme liveliness that characterizes the square [Dina K., 2014].



Fig 9. Sayyida Nafisa Square is Closed to Car Traffic Using Barriers on Mawlid Celebrations [O'Kane. B, 2017].

3.4 The Activities and Economic Aspects at the Sayyida Nafisa Mosque

First: Religious activity: Different groups of people, regardless of their cultures and backgrounds, flock to the mosque, especially during Mawlid Celebrations. Due to its religious value, it contains the shrine of Mrs. Nafisa for blessing.

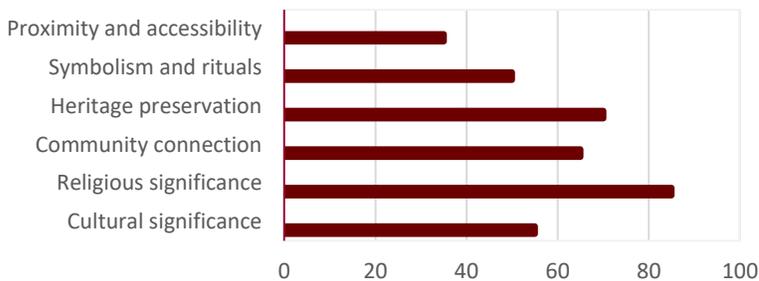
Second: Social activity: There are halls designated for celebrations outside the mosque that can accommodate 50 to 100 people. Its prices are suitable for the middle class and the limited income group, as the cost of booking the hall is 200 pounds for an hour and a quarter, outside of the auditor's account, which is a low price compared to the rest of the hall's prices [Sayid. S & Şalāh al-Din. A, 2021].

3.5 Survey

As part of enhancing the overall experience at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque, we are conducting a comprehensive survey to gather insights into the various activities held at the mosque. This survey aims to understand the reasons behind engaging and the preferences of individuals who actively participate in these activities at this mosque. We collect responses from approximately 120 individuals who are regular participants in activities at Sayyida Nafisa Mosque. By obtaining diverse perspectives to gain a holistic understanding of the community's engagement with the mosque activities.



Why do you prefer Sayyida Nafisa Mosque for participating in social activities



Reasons For Visiting the Mosque

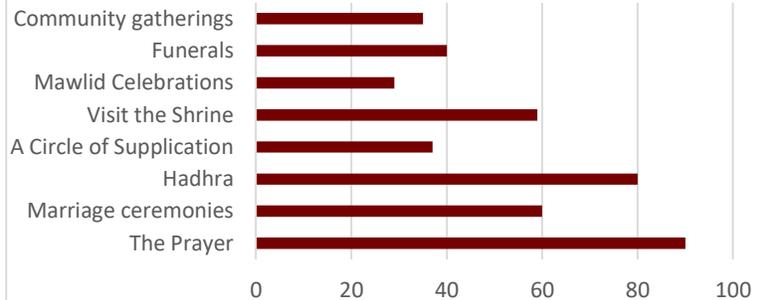


Fig.10. Samples of Survey Results [Author]

3.6 Reason for Preference Activities at the Sayyida Nafisa Mosque

The decision to hold events in Sayyida Nafisa Mosque stems from a combination of community-focused, religious, and cultural factors. In addition to being a site of prayer, the mosque is an important communal hub that helps its patrons maintain and shape their religious and cultural identities. Several reasons contribute to the choice of this particular mosque for various social activities:

-Cultural Significance: Because of the historical and cultural value of the site, families pick this mosque for events like marriage ceremonies and funerals as a symbol of heritage and tradition.

-Religious Significance: The mosque has spiritual significance and serves as a place of prayer. The decision to have events at the mosque is in line with incorporating religious themes into significant life events.

-Community Connection: The Sayyida Nafisa Mosque serves as the neighborhood's focal point. Families want to gather socially there to deepen their relationships with the community and celebrate important life events with other believers.

