Abstract

CHATTERJEE, SUDESHNA. Children's Friendship with Place: An Exploration of Environmental Child Friendliness of Children's Environments in Cities. (Under the direction of Prof. Robin C. Moore.)

The Child Friendly Cities is a concept for making cities friendly for *all* children especially in UN member countries that have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (i.e., all except the United States) through municipal action. This idea is particularly important for improving the quality of life of poor urban children who are most affected by sweeping changes brought about by globalization and rapid urbanization in the developing nations of the global South.

However, there is no theoretical understanding of a construct such as environmental child friendliness that could guide planning and design of child friendly environments in cities. Resulting from an integrative review of a large body of interdisciplinary literature, a new six-dimensional construct based on children's friendship needs, called children's place friendship, is proposed as underpinning environmental child friendliness from an environment-behavior perspective. The study disaggregates the idea of the child friendly city into numerous interlocking child friendly places that children themselves consider friendly based on their own experiences. These child friendly places support the six dimensions of place friendship in different ways: care and respect for places, meaningful exchange with places, learning and competence through place experience, creating and controlling territories, having secret places, and freedom of expression in places.

An in-depth analytic ethnography was conducted in a low-income, high-density, mixed-use neighborhood in New Delhi, India, with children in their middle-childhood to validate and elaborate this conceptual framework. The chosen context provided a homogeneous Muslim base, large numbers of children and youth, ready access to fieldwork and several diverse socio-physical

settings. The study used four kinds of data: interviews, observations, journals kept by children, and archival documents and records.

The places most recommended by children under each of the six dimensions were studied to find out the meanings of these places for children by analyzing the physical environmental attributes, nature of production of the places in the city, and actualization of socio-physical affordances by children.

The findings of this study suggest that most child friendly places were easily accessible in the local area of the children's neighborhood. The large range of places (199 places recommended under six dimensions by thirty-one children) is categorized in twelve place typologies. Most child friendly places (34%) belong to the typology of local formal open spaces such as designed parks and playgrounds. Children respected, cared for and loved these places for being well-maintained and aesthetically pleasing environments. Children also chose local formal open spaces for action affordances. The study reveals the socially constructed nature of care and respect for places in the context of the low-income Muslim neighborhood. Local informal open spaces allowed children to claim and own space more easily than formal open spaces, to freely express themselves, as well as to seek out secret places. However, in relation to learning, though children themselves recommended places of symbolic value such as monuments, the study found that children who participated in the practices of everyday, learned as apprentices from the diverse settings in their local area.

Analysis of the patterns of place friendship in the new place typology suggests that instead of considering six dimensions of place friendship, four dimensions are sufficient to account for the range of children's friendly interactions with places. A generic typology of child friendly places is proposed using the reduced set of four dimensions. This provides a tangible framework for child friendly city strategies both for the creation of child friendly places, as well as for evaluation of environments specifically created for children.

CHILDREN'S FRIENDSHIP WITH PLACE: AN EXPLORATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHILD FRIENDLINESS OF CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTS IN CITIES

By

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Dedication

To the children of Nizamuddin Basti for continuing to be visible, and active in public landscapes

Biography

Sudeshna Chatterjee was born in Calcutta in India. After completing primary and secondary education, instead of joining medical school as she had always dreamed of, she enrolled in the department of architecture in Jadavpur University in Calcutta because, to her own great surprise, she was ranked first in the statewide architecture entrance examination. She graduated in 1996 with First Class (with Honors). She also received the best thesis award for her final year architecture thesis.

Sudeshna joined the department of Urban Design in the School of Planning and Architecture in New Delhi for a master's degree in architecture in 1996. She was deeply involved in exploring the issues of social jusice in cities and user-friendly public places especially for children and youth. Her master's thesis—"Child in the City: Realizing the Perceptions, Needs and Aspirations of Children in Urban Neighbourhoods in Calcutta", was a participatory neighborhood restructuring project involving children. She received the gold medal for being the best student in Urban Design as well the first T. J. Manickam gold medal for the best thesis among all eleven academic departments in the School of Planning and Architecture for the academic year 1997-1998.

Sudeshna worked as an architect and urban design consultant with leading architectural firms in New Delhi from 1998 to 2002, contributing to important Indian projects such as the Police Training Academy in New Delhi, Indian Institute of Management in Calicut, and a new City Center for the steel township of Durgapur. During this time, Sudeshna volunteered her spare time to non-governmental organizations that worked toward improving children's environments in cities. A firm believer in Malcom Gladwell's idea, "[w]e need to prepare ourselves for the possibility that sometimes big changes follow from small events, and sometimes these changes can happen very quickly", Sudeshna decided to be more proactive in helping children and their families in a more direct way, and to bring in change that would allow poor families gain a better quality of life in cities. She joined the South Asia Regional Program of the Housing and Land Rights Network of the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) as a research associate in 2002. Based out of New Delhi, Sudeshna participated in action research that empowered South Asians living without secure tenure in securing the human right to adequate housing. At HIC Sudeshna identified a substantial gap between the rhetorical goals of the Child Friendly Cities and its practice in local governance in relation to physically improving the living environment of children in cities. Sudeshna was motivated by colleagues and friends to contribute to the discourse through systematic research.

Sudeshna won a Mellon fellowship to participate in the international seminar series on "Contested Childhood in a Changing Global Order" at University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in October 2001. In

Spring 2003, Sudeshna joined the Community and Environment Design concentration of the PhD in Design program at North Carolina State University. She was a Research Assistant at the Natural Learning Initiative, a research extension program directed by her mentor Prof. Robin Moore for three years. Sudeshna received an international fellowship from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in 2003-2004, and a Sarai-CSDS Independent Fellowship to conduct fieldwork for her dissertation in New Delhi in 2005. Sudeshna received the first place award in the student paper award category at the 37th conference of the Environment Design Research Association (EDRA) in Atlanta in 2006.

Since 2004, Sudeshna is a partner in the architecture and urban design practice of Kaimal Chatterjee & Associates in New Delhi. She was a project advisor to the Study Abroad Program in North India of the School of International Training in Vermont in Spring 2005. In the fall of the same year Sudeshna offered a graduate course called "Humanizing Cities" in the department of Urban Design in the School of Planning and Architecture in New Delhi. She also mentored dissertations for final year architecture students in the TVB School of Habitat Studies in New Delhi in 2005.

Since 2000, Sudehshna is married to Ravi Kaimal.

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I owe a great debt of gratitude to many people scattered all over the world. I will try and thank all of them in the order they entered my life and influenced this work. Subrata Ghosh introduced me to the creative possibilities of involving children in designing spaces way back in 1994 when I was a student of architecture in Calcutta. Pamela Reynolds, professor of anthropology, was the first to expose me to the contemporary ideations of childhood and contemporary issues impacting childhood globally through the international seminar "Contested Childhood in a Changing Global Order" in University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 2001. In early 2002, I met Susan Bissell, who was then Chief of Child Protection in UNICEF, India. Hearing about my interest in children's environments and upon seeing my master's thesis, Susan promptly gave me a copy of her own PhD dissertation, Manufacturing Childhood, and a CD of her Oscar nominated documentary film "A Kind of Childhood." Susan's work, constant encouragement to pursue a PhD, and wonderful friendship had been a source of inspiration over the years. The South Asia Regional Program of the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) provided me the opportunity of working with human rights instruments in helping children and youth gain an adequate standard of living in low-income settlements without secure tenure. I was introduced to the idea of child friendly cities while working with HIC, and met Eliana Riggio of the Innocenti Research Center at an international conference in Brugges, Belgium. Eliana encouraged me to strengthen my ideas on children's environments through a PhD. Lalitha Iyer, development consultant and ex-manager of PLAN International's Habitat Domain told me to listen to my heart when I was in two minds about joining the PhD program. Lalitha generously included me in her life, taught me how to write a research paper, and to prepare a great South Indian meal in less than thirty minutes.

Of course, I would not have embarked on this journey of evidence-based research on children's environment but for Robin Moore, my PhD mentor, and a pioneer in children's environment research. I first met Robin in November 2001 when he talked me into taking up the challenge of the PhD. Robin introduced me to a wide range of literature in the field, and easily shared his own knowledge and wisdom. He also pulled me back whenever I showed the slightest signs of taking off on a different "interesting" path by gently saying 'keep that for later!'

I was lucky to find a strong and committed advisory committee who pushed me in the right direction while asking intelligent questions. Dr. Denis Gray, being the psychologist was the first one to ask how environmental friendliness was different from place attachment or other theoretical constructs that could possibly explain people's relationships with the environment. He made me think about the possibility of a new construct. When I collected a large literature on friendship, Dr. Herb Childress pointed out that I was not paying much attention to them, and that

maybe by integrating them with literature from environment behavior I might be able to comment on the adequacy of environmental child friendliness as a construct. Dr. Perver Baran provided the perfect opportunity for adding rigor to my theoretical framework by asking me to explicate how the new concept of place friendship that I was proposing, was different from other commonly studied place relationship constructs. Dr. Meredith Davis, who generously stepped in to fill Dr. Raval's advisory committee position in short notice to smoothen my graduation process, provided help and support whenever I turned to her.

I would not have been able to continue in the PhD program but for the generous International Fellowship from the American Association of University Women in 2003-2004. The Sarai Independent Fellowship provided me funding for conducting the dissertation fieldwork in New Delhi in 2005. Several Delhi-based NGOs such as Hazard Center, and India Alliance for Child Rights provided me with valuable documents and shared their experiences of working with children in New Delhi.

My inspirations and guide in the daunting task of writing up the dissertation had primarily been Mitch Duneier's "Sidewalk" and Herb Childress's "Landscapes of Betrayal, Landscapes of Joy". I had the good fortune of having Herb as a committee member and enjoying many research conversations with him over several meals. Herb taught me to stay grounded to my data while at the same time ask profound questions to develop deeper understanding of ordinary occurrences.

I can never adequately thank nor compensate the children, teachers, and staff of The Hope Project in New Delhi for sharing their lives, work and insights with me. Without their generous gift of time and stories, this project would have remained yet another proposal. I would like to thank Kamini Prakash, for giving me access to the community in Nizamuddin. I would also like to thank my friends Sharmila and Randal Livingston for introducing me to key informants in Nizamuddin West and the Basti.

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Mad globe trotting for the last three and a half years would have been impossible but for wonderful friends like Jyoti and Nadine in London, and Avik and Maitreyi in Princeton. I was also blessed with an extended family of friends in Raleigh that made my stay here memorable. I do not have adequate words to thank my wonderful friend Claudia Winegarden who in my book has

earned the title of supreme goddess for her multi-faceted talents, drive for perfection and excellence in whatever she does, and her magnificent generosity. Achva and David Stein honored me with their friendship and by opening their home to me for extended stay in the summer of 2005. Thomas Abraham, and Shuming Li are good friends who cheered me up every weekend while I was writing the dissertation. Ginny Sullivan, Daryl Carrington, Magdy Ma, and Celen Pasalar are wonderful colleagues who made the program a vigorous learning experience.

Closer home, my family had always let me fly to pursue my dreams and good-naturedly put up with my emotional and physical distance during long stretches of the PhD process. Ravi, my husband had been the rock of my life during the last three and a half years when we lived in different continents for at least a semester at a time. To him, my debt is the greatest. I hope to do the same for him someday if he will let me.

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Abbreviations

CFC	Child Friendly City
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DDA	Delhi Development Authority
EB	Environment Behavior
EE	Environmental Education
MCD	Municipal Corporation of Delhi
RWA	Residents' Welfare Association

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Preface

This dissertation, based on investigation of children's environments in the Indian context, was in the making for nine years starting with the fieldwork of my master's thesis in urban design on neighborhood restructuring through children's participation in Calcutta. Since then I had been actively engaged in design and research of different types of children's environments in developing countries. To nurture my deep interest in developing policy and design guidelines for making cities child friendly, I joined the Habitat International Coalition in 2002 to work on children's housing rights in South Asia as a research associate. It was during that time I came across the UN Child Friendly City (CFC) network. I was very excited to discover a real legitimate organization working on an idea that I had tried to develop through my work in design and research in the last few years. But very quickly I found out just how little work had been done to improve the physical environments of children as child friendly ones in cities around the world. My housing rights work took me to poor communities where even the basic needs of a shelter for children were often not met by governments who had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and hence promised to provide an adequate standard of living to children. NGOs working on the ground knowing my background in architecture would ask me to propose a child friendly housing alternative to the inadequate government proposed ones in resettlement areas outside Delhi. I quickly realized that very little empirical knowledge existed about how to create child friendly environments, and hence passed on the invitations to contribute through design. It was through these first hand experiences of lack of knowledge to guide action on creation of child friendly physical environments, I was convinced to pursue a PhD to help me become more useful in my purpose of improving children's lives through making cities child friendly as well as to contribute to the discourse of the child friendly city from the perspective of improving quality of life of children in the global South. I formally enrolled in the PhD program in Community and Environmental Design at the North Carolina State University in Spring 2003.

This dissertation presents fourteen chapters starting with the idea of the child friendly city as a plausible urban development paradigm especially in countries that had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Chapter 1 introduces the idea of the UN child friendly city as an urban development paradigm that promises to make the world a better place for *all* children. The chapter highlights the importance of this global idea to improve quality of life of poor urban children who are most affected by sweeping changes brought in by globalization and rapid urbanization.

Chapter 2 reviews a large interdisciplinary literature to understand how environmental child friendliness might be constructed from the perspective of planning and design of child friendly environments in cities. The integrative review ends with the proposition that due to lack of any available theoretical construct, a new construct based on children's friendship needs to be developed within the genre of place relationship studies in environment behavior (EB) research.

Chapter 3 develops a new theoretical framework called place friendship that underpins the construct environmental friendship from the EB perspective. The new construct is operationalized through six dimensions based on the integrative friendship model proposed by Doll (1996). The hypothesis of the study disaggregates the child friendly city into numerous interlocking child friendly places that children themselves explore, engage with, consider friendly based on their own experiences. This chapter, and parts of chapter 2, have been peer-reviewed and published in another form titled "Children's Friendship with Place: A conceptual inquiry" in the Journal of Children, Youth and Environment, 15 (1), 1-26, 2005.

Chapter 4 discusses the research methodology of analytic ethnography that allows starting with a strong conceptual framework but also allows indepth observational studies to elaborate and revise the framework. Since this is the first study based on a new construct it is exploratory in nature. I also explain my decision to work in India due to my familiarity with the context, established networks, and also because of the lack of empirical work with children in the Indian subcontinent.

Chapter 5 introduces the context of the study—Nizamuddin Basti, a contested urban settlement housing poor Indian Muslims amidst great architectural heritage in the heart of central New Delhi. The homogeneous Muslim base, large numbers of children and youth, and ready access to fieldwork in an environment that also offered several diverse socio-physical settings of different scale made Nizamuddin Basti an ideal setting for the study.

Chapter 6 discusses the constraints on place use by children in Nizamuddin Basti even though to a casual visitor it may seem that children play outside all the time in the neighborhood.

Chapter 7-12 present the empirical findings based on the six dimensions of place friendship. All these six chapters follow the same structure. They start with a brief summary definition of the dimension; tabulation of the places most recommended under the dimension; discussion on the nature of production and constraints of the recommended places; analysis of the physical attributes of these places including discussing places which were not recommended but which had similar place attributes; interpretation of the meanings children ascribe to these places; and

discussion of implications for design and planning based on the subjective and objective analysis of the most and least friendly places. Chapter 7 in another form, has been peer-reviewed and published in the EDRA 37 conference proceedings (2006) as "Children's Notions of Environmental Care: The case of a low-income Muslim neighborhood in India." This paper won the first place award in the student paper award category at the 37th Annual Conference of the Environmental Design Research Association in Atlanta, GA in 2006.

Chapter 13 offers a synthesis of all the recommended friendly places discussed in the previous six chapters through creation of a place typology that is informed by ownership, supervision and design input patterns in the recommended places. Based on the analysis of the new typologies across the dimensions, the discussion suggests which place typologies are more likely to foster particular dimensions of place friendship in children. The reduced dataset shows a pattern of similar characteristics and place recommendations for four of the six dimensions. I offer a detailed analysis of these four dimensions and suggest that in fact instead of considering six dimensions of place friendship, four dimensions are sufficient to account for the range of friendly interactions with outdoor places. I end the chapter with a proposal for a new generic typology of child friendly places based on this adjusted model with four dimensions. I also discuss the characteristics of places that each of these four child friendly place types will require to foster the underlying dimension of place friendship.

Chapter 14 introduces Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework and situates children's friendship with different places at the systemic levels proposed by this framework. The study revealed many different friendly places for children but they were not child friendly in every systemic level in the ecological framework. The physical characteristics of the settlement that allowed creation of child friendly places at the levels where the community had control over their lives are discussed and compared with similar findings across the world. I argue in this chapter that in addition to considering transferability of findings to places with similar characteristics in low-income communities in developing cities, places that nurture similar forms of childhoods need to be considered. I end the chapter with the offering of a set of policy directions for improving quality of life of children in low-income settlements through creation of child friendly places as part of UN CFC initiatives.

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1. The Child Friendly City: A New Paradigm for Urban Development

'The future of the world is unmistakably urban' is a much quoted cautionary prediction based on analysis of population trends in post-industrial cities around the globe. Kingsley Davis, as early as in 1965, told us that absolute population growth was no longer a function of urbanization or rural-urban migration in the industrialized western world as compared to developing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. These developing nations were still rapidly urbanizing with people continuing to migrate from rural areas to urban centers in search of jobs, education, and a life out of poverty. However, instead of escaping rural poverty, these new urban populations in fact constituted a large part of the poorest and most deprived groups in the world (UNCHS 1996). More importantly though the new urban poor in developing countries are very young, and according to some predictions, the youthful city populations in the global south, will soon be a worldwide majority population category (Boyden 1991).

If that is a plausible future urban reality in large parts of the world, then planning and design of cities need to take into account the needs of the increasing youthful city population and no longer ignore them for being a disenfranchised minority group. Though this is not a new advisory for cities, as environmental researchers, predominantly from North America and Western Europe, have for decades advocated designing environments that were better suited to the unique environmental needs of children (Hart 1978, Moore 1985, Chawla 1986, Heft & Wohlwill 1987). However, the idea of making cities *across the world* friendly for children is very recent, being conceived in the Mayors Defenders of Children initiative in Dakar, Senegal in 1992 soon after the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) came into force in 1989. CRC is the most ratified UN convention that defines the child as a person under eighteen years of age, and imposes legal obligations and responsibilities on families, institutions and governments to realize the rights of the child as codified in the convention. Throughout the last decade, countries across the world met at important international conferences and drafted the *Agenda 21* (the program of Action from the UN Conference on Environment and Development 1992), the *Habitat Agenda* (Second UN conference on Human settlements 1996), and most recently *A World Fit for Children* (the document produced at the UN Special Session on Children in New York in 2002) promising to develop child friendly communities and cities through municipal action in collaboration with children (Riggio 2002). The UN CFC Secretariat was set up in Florence, in Italy to support city governments, organizations and communities in making cities friendly for children and youth across the world.

1.2. Limitations of the Current CFC Approach in the Global South

CFC initiatives in the global North had typically addressed physical environmental issues more than the countries in the global South. The initiatives in the South adopt a more "problem fixing" approach in low-income communities by providing basic services to the urban poor. However, no CFC project had developed the physical environment as a child friendly one by understanding what that means in the context of children's lives. The literature clearly suggests that there is no theoretical understanding of environmental child friendliness as a construct. This conceptual void makes it difficult to create operational measures of child friendly environments and this is an important contributor to the dismal performance of countries both developed and developing in improving the *physical* living conditions of children in compliance with child rights and child friendly city goals.

In the contemporary patterns of globalization, nation states and their national economic, political and social institutions are being transformed by influences originating beyond their borders thus affecting the everyday local context of children and the society in which children live (Kaufman & Rizzini, 2002). Childhood does not exist outside of a context and its culture. It is important to understand the goal of children's everyday struggle in local space and its relationship to the social expectations from childhood within that culture including the new heterogeneous culture of urban poverty that relocated families come to inherit in low-income settlements in cities around the world. I believe that in order to construct meaning of children's lives in these new communities it is important to approach children as knowing subjects in understanding the processes transforming their environment. The Growing Up Cities projects in the late 1990s adopted such an approach of participatory action research with children living in poverty around the world to influence urban policies that would improve the quality of children's lives in their physical environments. Similarly, if we want to create environments that children themselves consider meaningful and child friendly, not only in their cultural communities, but also in the new locations of their mobile migratory trajectories, other than the rights-based governmental checklist for child friendly cities, we need to know the local and social constructions of environmental child friendliness in different communities around the world, particularly in the developing world that houses the majority of the world's young, and where knowledge about children's environments is limited.

Among all developing countries, India houses the largest children and youth population in the world ahead of the most populated country China. More than 40% of India's population is under 18 years of age (as compared to 30% in China). With a high fertility rate (3.2, as compared to 1.8 in China) ensuring the largest youthful population in the world for several more decades. Given the

fast pace of urbanization in India, the Indian government has no choice but to make informed decisions about environments of children and youth in the rapidly globalizing landscape of Indian cities to fulfill its international legal commitments to children.

