Abstract
A person’s every act is a result of decision making, whether it is conscious or subconscious; the mind analyses a person’s surroundings and this analysis forms the structure of everyday decision-making, no matter how big or small those acts may be. In the world of architecture, the building is a part of a context and is approached and perceived by the user. It guides the user physically and emotionally. It becomes a tool to which people react, to which they can generate the plot and structure of a particular act at a particular moment. The understanding of informal recreational play in low-income localities in Karachi comes from the investigation that the analysis spoken of, does exist; the setting, culture, and characters of these places are identified by its users and they, in turn, form the decisions that build the foundations of informal play spaces, and only then, can analysis of these spaces take place. While most children in the West and those who belong to the higher income strata in Pakistan are provided with specific places to exercise physically, most of which are designed to specific standards based to the type of recreation, children in the lower income-strata are not afforded such luxuries of architecturally planned environments; they must reuse the area that surrounds them and convert them into such spaces. There is documentation available that highlights the urban fabric and cultural characteristics of low-income areas in this city, however, there is little written about the recreational activities of the resident children, much less the way these children organize play in their existing conditions. This documentation does just that; using the understanding of architectural principles and elements, the purpose behind this paper is to understand how architecture and recreation exist in tandem with each other and why and how the children of these areas apply the western ideals of architectural elements into their recreational activities. It is established that these recreational spaces are not within a built structure but in the space in-between architecture, known as the void.

This paper attempts to promote a more evocative understanding of the architectural tools
wielded into the recreational world of the children at Manzoor Colony, Shah Rasool Colony, and Shireen Jinnah Colony. The manner of this presentation is an analysis of the colonies on an urban scale (the setting and characters of the space) followed by the analysis of the same colonies on a micro scale (the use of the space)- the macro-analysis influences the microanalysis. This way, the flow of understanding from one scale to another will aid in the comprehension of how children carry out informal play through the re-evaluation of primary architectural elements. Ultimately, it has been discovered that the children have a profound understanding of their architectural context and use its many facets in their extra-curricular activities; although they are not trained as architects, they apply the same tools to recreation just like the way architects apply them when designing a building.