-Heritage Preservation: The mosque has a role in the transmission of religious and cultural traditions. Sayyida Nafisa Mosque is an excellent choice for events since it demonstrates a dedication to preserving cultural heritage and carrying on long-standing customs. The hall reservation prices are reasonable and low compared to hall prices anywhere [Saker. A, 2023].

-Symbolism and Rituals: carrying out certain customs and rituals related to social interactions. With its unique architectural and spiritual features, Sayyida Nafisa Mosque might be chosen because it can accommodate particular religious and cultural practices.

-Proximity and Accessibility: The mosque's location and accessibility where it is located in a lively and easily accessible area. The mosque becomes an obvious choice for social functions if it is conveniently positioned for a particular neighborhood.

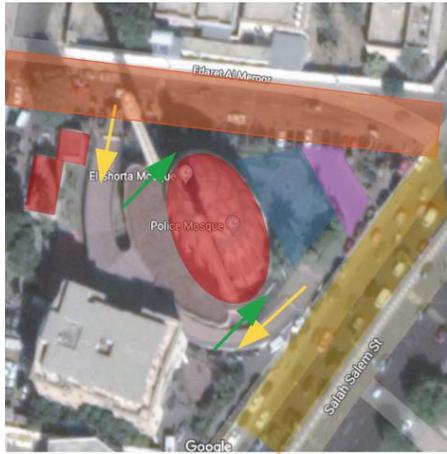
-Cultural Identity: Sayyida Nafisa Mosque has particular meanings for certain people or families. Selecting this mosque for get-togethers turns it into a platform to showcase and honor cultural heritage.

4. CASE STUDY: Al-Shorta Mosque in Salah Salem

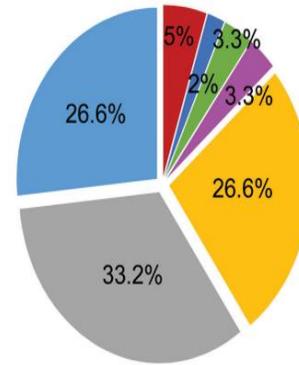
About the mosque: The Al-Shorta mosque and events house were built in 2005. It is located in Abbasiya, east of Cairo. The mosque is oval and consists of a space for prayer on the first floor, and below it on the ground floor are four halls of different sizes for holding the Qur'an and mourning, a large hall and two smaller halls on the ground floor and a hall in the basement and services include bathrooms and a small kitchen for drinks [El-Masri, A, 2018].



Fig.11: Al-Shorta Mosque in Salah Salem [www.alamy.com].



- The Police Mosque
- Mosque Courtyard
- Salah Salem Street
- Idaret Elmoror Street
- The Mosque Entrance (men's prayer hall)
- Ground Floor Entrance (Halls)
- Parking Outside The Mosque



- Men's Prayer Hall
- Event Halls
- Mosque Courtyard
- Women's Prayer Hall
- Paths
- Small Kitchen
- Administration

Fig2 A. Map Showing the Location of The Police Mosque Percentage in Salah Salem (Author).

Fig 2. B Diagram Showing the the Mosque's Spaces (Author).



A Picture Inside the Grand Hall



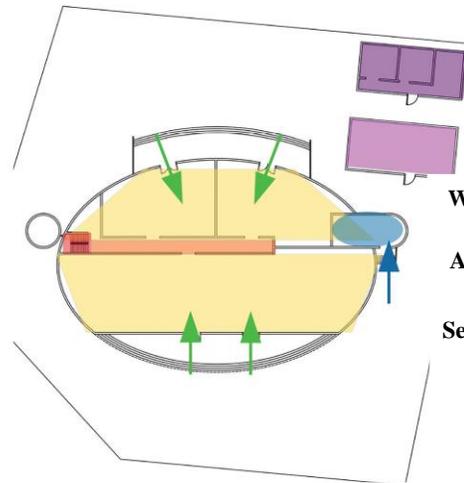
The Entrance to the Grand Hall



A Picture Inside the Men's Prayer Hall.