In the context of rapid urbanization and globalization that inevitably marginalizes minority groups such as children in cities, CFC initiatives can be more than just another UN international development rhetoric in countries such as India. CFC initiatives could become a new paradigm for urban development that seeks to provide happy, healthy childhood environments in cities. India is notoriously well known for its neglect of children in public policy as reflected through its abysmal allocation of 1.6% of the Union Budget for all child specific programs (Ali et al 2001). But even with the best of intentions to promote child friendly urban environments, judicious budgetary allocations or sensible strategies are not feasible without understanding environmental child friendliness in the context of India. But since no study explicitly investigated child friendliness of physical environments in any context, either western or non-western, no empirical study is possible without first conceptually engaging with the construct of environmental child friendliness. The CFC rhetoric talks about upholding the "best interests" of children when making policy decisions for cities. Since best interests is a variable concept, and likely to differ from the perspectives of different actors, children, parents, city governments, and state governments, I decided to turn the lens on children to understand how "best interests" can be interpreted from children's perspectives.

1.3. Objectives of the Dissertation

The main objective of this dissertation is to seek conceptual clarity on the much-used terms "child friendly environment" and "child friendly city". In order to do that, I developed a theoretical framework for understanding these concepts not by reviewing the diverse empirical literature on children's environment studies alone, but by doing an integrative review of a large interdisciplinary literature on childhood, children's environment and friendship. An established body of theoretical literature in environmental psychology, geography, planning and design, had proposed that children develop feelings and emotions about their everyday environments which induce powerful, positive or negative images. This literature also emphasized the role of affect in not only explaining how children learn about places, but also, in pointing out what sorts of environments children find most satisfying. Several constructs such as *place attachment* (Chawla 1992) and *place identity* (Proshansky et al 1987) in childhood have been used by researchers to empirically understand children's affective bonds to places. I started by studying these constructs to see if they could possibly offer much needed theoretical clarity, or whether we needed a new theoretical construct such as *place friendship* to define environmental child friendliness. I

concluded after a thorough analysis of place relationship constructs, that indeed, investigations of *child friendly* in the domain of children's relationship to physical places are in need of a new theoretical construct—place friendship. I developed a multidimensional framework to understand this new construct by deconstructing the idea of friendship in childhood.

I conducted the fieldwork for the empirical study in an Indian city as it was important to explore the meaning of environmental child friendliness for the largest, youthful urban population, most of whom lived in poverty but had been promised better living environments by their governments in international forums. The choice of a city in a developing country was also prompted by the urgent call for understanding of children's issues in the countries of the global South by several scholars (Boyden 2003, Moore 1997). I hypothesized that children's perceptions of a child friendly city are made up of complex images of numerous and interlocking child-friendly places that children encounter through both first and second hand experiences. I used the research strategy of analytic ethnography to explore these child friendly places with children in one neighborhood and its local area in New Delhi. The empirical study helped me in revising the dimensions of place friendship, in constructing higher-level place typologies based on the several different child friendly places, and in suggesting policy directions for child friendly cities in improving the living environment of children living in low-income neighborhoods through urban development.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

The concept of the Child-Friendly City (CFC), backed by internationally agreed-upon policy instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda, embodies a commitment to create better living conditions in cities for all children by upholding their basic human rights. The CFC thus has the promise of making the world a better place for many children. To realize this promise, we need to move beyond the rhetoric of global visions to a more empirically grounded understanding of environmental child-friendliness.

In the last decade there had been several publications on children and cities. "Cities for Children: children's rights, poverty and urban management (Bartlett 1999)", "Growing Up in an Urbanizing World (Chawla 2000)", and "Creating Cities with Children and Youth (Driskell 2002)" were a direct result of this endeavor. None of these works however *conceptually* investigated child friendly cities, but were more focused on improving quality of life of children in urban environments through developing adequate policy. A couple of journal articles, which did not easily show up in database searches till very recently, however did discuss the official UN approach to child friendly cities (Riggio 2002) and the Italian experience of child friendly city initiatives (Corsi 2002). Several articles however discussed children and youth issues related to participation (Frances & Lorenzo 2002), sustainable cities (Malone 2001), and child rights (Racelis & Aguirre 2002). Lastly there was one dissertation that had included *environment* and *child friendliness* in the title: "Children in Outdoor Contexts: Affordances and Independent Mobility in the Assessment of Environmental Child Friendliness (Kytta 2003)."

"Child-friendly environments: Approaches and Lessons (Horelli & Prezza 2004)" is the most recent addition to the discourse of children's environments. However, it promised to be the only compilation of current edited papers on the conceptually under-explored topic of environmental child friendliness. In the very first page of the introduction, the editors, Liisa Horelli and Miretta Prezza, wrote,

> *A political and practical problem [in creating child friendly environments] is that a tremendous gap prevails between the rhetoric of the governmental institutions and the implementation of what has been promised, especially in terms of children's wishes.* Another problem is the lack of adequate theories of what good environments are, *and what is their impact on the quality of life of children and young people (2004, p. 8, emphasis mine).*

I agree with the editors that there is a lack of adequate theories on the subject, but I fail to understand why they were searching for theories on "good environments" when they were in fact "in search of child friendly environments" (the title of the introduction). In the next page, the editors in introducing the conceptual organization of the empirical studies in the edited volume, rightly surmised that:

> *…as environmental child friendliness is a complex concept that is difficult to measure or tap directly, we have designed a cluster of studies…On the one hand, an analysis of the relevant literature and research on theories and concepts of good environments, including a small survey, has been conducted by Liisa Horelli and Miretta Prezza (see chapter 2 and 3). On the other hand, several empirical studies that assess the tacit and explicit knowledge of good environments in different contexts have been implemented, which feed into defining of environmental child friendliness (p. 10).*

Then the editors proceeded to provide some examples of the latter studies—comparison of the normative and participatory structures in Finland and Italy, comparison of models of children's participation in Rome and Helsinki, empirical results of two studies on environmental child friendliness in Rome and Helsinki, and children's mobility in Finland and Italy. The editors ended the introduction after providing this overview with:

> *The leitmotif running through the articles is that a theoretical and practical clarification of environmental child friendliness is needed, which can be applied both by decision-makers, professionals, parents and children themselves in the enhancement of everyday life contexts (p. 10).*

In the short span of a two-page introduction to a unique edited volume on child friendly environments, the editors started by admitting that no theoretical frameworks existed that enabled proper empirical assessment of the subject under consideration. Then they proceeded to develop a multi-dimensional model of environmental child friendliness based on a literature review of "good environments" and "assessment of the tacit and explicit knowledge of good environments in different contexts." Empirical studies were conducted in countries in the north and south of Europe, and fitted in to the model. However, the end assessment of the whole endeavor by the editors was, again, admittance of the fact that no study on children's environments was adequate without "a theoretical and practical clarification of environmental child friendliness."

2.1. A Framework for Integrative Literature Review

Since theoretical, conceptual, or empirical literature on environmental child friendliness was non-existent, I decided to do an integrative review of interdisciplinary literature related to design and planning research to understand whether it is possible at all for children to enjoy friendly relationships with the environment.

There is also no unified theory on children's relationship to the urban environments (environmental child friendliness belongs to this genre of research). However, the interdisciplinary studies in environment-behavior (EB) research, children's geography, environmental psychology, and more recently new social theories of childhood have provided valuable insights and theoretical propositions for studying the diverse range of childhood experiences in cities, towns and villages across the world. This literature review will summarize and integrate the interdisciplinary literature to focus on the construct environmental child friendliness. Figure 1 below maps the range and purpose of the literature to be reviewed in this chapter.

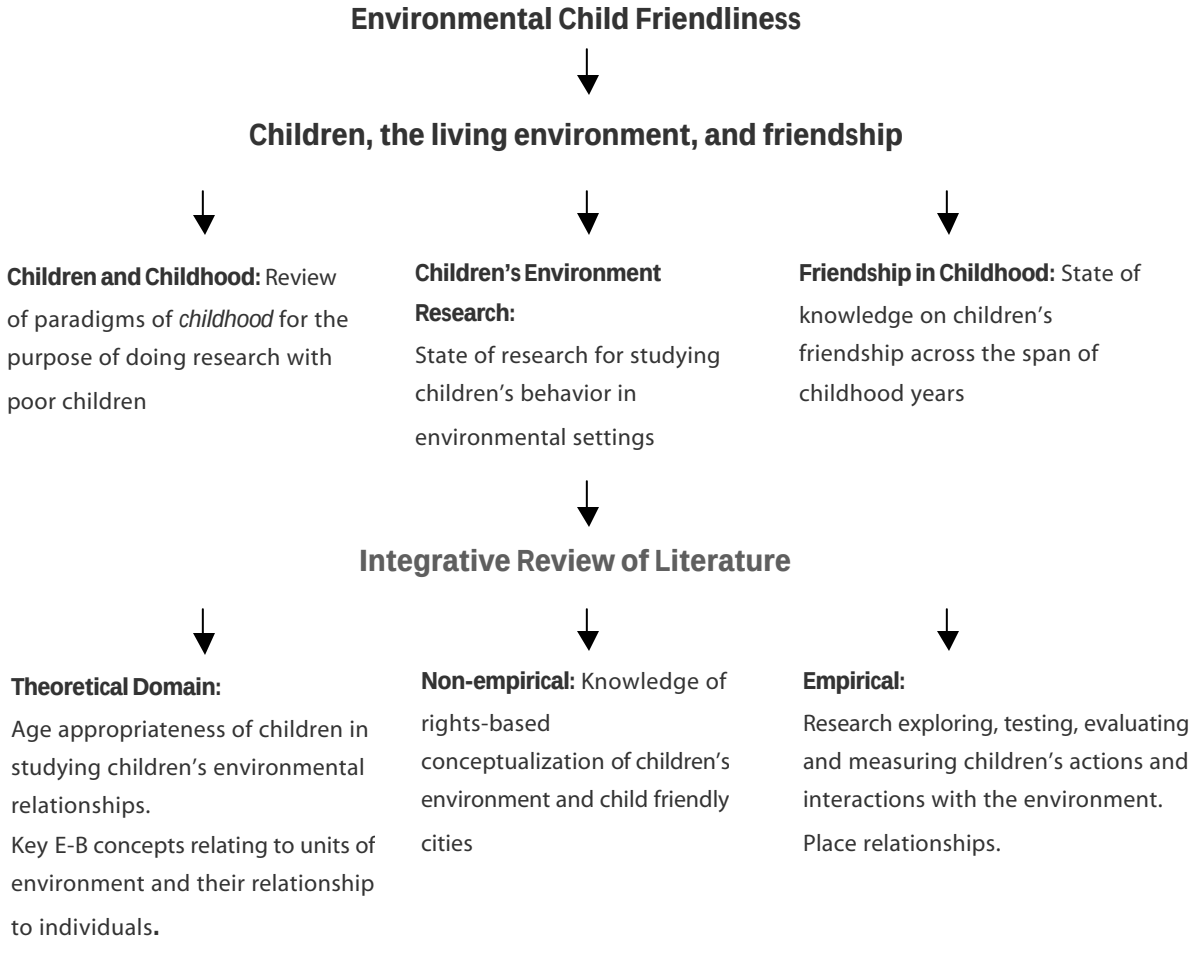


Figure 2.1. Conceptual Map of Literature

2.2. Children and Childhood

Cunningham (2005), rightly points out,

> *Childhood cannot be studied in isolation from society as a whole. It is arguable that the factors which have had most impact on it, both as a set of ideas and as a phase of life, have been primarily economic and demographic, and, in second place, political. It has been the economic development of the western world, which has allowed for both the shift in the experience of childhood from work to school, and for the emergence of the idea that childhood should be a time of dependency. And concern for the present safety and future needs of the state have often provided the impulse for public action concerning children (p. 3).*

2.2.1. Childhood and Convention on the Rights of the Child

There is no better codification of public action concerning children than in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)—CRC, the most ratified human rights convention in the history of the world. Countries on either side of the globe and in all directions, except the United States, agreed on the premise that children have the basic rights to survival and development, protection and participation in every aspects of their lives, and that states and humanity have the obligation to secure these rights for children.

CRC provided a new direction to conceptualizing childhood by first affirming the age-specific definition of the 'child' as a person under eighteen years of age and by laying down the basic non-negotiable rights of childhood that parents, families, societies and governments should respect through customary and legal provisions. Ever since the adoption of the CRC, ratifying nations committed to creation of environments that ensure children's survival and development and to involve children in decisions that affect their lives (Chatterjee 2002).

The convention recognizes children as a group, a body of social actors, and as citizens with needs and rights, it also treats childhood as a structural feature of society, as any person under 18 with evolving capacities. This age-based structural conceptualization of the "child" has been attacked by critics of the convention as being sociologically void because the manifestations of childhood not only varies from society to society, but even within a society, children and childhood experiences often cannot be considered as typical (Nieuwenhuys 1998). The new sociological approaches to childhood understand childhood as 1) a social construction, 2) a variable of social analysis to be considered in conjunction with other social variables such as class, gender, and

ethnicity, and 3) populated by social actors who are actively transforming their own lives and of those around them (Heywood 2001). In other words, different societies and cultures understand child and childhood in different ways. As Prout and James (1990) point out, "the immaturity of children is a biological fact of life but the ways in which this immaturity is made meaningful is a fact of culture (p.7)."

Moreover, the limited repertoire of protectors and caregivers in CRC's universalist ideal of childhood is clearly informed by notions of modern children growing up in nuclear families, which is an ideological paradigm of a western industrialized society, and not of the inter-generational extended family systems prevalent in societies of the global south,

> *The convention's assumption that the field of childhood would be dominated by but three significant social actors—i.e., the individual (and un-gendered) child, the biological parents, and the state—acknowledges insufficiently that, in the South, the circle of kin—the group of peers, family patrons, and professional, ethnic, and religious communities, and one could go on, have a socially accepted role in children's socialization and well -being. The general philosophy of the convention reflects what is most valued in the type of childhood that has evolved in the North: a highly individualistic world outlook, a life -style clearly distinct from that of adults, and the experience of living in a privileged, protected arena within the confines of the nuclear family and staked out by an array of pedagogical aids and expertise guaranteed by the state. This is why critics of the convention have attacked the underlying assumption of its approach, which would portray the child not only in isolation from its social networks but also as a "naturally" innocent being that is under constant threat by an inimical world and incompetent in facing this danger and in maintaining meaningful relations with adults other than parents and the experts operating in state institutions (Nieuwenhuys 1998, p. 149).*

Just as the global south sees the CRC as giving too much control to parents and the state in matters relating to children, the opposition within the United States, the only non-ratifying nation, that prevent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is predominantly based on the fear of giving up state and parental control over children. The reasons commonly cited for non-ratification were the concerns of the Convention requiring federalizing an area of law (relating to children and families) that traditionally is the domain of states, rather than the federal government; of giving legal rights to children and thus depriving parents of the right to exercise

appropriate control over their children; of including economic rights that are inconsistent with the philosophy of government followed in the United States; and finally of being forced to account to the international community for US policies in regard to the treatment of children (Quigley).

The US example and the fact that most ratifying nations failed to enact the convention that they ratified bring home several points in great relief: nations including the United States worked toward protecting childhood through the Declaration on the Rights of the Child in 1959, from the historically recorded low levels of childcare such as killings, neglect, abandonment, beatings, terrorization and sexual abuse (de Mause, 1974) but in effect developed a system for promoting dependence where "good parenting consisted of preserving and prolonging this [children's dependence], in part at least by the exercise of parental authority" (Cunnigham 1995). This new ideal of childhood as properly protected, dependent and happy, as sociologists (James, Jenks and Prout 2002) and historians (Cunnigham 1995, 2005) have agreed is influenced by the notions of romantic childhood promoted through popular western culture.

Aries (1962), relying on art, music, literature and photographs from French society, was the first to argue that even though children existed before, childhood as a concept and a social construction, made a sudden first appearance in 16th century. Postman (1994) also endorsed childhood as a social construction rather than a biological category. Postman accepts Aries's thesis that the concept of childhood emerged out of the Renaissance. But he furthers the proposition by saying that medieval societies lacked childhoods because of the absence of education and its institutions, and the absence of shame. The notion of childhood, Postman (1994) argues coincided with the invention of the printing press. The printed word created a new kind of adult, different from the child (Bissell 2000).

Qvortrup (2005) commenting on representations of children and childhood in medieval and post medieval society, points out that the medieval society "was not short of children but which lacked childhood. Children were plentifully (and visibly) there, but they did not constitute a *conceptual category* [as Aries and Postman had argued], that is, there was no particular awareness of them. They were part and parcel of any community; they were entrusted with duties like adults; they were not kept away from putative dangerous events—from sexuality to executions, no one prevented them from being witness to whatever took place because no one had the idea that children constituted a particular group, or that the child had particular needs…childhood was invisible. Children were there (2)." In the Ariesian vision of childhood in medieval Europe, "*children were a part of public life, that is, they were not confined to the privacy of a family*. Children were

public in the sense that they were in the open space, and to be in the open space implied large visibility, albeit not in the figure of children as a group or collectivity (2, emphasis mine)."

In contrast Qvortrup argues that modern democratic societies in embracing openness as a structure of social and political life, simultaneously

> *…developed a large number of private forms—from private ownership of the means of production to private organizations and the privacy of families. Children in modern society basically belong to the private family, which is portrayed as a 'haven in a heartless world' or a retreat from the openness of public society. In this sense children have historically experienced a movement from visibility—as small adults—in open local communities to invisibility in public spaces in a modernity which is characterized by much more freedom and democracy—and in this sense more openness than Ariesian societies. These apparent paradoxes were resolved by suggesting that childhood has entered the historic stage. In fact, this was the gist of Aries's famous thesis;* children lost legitimate visibility in public as they were confined within a variety of forms of childhood: a family childhood, a school childhood, a kindergarten childhood, a leisure time childhood *and so on. In short: even if children gained more and more visibility within these confines, sociologically speaking, childhood had become severed from an encompassing encounter with adulthood (p. 2, emphasis mine).*

Childhood has come to occupy a more precious place only in second half of the twentieth century, the strongest evidence of which is the multi-billion dollar market for toys. Families increasingly live in a consumer culture where "the forces of competitive emulation are so strong that any failure to provide children with what their peers have is likely to induce guilt" (Cunningham 1995, p184). As Cunningham notes, historically parents had invested in their children with the hope for some care in old age. And this is still true in non-western cultures, with negligible social security provided by state, children take varying degrees of responsibility for their aging parents. However the emotional gratification parents derive from their children is universal. In fact adults need children to gratify their own emotional needs. This is most clearly evident from the development of legal adoption in the twentieth century and the phenomenon of American parents insuring themselves against the death of their children to recover from emotional stress (Cunningham 1995).

The CRC represents the most "comprehensive description of the rights of every child. It is a document that defines childhood as a state bound by structures and expectations; and it prescribes responsibility to individuals, institutions and states for realizing that childhood (Bissell 2000, p. 80)." As the opposing camps debate the validity of the ideal of childhood adopted by the CRC as a framework that governs all aspects of children's lives, the fact remains that vast majority of the world's children are grappling with the crippling effects of acute poverty in different countries that threaten their very survival and development. For poor children, the non-negotiable rights of childhood promoted by the CRC—non-discrimination of children, upholding the best interest of the child in any development decision, ensuring child participation in the process, and above all securing the child's right to survival and development, may be the only way to secure an adequate standard of life. Despite the criticisms of a western bias in its conceptualization of childhood as a definite age-specific life stage that needs protection from family and state, the CRC in recognizing children as social actors and citizens with basic human dignity, provides the space for global experiences of childhood in local communities around the world to strengthen its purpose. The universal childhood promoted by CRC may have been influenced by ideas of romantic childhood as is evident in the strong focus on protection of children by the state (Cunnigham 2005). But this universal ideal of childhood is also equally influenced by more social constructionist ideas, as the convention's focus on children's autonomy, self-determination and participation indicates. Since sociological studies in childhood is a very recent field of inquiry currently being dominated by groups creating "new social theories of childhood", it is not unreasonable to expect that in future with the current growing awareness of different childhoods across the world, there will be new knowledge that will inform, revise, and elaborate the conceptualization of childhood in the CRC. Till that happens, the convention remains the only valid instrument to measure the performance of nations in providing the basic necessities to the poorest of children.

In the post CRC (1989) decade, a new emancipatory action research framework was adopted by several studies (the Growing Up in Cities studies are notable examples), based on the non-negotiable child rights that reconstructed children as active agents with voice in matters affecting their lives. Globalization directly and indirectly affects children through changes such as with parent's unemployment, migration and rapid urbanization. The relevance of the CRC is heightened in such changing times as it serves two very important purposes. It provides a standard for assessing children's quality of life using universalist global principles regarding the most important aspects of children's lives—health, education, standard of living, civil rights and freedom; and reminds individuals, institutions and states of their responsibility to children (Bissell, 2000; Boyden, 1997, 1998).

2.2.2 Universalist vs. Social Constructionist Ideas of Childhood

For the increasing population of children living in poverty around the world, universalist visions are necessary to establish standards; to hold states and society responsible for making sure that *all* children go to school, are able to read and write, and learn in an atmosphere where they are not constantly the *other*. We need to have universalist health goals for *all* children that will ensure that children have access to healthcare that will immunize them, monitor their growth, and protect them from preventable and life-threatening diseases. Such universalist strategies will prevent the hazards which could potentially be life-threatening for children in the margins of society by making their living environments secure and safe. But the emphasis on *all* children will not allow only universalist strategies to adequately cope with the many forms of childhood and expectations from childhood within local cultures. Therefore, by anchoring childhood on certain non-negotiable standards for being, we need to understand the variability and intentionality of different forms of childhood by socially constructing the child and its context for development.