The Entrance of the Men's Prayer Hall.

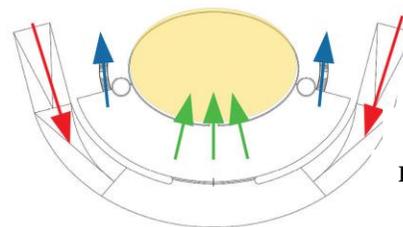


- Event Halls
- Women's Prayer Hall
- Administration
- Halls Entrance
- Service corridor
- Kitchen Stairs
- Paths

The Ground floor (Event Halls)



Allocate Parking Spaces



- Men's Prayer Hall
- Prayer Hall Entrance
- Ramp to the first floor
- Access Stairs to The Halls

The First Floor Plan (Men's Prayer Hall)

Fig.12: Ground floor, and First Floor Plans for The Al-Shorta Mosque, and The Main Entrance (Author).

4.1 The Religious Activities at The Al-Shorta Mosque in Salah Salem

The religious activities serve to uphold the mosque's role as a center for religious observance and worship, fostering a sense of spiritual belonging and community cohesion [El-Masri, A, 2018].

Regular Prayers and Religious Services: The mosque hosts daily prayers, including the five obligatory prayers, providing a sacred space for congregational worship and individual spiritual reflection.

Religious Education Classes and Quranic Studies: The mosque offers classes and study sessions aimed at enhancing the community's knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings, scripture, and jurisprudence (fiqh).

Sermons and Lectures on Islamic Teachings: Imams and religious scholars deliver sermons and lectures on various aspects of Islamic theology, ethics, and spirituality, providing guidance and inspiration to the worshippers.

Observance of Religious Rituals and Festivals: The mosque organizes and facilitates the observance of important Islamic rituals and festivals, such as Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha, allowing community members to commemorate these sacred occasions in a communal setting [Hassan, M. F, 2017].

Spiritual Guidance and Counseling: The mosque provides avenues for individuals to seek spiritual guidance, counseling, and support from knowledgeable religious leaders, fostering a sense of emotional well-being and religious fulfillment within the community.

4.2 Social Activities in The Al-Shorta Mosque in Salah Salem

The Al-Shorta Mosque actively engages in various social activities that contribute to the cohesion and well-being of the community. These social events serve as platforms for fostering connections, celebrating important life events, and supporting individuals and families.

-The Marriage and Funeral Ceremony: The halls are used for marriage ceremonies from Saturday to Wednesday, even one hour before the Maghrib prayer, and after the Maghrib prayer, they are used for funerals. On Thursday and Friday, the halls are used throughout the day for the wedding ceremony only, and no funeral ceremonies are held. As for organizing celebrations, the time for booking the hall is 45 minutes. Attendees arrive at the ground floor of the mosque. Upon expiration of the period, the hall will be vacated to be cleaned and prepared for the next booked shift [Mohamed, S. A, 2020].

-Seating Arrangements and Hospitality: Seating is arranged at the funeral, with chairs stacked back-to-back and paths between rows of chairs. In the wedding ceremony, the chairs are arranged facing the official (sheikh) as in Fig13, which is designated for events. After the visitors enter, drinks and food are distributed to the attendees. During the wedding ceremony, photographers arrive 5 minutes before the start of the event to photograph the bride and groom.

-Community Support and Inclusivity: Through its social activities, The Al-Shorta Mosque promotes community solidarity and inclusivity, welcoming individuals from diverse backgrounds and fostering

a sense of belonging among attendees. The mosque's open-door policy ensures that everyone feels valued and respected, regardless of their social or economic status [Ahmed, R. H. 2016].