The relative dominance of the universalist vs. social constructionist ideas of childhood, more than anything else, is determined by the context of the children studied, the form of childhood being addressed and the focus of the study. I find the framework posted by James et al. (1998) in defining the epistemological and methodological approaches to the study of childhood, based on the purposes of the study, very informative.

1. **Childhood as a Diverse Structural Phenomena**: specificity of childhood emerge as a predominant theme, good for highlighting the socio-cultural specificities of childhood in a context.
2. **Childhood as a Unitary Structural Phenomena**: produce abstract schematic account, good for formulating policies that will affect all children in a society, city, country.
3. **Children in their Localities, Context**: agency and specificity of children's own diverse experiences of childhood as the central focus.
4. **Children as Social Actors**: understanding how children deal with their circumstances by foregrounding their agency in social action.
5. **Diversity and Social Construction of Childhood**: examining the everyday assumptions of what childhood might be.

Cunningham is concerned as a historian that it is "much easier to write a history of childhood than of children….Ideas about childhood in the past exist in plentitude; it is not easy to find out about the lives of children (2005, p. 2)." As the chosen context of this study, a low-income settlement in New Delhi in India, has very little empirical literature on children's environments, and children's

own experiences, and widely differing ideas about childhood held by different actors in the child's life—children themselves, familes, the community, society, institutions and government, I adopt the epistemological perspective of "children in their localities and context" to focus on the specificity of children's own diverse urban experience rather than study any one form of childhood among others that maybe on offer in the chosen context.

2.3. Children's Environment Research

2.3.1 Theoretical Knowledge Base

Many different theoretical bodies of knowledge have influenced children's environment research. In this section I will describe the key concepts that will be helpful in structuring a study on children's relationship with the physical environment. In any environmental study involving children, it is essential to clarify the age-range of children. The first topic of 'age appropriateness of children vis-à-vis environmental relationship studies' seeks that clarification while affirming the choice of the age-range for the study. The next two topics—'behavior setting' and 'place' compares the units of analysis of the environment commonly used in children's environment studies, to explore the appropriate unit for a study on environmental child friendliness. The fourth topic—'affordance' discusses the theoretical concept most widely used in meaningfully describing the relationship of children with their environment.

2.3.1.1. Age-Appropriateness of Children Vis-à-Vis Environmental Relationship Studies

Whichever perspective one adopts, children represent a large conceptual category with differing abilities, needs, and maturity based on their phase in childhood, life-circumstances and social context. The biological needs of infants are different from the physical and increasingly complex psychological needs of older children in middle childhood, and adolescents. Local studies with children, almost always involved one phase of childhood to eliminate the confounding variability introduced by different ages.

Empirical literature suggest that children in their middle-childhood (6-12 years) most actively use outdoor space (Chawla 1992). Developmental literature suggest that during late years of middle childhood children can mentally role-play the mutual actions and intentions of self and other (Sheiman & Slonim 1988), and are capable of taking reciprocal perspectives and of self reflection, and is aware of reciprocity and mutual adjustments in friendship (Selman 1980). Above all, this age range has been least studied in empirical research (James et al 1998).

From the perspective of studying children's everyday experiences of the neighborhood, late middle childhood is a good age-group to work with because such children will more likely use a diverse range of places on an everyday basis. Also in order to understand the local and contextual constructions of childhood, children in late childhood, 10-12 years, will be able to give voice to their perceptions about their environment as well as their lives in the context of their living area, culture, and society.

2.3.1.2. Behavior Settings

'Behavior settings are the concrete environmental units where people engage in behavior (Schoggen 1989, p. 368).' Behavior settings are observable, ecological environments that exist independent of the psychological processes of individual persons. This objective environmental unit has often been used as the unit of analysis of children's eco-behavioral environments (Barker 1969). The behavior patterns that occur in behavior settings are considered part of the environment of the individual in the setting, similar to the other fixed and temporary physical components of the setting (Schoggen 1989). These patterns are not considered as intentional acts of individuals in relation to the properties of the environment. What behavior settings allow us to do is to objectively record, and analyze the ecological environment of a person at a particular time. Three classes of variables influence analysis of these settings—physical properties, the number and character of human components and the programs of the setting.

2.3.1.3. Place

There is no unifying theory of *place*, which is considered a useful concept for integrating the objective and subjective perceptual environments of humans typically researched in design and in environmental psychology (Groat and Depres 1991). Place has been researched differently by designers, planners, geographers and psychologists (Groat 1995). However, some correspondence exists between the work of Relph in the field of humanist geography and the work of Canter in psychology. Both authors outlined three components of place: Relph identified *physical features* or *appearance*, *observable activities and functions*, and *meanings* or *symbols*; Canter identified *actions*, *conceptions* and *the physical environment* as components of place. The word "place" within the EB repertoire has multiple meanings as well. At the most basic level, a place is a setting for human action. It comes in different scales and sizes and varies in scope—from the front porch to an entire city. It is an intentional environment laden with emotional and cultural meanings, personal and group values that make it stand apart from its context (Childress 1994). What this implies is that places, including child friendly ones, are to be found in immediate smaller settings as well as in distant larger ones. Place researchers agree that interpreting place meaning involves a complex

interplay between the perceptual, cognitive and affective responses to the environment (Groat 1995).

Integrating Place and Behavior Settings to Strengthen Analytic Power of Place. The construct of place in addition to knowing the ecological environment of individuals as the settings for their action, also understands the subjective representations of the objective environment for individuals and groups. But the construct of place has been accused for its lack of "robust analysis of the physical attributes of place" (Groat 1995, 7). If the analysis strategies of behavior settings that analyze the objective, ecological environment, and its physical attributes, are used for analyzing place, a more robust analysis of place can be developed by integrating the subjective and objective perspectives.

2.3.1.4. Affordance

Affordances are defined as functionally significant properties of the environment that are perceived by the individual through the process of active detection of information from a setting. The concept of *affordance* is based on an ecological approach to person-environment relations where the environment is seen as a value-rich ecological object as opposed to a value-free physical object to which human mind ascribes meaning. Affordances have been further regarded as a graded property of the environment whose different levels are potential, perceived, utilized and shaped (Greeno 1994). To add a social dimension to affordances Reed (1993, 1996) had distinguished between fields of free action (FFA) or spontaneous affordances and fields of promoted action (FPA). Affordance promotion occurs when social rules and practices regulate which affordances are to be utilized or shaped. However, Kytta (2003) had found through her empirical research that social and cultural contexts often restrict utilization and shaping of affordances. She calls such affordances field of constrained action (FCA). Gibson and Pick (2000) attributes the perceptual development of the child to the reciprocity of perception–action that guides each other in a cyclic manner, perception guiding action and action furnishing new information for perception. This supports the transactional/dialectical perspective of the child-environment relationship (Werner & Altman, 1998). The concept of affordance emerging out of Gibson's ecological approach is being considered by E-B researchers to be an invaluable instrument for formulating a functionally meaningful description of an environmental setting. The broader value of this type of functional approach is that it offers a way of thinking about the environment that is both *objective* and *psychologically meaningful* (Heft, 1997).

Heft was the first environmental psychologist who attempted to identify some of children's environmental experiences through an affordance taxonomy (1988) by collecting data from three

books that provided detailed accounts of children's outdoor environments—'*One Boy's Day*' by Barker & Wright (1951), '*Children's experience of Place*' by Roger Hart (1979) and '*Childhood's Domain*' by Robin Moore (1986). This functional taxonomy created a matrix of outdoor environmental features and related them to the activities they were observed to support. Kytta (1995, 2002) added social interaction as an affordance type in the taxonomy stemming from the concern that other people in children's environment provide some of the richest affordances. An affordance scale was developed by Heft and Kytta to objectively assess actualized affordances and the environmental properties supporting the affordances. One of the shortcomings of this affordance scale however, is that it does not account for frequency of affordance actualization. In a pilot study the author while trying to record affordances of children's outdoor environment in a designed setting found that certain affordances were much more utilized than others (Chatterjee & Sullivan 2005). Recording all possible affordances in a setting without marking the frequency of their occurrence, does not give a true description of the most utilized affordances in a context. This knowledge is crucial to designers who can program children's environments better if they learned which settings and features were most used by children.

2.3.2. Non-Empirical Literature

This section will discuss the relevant theoretical writings on child rights and living environments with specific emphasis on physical urban development. The review will also include the obligations of local urban governments in promoting sustainable development in cities including the idea of the child friendly city. This review will summarize both expert opinions, and findings of case studies of cities that promoted CFC initiatives.

2.3.2.1. Child Rights and the Living Environment

The CRC recognizes children's rights to an adequate standard of living (Article 27), not only through promotion of the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, but also through promoting adequate housing environments. The human right to adequate housing has been defined as the right of every woman, man, youth and child to gain and sustain a secure home and community in which to live in peace and dignity. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognizes seven minimum core obligations of states in securing the right to adequate housing: *legal security of tenure*; *availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure*; *affordability* of housing in relation to income levels of families; *habitability* ensuring adequate space and protection from the elements within housing; *accessibility by all* to adequate housing; *location allowing easy access* to employment, healthcare, schools and other social services; *cultural adequacy* that promotes diverse cultural practices (Chatterjee 2002).

2.3.2.2. Obligations of Local Urban Governments to Children and Their Environments

Even though the CRC refers to the state for promoting the legally binding obligations of child rights at a national level, but in reality the whole governmental structure of a country is required to fulfil these obligations (Bartlett 1999). In fact with increasing urbanization and decentralization of governance to cope with local issues, the local government has more responsibility in fulfilling CRC obligations to promote child rights in urban areas governed by them. In many countries, urban basic services that definitely improve children's quality of life in cities are provided by local governments. Other actors who actively work toward promoting child rights are community and non-governmental organizations. But these extra-governmental organizations do not have the structural capacity of governments to usher in systemic improvements. Bartlett (1999) summarizes the important role played by local urban governments to improve children's living environments,

> *Only these authorities can develop the regulatory frameworks to promote health and safety, to establish building codes and planning norms, to assign responsibilities to other groups, and to be responsible for monitoring the cost and quality of private or community provision. Through collaboration and partnerships, local authorities can make the fullest use of all available resources (p.16).*

The importance of the local government is further borne out in the discourse of sustainable urban development. The Plan of Action resulting from the World Summit for Children (1990), and the Agenda 21 (1992) resulting from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, made a strong connection between child rights and sustainable development, as children's lives were most profoundly affected by changes in their living environments. At UNCED governments endorsed a new definition of development (Chawla 2000) where development and protection of the environment was balanced "so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations." The Local Agenda 21 codified the local level goals of sustainable development and made local governments important actors in realizing these goals. The Habitat Agenda (1996) resulting from the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements strongly emphasized taking into account the needs of children and youth through direct involvement of the young in shaping cities, towns and neighborhoods.

2.3.2.3. The UN Child Friendly City Global Initiatives

The UN Child Friendly City global initiative, an outcome of the thinking embodied in the CRC, Agenda 21 and Habitat Agenda, with regards to improving quality of life of children and youth in cities around the world, works with local governments globally to make the urban environment of children child friendly. The initiatives are concerned with ensuring that 'city governments consistently make decisions in the best interests of children, and that cities are places where children's right to a healthy, caring, protective, educative, stimulating, non-discriminating, inclusive, culturally rich environment are addressed' (Riggio, 2002). The most significant problem in this definition of the UN CFC is interpretation of best interests of children. Cities are typically not planned with children in mind, but to maximize returns from urban land through minimum expenditure (Bowman & Pagano 2004). In this model of urban development, driven by fiscal imperatives of the city, how does the best interest of the child, which may not give any maximum return and incur capital investment, get respected? Though, cities may respect children's rights through a strong social agenda drawn up by a conscientious mayor, interpretation of children's best environmental interest may not be in favor of creating places that provide maximum happiness to children. To site an example, children, when provided with the opportunity to explore their surroundings in an unconstrained manner, seek out vacant lots in the local area (Hart 1978, Moore 1986). These are typically seen as dangerous places by adults, and as potential developable land by cities. Best interests of children would require preserving these places within cities for children to enjoy through their play and games.

The global initiative of CFC because it is backed by international human rights instruments, has the promise of creating environments that could nurture children and youth especially in contexts where they are most vulnerable in densely populated, resource deprived developing societies that are home to a significant percentage of the global youth population. Also the emphasis on local level interventions initiated by city governments in consultation with all the stake holders creates the opportunity for tabling local issues that are pertinent to the lives of children and youth in a given context.

However, Bartlett (2005) after reviewing the CFC website, and case studies relating to child friendly city initiatives around the world found out that most cities while promoting child rights through initiatives and programs, leave out the physical environment. There are also no examples of modifications of local ordinances or codes pertaining to building guidelines. There are some examples of vision statements and goals prepared by cities to improve the lives of children that broadly touch upon all the domains covered in CRC. The Kawasaki City Ordinance on the Rights of the Child is such an example.

Some cities such as Waitekere City in New Zealand created the post of a special advocate for children who represent the needs of young people at the local council. Similar posts of spokesperson for children at municipal level were created in Honduras, and Norway. The only example of city-initiated action to improve the physical environment happened in Franston in Australia through the Community Safety Plan 2000. This included a safety audit of places that children were likely to use the most, and development of a proposal through children's participation for improving a skate ramp in the city.

Christchurch in New Zealand is the only city that engaged in a five-year action research called the Children's Strategy Study to create the vision of a child friendly city. The objective of this study was to develop long-term strategies for children's health and safety, physical design and layout of the city, children's experience of education and opportunities for stimulation and play. The citywide child surveys revealed that children's perceptions of "good" places were by and large related to psychological states such as stimulating and exciting; and policy issues such as travel distances to schools, recreational facilities, and shopping. Other policy issues highlighted by the respondents of the survey had to deal with keeping the city clean, bright and safe. The only design issues referred to by the children were the need for green buildings and playgrounds. A lot of these preferences are related to the overarching policy goals of CFC such as stimulating, educative, healthy and protective. The City of Christchurch made design and policy recommendations based on these findings in developing child friendly parks and institutional premises. However the survey did not come up with any notion of what a child friendly park or any other environment should have in terms of physical features or affordances to achieve being stimulating or exciting or educative or protective.

In the few cases where children from low-income communities around the globe had been asked to *comment* on their ideas of *child friendly cities* such as in Johannesburg, Barra Mansa, and Phillipines, children identified problems in their *physical surroundings* as concerns they would like to see addressed (Bartlett 2005). This suggests that the western interdisciplinary empirical findings, that children feel very connected to their local environments, hold true for children living in developing societies as well. As Riggio and Kilbane (2000) report, the CFC initiatives in the global North emphasized more than the South on physical environmental issues such as in improving parks and recreational areas in attempts to make the city child friendly. The initiatives in the South adopt a more "problem fixing" approach in low-income communities by providing basic services to urban poor. The southern initiatives typically do not focus on enhancing childhood experience in contexts where there maybe no basic infrastructure related problems such as in middle-income neighborhoods.

The survey of case studies of CFC initiatives around the world did not reveal any project that had developed the physical environment as a child friendly one by understanding what that means in the context of children's lives. When surveys were conducted by cities to make the living environment "child friendly", as in the case of Christchurch, questions were asked about what would make a "good" environment or a "better" environment. Even though semantically, "good", and "better" may appear similar to "friendly", in order to describe and develop an adequate environment for children through CFC initiatives, and from the point of view of systematic research on environmental child friendliness to explore the qualities of a child friendly physical environment, it is imperative to find out if these similar terms and other related constructs commonly used in place relationship studies mean the same or different things.

2.3.3. Empirical Literature

This section will summarize the empirical literature on children's experiences of the environment and relationships with the environment in an attempt to integrate what is known about child friendly environments. The section will also review the more common place relationship constructs that had been empirically studied to enrich our understanding of human interactions with the environment. The review will point out what is not known about place relationships and highlight the areas, which need further conceptualization and investigation.

Environment-Behavior (EB) literature includes a range of studies that focus on children's needs and experiences in towns and cities. Several studies produced evidence of emotions and self-regulation in favorite places—children and adolescent's attachment to favorite places for restorative experiences (Korpela and Hartig 1996; Korpela, Kytta, and Hartig 2002), and youth's preference for different places, both private and public, for reasons as varied as retreat and social interaction (Clark and Uzzell 2002; Lieberg 1994; Owens 1988; Schiavo 1988). Towns and cities have rich affordances which, through children's exploration, contribute to their repertoires of widening social and cognitive worlds (Bjorklid 1982; Hart 1979; Moore 1986; Torrell and Biel 1985), though gender differences in patterns of exploration and extent of mobility suggest that girls encounter various degrees of constraints in both western and developing societies (Banerjee and Driskell 2002; Hart 1979; Tranter and Pawson 2001; van Vliet- 1983). Other researchers have searched for evidence on social and physical dangers—strangers and street crime (Blakely 1994), traffic (Bjorklid 1994), and pollution (Lyons and Breakwell 1994; Woolley et al. 1999)—that threaten children living in cities.

These multi-dimensional explorations of children's experience of towns and cities have proposed several important place variables—safe and healthy places, favored places, parentally-approved

places, educative places, culturally-approved places—that enhance our understanding of what kind of environments cities should be providing to nurture happy childhoods. But these empirical studies do not tell us how children develop "friendly" relationships with the physical environment by interacting with these different types of places.

2.3.3.1. Place Relationship Constructs

This section will do a focused review of existing place relationship constructs to explore if environmental child friendliness can be explained by any of them.

Sense of Place: The concept of *sense of place* (SOP) has been widely considered to be the meaning attached to a setting by a person or group. SOP has been assigned a higher construct level subsuming other concepts that describe human relationships to places. SOP consists of three phases: the first phase is belonging to a place, the middle phase is attachment, and the third (and most intense) phase is commitment to a place (Shamai 1991). Adopting an attitude framework to empirically assess SOP, Jorgensen and Stedman (2001) selected the most commonly addressed place concepts in environmental psychology: *attachment*, *identity* and *dependence*, to represent the affective, cognitive and conative components of attitude towards spatial settings.

Place Attachment: Attachment, according to Riley (1992) is the "affective relationship between people and the landscape that goes beyond cognition, preference or judgment" (p.13). In defining childhood place attachment, Chawla (1992) notes "children are attached to a place when they show happiness at being in it and regret or distress at leaving it, and when they value it not only for the satisfaction of physical needs but for its intrinsic qualities" (p. 64). According to Chawla, during the latency years of middle childhood when the strong social attachment to the family base lessens, the physical environment looms large in children's experience. Studies in child-environment research (Hart 1979; Moore 1986; Kytta 2003) have shown that school-age children are the heaviest users of outdoor landscapes, particularly around the home and its surroundings. Empirically, however, very few studies have directly investigated children's place attachment and/or its link to sense of place. Childress (1994) challenges the exclusivity enjoyed by place attachment in the domain of affective place relationships by announcing that it is certainly *one* of *many* possible relationships with place. Childress encourages us to explore the gamut of human interaction with the environment to enrich our vocabulary of place relationships.

Place Identity: Place identity, as posited by Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff (1995; 1987; 1983) is a substructure of the self-identity of the person consisting of, broadly conceived, cognitions about the physical world in which the individual lives. These cognitions represent memories, ideas,

feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behavior and experience, which relate to the variety and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day existence of every human being. At the core of such physical environment-related cognitions is the 'environmental past' of the person; a past consisting of places, spaces and their properties which have served instrumentally in the satisfaction of the person's biological, psychological, social, and cultural needs (1995, 89).

Broad place identity cognitions allow people to use places for attaining cognitive integration and consistency, anxiety reduction, and self-esteem maintenance (Korpela 2002). Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) explored the extent to which an attachment or affective relationship with place supports and develops key aspects of identity in adults—self-esteem, self-efficacy, distinctiveness and continuity (components of Breakwells' identity process model). This model has potential for understanding *children's* emerging self-identity through affective place relationships as well (Spencer and Woolley 2000).

Place Dependence: Place dependence is concerned with the appropriate fit between settings and achievement of specific behavior goals. This concept answers the question, "how does this setting compare to others for what I like to do?" Stokols and Schumaker (1981, 457) defined place dependence as an "occupant's perceived strength of association between him or herself and specific places." Place dependence differs from attachment in two ways. Dependence can be negative when a place limits achievement of valued outcomes, and the strength of association experienced by an actor in a setting may be purely based on specific behavior goals rather than affect (Jorgensen and Stedman 2001).

2.3.3.2. Environmental Child Friendliness as a Place Relationship Construct?

According to Korpela (2002), place identity, place attachment, privacy regulation, and restorative outcomes of favorite places are all inter-related phenomenon within self- and emotion regulation. For example, the phenomenon of anthropomorphizing a favorite place (the act of ascribing humanlike qualities through nicknames, etc.) serves several purposes. Entering such a place enables the person to block negative feelings and emotions after a disappointment, fatigue or stressful scenario. Being in this place also reinforces positive feelings through the humanlike nurturing and ameliorating dimensions ascribed to a familiar favorite place.

However, Jorgensen and Stedman (2001) found that the concepts of identity and dependence were less synonymous with the SOP factor than attachment. The authors while empirically attempting to clarify the substantive content of place meaning by integrating diverse concepts,

realized that the construct validity of the sub-constructs of dependence, identity, and attachment were questionable as attitude components, especially in the domain of place relationship. For example, place attachment is considered to be implicit in the place identity construct (Korpela 2002) as attachment to places fulfill people's emotional needs and helps people to develop and maintain their identities (Kaiser and Fuhrer 1996).