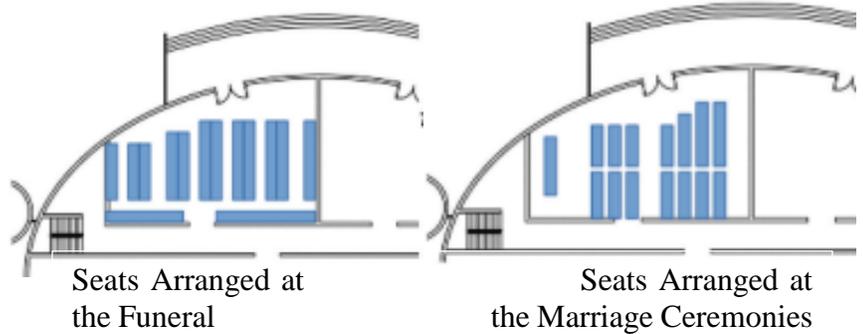


Fig.13. Distribution of Seats in Celebration Halls (Author).

4.3 The Impact of Activities on the Urban Space of Al-Shorta Mosque in Salah Salem

Due to the presence of many attendees at wedding and funeral ceremonies, the number of cars increases and stops on Al Muroor Street and Salah Salem Street, causing traffic congestion. Therefore, a portion was allocated for parking in front of the mosque by closing a street that passes between Salah Salem and Al Muroor Streets. It is rare for the wedding ceremony to be held at the time of the marriage ceremony in the mosque, but if it happens, it takes place in Adart Elmuuror Street in front of the mosque, which is empty after sunset. When military funerals are held, the procession follows Adart Elmuuror Street opposite the mosque, and a security cordon has been imposed around the mosque. Military displays are performed during the funeral as in Fig.14 [Hussein. A. A, 2020].



Salah Salem Street
Adart Elmuuror Street
Parking Area

Fig.14: Military Funeral Ceremony, And the Location of the Mosque and its Surrounding Streets [www.alamy.com].

4.4 The Activities and Economic Aspects at The Al-Shorta Mosque in Salah Salem

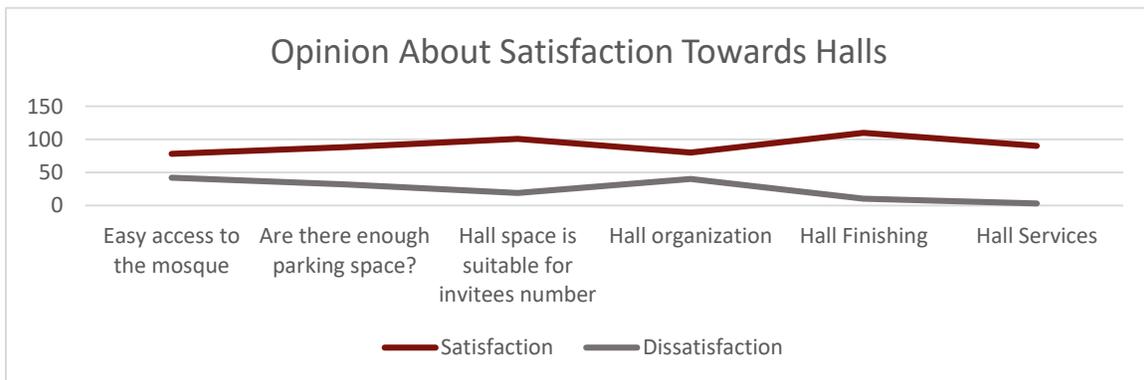
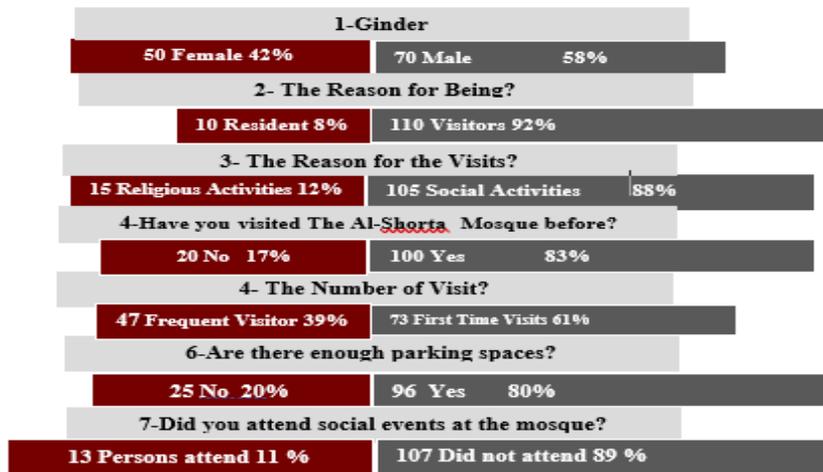
The celebration halls accommodate different numbers of visitors and at different prices depending on the capacity of the halls. The price of the hall depends on the number of people in it and according to the morning and evening hours. The larger the hall, the higher its price, and evening appointments are more expensive than morning appointments as in Table 1.