Reviewing the great basket of place-centric literature, the question, "do these diverse (and divergent) concepts somehow construct environmental child friendliness?" remain unanswered. Friendship, like attachment, has a strong affective component and is a common form of human relationship. By the same token, children should be able to form friendship with place just as they are attached to favorite places. Perhaps child-friendliness is a new construct rooted in children's friendship with place, and is different from the more prevalent place relationship construct, place attachment, found in EB literature. Of all the other forms of relationships with the living environment as discussed above, friendship with places has not been subjected to scholarly inquiry. However its wide application in global rhetoric—child-friendly city, child-friendly environment, etc.—certainly merits just that.

This dissertation will now inquire into the concept of place friendship as a valid form of place relationship in childhood. Like attachment, the concept of friendship has a strong affective component, and is considered a tool for building connectedness with peers just as attachment is considered a tool for building connectedness with family in school-aged children (Smith 2004). Hence the conceptual model for place attachment, which is perhaps the most developed place relationship concept in environment-behavior studies, both becomes a model for conceptualizing place friendship, and a point of departure for defining the uniqueness of this new place relationship concept. As a first step, the literature on childhood friendship will be reviewed, and then compared with the construct of attachment in childhood, thus laying a foundation for differentiating between place attachment and place friendship. The next chapter will be devoted to the construction of place friendship as a new place relationship construct within the broader SOP framework to provide new insights for research and theory in place relationships.

2.4. Children's Developing Ideologies of Friendship

Friendship is a process of mutual selection by which a child chooses and is simultaneously chosen by another as a preferred friend (Doll 1996). The essentials of friendship, according to Hartrup (1991) are reciprocity and commitment between individuals who perceive each other as more or less equal (note that this is different than interaction between child and adult, which often reflects a dominant-subordinate dynamic).

The friendship ideologies of children change as the child grows older. Selman (1980) proposed a model of children's reflective understanding of friendship based on their development of social perspective-taking abilities at different ages (see Table 2.1). This model makes clear that developmental age of the child is important in reflecting upon friendship. However, the overlapping age ranges in each level of friendship also suggest that the perspective-taking abilities of each child differ. The age flexibility of this model allows consideration for socio-cultural, economic and ecological influences in understanding children's developing philosophies of friendship as diverse, socially constructed phenomena.

Table 2.1: Selman's (1980) five-stage model of children's developing philosophies of friendship (concept descriptions adapted from Hart et al. 1997; Rizzo & Corsaro 1988)

Stage and Name	**Age-Range**	**Concept**
Stage 0: Momentary Physical Interaction	3-7 years	Children conceive friendship solely on propinquity and proximity.
Stage 1: One-Way Assistance	4-9 years	Friendship entails the notion of friend-as-helper and knowledge of his/her dislikes. Friend as someone to play favorite games.
Stage 2: Fair-Weather Cooperation	6-12 years	Friendship involves an awareness of reciprocity and mutual adjustment but the relationship is still defined via the play moment, and cooperation around incidents and issues. Relationships tend to break up over arguments.
Stage 3: Intimate and Mutual Sharing	9-15 years	Friendship involves an awareness of the continuity of the relationship and of the affective bond. Possessiveness and jealousy often characterize this stage.
Stage 4: Autonomous Interdependence	12 years to adult	Friendship entails the awareness that friends. Must rely on each other. Draw strength from each other. Gain a sense of self-identification through identification with the other as a significant person with whom one has meaningful relations. Accept the other's needs to establish relations with others and to grow from such experiences.

The emerging themes of friendship relations based on Selman's model and other friendship literature reveal that in *early childhood*, friendship is understood by affiliation, common interests, proximity and attractiveness of the activity (Hartrup 1991; Ramsey 1991) through relatively momentary and purely convenient play episodes (Doll 1996).

By *early elementary* grades, children acquire contractual notions of friendship where they have responsibilities to fulfill and expect the same of their friends: mutual exchange of favors and duties; reserving playtime and play spaces for one another; sharing treats; and protecting one

another from common enemies. Though longer play episodes are recorded, contractual childhood friendships continue to be transitory as compared to adult friendships (Doll 1996).

By *later elementary* years, contractual friendships become more sophisticated, similar to adult expectations of loyalty and mutual understanding. Later elementary aged children often refer to the purpose of friendship as fulfillment of a need to be liked and supported by friends (Selman 1979; 1980).

Negotiation skills for achieving intangible favors and concessions characterize *middle childhood* friendships (Doll 1996). Adolescent friendships set aside the contractual nature of friendship in favor of mutuality (Brown 1989; Jones and Dembo 1989). Intimacy and loyalty are considered to be the purposes of friendship (Selman 1979; 1980).

2.4.1. Doll's Six-Dimensional Framework of Friendship

Doll's (1996) integrative review of developmental definitions of friendship revealed six essential elements across the developmental range of childhood:

Mutual Affection and Personal Regard, by which each friend demonstrates a caring responsibility for the other (Hinde 1979)

Shared Interests and Activities, representing the friends' investment of time and intention to have fun together (Hartrup 1989a; Youngiss 1980)

Commitment, or the intention on the part of both friends to continue fostering the relationship over time (Asher 1995; Hartrup 1989a; Hinde et al. 1985)

Loyalty, that is the intention of both friends to protect the interest of the other (Hartrup 1989a; Hinde 1979)

Self-Disclosure and Mutual Understanding, by which each friend acquires and contributes to an uncommon understanding of the other (Hartrup 1989a)

Horizontality, such that friends share power in the relationship (Hartrup 1989a; Hinde 1979)

2.4.2. Friendship vs. Attachment

Hinde (1976) suggested eight dimensions for characterizing relationships. These are:

1. Content of component interactions
2. Diversity of component interactions
3. Reciprocity vs. complementarity of interactions
4. Qualities of the component interactions (meshing, mutual goal alignment)
5. Relative frequency and patterning of component interactions
6. Multidimensional qualities such as "affectionateness" that cannot be described in terms of any one dimension such as warmth or possessiveness
7. Each partner's level of moral or cognitive functioning
8. Penetration or degree of mutual disclosure, openness, and intimacy
9. Several of these points reveal qualitative differences between attachment and friendship.

The *content* of an attachment relationship is security regulation, in which the attached person seeks and the attachment figure provides security (Bretherton 1985). In contrast, the content of friendship has many dimensions, which (as shown in Table 1) differ with the developmental age and social perspective-taking ability of the child.

An attachment relationship is a *complementary* one, where the behavior of each partner differs from but complements one another. Friendship, on the other hand, is a *reciprocal* relationship where the partners show similar behavior, either simultaneously or alternately. Bowlby (1982) suggested that the roles of attachment figure and playmate are distinct. In close personal relationships most people have a complex pattern of needs that can be best met by someone with some similar and some complementary characteristics (Hinde 1979), which is why it is possible to have a caregiver as a friend or a friend as an attachment figure in later years. However, not all attachment figures are friends and not all friends are attachment figures. In order for the relationship to have some reciprocal and some complementary interactions to satisfy complex needs, understanding the frequency and nature of interactions across the full range of the shared plan is important. In studying this shared range of interactions, the relative predominance of attachment and play components may vary to tilt the relationship toward the predominance of either attachment or friendship.

It seems that as children grow older, the two types of relationships, attachment and friendship, take on opposite curves of intimacy and visible strength. Attachment behavior is most conspicuous in early childhood, when security is a primary concern. As children's affective-cognitive development progresses, they become better able to assess the intentions and motives of the attachment figures, and children develop improved coping skills (Bretherton 1985). In older children, attachment becomes very visible only in stressful situations or in moments of high personal achievement and social recognition.

A strong expression of an attachment relationship in early childhood wanes to specific expressions of attachment behavior with age. The strength of friendship, however, in terms of interdependency, mutual sharing and doing things for the other grows with developmental age. The intense shared play moments of early childhood are replaced over time by interdependency or greater mutual understanding. In fact, Hartrup posited that as very young children venture out of their secure caretaker attachments, it is peer friendships that draw them into the ever-widening social worlds (Hartrup 1989a; 1989b; 1991). It would seem that attachment relationships are crucial for young children to develop improved coping skills, whereas friendship relationships are important for gradually learning to recognize interdependence in a shared world.

2.4.3. Functions of friendship

Hartrup (1991) identifies three functions of friendship:

Emotional Resources: friendships provide children with the security to explore their surroundings, meet new people and solve new problems. Friendships also protect children and adolescents from the adverse effects of negative events (Heller and Swindle 1983; Ladd and Oden 1979), such as family conflicts, terminal illness, school failure, or parent's unemployment. (In both of these respects, friendship functions are somewhat similar to attachments.)

Cognitive Resources: friendships enhance problem-solving abilities, provide unique contexts for transmitting information from one child to another, and aid knowledge acquisition and mastery of certain tasks.

Social Resources: friendships provide contexts in which basic social skills such as social communication, cooperation, and group entry skills are acquired and elaborated. They also provide the templates for subsequent relationships; new relationships are never the same as old ones in all respects, but the organization of behavior generalizes from old to new relationships.

Measures of friendship show strong relationships to a child's immediate experience of well-being (Doll 1996). Moreover, childhood friendship a child's ability to get along with other children has been considered the best predictor of adult adaptation (Hartrup 1991). Friendships in childhood become a secondary source of a range of support that were previously provided by the family—companionship, recreation, personal guidance, and emotional support (Asher 1995). Friendship provides the space for children to develop as independent and competent social agents (Hartrup and Laursen 1989; Sluckin 1981; Sutton-Smith 1971). The task of growing up becomes easier if children have friends to share emotional hazards, a friend to ask for assistance when faced with

stressful situations (Heller and Swindle 1983; Ladd and Oden 1979). Just being with a friend changes how peers treat the child. There is also a difference in the nature of conflict resolution between friends and non-friends, with gentle cooperative solutions being more common among friends than non-friends (Hartrup 1989a).

Despite strong evidence suggesting developmental outcomes such as positive self-attitudes or self-regard, and enhanced relational functioning in sibling, peer, and romantic relations, Hartrup (1991) cautions that these developmental outcomes are not exclusively attributable to having, making and keeping friends. He suggests that, should friends be unavailable, other relationships (including attachments) may be flexible enough to serve friendship functions. This is also true of attachment; if an attachment figure is absent, other relationships (including friendship) can fulfill security-seeking needs. Hartrup's advice is to view friendships as developmental *advantages* rather than developmental *necessities*.

At this point it is worth making a comment about possible destructive effects of peer relationships, which may lead to complex abusive behaviors such as bullying in schools (Banks 1997; Lyznicki et al. 2004). Reviewing the literature on friendship, it does not appear that friendship produces destructive effects. Rather, the lack of it does (as in the case of children who are isolated and rejected by peers), just as lack of other close inter-personal relationships—including attachment to family—produces loss of self-esteem and emotional distress. Children without friends tend to dislike school more, or are vulnerable to a wide range of destructive personal and interpersonal outcomes including substance abuse, gang involvement, teen pregnancy and other forms of violence at school (Doll 1996; Smith 2004). The concepts of friendship and attachment are valuable tools to build a sense of connectedness between youth and peers as well as youth and family. Building such connectedness, according to Smith (2004), is the most positive approach to prevent violent behavior.

The comparative review of the literature on attachment and friendship in childhood suggest that these are very different constructs serving different emotional, cognitive, and social needs in childhood. In reviewing several different ideological perspectives on childhood friendship such as that of Selman, Hinde, Hartrup, and Doll, it was found that only Doll's framework integrated all the other perspectives into a coherent multi-dimensional friendship construct. Therefore Doll's framework will be adopted in the next chapter to explore a possible new place relationship construct, place friendship.

Chapter 3
Environmental Child Friendliness: a Theoretical Proposition

The integrative review of a large interdisciplinary literature suggested that from the perspective of children's place relationships, it might be possible to study environmental child friendliness of children's environments in cities through the construct of place friendship. This chapter will explore this new construct in order to develop a much-needed theoretical framework for studying environmental child friendliness.

3.1. Place Friendship as a New Place Relationship Construct

The basic premise for conceptualizing childhood place friendship is that children share affective relationships with favorite places that cater to a range of developing friendship needs and ideologies. In an inclusive, non-discriminating environment as proposed by the CFC initiative, a place should be able to cater to the whole range of friendship requirements across the large range of childhood years (including adult friendship) to be truly considered a "friendly place." Though the focus of the empirical study based on this new theoretical proposition is middle childhood, I will review the place relationship literature across the biological range of childhood because 1) the theoretical framework of friendship (Doll 1996) adopted for developing theory on environmental friendship presents an integrative conceptual frame for the whole range of childhood, 2) as a construct place friendship should be useful for investigation of environmental child friendliness for every child and not just children in middle childhood, 3) place relationship studies focusing exclusively on middle childhood is rare if not non-existent. By adopting this general theoretical framework, empirical studies will be able to elaborate or revise it for children in middle childhood in a particular context.

In his empirical research on restorative qualities of adolescents' favorite places, Korpela found that his adolescent subjects often went to their favorite places to relax, to calm down, and to clear their minds after threatening or emotionally negative events (Korpela 1989; 1991; 1992). This is an example of using favorite places as a secure base or attachment place for seeking security. But in addition to these attachment needs, the subjects also reported beauty, control, freedom of expression and escape from social pressures. These latter experiences represent some of the essential elements of friendship in childhood such as proximity and attractiveness of the activity (Ramsey 1991) as a starting point for sharing interests and activities—the experience of beauty of a place is a starting point of a relationship with the place based on the attractiveness of its intrinsic qualities or affordances. Experiences of control, freedom of expression and escape from social pressures resonate with the idea of horizontality or sharing of power in developmental friendship

(Hartrup 1989; Hinde 1979) where place and child share power in the relationship. Korpela's empirical findings follow Hartrup's (1989; 1991) idea of using the attachment base to venture out and explore the widening social world by forming friendships with peers. This also is an affirmation that the same place can fulfill attachment and friendship needs.

Referring back to the Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) study on place attachment at the home, neighborhood and city scale, the findings of weakest level of attachment at the neighborhood scale despite a large literature theorizing strongest attachment to neighborhoods, could be explained by the fact that the needs for exploration within the neighborhood were friendship needs and not necessarily attachment ones. Due to the lack of a construct such as place friendship, all other place relationships needs get subsumed under place attachment.

Place attachment has an inward pull, drawing the child in to provide security and helping the child to cope with stress and anxiety. When the place to which the child is attached for its qualities as a secure base, and opportunities for security seeking are lost, the separation causes anxiety in the child (Bowlby 1982). This place to which the child is attached also becomes a base from which the child moves away to explore the environment, but comes back to when faced with fearful and stressful situations. In early to middle childhood, before interdependent friendship ideas are formed, an attachment place holds the child in a secure base to venture out into the wider environment and other places, to make friends for sharing interests and activities in order to develop environmental competence. Through continuous, reciprocal interaction with the everyday environment children learn to co-exist in a shared world (Chawla and Heft 2002). This vision of children exploring the environment from a secure base to seek out friendly places embodies the principles of Agenda 21 from the Earth Summit, the Habitat Agenda and the Convention on the Rights of the Child—the three international policy instruments guiding the idea of the Child Friendly City—in promoting the idea of our interdependence with each other and our interdependence with our place (ibid).

3.1.1. Place Friendship and Sense of Place

According to Shamai (1991), the highest sense of place indicator is commitment to a place through investing time, money and other forms of human agency. The concept of commitment is integral to place friendship. Shamai's sense of place scale consists of seven levels:

1. Not having any sense of place
2. Knowledge of being located in a place: A state of being physically aware of a place but not being emotionally linked to the place

3. Belonging to a place: A state higher than just physical awareness of the place, awareness of what is important for the place and respect for the place
4. Attachment to a place: A state of emotional attachment to the place; place has personal and collective meaning
5. Identifying with the goals of the place: a state of deep attachment to the place that fosters allegiance and loyalty
6. Involvement with a place: a state of commitment to a place where one is actively involved by investing in the interests of the place

Sacrifice for a place: Highest state of sense of place where one is ready to give up personal and/or collective interests for the larger interest of the place.

The three conditions of friendship (Doll 1996)—shared interests and activities, commitment and loyalty, are very similar in content to SOP factors—involvement with a place, sacrifice for a place and identifying with the goals of the place. All three of these SOP factors account for the construct of commitment to a place. Thus, sense of place literature needs to acknowledge place friendship as a valid form of human interaction with the environment that leads to the highest form of sense of place through commitment to place. The construct of place friendship also enriches the vocabulary of place relationships and sense of place and allows us to develop a wider repertoire of human interaction with the living environment.

In close inter-personal relationships, both attachment and friendship are needed to satisfy a complex pattern of needs (Hinde 1979). Similarly, children use both place attachment and place friendship in order to maintain a balance between manifest behavior in the environment and regulation of the self. Moreover, place friendship provides a developmental advantage to children by affording better cognitive and social outcomes in addition to emotional ones. This enables children to have a wider repertoire for having fun and adapting to stress. Though there are overlaps in conceptualizing friendship and attachment in terms of the nature of some interactions, the difference in the frameworks is most distinct in childhood.

3.1.2. Place as a Mediator in Child-Environment Friendship

Bryant (1985) in her empirical study on sources of support in middle childhood found that when children from smaller families had three or more places that they could independently explore in their environment, they were more accepting of individual differences than children from larger families. In contrast, children in larger families with just one place to get off by themselves were more accepting of individual differences, and found it easier to get along with people than

children from smaller families. What this indicates is that when children lack interpersonal support from siblings, peers and other members in their everyday lives, they compensate for those relationship needs by striking out on their own and finding environmental resources.

In keeping with Hartrup's idea of attachment securing the base for friendship to flourish in childhood, it is possible that when a person is in a complementary place attachment relationship such as with the home environment in nuclear families, the attached place (in this case the home) becomes the starting point for further exploration of other environmental resources to take care of the diverse interpersonal needs of children especially when those are not satisfied in the home or attachment base. Once children identify new places in their everyday environment, it is possible for them to engage with these places through the potential, nested and sequential affordances.

The place has a mediating or two-way relationship with the child and the task or behavior. A child interacts with place to fulfill some need. In order for the child to prefer that specific place to others, the place has the responsibility to satisfy those needs, to create a fit between action and the environmental features affording those actions. If there is compatibility between the child's needs and the recognized affordances of the place, the child transacts with the environment to actualize the affordance and fulfill the need. When the socio-ecological context for this affordance actualization is supportive, children may develop strong affective feelings toward the place including considering the place as a friendly one.

As small family units characterize the western urbanized social milieu, and as new forms of families including a large number of children without immediate families are restructuring the fast urbanizing communities in the global South, we need to enrich environmental resources by creating several different socio-physical settings in the everyday environment of the child. In other words we need to provide many child friendly places in our cities so that children can develop friendship with place and fulfill several of their interpersonal needs.

3.2. Six Dimensions of Place Friendship

What makes an environment child-friendly—is it the place or the experience? Will the act of providing settings according to a checklist of empirically determined child-friendly features and settings truly generate a child-friendly environment? Or do the reflexive meanings of the range of children's experiences with and in places constitute child-friendliness?

From a phenomenological perspective, understanding of meaning happens through the act of indirect cognition (Heft 2003) or by stepping outside of the ongoing flow of immediate

perception-action events. The awareness of a relationship does not sink in when one is immersed in direct experience with the relationship partner. Only by reflecting on the experience itself will children learn the meaning and value of their relationship with a place. According to Heft this is because:

> *Awareness sinks to a minimum [during immediate experience] to such an extent that encounters with the world seem nearly automatic and habitual, and the experience of a boundary between the self and the world is negligible. We are 'simply' immersed in situated doing and being (Heft 2003, 151).*

By selecting and isolating particular portions of this on-going perception-action experience and lifting them up for closer scrutiny, we heighten our awareness for analysis and categorization through a reflexive process. Indirect cognition allows us to reflect on the experience with place, and determine the nature of our relationship with the place through the experience. This process of reflexive, second-order mode of knowing allows more than just understanding relationship links between the setting and the nature of actions afforded by the setting. It is only through our understanding of our relationship to places that we are either drawn toward or repelled by them. We start valuing a place when it serves to satisfy some of our complex needs.

It is worthwhile to bring back the six definitions of friendship that emerged from Doll's integrative review of elements of developmental friendship to see how the conditions of peer friendships can be translated for place friendships (for a summary see Table 3.1 in p. 48).

3.2.1. First: Mutual Affection and Personal Regard to Care and Respect for Place

Doll, borrowing from Hinde (1979) illustrates the first friendship criterion of *mutual affection and personal regard* as one by which each friend demonstrates a caring responsibility for the other. In other words, concern for a friend is translated into action through demonstration of care. Conceptualizing care and respect for places as a place friendship dimension in childhood is strongly anchored in the notions of environmental concern of children. Though Hart (1997) argues that there is very little research on how and why children develop concerns for the environment, he and others (Hart and Chawla 1981, Chawla 1988) before him have posited *childhood animism* or the "tendency to find intention and consciousness in things that are inanimate (Hart 1997, 18)", as the basis for children's caring for the non-human world. According to Chawla & Hart (1995) childhood animism may form the emotional basis for environmental concern. And this caring concern for the inanimate environment is shaped by opportunities for direct contact with nature and through social learning (Chawla 1988).

Following the notion of animism, a child develops mutual affection and personal regard for a place that has pleasing intrinsic qualities capable of delighting, and holding the child from harm. When the opportunity is provided to the child to care for such a place, the child is likely to participate in reciprocating in caring for the place. As in fact Piaget (1926/1960) had noted through his observations of children collecting a few pebbles or flowers at a time so that they would not feel lonely, or frequently rearranging stones along pathways so that stones may enjoy different views, animism often assumes a form of respect for non-human things in childhood. The formulation of environmental caring through friendship with place is also in keeping with the commonly expressed viewpoint in EE that "the very young should first be friends with and love and feel the natural world…"(Sheryl Schoenfeld, quoted in Tanner 1977, 49; and Chawla 1988, 16).