Table 1 Hall Reservation Price.

Hall Capacity	Hall Prices in Pounds	
	Morning Hours from 1 pm to 5 pm	Evening Hours from pm to 1 am
From 180 to 200 Persons	1500	1800
300 Persons	2500	2800

4.5 Survey

As part of enhancing the overall experience at Al-Shorta Mosque, we are conducting a comprehensive survey to gather insights into the various activities held at the mosque. This survey aims to understand the reasons behind engaging and the preferences of individuals who actively participate in these activities at this mosque. We collect responses from approximately 120 individuals who are regular participants in activities at Al-Shorta Mosque. By obtaining diverse perspectives to gain a holistic understanding of the community's engagement with the mosque activities.



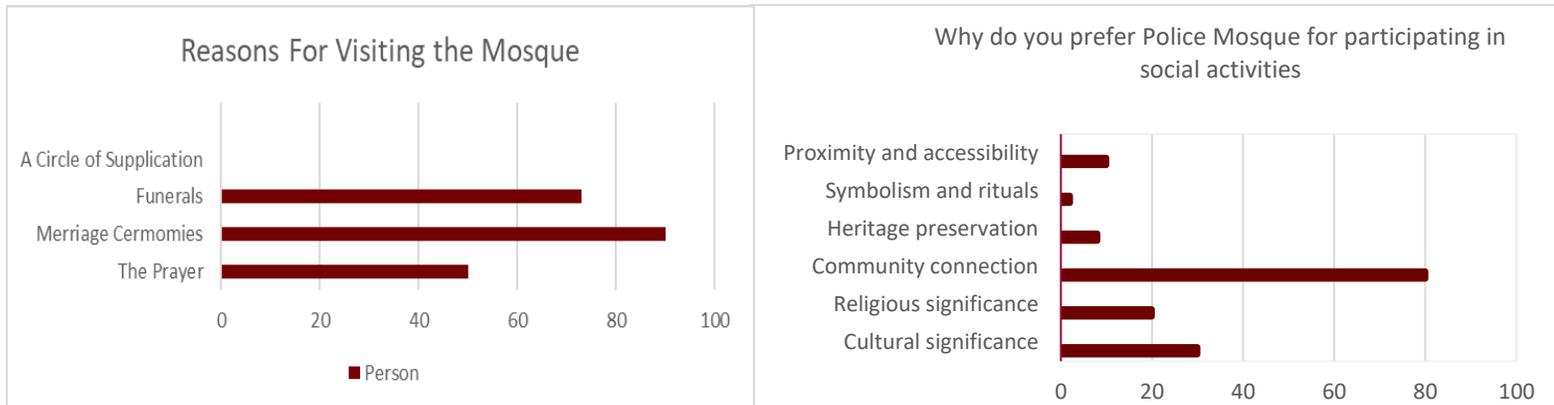


Fig.15. Samples of Survey Results (Author).