One of the goals of environmental education (EE) is to include "environmental sensitivity to the learner's community in early years (Tbilisi Declaration, UNESCO 1980, p.72)." The EE goals of developing an environmentally conscious citizenry have seen several local projects involving the school community (of which Robin Moore's Washington Yard is a notable example) in creating and caring for natural schoolyards. Such projects are driven by the need to instill responsible environmental behavior: indepth knowledge of the issues, personal investment, knowledge of and skill in using environmental action strategies, an internal locus of control, and the intention to act (Chawla 1998). Projects such as the Washington Yard also demonstrate what sustainable development means on the ground from a design perspective (Moore 1995). Projects of this type however, are rooted in the Western tradition of favoring and promoting the natural environment more under the "concern for environment " banner (Hart 1997). Hence understanding of children's environmental concern, as well as EE curricula have been accused of being biased due to the western culture's preoccupation with romantic ideals of childhood and its special relationship with nature (Hart & Chawla 1981; and Chawla 1994). This cultural favoritism is further reflected in analysis of autobiographies (Tanner 1980, Peterson & Hungerford 1981, and Chawla 1986) that revealed that the sense of connection to nature in adult lives was anchored in interest and affection for nature and positive experiences outdoors in childhood. Wals (1994) showed that even children growing up in poor inner city neighborhoods in Detroit had "developed a sense and a taste for nature (p. 12)", even though this nature was experienced in their back alleys. These Detroit students gave meaning to the concept of nature through their own neighborhood experiences—"In my neighborhood we find lots of nature. Flowers that you don't plant will grow and we have a tree that's in the next block that nobody planted, it just grew! (Wals 1994, 14)"

Though the value of the natural world in children's outdoor experience has been established as fundamental in developing ecological concern and knowledge, little is known about how such concern develops in children growing up in environments that are undergoing rapid change due

to urbanization in developing countries. How do children develop concern for the environment while growing up in surroundings that are devoid of nature, and where the nature of childhood itself deviates from the romantic ideals of a happy protected precious life stage? Do children growing up under these circumstances fail to appreciate, value and care for the environment? The Growing Up in Cities research in an Indian slum near the rapidly urbanizing city of Bangalore did show that boys from the slum sought out secluded natural areas outside their settlement for different play needs and restorative experiences. The girls in this community regularly participated in cleaning the houses, and decorating the threshold with *rangoli* or intricate designs made of rice flour every day. The public realm was rarely the concern of householders for daily care, though some families swept the streets and cleaned the drains in front of their homes (Banerjee & Driskell 2002). The examples in different cultures and contexts show that children develop affection and regard for places that have pleasing intrinsic qualities capable of delighting, as well as holding the child from harm. These places may vary from school yards, to nature in the back alley, to house thresholds. But when opportunities were provided, children participated in taking care of these places.

3.2.2. Second: Shared Interests and Activities *to* Meaningful Exchange with Places

Doll (1996) considers the first two dimensions in her six-fold framework of elements of friendship as present in the friendships of even very young children. The second dimension is shared interests and activities. Early childhood friendships have been defined through convenience both by Hartrup (1989) and Selman (1980). Children consider other children readily available for play as friends. Both propinquity and proximity of friends, as well as the attractiveness of the shared activity determine the friendship pattern.

Sharing activities in early childhood, often as per convenience of the children involved, lead to better understanding of the other if the interaction is sustained over a period of time. This subsequently expands the range of friendship to include extra-play activities to other interests. Doing things together then is an important building block, if not the most important, of friendship.

Place-child exchange or place and child doing things together, is the logical second dimension of place friendship according to the model adopted for this study. In order to explain how this is a feasible proposition, I would delve into the epistemology of person-environment exchange that considers the organism and environment as inseparable and organisms as "inevitably immersed in physical surroundings that provide both the context and possibilities for the activities in which they engage" (Preston 2003, 60).

Transactionalism has often been adopted by scholars studying children's lives in cities as a way of understanding development "as a life-long process of person-environment transactions in whose course both the cognitive and emotional-motivational structures of the person change…individual's knowledge of the city is modified, places and elements of the environment acquire new meanings, and the person's mental representation of the city is updated." (Harloff et al 1999, 55). The units of analysis in transactional studies are both the organisms and their milieu juxtaposed into a combined complex unit. This way of looking at how organisms or persons interact with their environment, as an integrated system is a departure from modernist thought which credits activities solely to the mind, and by extension to the person.

The Gibsonian ecological approach has received much attention from scholars studying person-environment interactions or exchange in recent years. Gibson and his interpreters, Reed and Preston, also emphasize a departure from modernist perspectives and from the supremacy of the mind as the sole producer of knowledge. Gibson's theory of visual perception situated the study of vision "outside of the eye and back in the world beyond" (Preston 2003, 59) by emphasizing that vision was not a passive sensory activity, but an embodied action of individuals acting in an environment including "looking around, walking up to interesting things, and moving oneself around objects to get different perspectives on them" (Preston 2003, 58). The proposition that organisms and their environment are inseparable allowed Gibson to develop the concept of "affordances" as the information organisms pick up from the optic array in the environment. Affordances, according to Gibson, are the opportunities an environment offers to the animal. These are not merely the extrinsic functional properties of the environment (such as offering of a seat by a park bench due to its flat low sittable surface), but a more detailed presentation of a set of possibilities for engaging the organism (such as the condition of the bench, clean usuable vs. dirty unusuable, and the proportions of the bench with respect to the individual). The functional properties of the environment become affordances for organisms only when they can be meaningfully perceived by the organism toward fulfillment of some need, activity or interest. The concept of affordance then unites organisms with meaningful things in the environment.

The concept of affordance provides a new way of looking at person-environment exchange through sharing of activities and interests between individual and place. Places that afford doing different things in it, with it, will be a child friendly place. How a place allows children to perceive its different affordances, and act on the information thus collected, will determine how friendly the place is toward the child.

Since I have established the epistemological position that privileges both child and place as units of analysis, in the study of meaningful exchange with places, I will heed the advice of the

Gibsonian scholars and give a detailed description of the environment within which the child is acting, and categorize the possibilities that the environment presents to the child as well as how the child actualizes those opportunities.

3.2.3. Third: Commitment *to* Learning and Competence Through Place Experience

The third dimension in Doll's (996) framework of childhood friendship is commitment or "the intention on the part of both friends to continue fostering the relationship over time". Reciprocal commitment transcends immediate observable events between friends to include a deeper understanding based on highly personal experiences that builds interpersonal trust and empathy (Doll 1996). Abstract reasoning is required to nurture this mutuality; hence this dimension of friendship gets highlighted in middle childhood and strengthens in adolescence.

But what about commitment in place friendship? How does place and child continue fostering a friendly relationship over time that eventually builds trust and empathy? The first steps to early childhood friendship as seen in the earlier dimension are proximity of friends and convenience of play moments. But once friends are made how are friends retained and the bond of friendship strengthened over time? This would mean continued interactions on an everyday basis to know the other better. Discovering affordances and actualizing affordances of places allow children to share interests and activities with friendly places. When this place-child exchange happens in a continuous manner with the everyday environment in a field where children are relatively free of action constraints, children create new affordances and hence new meaning of places. Children learn to manipulate affordances that are nested within already experienced ones, and explore further to learn about and utilize the sequential affordances in an activity. Gaver (1991) cites an example of nested affordance: switches on electrical appliances, which allows a person to use the switch or play with the switch but also initiate some other activity. Kytta (2003) suggests that when a child climbs a tree and finds a strong branch, the prospect of building a tree house in that branch becomes a sequential affordance. Discovering these hidden affordances of the environment contributes to "deeper understanding" of place "based on highly personal experiences".

Matthews (1992) in his robust study of how children make sense of place, suggests that children's direct and indirect experience of place contribute to children's environmental learning and environmental competence. To clarify this idea further, I would borrow from Chawla and Heft's (2002) theoretical analysis of development of competence in children based on activities that children are able to perform in the environment. According to these authors, if environmental features had been responsive to a child's actions, and if these features continue to offer rich

possibilities for further engagement, the child will be inclined to use those features again. "The psychological outcome of these recurring experiences for the individual can be called competence (207)…it refers to the capacity to exercise control over valued spheres of life and in so doing achieve desired outcomes (205)." Learning about the environment through own experiences, influences choices that one might make in future. Whether those choices are competent, will ultimately be judged by whether the actions in relation to the environment "contribute to the preservation of biosphere on which human survival depends, as well as the survival of innumerable and uncounted other species (205)." Hence learning about the environment and gaining environmental competence are important factors for developing a committed relationship with the environment. In other words we could say that commitment in place friendship is manifested through environmental knowledge, learning from the environment and gaining competence to be informed actors within and on behalf of the environment.

Just as commitment in friendship is not based on immediate observable events between friends but on a deeper understanding based on highly personal experiences that builds interpersonal trusts and empathy, environmental knowledge and competence is not based on one time interaction with a place but a sustained flow of interpersonal experiences in, of and about place. Little (1980) had argued that much of the pleasures that children get out of environmental explorations, amount to "sweet nothings." These supposedly inconsequential exchanges, such as kicking a stone around while rambling down a street, rarely get mentioned to anyone. But the gentle accretion of such everyday experiences build the environmental knowledge base of children and allow them to be competent actors in the environment.

3.2.4. Fourth: Loyalty *to* Creating and Controlling Territories

The fourth dimension of friendship is loyalty or the intention of both friends to protect the interest of the other (Hartrup 1989, Hinde 1979). In place friendship, loyalty can be interpreted as a place that is available to the person over a long period of time (maybe over the years), and allows the person to own, to personalize and defend the place from other interest groups. In return the place also protects the interests of the users. This reciprocal relationship leads to creation of identifiable territories over time.

Probably the most common conception of "human territoriality" is "control of area". As Foucault points out, *territory* is "no doubt a geographical notion, but it's first of all a juridico-political one: the area controlled by a certain kind of power (1980, 68)." Most scholars studying human territoriality have built in this aspect of *control* in their definitions of territory. Sack (1986) defines territoriality as "the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people,

phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area (p19)." According to Sack, "a place can be used as a territory at one time and not another; that is in creating a territory we are also creating a kind of place (p19)." Malmberg defines territoriality as "an instinctive nucleus, manifested as more or less exclusive spaces, to which individuals or groups of human beings are bound emotionally and which, for the possible avoidance of others, are distinguished by means of limits, marks, or other kinds of structuring with adherent display, movements or aggressiveness (1980, 10)."

The above two definitions bring out two aspects of territoriality that has been empirically verified as especially important in the context of children's territorial claim on the environment. As children are "legally prohibited from property ownership" and children only "appropriate and occupy the places of others (Childress 2004, 195)," unrestricted and reserved use of space at one time and not another, and emotional bonding with these claimed spaces are essential characteristics of territories created by children and youth. Appropriation strategies often include identifiable territorial markers by organizing the parts of a setting. Such territorial behavior, as Altman (1975, 107) points out, "is a self/other regulatory mechanism that involves personalization of or marking of a place or object and communication that it is 'owned' by a person or group. Personalization and ownership are designated to regulate social interaction and to help satisfy various social and physical motives. Defense responses may sometimes occur when territorial boundaries are violated." The defining of self and other through territorial ownership and claiming of space as belonging to an individual child, or a group of children, is a phenomenon reported in autobiographical writings of Jung, and empirical studies with children in the 1970s by Hart (1978). Children's territorial behavior, as recent studies in children's geography have shown, is a vehicle for identity construction where territorial practices of inclusion and exclusion of others are determined by shared residence and locality of children as in the case of block politics of youth in New York City (Wridt 2004), or in the tendency of youth to defend their "areas" on the basis of race and ethnicity in multi-racial communities of small towns in England (Watt & Stenson 1998).

The common thread that binds all human territoriality studies is the human proclivity to territorialize, to claim space, and children are no exception to this rule. In fact children's attempts to appropriate adult controlled landscapes gains legitimacy in the context of children's lack of legal ownership of land, and on the grounds of children's developmental right to play outdoors.

3.2.5. Fifth: Self-Disclosure and Mutual Understanding to Having a Secret Place

The fifth dimension of friendship in Doll's framework (1996) is *self-disclosure and mutual understanding*, which is described as the criterion by which each friend acquires and contributes

to an uncommon understanding of the other (Hartup 1989a). Though adolescent friendships are typically attributed with heightened needs of intimacy and loyalty (Selman 1979, 1980), over thirty per cent of the middle school children I interviewed cited reasons of mutual understanding, self-disclosure and deep loyalty as the meaning of friendship. "What I like best in my best friend is that she keeps all my secrets and never tattles."

Maintaining of intimacy between friends through sharing of secrets, and deep personal understanding then is not uncommon in middle childhood, which according to several scholars is the phase of childhood that had received very little attention ever since Freud called it the "latency period" (Sobel 1993). In fact, studies in middle childhood had started to recognize the significance of this period in developing a bond with the natural world (Pearce 1977, Chawla 1992). In the domain of children's place relationships, Sobel compares children's place-making efforts in middle childhood to the Jungian perspective of development or unfolding of the self in relation to the outer world. Sobel puts forth several autobiographical accounts including that of Jung as a young boy, to suggest that the need for privacy in middle childhood compels children to seek out secret places in the landscape: "Nobody knows of my special tree/Where we are alone, my secret and me (Edith Chase in "Secret Dawn" 1978 in Sobel 1993)."

Privacy in childhood has received very little attention in the discourse of child development (Wolfe 1978). After reviewing the literature, Wolfe, however outlined three dimensions of privacy in childhood: 1) interpersonal, 2) environmental, and 3) self-ego dimensions of privacy. Privacy by definition involves a particular form of relationship with others including the objects.

In the interpersonal dimension, privacy is achieved through interaction management and information management. The first involves choosing the forms of interaction including non-interaction with others (others also include objects and the physical environment). The second involves choosing how much information to share with others.

The self-ego dimension of privacy as described by Wolfe (1978) involves autonomy or freedom to choose the boundaries that allow being alone or being with others in pursuit of both enhancement of self and protection of self. Sobel refers to this self-ego dimension of privacy as a function of the secret place in middle childhood: "during this period of middle childhood, the self is fragile and under construction and needs to be protected from view of the outside world. The secretive nature of the hiding place is significant. The self, like the metamorphosing larva of the butterfly, needs to be wrapped in a cocoon before it emerges into the light. Thus, the places that children seek out are places where they cannot be seen, places to begin the unfolding of the self (1993, 70)."

The environmental dimension of privacy has three elements:

1. Cultural element: perceived options of privacy experience are limited by the cultural norms, which also define privacy situations for individuals and groups acting within that culture.
2. Socio-physical element: the qualities of physical and social settings that allow individuals and groups to experience privacy
3. Life-cycle element: the above two elements limit or facilitate privacy experiences according to the stage in the life cycle of the person. Also concepts of privacy change with stages in life cycle.

The significance of the secret place or the special private place is not only that of nurturing of "self" in the developing child, but also in managing interpersonal dimensions and environmental dimensions of privacy. The range of children's social interactions grows more complex as children grow older, and expectations from and responsibilities of children also change. Children seek out private special places or secret places when they want to withdraw from social interactions, to control stimulation from both physical and social sources, and to role-play and fantasize as a way to rehearse their behavioral roles in real life (Wolfe 1978). Hart's study (1979) of children's place experience in a small town in New England showed that children (12 years and under) frequently built places in the landscape using natural elements such as trees, bushes, fallen leaves etc. After studying these structures over a year, Hart wrote, "the dramatic play in these environments allows for girls and boys alike, the opportunity to act out real-life situations, express personal needs, explore solutions and even to experiment in the reversal of roles. Undoubtedly these functions are important but I believe there are qualities to this kind of building play beyond those of modeling the adult world (1979, 217)."

In a study conducted by Wolfe and Laufer (1975), with 900 children, the privacy experience as reported by these children included an activity component and a place component, though for children themselves the most important thing was the experience of being alone and being able to manage information. Though information management as a secret in private places may include "the suppression of truth, the concealment of information or the preservation of desires or dark knowledge (Lloyd & O'Brien 2000, xvi)"

Hart suggested that children in creating special places gain, competence and satisfaction from successfully transforming the environment to suit their own needs. Children also felt comforted in being able to create a place where they could enjoy privacy. The cultural mores and environmental qualities of a New England small town in the early 70s allowed children to be active

in shaping places in the landscape and actively construct meaning, which included enjoying privacy experiences. Secret places allow children to disclose, preserve and conceal information, suppress truths, desires and dark knowledge (often a characteristic or a secret of the place itself), and also to manage interactions with others by retracting into these private spaces in the everyday landscape.

3.2.6. Sixth: Horizontality to Freedom of Expression in Place

Horizontality refers to the sharing of power in the relationship (Hartrup 1989a, Hinde 1985). This dimension of friendship focuses on how friends are able to balance their reciprocal commitment to and expectations of each other such that the relationship has equilibrium as opposed to a dominance-subordination dynamic. To be able to exercise and share power, one needs freedom to communicate and engage with the other and freedom to express oneself without fear of the other.

Freedom of expression is one of the defining parameters of a democratic culture, and a fundamental human right. The term 'freedom of expression' is most commonly used in reference to free speech and free press. Free expression in public places within cities, however, may take many forms other than speech. Groups or organizations could express their thoughts through art, theatre, films, design, and even new community initiatives and programs. The multi-faceted conceptualization of freedom of expression as a means by which children could participate in matters affecting their lives is upheld in several articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

> *"The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice." (Article 13.1)*
>
> *"States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion." (Article 14.1)*
>
> *"States Parties recognize the right of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly." (Article 15.1)*

According to Breitbart (1998), one of the clearest expressions of power in the socio-physical landscape has "always been the ability to invest one's living space with meaning—to literally

occupy, define and decorate one's surroundings (306)." Children in occupying and claiming space, share power, by negotiating constraints to freely express themselves in different ways such as through art, music, personalizing space through activities and physical modifications of settings. Through these acts of free expressions in place, children create new meaning of places. An example of freedom of expression in place by young people could be found in the graffiti writing and hip-hop that originated in the 1970s among youth in South Bronx. The emergence of this new cultural form among youth was seen as a way by which a powerless section of society inscribed new meaning to their living environment that had steadily deteriorated due to unemployment, crime, drug use and violence (Kelley, 1997). As several commentators had noted, rap music allowed young people to identify and challenge the source of the many problems in their lives and surroundings (Rose 1991), and graffiti writing as a form of free expression provided a symbolic means of escape from the confines and constraints of everyday life in a contested living environment.

But as Breitbart (1998) points out, the locus of children's free expression in public place determines whether adults interpret youth urban cultural practices as freedom of expression or criminal activity. Breitbart contends as long as these free expressions in public places are located in low-income neighborhoods they are not considered out of place. But when these expressions such as graffiti start spreading to other public places in the city and public transportation, they directly compete with the global marketplace for business space, and hence multi-billion dollar graffiti clean-up campaigns get initiated. With the increasing privatization of public places in global cities, considerable restrictions are imposed by the controlling private interest group over who may occupy the spaces and how the spaces maybe used, similar to the time, place manner restrictions imposed by universities on free speech and assembly on campus. The added restriction on privately controlled public space is "who can use public place." Such places by controlling access, restricts use of public place by all citizens and thus in fact act as private property.

This trend of privatization of public place undermines the basic premise of a rights based child friendly city that promotes the development of human communities in such a manner such that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration. The developmental notions as well as empirical evidence of children's favorite places suggest that children's best interests include children's need of places varying in scale and scope, in their everyday environment, in and around their neighborhoods, where they could manipulate the physical environment to create territories that hold special meaning for them. The notion of freedom of expression in place is related to the act of manipulating the environment to implant new meaning within the public landscape. As cultural critics point out, the constraints placed on children and youth, such as through restricting

access to public places, is about cultural politics where the content of children's expression to claim space is scrutinized and policed by the dominant groups in the place in question (Rose 1991). Just as some kids accept and comply with these restrictions, others, especially in low-income communities with pressing social and environmental problems, attempt to reinvent ways of exerting influence and power over their surroundings with involved adults (Breitbart 1998).

Table 3.1: Criteria for Place Friendship

Criteria for friendship (Doll 1996)	**Conditions of friendship**	**Proposed conditions for place friendship (based on children's environments literature)**	**Criteria for place friendship**
Mutual affection and personal regard	Criteria by which each friend demonstrates a caring responsibility for the other (Hinde 1979)	Childhood animism is the basis for children's caring for the non-human world (Hart and Chawla 1981, Chawla 1988), and may form the emotional basis for environmental concern (Chawla & Hart 1995). Animism often assumes a form of respect for non-human things in childhood when children autonomously interact with and ascribe human emotions to desired objects (Piaget 1926/1960) This caring concern for the inanimate environment is shaped by opportunities for direct contact with nature and through social learning (Chawla 1988)	*Care and Respect for places:* Children develop affection and regard for a place that has pleasing intrinsic qualities capable of delighting, as well as holding the child from harm. When the opportunity is provided children are likely to care for places that they love and respect.

Table 3.1 continued

Shared interests and activities	Represent the friend's investment of time and attention to have fun together (Hartrup 1989a, Youngiss 1980)	In person-environment exchange or transactions, people and their environments are considered inseparable, and people as "inevitably immersed in physical surroundings that provide both the context and possibilities for the activities in which they engage" (Preston 2003, 60). The environment presents a set of possibilities for engaging the child through different activities in actualizing its affordances (Kytta 2003)	*Meaningful exchange with places:* Places through their affordances allow children to fulfill different needs and interests through action. Affordance actualization in places unites place and child through a process of meaningful exchange.

Table 3.1 continued

Commitment	The intention on the part of both friends to continue fostering the relationship over time (Asher 1995; Hartup 1989a; Hinde, Titmus, Easton & Tamplin 1985)	Children's direct and indirect experience of place contribute to children's environmental learning and environmental competence (Matthews 1992). When places continue to offer rich possibilities for further engagement, the child through recurring experiences of interaction with place gain competence (Chawla & Heft 2002) Learning about the environment through own experiences influences competent environmental action choices in the future (Chawla & Heft 2002)	Learning and Competence through place experience: Learning from the environment and gaining environmental competence through direct experience of place are important factors for developing a committed relationship with the place and environment. In other words we could say that commitment in place friendship is manifested through environmental knowledge, learning from the environment and gaining competence to be informed actors within and on behalf of the environment.
Loyalty	The intention of both friends to protect the interest of the other (Hartup 1989a, Hinde 1979)	Human territorial behavior shows that humans have a natural proclivity to claim, own, and defend spaces as their own territories (Sack 1986, Malmberg 1980, Altman 1975). More opportunities for interaction with these	*Creating and Controlling territories:* Place allows creation of identifiable territories through children's actions over time. Children assert control over these defined territories and defend them from perceived intruders.

Table 3.1 continued

		territories, and enhanced scope for personalization create stronger territories, which are protected from intruders (Altman 1975).	
Self-disclosure and mutual understanding	Criterion by which each friend acquires and contributes to an uncommon understanding of the other (Hartup 1989a)	Privacy needs, particularly in middle childhood, compels children to seek out secret places in the landscape (Sobel 1993). These places allow children to engage in activities that enhance and protect the self (Sobel 1993). Children's privacy experience includes the experience of managing information and interaction in the chosen place (Wolfe 1978, Wolfe and Laufer 1975).	*Having secret places:* Secret places allow children to disclose and preserve concealed information, suppressed truths, desires and dark knowledge (often a characteristic or a secret of the place itself), and also manage interactions with others by retracting into these private spaces.

Table 3.1 continued

Horizontality	Friends share power in the relationship (Hartup 1989a, Hinde 1979)	One of the clearest expressions of power in the socio-physical landscape is the ability to invest one's living space with meaning through personalization, decoration, and occupation (Breitbart 1998), or in other words through free expression of the self Freedom of expression is one of the defining parameters of a democratic culture, and a fundamental human right. Though the term 'freedom of expression' is most commonly used in reference to free speech, in public places within cities, free expression happens through art, theatre, films, design, and even new community initiatives and programs.	*Freedom of expression in place:* Children in occupying and claiming space, share power, by negotiating constraints to freely express themselves in different ways such as through art, music, personalizing space through activities and physical modifications of settings. Through these acts of free expressions in place, children create new meaning of places.

The friendship ideologies described in the third column of Table 3.1 were interpreted using a vocabulary borrowed from EB, geography and environmental psychology literature. The correspondence between the conditions of friendship and environmental concepts is not a direct translation but an interpretative translation between two domains—psychology and environmental studies.

3.3. Working Hypothesis

The central hypothesis of this dissertation is that children construct the child friendly city through their own first and second hand experiences with numerous and interlocking child friendly places in the everyday environments of their cities. The six dimensions of place friendship based on environmental concepts provide a framework for proposing a working definition of a child friendly place from a socio-physical perspective. I propose the following working definition of a child-friendly place based on the thematic analysis of the dimensions of place friendship (presented in table 3.1):

Child friendly places in the everyday environment of the child

1. Provide opportunities to children to develop an attitude of care for places that children love and respect
2. Promote meaningful exchange between child and place through affordance actualization in places
3. Offer opportunities for environmental learning and developing environmental competence through direct experience in places
4. Allow children to create and control territories, and protect these territories from harm
5. Provide privacy experiences and nurture childhood secrets
6. Allow children to express themselves freely in place

3.4. Research Questions

To investigate child friendly places in children's everyday environments, and to validate the proposed hypothesis, I designed an empirical study (see chapter 4 for discussion on research design). I propose to answer the following four research questions through this empirical investigation.

1. What according to children are friendly places in their living environment under the six dimensions of place friendship?
2. Why do children consider these places to be friendly?
3. What are the common attributes of places considered friendly under a place friendship dimension?
4. What lessons do these child friendly places offer for policy and design of similar place types in other neighborhoods and in the city?

By answering question one, I will be able to provide concrete references to physical places in children's everyday environment within the chosen geographic, social, cultural, economic and political context. The second question will help to refine and revise the conceptual framework and the hypothetical definition of the child friendly place by providing concrete evidence of ways in which children develop friendship with places. The third question seeks to discover the physical qualities of places that play a role in supporting place friendship behavior and attitude in children. The fourth question understands if the findings of the study have implications for design and planning of child friendly places and cities.

Chapter 4
Research Methodology

In this chapter I will discuss how I designed the empirical study to elaborate, refine and even revise the conceptual framework I put forth in the last chapter. The discussion will include the reasons for selecting the research strategy, methods for collecting data in the field, and the analysis techniques used in this study. In the introduction I argued that lack of empirical studies on children's environments in developing countries such as India, contributed to the lack of policy focus on physical environments for children in these countries besides the fact that sound theoretical frameworks at a global scale are absent to guide action on child friendly cities. I conducted the fieldwork for this dissertation in a fast urbanizing city, New Delhi, in a rapidly developing country, India, to bring in empirical elaborations to what were simply abstract conceptual musings in the last chapter.

4.1. Analytic Ethnography as the Appropriate Research Strategy

The subject of my research deals with children's *friendly* relationships with places in their everyday environments. This form of place relationship had been unexplored prior to this study. Any childhood place relationship including friendship is marked by interplay of affect and emotions, knowledge and beliefs, behaviors and action (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). Therefore to empirically study children's friendship with place required obtaining intricate details of phenomena such as children's feelings about places; robust analysis of the physical characteristics of chosen places; and thought processes of children about places, as well as those of the community and the city that produced those places. In addition the study was conducted in a social, economic, political and geographic context, India, which had no prior record of studies on children's place experiences. There is abundant quantitative data on Indian children's health, well being, education and work. But there is almost no understanding, barring one much cited ethnography by Olga Niewenhuys on gender and labor issues in childhood, of children's attitudes, behaviors, perceptions, context and experience. Given the substantive and contextual uniqueness of the current study, qualitative methods were better suited for data collection.

However, the starting point of the inquiry was a strong conceptual framework, working hypothesis, and research questions linked to both the framework and the hypotheses. This inquiry did not seek to inductively produce grounded theory on place friendship in childhood, thus making a typical grounded theory research unsuitable for this study (Creswell 1994; Glaser 2001). The design of this study used the distinctive strategy used in social research, sometimes labeled analytic ethnography (Lofland 2002), which allows starting with general propositions, and through

unfettered inquiry and deep familiarity with the setting, allow emergent theories to revise, elaborate and update the initial propositions.

The seven defining features of analytic ethnography (Lofland 2002) that I used in this study were:

1. *Generic propositions* or putting forth generic concepts that propositionally structure data. In this study the six dimensions of place friendship propositionally structured the study of children's friendship with place. Questions thus framed generated data related to types of places, frequency of nominations, structure of physical organization within the place, process of meaning creation, agency or how people strategized in or toward creating those places. The data collected were both quantitative and qualitative and needed a cohesive analysis strategy to make sense.
2. *Unfettered inquiry* using a long time frame which in the case of this study was one year; a wide social frame which in this case was the social life of one large neighborhood and all social institutions in the city that impacted production of spaces in the neighborhood; and "an emotional attitude of judiciousness and calm concern, with patient and careful examination and continual reexamination of all data and concepts (Lofland 2002, 149)."
3. *Deep familiarity* so characteristic of participant observation, and which according to Goffman is a technique of "getting data…by subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals, so that you can physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethnic situation, or whatever. So that you are close to them while they are responding to what life does to them…To me that's the core of observation…You are artificially forcing yourself to be tuned into something that you then pick up as a *witness—not as an interviewer, not as a listener, but as a witness* to how they react to what gets done to and around them…It's *deep familiarity* that is the rationale—that plus getting material on a tissue of events—that gives the justification and the warrant for such an apparently "loose" thing as fieldwork. (Goffman 1989, as quoted in Lofland 2002, 150)"
4. *Emergent analysis* or making it all come together for the analytic ethnographer involves more than anything else coding data as they accumulate and writing memos and analytic notes based on the codes. Though the emergent analysis of analytic ethnography is typically seen as closer to the inductive analysis techniques of grounded theory research, Lofland (2002) admits that the nature of the emergent analysis will get modified with wider application of this research strategy in future to be more attuned to the research questions and hypotheses proposed at the outset of research. The current study certainly

falls in that new genre of studies that use analytic ethnographic strategies to theoretically validate hypothesis and revise conceptual propositions.

5. *True content* refers to both factual trueness and analytic trueness and demand a) correctly representing empirical facts of a situation or setting b) exercising caution while estimating frequencies and magnitudes while working with quantitative data, c) constructing analysis that are able to amalgamate empirical facts into coherent propositions, d) developing reliable personal testimonies of researchers.
6. *New Content* development is one of the greatest benefits of analytic ethnography as the strategies of unfettered inquiry and deep familiarity with any new data allows revisions of well-known ideas, concepts, and propositions by discovering neglected lines of conceptualization or even redundant propositions. Both these are legitimate forms of newness, and the current study adopted these analytic strategies to revise the proposed model in the light of the new empirical data collected through fieldwork. Also the current study developed new content by being the first empirical inquiry on children's friendship with place, as well as the first study on children's place relationship in India.
7. *Developed Treatment* in analytic ethnography refers to the communicative power of this form of research through three interrelated dimensions of a) degree of conceptual elaboration, b) the balance between conceptual elaboration and data presentation, and c) the degree of interpretation of conceptual elaboration and data presentation. In the current study considerable effort has been made to create a conceptually dense, specific and well integrated framework (Strauss and Corbin 1990) on children's place friendship to structure an empirical study. As for achieving a balance between conceptual elaboration and data presentation, the craft of the written report will play a big role. There I will heed the advice of Lofland (2002) and avoid over-elaboration of the conceptual scheme, and excess analysis. Instead I will attempt to bring to life the written work through accounts of episodes, events, conversations and interactions. The third dimension, the degree of interpretation of conceptual elaboration and data presentation, also continues the delicate alternation of data and analysis as text.

By adopting analytic ethnography as the overall research strategy, I decided to do a richly documented case study of one neighborhood studying in detail how children related to different places in their local area. As the primary research questions were "what" and "how" an indepth case study was well suited to investigate the contemporary complex phenomenon of children's place friendship within the real-life context of children's everyday living environment where the boundaries between phenomenon (place friendship) and context (places in everyday

environment, children's backgrounds and living situations) were not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence were essential to triangulate the data (Yin, 1984).

4.2. Unit of Analysis

Place-child reciprocity is at the core of the construct of place friendship. If one adopts a Gibsonian ecological perspective to studying children's relationship to places, the starting point will be the embodied activity of the child in the environment (Preston 2003) where the child will be seen as an active agent continually engaging with the surrounding in a selective manner (Heft 2001). The assumption is that "organisms are inevitably immersed in physical surroundings that provide both the context and the possibilities for the activities in which they engage" (Preston 2003, 60). The Gibsonian position equally privileges the child/organism and the environment by departing from the modernist separation of the mental and physical worlds. The unit of analysis for this study on children's place friendship is not the child or the place but place friendship that allows children to form a bond with places.

As discussed in the literature review (see chapter 2) the construct of place in addition to knowing the ecological environment of individuals as the settings for their action, also understands the subjective representations of the objective environment for individuals and groups. But the construct of place has been accused for its lack of robust analysis of the physical attributes of a setting (Groat 1995, 7). The analysis strategies of behavior settings that analyze the objective, ecological environment, using three classes of variables—physical properties, the number and character of human components and the programs of the setting, will be used to analyze the physical attributes of place to develop a more holistic analysis by integrating the subjective and objective perspectives.

4.3. Choosing the Context for the Study

The heterogeneity and diversity of the billion strong population of India makes the choice of where to study challenging. I made a choice, in keeping with the ideology of the Growing Up In Cities studies, to work with children, in their middle childhood, who lived in a fast urbanizing large city. I again had a choice of 300 Class I cities that had a population of 100,000 and accounted for 65% of the urban population of India, of which 23 were metropolitan cities or had a population of 1 million or more and accommodated 33% of the urban population (Visaria & Visaria 2003). The primary reasons for selecting New Delhi, a metropolitan city and the capital of the country, were my familiarity with the social and ecological context of that city, and promised collaboration of

community organizations and other research colleagues in the city to facilitate the long, and challenging process of fieldwork.

When I landed in New Delhi in December 2004, to scout for a setting for my empirical fieldwork, I realized that I was looking at a wide range of living conditions of a 13.9 million strong city population. To complicate things further, my pilot studies with middle school children in my own neighborhood quickly suggested that children from middle- and higher income families had very little opportunities to be outside their homes by themselves or in the company of friends. This implied that I would have very little first hand experiences of children in places outside their houses. Colleagues from social science, who had experience of fieldwork in the city, pointed out that if I wanted to work with children who actively used public places I should get entry into municipally run schools. Children from lower-income families studied in such schools and such children were likely to enjoy more licenses to play outdoors by themselves. I understood I not only needed to decide parameters for physical site selection but also for forms of childhood in this complex Indian context.

4.3.1. Criteria for Selecting the Setting of the Study

1. **A Neighborhood that Offered a Diverse Range of Easily Accessible Socio-Physical Settings**. These criteria were present in Kytta's (2003) Bullerby model of the most child friendly environment. Since the objective of the current study is to understand the meaning of child friendliness for children, I thought it made theoretical sense to study an environment where children had a range of places to choose from and easy access to these places.
2. **A Large Child Population Who Actively Used the Local Area**. This was a prerequisite for a study on children's environment in order to produce a good sample size (thirty or above) in the chosen age group of 11-12 years, and to record experiences of children in real places.
3. **A Homogeneous Community**. The heterogenous Indian population brings in several external confounding variables of different religion, language, cultural practices and socio-economic status. The study population should try and minimize as many of those variables as possible while satisfying the other criteria of selecting the setting for the study.
4. **A Neighborhood and a Living Environment that Represented the Living Conditions of the Majority of the City's Population**. This criterion is important for theoretical generalization of the study.

I found a neighborhood in New Delhi that satisfied all these four conditions. The neighborhood offered a community school that the local children attended. This was the deciding factor for choosing the neighborhood, as by choosing a government school I would have followed children to several different neighborhoods and not one setting that provided a common frame of reference to the place experiences of children. So I spent a year doing fieldwork in Nizamuddin Basti, a high-density, low-income predominantly Muslim neighborhood in the heart of central New Delhi. The Basti had thirty-one listed monuments, several different functional settings, and structured and unstructured open spaces. But most importantly the Basti had The Hope Project and the school run by them, that gave me access to the large population of children (about 4000 under the age of 18years) who actively used the local area everyday for living, playing and learning.

4.3.2. Access

My friend, Kamini Prakash, was appointed the executive director of the NGO, The Hope Project in 2001. Her organization worked with the local community of Nizamuddin Basti to improve health, education, and livelihood options for a large population comprising of over 12500 poor Muslims. She had talked to me about the complexity of the environment and the large youth population who seemed to be out playing all the time. The reason why she chose to share that aspect of the community's life with me was because I had done a master's dissertation on children's environment in cities, and I guess never stopped talking about how fulfilling I thought the experience of working with children was. So wherever people saw children actively using their neighborhoods, they dropped it casually in conversation with me. I had also at some point mentioned to Kamini my desire of mapping children's places in Delhi as my master's work was done in another Indian city, Calcutta. Kamini took me on a walk in Nizamuddin Basti soon after she joined The Hope Project in 2001. We went to a monument called Chausath Khamba (literal translation meaning sixty four pillars). Kamini pointed out, "Just see how active these spaces are!" We climbed on top of the grand gateway through a steep narrow staircase, and looked down upon a large open space, which had at least twenty children playing separate games of cricket. There were several adults too hanging out in the open space. Kamini mentioned in passing as we observed those children on that summer evening, "It will be wonderful if you can get these children involved in mapping their own neighborhood in Nizamuddin Basti someday."

In December 2004, when I was busy talking to different city school principals in New Delhi to get access to children, at the back of my mind I had a strong desire to go back to Nizamuddin Basti. But initially, my research proposal had a comparative study design between two neighborhoods—one high-income and one low-income matched on key social variables of

religion, and socio-cultural background. So it meant that if I chose Nizamuddin Basti as the low-income community, I needed to find a high-income homogeneous Muslim community. Finding such a neighborhood in Delhi and getting access to children, would have been a tough if not an impossible proposition. With every passing day, and especially after piloting my interview questions with middle-to high-income children in Delhi neighborhoods, I realized the difficulty of access to a large group of children who matched on socio-economic, cultural and religious variables as most Delhi neighborhoods represented a diverse mix of families who were from very different socio-cultural backgrounds even if they could be superficially seen as belonging to one economic bracket.

Dr. Pamela Reynolds, the noted South African anthropologist who was among the first in her profession to work with children and youth, was in New Delhi in December 2004. I knew Dr. Reynolds from 2002 when I held a Mellon fellowship at University of Michigan at Ann Arbor to attend an international seminar series on "Contested Childhood in a Changing Global Order." Dr. Reynolds, now professor in the department of Anthropology at Johns Hopkins University, was instrumental in putting that series together as presidential faculty chair. I met Pam during her stay in Delhi that December, and discussed my work with her including the problem of site selection. I confided in her my hidden desire of working in a rich social environment such as that of Nizamuddin Basti, but realized that I would be working only with poor children. Pam offered to visit Nizamuddin with me. So early next morning, we landed in the Basti. We took a young tour guide from The Hope Project who being a local youth was very familiar and articulate about the neighborhood and its history. When we finished our walk, Pam told me, "If you can get access, this is a wonderful place to study. And why do you want to do different sites? If you can understand how one neighborhood works for children, you have a great dissertation!"

The next morning, I told Kamini Prakash that I wanted to discuss working with the children of the Basti through The Hope Project. Kamini asked me to send a brief write-up about the work and the time frame for the project. I not only sent what she asked for, but also my informed consent forms for children and parents that the institutional review board of the university had approved before I left for India. A month went by and no news came from Hope. In the first week of February, getting very worried, I called Kamini. She was surprised that I had not heard from the educational consultant who was reviewing the project, and who was supposed to work out the logistics of the fieldwork at The Hope School. Within a couple of days however I got a meeting with the consultant and we discussed the project in detail. The consultant came up with the wonderful idea of introducing the project to eleven and twelve year olds, both boys and girls, and their parents before starting the actual work through a workshop.

Hope organized a large community workshop in the second week of February 2005 where the school principal and the principal social worker introduced me to parents. I had made elaborate preparations before the workshop, translating my proposal and consent forms in Hindi. But facing an audience who did not speak a word of any of the two languages that I was most fluent in—Bengali and English, I was very nervous. I started in my slow self-conscious Hindi, but before long The Hope School principal took over from me and presented the main ideas of the project in a clear, lucid manner. She even lightly poked fun at my spoken Hindi, saying that it was understandable because I was Bengali! (Indians who grew up speaking Bengali, typically mixed up the genders and voice while speaking Hindi thus attracting much jeer from the Hindi-speaking community). The Hindi and Urdu speaking women in the community laughed at the explanation and said, "that is alright. We are not here to judge her on her bad Hindi. She is going to work with our children, and hopefully we will all learn something from her." I was greatly relieved at this quick and warm acceptance, but worried about the learning from me part. Once the practical aspects of access were sorted, I started hanging out in the school and the community to pilot test the interview before starting actual data collection. I conducted one pilot interview with the questions I had carefully translated in Hindi with a lot of help from my husband and an English-to Hindi dictionary. But during the pilot testing I realized how stiff the language sounded to the child, and the social worker who sat through the interview with me had to simplify the language of almost every question. After the interview, the social worker suggested that I took help from a Hindi teacher from the school to bring in cultural language that the children can easily comprehend. I discussed this with Kamini, and she suggested that I work with one of the administrative assistants who regularly wrote community handouts, and notices in a language that people of the Basti easily understood. Gratefully I approached the recommended person, and through her another Hindi teacher. Between the two of them, all my consent forms, and interview questions got retranslated. I then piloted them again with another child before starting the interviews in March. To my mind, I got *interpersonal access* to the school community while working with the staff of The Hope Project on the translations. The rapport that was built up during those sessions snowballed to include other teachers and social workers who spent a lot of time casually chatting with me in the nooks and crannies of the school.