4.6 Reason for Preference

Activities at The Al-Shorta Mosque in Salah Salem

Individuals prefer the place because they can hold celebrations, provide seating and an official (sheikh) in the case of marriage ceremonies, provide drinks and food services for attendees, and have easy access to the mosque as it is located on Salah Salem Street, one of the largest streets in Cairo. Also, the hall prices are average and suitable for individuals, with special prices for Al-Shorta officers.

5. Explore the differences and similarities between Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and Al-Shorta Mosque in Egypt

In summary, while Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and Al-Shorta Mosque in Egypt may have differences in their approaches and emphases within the religious, social, and cultural aspects, they likely share common features and objectives aimed at serving their communities and promoting harmony, heritage, and cultural diversity.

Religious Aspect, Differences, and Similarities in Features: Both mosques offer regular prayers and religious services, such as daily and Friday congregational prayers. Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and Al-Shorta Mosque have different religious beliefs, orientations, or schools of thought within Islam. They may vary in the intensity and frequency of religious education programs and sermons. Both mosques have major Islamic festivals such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. Spiritual guidance and counseling may be offered to community members in both mosques [Abdel- Gawad, H, 2019].

Social Aspect, Differences, and Similarities Features: Both mosques engage in community outreach and support initiatives, such as providing food aid, clothing donations, or financial assistance to those in need. The scope and focus of community outreach programs may differ between Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and Al-Shorta Mosque based on their communities' needs. Both mosques support social justice causes such as human rights advocacy or environmental conservation efforts.

Cultural Aspect, Differences, and Similarities Features: Both mosques may be associated with specific cultural traditions and practices but they are different in terms of cultural events and festivals, reflecting the historical and cultural context of their locations.

Social Cohesion: Both mosques contribute significantly to social cohesion by hosting various social events such as marriage ceremonies and funerals. These events provide opportunities for community members to come together, strengthen bonds, and support one another during significant life events.

Community Engagement: The study underscores the importance of fostering increased community participation in religious, social, and cultural activities at both mosques. Enhanced community engagement is crucial for promoting inclusivity, unity, and a sense of belonging among mosque attendees [A. Saker. M, 2023].

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and Al-Shorta Mosque reveals the multifaceted roles these religious institutions play in shaping their communities. Both mosques serve as vital hubs for religious observance, social interaction, and cultural preservation. Through daily prayers, Friday congregational prayers, and educational programs, they fulfill the spiritual needs of their congregants. Additionally, by hosting social events like marriage ceremonies and funerals, the mosques foster social cohesion and provide support during important life events. Sayyida Nafisa Mosque stands out for its rich cultural heritage, especially evident during Mawlid celebrations, while Al-Shorta Mosque contributes to community engagement through its outreach efforts. To further strengthen their impact, it is recommended to promote community participation, preserve cultural heritage, facilitate dialogue, initiate social outreach programs, and implement educational initiatives. These actions will not only enrich the experiences of mosque attendees but also reinforce their roles as pillars of harmony, unity, and cultural diversity within their communities.

7. Recommendations:

By implementing these recommendations, Sayyida Nafisa Mosque and Al-Shorta Mosque can further enhance their roles as vibrant centers for religious worship, social interaction, and cultural enrichment within their respective communities.

Promoting Community Participation: Develop initiatives to encourage greater involvement of community members in mosque activities, such as volunteering, organizing events, and participating in decision-making processes [Elif. H& Nurdan. S, 2020].

Preserving Cultural Heritage: Implement programs aimed at preserving and promoting cultural heritage within mosque communities, including workshops, exhibitions, and cultural events that celebrate local traditions and customs.

Social Outreach Programs: Launch outreach programs to address the needs of marginalized groups within the mosque communities, such as providing support for refugees, the elderly, or individuals facing socio-economic challenges.

Education Initiatives: Introduce educational programs within mosques to deepen community members' understanding of religious teachings, cultural practices, and social issues. These programs

can empower individuals to become active participants in promoting positive change within their communities.

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