4.4. Choosing the Respondents for the Study

Hope teachers collaborated with me in randomly sampling students from the age-group specified by me, eleven and twelve years, by drawing up age-specific list of students both from the non-formal girl's school run by The Hope Project in the morning, and the afternoon tuition classes that provided educational support to students from the neighborhoods who attended formal government schools. As most poor children in the Basti were first generation learners, the

education support classes were very popular among the community. I had specified that I wanted sixteen boys and sixteen girls for the interview. A teacher informed me one day, that it was impossible to find sixteen boys in that age group who came to Hope. I suggested to her, "Maybe we could ask some of the boys to recommend their friends who may not be part of Hope Project but who live in the Basti." The teacher replied, "we have already been working on that." She paused, then winked and said, "want to know what else we have suggested to the teachers and social workers? Sudeshna needs boys for her research. If you can't find them in the neighborhood, quickly give birth, somehow grow them up fast, and bring them to Hope!" she laughed, and I did too. But I also realized how ridiculous the protocols of sampling sound to people outside the research community. The Hope social workers took me on neighborhood walks to gain familiarity of the community, always ready with stories and anecdotes ranging from the ridiculous to the sublime that made everyday in the field not only a great learning experience but also very entertaining. The wonderful and energetic staff of The Hope Project also introduced me to key resource persons in the community for interviews whenever I discussed exploring some new thread over a cup of tea in the staff room during the lunch break.

4.4.1. Child Participants

The participants were initially thirty-one children, sixteen girls and fifteen boys (see appendix 3 for schedule of interviews with these children). Some of these children attended the municipal schools in the local area, while a few (eight girls) attended the non-formal adolescent girls school run by The Hope Project. All the sixteen girls in the sample regularly engaged in housework and sibling care, whereas the boys helped out in small-scale family businesses and performing outside chores. These children had limited toys and dressed similarly to adults. Informed consent forms for both children, and parents were sent home. Parents had been read and explained the content of the form during the first community workshop. Parents signed and returned the forms to the school, whereas children signed the forms in front of me. But as the study progressed, I developed a subsample of twelve children through purposive sampling representing children who reported regular use of a wide range of places in the local area. This technique of purposefully selecting subsamples can be described as sampling for theory construction (Charmaz 1995), by examining some extreme or deviant and some typical cases (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Later in the year, to further theoretically elaborate on some emerging patterns, I conducted school-wide workshops including a larger age-range of nine to sixteen years with seventy girls and forty-five boys. Later as the emergent patterns of Basti children's place use suggested extensive use of resources within the adjacent planned neighborhood, I decided to explore the perceptions of middle-income children living in the planned neighborhood next to the Basti. However as it was difficult to find enough children in the same age-group as the Basti children of the study. Moreover due to

unwillingness of the guardians of the children to allow them to participate in the study that required unsupervised face-to-face interviews, and field trips, I had to abandon that line of investigation.

4.4.2. Adult Participants

As most places in children's everyday environments in India are intergenerational places, as well as almost exclusively produced by adults and for adults, it was important to talk to adults to understand their perceptions of these places as well as validate some of the stories that children told me about the places. So I conducted in-depth interviews with six teachers (four lived in the same neighborhood), four social workers, and two directors of The Hope Project. Other than Hope staff, I also interviewed five mothers, two fathers, five caretakers of public parks, and three design professionals from DDA—one landscape architect, one urban designer and one urban planner who had direct experience of designing facilities in and around the Basti. Of course there were several chance encounters with other researchers, Nizamuddin West residents, and friends who provided anecdotal data to enrich my understanding of the studied neighborhood.

4.5. Data Collection Methods

To answer my four research questions I collected mostly qualitative and some quantitative data. Initially indepth individual interviews were conducted with thirty-one children. The study was subsequently extended to focus groups discussions with 115 children where groups talked about the advantages and disadvantages of living in their neighborhood, and field trips with a subsample of six boys and six girls. Community mapping using aerial photographs during the focus groups proved quite unsuccessful due to the large group size in the focus groups and the newness of the medium of aerial photographs. However, several students completed the drawing assignments of 'perception of neighborhood', 'favorite places', and 'disliked places'. Only a few students (four; two boys and two girls) kept a daily journal of activities for a week. Several other interviews were conducted with parents, teachers, and city officials—planners, landscape architects, architects, park attendants. In addition I spent several hours each week observing the daily life of the community in places nominated by children as "friendly places". These observations, supported by children's narratives about these places have provided me some insights about the social and functional meanings of these places for children.

To summarize I collected four kinds of data (see figure 4.1) for sequence of data collection:

1) **Interviews**:
    a. In-depth semi-structured individual interviews with thirty-one children
    b. Unstructured interviews with twelve children on location of their friendly places during child-led field trips, as well as in their neighborhoods during ethnographic observations
    c. Focus group discussions with 70 girls (9-16 years old), and 45 boys (9-16 years old),
    d. Interviews with adults—parents, teachers, social workers, gardeners, city planners, landscape architects, government officials
2) **Observations**:
    a. Year-long observations in the neighborhood and its adjoining areas including all the places nominated by children (recorded through detailed fieldnotes, typically written with 72 hours of the observations)
    b. Photographs
    c. Behavior maps
    d. Physical traces
    e. Affordance taxonomy
3) **Journals kept by Children:**
    a. Weeklong diaries by self-selected sample of four children
    b. Free recall sketching by twenty children
4) **Documents and Records:**
    a. Written documents about the context of the study from city departments,
    b. University research archives
    c. Daily newspapers
    d. Published ethnography with women in Nizamuddin
    e. Local cookbook
    f. Annual report of Hope Project

These multiple sources of data allowed for triangulation or confirmation of findings from at least two independent sources (Patton 2002). The figure below summarizes the sequence of data collection and analysis as followed in this dissertation.

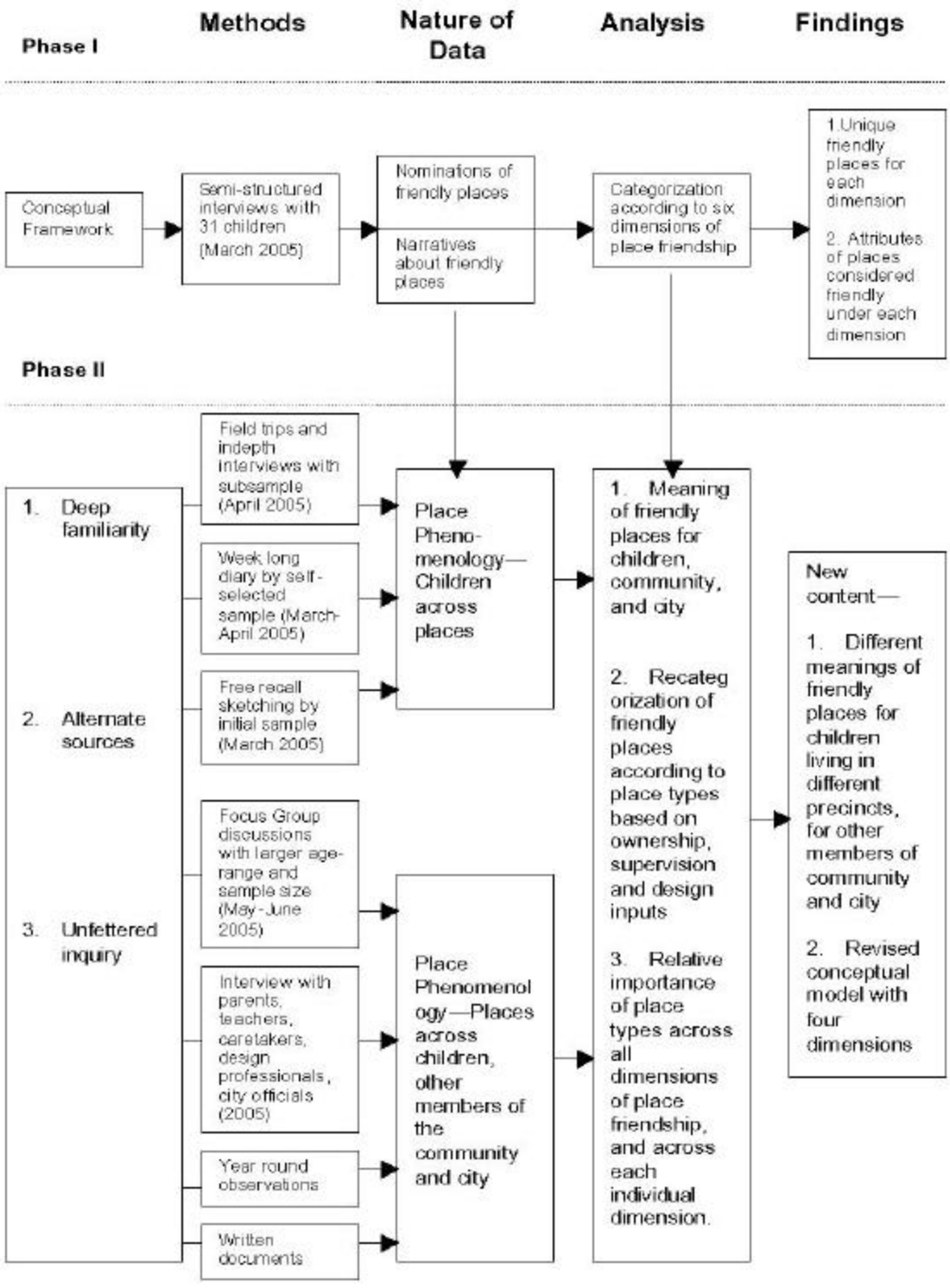


Figure 4.1: Sequence of Data Collection and Analysis

4.5.1. Interview Methods

4.5.1.1. Individual Semi-Structured Interviews with Children

The goal of any interview is to understand the world from other people's point of view because as Michael Quinn Patton (1990) reminds us, we cannot *observe* everything that we want to know. The fieldwork for this dissertation had several different kinds of interviews in addition to extensive field observations. The most extensive interviews were with children that systematically posed questions to find out what children thought, felt, knew, believed about, and expected from different places in their everyday environment. I developed a semi-structured standardized interview (see appendix 1), which is sometimes called in-depth interview (Esterberg 2002). This method has been recommended by feminist scholars to study women and other marginalized groups including children because such groups often do not have the opportunity to tell their stories. Research methods such as in depth interviews within the tradition of participatory action research allow them to do so.

The interview questions were framed to elicit responses on 1) children's opinions about places where each of the dimensions of place friendship were enjoyed, 2) children's experiences or behavior in the recommended places, 3) children's feelings when children are in those places, and 4) children's factual knowledge about those places. All these are legitimate questions to ask people to know more than what people actually, do in places, which can be studied through observations (Esterberg, 2002, Patton 1990). A set of six questions based on the six dimensions of place friendship to collect information from children to answer my first two research questions (see appendix 1). In addition, I asked children another set of questions that were developed in the Growing Up in Cities projects to understand children's perceptions of the community, its social networks, physical infrastructure, children's relative status in the community, children's ideas about local power politics and hopes for future (see appendix 2). Each interview lasted from twenty-five minutes to one hour depending on each child's response to mostly open-ended questions. I had deliberately eliminated dichotomous questions that only had yes and no answers because as Esterberg (2002) points out such questions "can bring a conversation to a halt because they do not encourage interviewees to continue (98)." Some children at the beginning were nervous, but I spent a few minutes at the beginning of each interview putting children at ease. I told them that there were no right or wrong answers. I was interested in everything they had to say about their neighborhood and their life. I was there to learn from them about how children made sense of places in their neighborhood. Often when I said this, there were considerable nodding, and in one case a clear relief statement from a new student, "Oh, I thought you were here to teach us English, and I was afraid, because I have never been to school before."

A social worker from The Hope Project drew up the schedule for the interviews based on feedback from teachers on date and timing (see appendix 3). Interviews were conducted in Hindi and recorded in an iPod. I dressed according to the culturally accepted dress code, in a *salwar kameez* (Indian dress of a long shirt over pants) and always carried a scarf to cover my upper body. I allowed curious children to play with the iPod and listen to some of my itunes with a headphone after the interview. I also allowed children to ask me questions on anything they wanted to know from me or about me after their interviews. The most frequently asked question was, "Are you a Muslim? What are you?"

The research literature suggests that interpersonal skills are crucial to successful interviews. The traditional focus of interviews as conduits for extracting information from "subjects" has been criticized (Oakley 1981) due to the obvious issues of power in such a unidirectional approach. Developing a rapport with the respondents is recommended though doing so with interviewees who are socially, culturally, and economically very different from the researcher requires skills to negotiate the complex social boundaries (Esterberg 2002, Stack 1996). The children of Nizamuddin Basti were socially very different from me. The only similarity that I found and often discussed with them was that I was once a child who loved to roam around in her neighborhood alone and with friends. My best childhood memories were in local places near my house away from prying eyes of adults. This, in addition to the fact that I listened and encouraged children to talk about anything they wanted without fear of being disclosed to teachers, parents or anybody else, probably helped my being accepted by children, as one new migrant boy said, "Not many people I know talk to me nicely, or want to know what I think, like you do."

I hired a transcriber who had good understanding of the local dialects. She worked from my office and transcribed all thirty-one interviews in Hindi. I then worked with two translators to translate the Hindi transcriptions in English. All thirty-one names were substituted in the transcripts,which were then stored in a secure filing cabinet.

4.5.1.2. Field trips and Unstructured Interviews

Twelve children, six boys and six girls took me on field trips. I took three children of the same gender and who lived close to each other in the Basti or were good frends, weretaken together on field trips. On each of the four field trips another adult, once a social worker from The Hope Project and thrice a research assistant, accompanied me. Parents were informed well in advance about the field trips and I picked up and dropped the children at their school. We visited the places nominated by each child under each of the six dimensions during the field trips. Children were encouraged to talk about their experiences in each of these places. The interviews thathappened

in these natural settings were unstructured, more spontaneous and free-flowing than the initial semi-structured interviews within the school premises. Here topics were situation-specific, generated from the observed behavior of the visiting children in these places. During these field trips children often enacted their favorite actions. On a few occasions friends of the children joined us in some of the places near home. At such times children in the company of their friends would forget that they were in the company of two outside adults. It was then I realized what Goffman meant by *witness*, "not as an interviewer, not as a listener, but as a witness to how they react to what gets done to and around them."

As the field trips and unstructured interviews happened a month after the semi-structured ones, children had already got used to seeing me everyday in their neighborhood, and had at least one intense interview session with me in their school in March. They greeted me in the street after their interviews, introduced me to their siblings, friends and other family members. I received invitations to visit them on Eid, the most coveted festival in the children's calendar of events.

The first interviews were my first glimpse into the children's worlds that allowed me to prepare for the next phase of the research. This was done by sorting all the places recommended by children, and selecting children on the basis of their diverse choices. But during the field trips, because we were all co-visitors to a place outside of the familiar school room, the hierarchical adult interviewer and child interviewee relationship that was inevitable in a face-to-face, sit down, across the table situation, had changed to a friendly collaborative one. Once when we reached a city park, that most children had recommended, I had to pay Rs. 10 as a parking fee. The three Basti girls who were with me on the field trip that day were outraged. They went and discussed this with the gatekeeper of the park, saying that they had never paid anything for entering the park before. The gatekeeper assured them, that entry to the park was free, but there was a fee for parking. The girls came to me and sheepishly informed that they did not know this, as they never had to park before. I realized that they truly cared that I paid a fee to enter the park with them that day. It struck me that they did not see the field trips as my work but as something that we all did together.

4.5.1.3. Focus Groups

Focus groups or small-group interviewing had been considered an appropriate research method to reduce imbalances of power between the researcher and the researched (Montell 1999), as this form of interview generatives collective testimonies thus enabling people to speak up without fear of being a lone voice. This method had been used in studying women (Madriz 1998, 2000),

and children (Bissell 2000, Swart-Kruger 2000). The biggest advantage of focus groups is that it facilitates collection of large amount of data quickly (Esterberg 2002).

My initial thirty-one interviews, which included interviews with sixteen girls, aged 11-12 years, revealed a pattern of active use of outdoors by all responding children. On talking to teachers one day about some of the emerging patterns of the study, I was told that girls' active use of outdoor space was not socially promoted in the community. On further discussion I was told that the age group I interviewed—11 and 12 years—was represented in the Hope school by girls from the lowest socio-economic classes of the Basti. This was because the school over the years had sensitized the community to send their children to formal schools and not to the project's non-formal school. As a result, only the poorest families who could not afford formal schools sent their children to The Hope Project. The teachers told me to talk to older girls who came from more economically stable backgrounds to get a more balanced view of girls' use of public place in the Basti. The Hope school conducted a weeklong social science workshop at the end of the school semester in May 2005. I was asked to participate and conduct a few sessions. I decided to put together focus groups to encourage discussions about the neighborhood and place use among the different ages. I designed focus group discussions for the last two days of the school workshop with 70 girls in the age-range of 9-16 years. Later I replicated the focus groups with 45 boys aged 9-16 years through the children's parliament program of the school in August 2005.

Four teachers helped me conduct different activities during the two-day girls' workshop. The girls were divided into 5 groups, and each group had one facilitating adult. The first day the groups were arranged such that the entire age range of 9-16 years was represented in any given group. On the second day the girls were divided into five groups according to age. For the boy's focus groups, two assistants helped me. The same strategy of dividing groups as the girl's workshop was adopted. Though the group sizes were large, I did not have the choice to reduce the sizes as every child who was part of the social science workshop or children's parliament in the school needed to participate in the focus groups. So I used a thirteen-point framework developed with children in South Asia to assess children's living environments within each group (see appendix 4). The groups worked together, squatting on floor rugs, to produce a poster with their answers to the thirteen questions and then each group presented their works. But while they were making the posters, I went from group to group to talk to children and understand the process they followed. This took six hours. But as the girls were used to daylong workshops in the school, nobody complained.

One of the criticisms of the focus group method is that power imbalances in groups often lead to participants censoring their responses to stick to group opinions. In the mixed age focus groups

this was a possible source of bias. For this reason when I took turns in sitting with all the groups at a time, I went through the thirteen points encouraging younger and older girls to voice their opinions. Though the older girls were the ones taking charge in every group to write down the collective experiences, I encouraged the younger girls to freely express themselves. This resulted in a detailed chart where different responses according to age were tabulated in relation to outdoor place use. In one group, when I asked children if they felt refugee children had the same opportunities as they did in the neighborhood, the oldest girl in the group said yes and proceeded to tackle the next question. But, with me sitting in the group, the youngest girl, spoke up about her experience of being a discriminated for being a Bangladeshi refugee. After listening to this girl's story (see appendix 5 for the story), the group rewrote its answer to the point. What the story about one refugee child's experience suggests is that a diverse, multi-faceted, actively selective and constructive fund of knowledge is present in every person. The right moment, and active interview context allows respondents to call upon and construe relevant information into a circumstantially sensible and relevant story based on the narrator's experiential knowledge (Holstein & Gubrium 1995).

4.5.1.4. Interviews with Adults

After my initial semi-structured interviews, field trips with children and an extended period of observation in the field settings, I realized that I needed to understand how the places that were meaningful to children were produced by the city, and supervised by different agents. For example when children led me to a park in the adjacent middle-income neighborhood, I realized that the Basti children were not even welcome there. Moreover, the children of the middle-income neighborhood hardly used the park. I was interested to find out why. So I interviewed the park caretaker, some of the adult park users, and middle-income children who came with adult caretakers. I also interviewed a few parents of the children from the middle-income neighborhood. Access was not easy and I had to depend solely on my own social networks and those of the teachers of the school to schedule an interview with a child or adult in this middle-income neighborhood. Within the Basti, I interviewed parents, park gardeners, public place users, teachers and shopkeepers.

To understand the perceptions of the city, I contacted the Urban Design Department in the School of Planning and Architecture to get a reference for accessing design professionals in the Delhi Development Authority. I managed to interview one urban designer, one landscape architect and one urban planner in DDA. All three of them were either directly or indirectly related to shaping places in and around Nizamuddin Basti. All the adult interviews were done through purposively

selecting respondents for the specific perspectives they had, and roles they played in relation to Nizamuddin Basti and its children.

4.5.2. Observations

4.5.2.1. Obtrusive and Unobtrusive Observations

In this study, just as I was interested in children's experience, feelings and thoughts about places, I was equally keen to learn about what children actually did in places. Since I wanted to know and understand for myself the doing of children in the environment, in addition to children telling me what they did, I spent a year observing children obtrusively as a participant observer, as well as unobtrusively from a distance, or a terrace or a park bench after I had spent considerable time in the settings to be accepted as a part of the children's everyday environment. In most observation sessions, whether in The Hope Project social worker's office or outdoors, I jotted notes while I observed children, families, and human interactions in the Basti. I took photographs using a small digital camera and often when a particularly interesting episode would start to unfold in front of me I switched to the movie mode of my camera to catch the details of an action episode. By using a long time frame, and a wide social frame for my observation and interview sessions, I was able to develop a deep familiarity with the setting.

4.5.2.2. Evaluative Observations

I was very keen to document and analyze the physical attributes of a place that made it friendly for children. In order to support my interview and behavior observations, I used three methods to that helped evaluate the physical features of places for inviting children's actions. These methods were behavior mapping, documenting physical traces, and using the affordance scale to record actualized affordances in places.

Behavior Mapping: I mapped behaviors in all the active open spaces in the Basti including those that children had recommended as friendly places for a week. This data provides strong graphic evidence to support the observations recorded in fieldnotes by coding discrete activities in places through maps. Annotations on the weather, feel of the day, and any other particulars that were important in evaluating the context of the place and recorded behavior was noted down.

Documenting Physical Traces: I documented physical traces of both accretion and erosion that had marks of children such as graffiti, markings on the ground, makeshift swings, as well as more concrete features introduced at a community level to improve quality of life of residents such as

the new bridge over the sewer, new masonry wall to retain the debris in the play space over the dump yard. These physical traces were also analyzed for acts of meaning.

Affordance Scale to Record Actualized Affordances in Places: I used the Heft-Kytta affordance scale (Kytta 2003) to document actualized activity and social affordances in the top places in all six dimensions of place friendship. This scale allows evaluating a place by recording a feature description and a corresponding activity supported by the feature in the place. But it does not allow recording the frequency of affordance actualization in a setting when a particular affodance is actualized more than once by the same child or different children at the same time. Using the scale, validated for the context (see chapter 8, and appendix 6), it was possible to provide a functional description of the settings that included both child and place through a pattern of activities at a particular time. In each observed place, it was possible to record a maximum of nine features and thirty-three affordances with this scale.

4.5.3. Journals kept by Children

Place Diaries and Sketches: All thirty-one children were asked to maintain place diaries for a week. The instructions for this exercise were very simple: at the end of each day, write down what happened that day from the time you woke up till the time you went to bed at night. Document all events, conversations and the places where these took place throughout the day for one week. In addition children had to do three free recall annotated sketching assignments on: "my neighborhood", "my most favorite place", "my most disliked place". Though only four children completed the place diaries, about twenty children completed the sketching assignments. The diaries and annotated place drawings provided invaluable data that enhanced my understanding of children's feelings and thoughts about the texture of their everyday lives.

4.5.4. Documents and Records

Research Publications: Patricia Jefferey (1979, 2000) published an ethnography called "Frogs in a Well: Indian women in purdah." This was the only published study on Nizamuddin Basti looking at the everyday realities of *Pirzada* women living in strict seclusion in the Basti. Though one dissertation in urban conservation and some area studies in urban design in the School of Planning and Architecture had taken Nizamuddin Basti as the setting for the studies, these documents were not available with the college library. The annual report of The Hope Project, and a book of recipes called "Recipes from an Urban Village: A cookbook of Basti Hzt. Nizamuddin", that included stories from women who contributed the recipes, and put together by Charmaine O'Brien, were the other secondary cources that gave me information on some aspects of Basti life.

Media Reports: I regularly followed and archived news items relating to both children in Delhi and Nizamuddin Basti from the prominent local newspapers and city magazines.

Official Records: I obtained a report containing a proposal for Nizamuddin Basti from DDA. This report was prepared in 2001 and was called, "Report of committee constituted by the Hon'ble Lt. Governor of NCT of Delhi to evolve proposals for overall improvement of Dargah Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya and its precincts." In addition I also studied the Draft Master Plan for Delhi 2021, which had the blueprint for future developments in Delhi in the next two decades. By critically looking at how the city envisaged future development, I set the analytic tone for my study. I also accessed online databases from central and local government websites.

4.6. Data Analysis

The semi-structured interviews generated both qualitative and quantitative data. As the interview questions were grouped into six themes, each of which had names of places nominated by children under each dimension, and narratives about what made the places friendly for children, I generated Excel spreadsheets with the entire dataset from my transcripts. The quantitative and qualitative data were separated into different spreadsheets. I organized all my field notes, other interview transcripts and place photographs chronologically for easy retrieval.

4.6.1. Looking for Patterns

I coded my transcripts, and field notes according to the themes in the six dimensions of place friendship while allowing the data to suggest new open codes, which could give richer understanding to the constructs I was studying. Once I saw some emerging patterns in the data through the open codes, I performed focused coding actively looking for those patterns throughout the data set. At each step of the way, I wrote memos, both procedural memos, to remind me of my coding strategies etc., and analytic memos, to think through the categories I had developed, making connections between cases and highlighting the important findings.

4.6.2. Comparing Similar Cases, Looking for Deviant Ones

Once my coded data suggested that places in a certain dimension possessed some common characteristics, I looked for deviant cases, which had the same characteristics but were not recommended by children. By comparing similar and deviant cases, I fine-tuned the attributes of places that made them friendly for children in a given dimension.

4.6.3. Narrative Analysis

I recorded several different stories during the course of the interviews, field trips and observation sessions. The place diaries of children further contained stories about their daily lives. In addition to analyzing the stories themselves for content, the structure and social context of the stories were also analyzed. Most of the stories were about children's place experiences including stories of place fear. I paid special attention to the social context of the stories to understand the child's place within the Basti, and in relation to the places in the stories. I also looked for the cultural resources such as use of myths, taboos, and constraints, used by the narrator. The narrative analysis of the stories allowed construction of possible meanings of children's everyday experiences in places.

4.6.4. Creating Typologies

My quantitative data helped me categorize places into six types of friendly places. Later these places were coded according to place typologies based on ownership patterns, supervision patterns, design inputs, and actualized affordances. Once this categorization was done, place typologies were sorted in Excel according to each level of coding to explore meaning of places within the type and the meaning of the place typology in creating child friendly places in the city.

A grounded theory approach allowed me to understand not only new patterns of experience, but provide richer meaning to the socially constructed nature of each of the friendship categories. Though I started with a strong conceptual framework, the emergent patterns in the empirical data allowed me to revise the categories of place friendship.

4.7. Trustworthiness of study

Guba (1981) in addressing the issue of trustworthiness in qualitative studies suggest that instead of aspiring to quality standards of rationalistic inquiries (internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity), qualitative methodologies should hope to attain *credibility* so that the findings are plausible, *transferability* so that findings are context relevant, *depedndability* so that findings are stable, and *confirmability* so that findings may be confirmed by other investigators.

To attain ***credibility***, this study adopted the strategies outlined by Guba (1981):

a. **Prolonged engagement** (one year) with the study context.
b. **Persistent observation** including extended interaction in order to indentify pervasive and atypical qualities of places.

c. **Peer debriefing** by interacting with the urban study group of the Center for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in New Delhi through monthly posting of fieldnotes and searching questions to the Sarai-CSDS online reader-list. Though this initially started as an obligatory practice to satisfy the requirement of the Sarai fieldwork grant, I soon realized the value of sharing my insights with other professionals on a regular basis. I was pointed towards adequate referential literature particularly in reference to the status of Muslims in India, and new developments in urban development thinking within the country.
d. **Triangulation** was used to cross check data from atleast two sources (Denzin 1978), and information that has not been verified from at least two sources has not been presented in the dissertation. Since I collected at least four different types of data, triangulation or crosschecking data from at least two of those types was not a problem.
e. **Member checks** during the process of fieldwork involved frequent checking of facts, and stories with members of the community and Hope social workers. The report was subjected to member check again after the competion of fieldwork when the case study had taken a coherent shape but before casting it in final form.
f. **Establising structural corroboration or coherence** of the diverse types of data obtained from multiple sources involved interpreting the apparent contradictions that often showed up in findings due to use of different sources representing different perspectives. Possible rival explanations, and negative or deviant cases were investigated to establish plausibility of the chosen interpretation.

To attain ***tranferability***, in the tradition of idiographic or context-relevant studies that instead of making true-statements about general applicability focus on statements descriptive or interpretaive of a given context, this study adopted the strategies outlined by Guba (1981):

a. **Purposive selection of context to allow development of theory** on children's environmental friendship by choosing a site that allowed children to be outdoors on an everyday basis and to actively engage with a diverse range of places and settings in the local area. Purposive sampling of subsample, adults, and places based on the emerging patterns of the first phase of data collection aided theory development about the proposed construct.
b. **Collection of thick descriptive data** that allowed comparison of this context to other possible contexts of low-income settlements in developing cities having similar socio-physical attributes and to which transfer might be meaningful.
c. **Development of thick description of context** to facilitate judgements about fittingness with other contexts.

To attain ***dependability***, or stability of data, Guba (1981) warns that allowance needs to be made for "apparent instabilities arising either because different realities are being tapped or because instrumental shifts stemming from developing insights on the part of the investigator-as-instrument (p. 86)."

a. **Methods were overlapped in this study**, such as interviews and observations were used in tandem to overcome weaknesses in each method. Often when these methods produced similar results, such as children's recommendation of the top place that they loved and respected, and observational data suggesting that the place indeed communicated signs of being a cared for environment, the stability of data was strengthened. On the other hand when the interview data and journals of children suggested different types of places that children learned from, it allowed the study to investigate the apparent contradictions from different interpretive perspectives and develop reasoning for plausibility of both types of places by again using two different sources for cross-checking the data on each emerging place type.
b. An **audit trail** was established throughout the process, through the documentation interview guides, notes and transcripts, and fieldnotes to facilitate an external auditor to examine the process.

To attain data and interpretational ***confirmability***, this study took the following two steps:

a. **Triangulation** was achieved by not only collecting data using different methods, and from different sources, but also by involving a research team in the second phase of the study to conduct observations in selected places. Another extensive set of fieldnotes by an American architectural student, Julie Kozwacka, who brought in a very different perspective being a first time observer in a non-western context, was used to balance out my predispositions and introduce a perspective of new otherness to my own understanding and interpretations.
b. I **practiced reflexivity** by intentionally revealing to the audience my epistemological assumptions early on in the study. I thereby set the direction for the integrative literature review and conceptual propositions, and justified presenting my findings in a particular way. This establishes the clear reasoning behind the structuring of the study. In addition whenever I deviated from the stated research plan, I explicitly stated that and justified the shift. This will help an audit trail of the research and hence confirmability.

Chapter 5
Context of the Study

5.1. Nizamuddin Basti: A contested urban settlement in New Delhi in India

India is the *largest democracy in the world*, a rhetoric that our politicians use to great effect to garner international support. New Delhi has the joy and burden of being the capital of this mega democracy. Its historic roots as a 'city' are traceable to 2500 years. Since the 12th century, Delhi has seen the rise and fall of seven major powers. But the longest rulers of Delhi, for over six and a half centuries had been Muslim conquerors. It was in 1803, that the British colonizers captured Delhi from the Mughals, and only in 1911, the capital of British India was moved to Delhi from Calcutta. At the beginning of the 20h century, Delhi had a population of 150,000. After the transfer of capital and at the beginning of the extensive new constructions undertaken by the British rulers to shape the grand colonial layer of Delhi (1912-1931), the population of the city was still under a million people. Just sixteen years after the completion of the new colonial city, British rule came to an end, and India was partitioned to create the Muslim state of Pakistan. During this time, mass exodus of Hindus from Pakistan to India, swelled the population of Delhi to nearly two million in a matter of weeks. From being a predominantly Muslim city, Delhi now became a diverse cultural place with a majority Hindu population. Muslims today represent the largest minority group in India (13%). The Indian Muslim population is in fact the second largest national Muslim population in the world after Indonesia.

As might be expected from its long complex history, Delhi is a city of several different urban realities and landscapes. Just as this city is littered with monuments of different dynasties, eras and architectural styles, it also has several different forms of living environments dispersed in an urban area of 702sq km (Draft Master Plan of Delhi 2021). The contemporary neighborhoods of Delhi fall under three broad Master Plan categories—planned areas, special areas, and unplanned areas. Together they house a population of 13.9 million people, and continuously accommodate new migrants and job seekers who are projected to increase the population by another 10 million by 2021. 70% of Delhi's population lives outside planned areas in substandard housing (Hazard Center 2005).

Planned areas were developed as mono-functional land uses by the post-independence (India achieved independence from British rule in 1947) modern planners segregating gated 'residential colonies' from work centers. These areas were, and continue to be developed by both public and private development agencies. These developments are typically classified as high-, middle-, and low-income developments offering a range of house types varying from single-family homes in

plots, to walk-up apartment blocks, to soaring towers with luxury condominiums in more recent years. Living in these planned areas both within the limits of Delhi and in its new extensions, in Gurgaon, Noida, Pappankala and Dwarka among others, is the correct way of life as proliferating real estate and housing loan advertisements would make us believe.

The new master plan recognizes three areas in Delhi as special areas—1) the Walled City (erstwhile Mughal capital of Shahjehanabad), 2) Walled City and its Extension, and 3) Karol Bagh. These places according to this official document are "characterized by a mix of different land uses, and have similarities in compact built form, narrow circulation space, and low-rise high density developments, mainly accommodating residential, commercial, both retail and wholesale, and industrial uses (p. 15)." These areas, till not so long ago were considered "notified slums". As these areas continue to play an active economic role in the city through long established businesses that are crucial to the sustenance and identity of the areas, the master plan now treads cautiously in proposing area-specific unique redevelopment schemes for each of these areas.

Unplanned areas of the city include slums, JJ (*juggie jhopri* or squatters) Clusters, resettlement colonies, unauthorized settlements, urban and rural villages within the national capital region of Delhi. The first four so-called unplanned areas (resettlement colonies by the master plan's own admission are "planned") collectively constitute the sub-standard housing stock of Delhi and house majority of the city's population exposing the state's inability to provide adequate housing for all citizens. The villages of Delhi started out as indigenous enclaves, often predating the rest of the city. In fact as Delhi added millions to its population, the villages paid a high price by being forced to sell their agricultural land to development agencies. The city soon engulfed the villages and put a notional boundary, called *Lal Dora* (the literal translation of *Lal Dora* is red boundary, which is a planning concept to exempt traditional villages within Delhi from urban development guidelines, specified in the Master Plan, building codes, and property tax), around the original settlements, which were then made exempt from city development guidelines, building byelaws, and property tax. Deprived of their prime sources of livelihood, agriculture, these villages soon became congested living environments, though some urban villages, enjoying *Lal Dora* mandate of development exemptions such as *Hauz Khas* village, through a process of gentrification reinvented themselves as swank mixed-use areas boasting designer shops and art galleries. However, the fate of *all* villages were not the same. Some in fact fell out of the *Lal Dora* exemptions as the city saw them as more fittingly belonging to urban Delhi. In the master plan document, the same qualities characterize villages as special areas, though redevelopment plans are envisioned for only those villages that have "historic and tourism significance". The documentation on unplanned areas including urban villages is weak, and leads to severe contestations over tenure, property taxes and deemed status.

Nowhere is this contestation more poignant than in the 800 year-old settlement around the tomb of the famous Sufi saint, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya (died 1324 A.D.), in the heart of central New Delhi. Now surrounded by the most expensive land parcels of the city, the settlement was originally a small village, called Gyazpur, surrounded by jungles, on the banks of the narrow tributary, Sitari, of the Yamuna river. The Sufi saint Nizamuddin settled in this village after moving around considerably in Delhi and started a place for meditation and teaching students. According to Percival Spear (1994), Alauddin Khiljee, the Sultan of Delhi (1296 A.D. to 1316 A.D.) had built a beautiful mosque called Jama'at Khana in this village, and this was one of the reasons for the Saint to choose this place for settling down here. The present day tomb of Nizamuddin, which according to DDA documents is not the original tomb structure, but a later construction (1562-63) by a high-ranking nobleman named Faridu'n Khan, faces the Jama't Khana mosque. The Pirzada women I talked to said that they, the Pirzadas or the historically appointed custodians of Sufi shrines, and the Qureshis or the butcher community, were settled in the Basti during Khilji's time, and in that sense it was a 'planned community'.

Nizamuddin Basti currently houses 12500 people in an area of less than half a kilometer square. The population is predominantly Muslim (more than 95%). According to estimates of Hope social workers, about 30% of the population was under 18 years. Thus Nizamudin Basti represents a dense settlement with a homogeneous religious base and a large youthful population. The living conditions of the Basti, being produced outside mainstream planning, were representative of the living conditions of the majority (70%) of Delhi's population.

5.1.1. Precincts in Nizamuddin Basti

Despite, a homogeneous religious base, the Muslims living in the Basti were not all equal in the eyes of the community. Indian Muslims are often charged with Indianizing Islam due to the many cultural influences of the larger Hindu populace including the caste system. Hence, Indian Islam is not the monolithic casteless religion that is typically practiced in Islamic countries. The Basti population also embodied the caste-based fragmentation of people with the *Pirzadas* occupying the top caste rank similar to Hindu Brahmins, and the poor migrants, who often survived as rag-pickers, reached out to just about claim the bottom rung of the system as *Dalit* Muslims. Till to this day, the inner core or the *Kot* area of the Basti is the Pirzada stronghold, whereas the Qureshis have their own 'galis' or streets and even a mosque called the "Qureshi masjid". Many other butcher shops have however proliferated over the years in other streets. The small village around the Nizamuddin's tomb gradually spread into the surrounding open spaces that were used to bury the dead with new migrants flocking to the city for work. Nizam nagar, Khusroo Nagar, and Panchpeer, were all relatively new settlements, designated as squatters or juggies. A constant flow

of migrants from first Pakistan, and then Bihar, West Bengal, and Bangladesh rapidly increased the demand for housing in a central area in Delhi close to work centers. Nizamuddin due to its central location and status as a substandard low-income living environment provided affordable housing to the new migrants who were typically the lowest wage laborers.

The Hope School had undertaken several community mapping exercises with the children to define these different precincts (see figure 5.1). This information was now used by the school to locate children in the Basti, for the purpose of community outreach work. According to their current list, Nizamuddin Basti was a loose aggregate of at least nine different areas, which included both precincts within the Basti such as Nizam Nagar, Khusroo Nagar, Dildar Nagar, Inner Kot, Musaffir khana, Alvi Chowk, Bara Khamba, as well as peripherally located squatters such as Sari Kale Khan, Panch Peer, Under the Bridge etc. The narratives of children and Hope social workers suggested three factors that broadly differentiated these areas as distinct residential precincts based on identities of residents. These factors were:

1. **Long-Time Residents vs. Migrants:** the precincts in the inner core of the Basti such as Inner Kot, Dildar Nagar, Musaffir Khana, Alvi Chowk, Bara Khamba typically housed older residents settled for a long time often through several generations, whereas precincts on the periphery such as Nizam Nagar, Khusroo Nagar, Panchpeer housed more recent migrants.
2. **Language and Customs:** even though both Nizam Nagar and Khusroo Nagar were peripheral newer precincts habitated by migrants, Nizam Nagar housed migrants from the eastern Indian states of Bengal and Bihar, and the neighboring eastern country of Bangladesh. These eastern migrants spoke broken Hindi and Urdu, preferring Bengali, and Bhojpuri, and had customs that differed from migrants who came from northern states. Hence residents in Nizam Nagar were discriminated by the predominantly Hindi and Urdu speaking residents of Khusroo Nagar.
3. **Professions**: residents in almost every precinct looked down upon ragpickers and people associated with ragpicking. Ragpickers typically lived in Nizam Nagar, Under the Bridge, Panch Peer, and gave these precincts a bad name as the area occupied by workers of a dirty profession.

In addition to identity, precincts were made distinct often through their geographic characteristics as more or less bounded enclaves separated from their adjoining areas by arterial Basti streets. When the distinct physical boundedness of precincts were absent in the case of areas contiguous to each other in older precincts in the heart of the Basti, the social identity played a larger role in separating areas as distinct entities.



Figure 5.1: The nine precincts in Nizamuddin Basti as Mapped by the Hope School (2005)

The predominantly low-income settlement, Nizamuddin Basti, falls in Development Zone D of Delhi, the most prestigious development zone that covered the imperial landscape of central Delhi initially designed by the Birtish architect Edwin Lutyen to house the British government in Delhi. After India achieved independence, this imperialist landscape with its grand central vista, government offices, and other central Delhi elitist civic facilities like the Delhi Golf Club became the seat of government of India in the capital city. After the partition of India, the government developed new neighborhoods, Nizamuddin East and West further annexing land from the old village to house Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan. When the city developed its first master plan, this historic village, like many others (approximately 150 villages), lost its surrounding land to city development authorities for developing the capital city of newly independent India. The title of "urban village" was then bestowed on these villages to protect their heritage, and the traditional way of life from the zoned, and master planned modern city. However, this blanket exemption soon proved to be a bane for the quality of life in these villages. Being cut-off from mainstream planning and financial institutions that support development, these places soon attracted migrant laborers, and other floating populations who found it hard to survive in the planned city. The distinction between urban villages and slums blurred, as squatters cropped up in any available land, and existing buildings expanded in all directions to cope with the pressures of a rapidly increasing population. The draft report of Delhi Development Authority (2001), to

develop "Proposals for Overall Improvement of Dargah Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya and Its Precincts" notes the failure of the city to address the issues of urban villages, and the particular situation of Nizamuddin Basti:

> *The richness of these architectural examples [32 listed monuments] contrast sharply with the extremely poor environmental conditions in the area. Like many other traditional settlements in Delhi, in Basti Nizamuddin, 'urban village' status has been left behind, ignored and neglected in the course of progress, planning, and development.*
>
> *It [the Basti] lacks adequate civic amenities either for the permanent population or for the pilgrims who gather at the time of Urs. Furthermore, continuous and intensive building development, both authorized and illegal, is contributing to levels of congestion, which has become intolerable. The resulting urban squalor provides an inappropriate setting for Dargah Sharif and the various architectural monuments, not to speak of unhealthy environmental conditions for the local population (p.2).*

Despite being officially classified as a degraded living environment, Nizamuddin due to its strategic central location in the city, and perceived status as a conducive living environment for poor Muslims, accomodated waves of new migrants who come to Delhi in search of work and a life out of abject poverty every year. New informal housing spilled over to the graveyards outside the historic core such as the residential precinct of Nizam Nagar to house new migrants. The houses within the old core of the Basti were on the narrow vernacular streets on deep plots immediately off the street without any sidewalk between the house and the street. The houses had internal courtyards that often were the hub of household activities and the open space allocated for women. The front of most houses had businesses, retail or workshops where the family businesses were carried out. This settlement embodied all the classic characteristics associated with "urbanization without industrialization"—the mixing of different functional uses within the same living environment, disorderly and dirty as compared to the planned urban areas, and economically out of step with its surrounding environment. But in reality such settlements, especially in developing societies such as India, were vital to the functioning of the city as they provided affordable housing for the poor who worked in the informal sector. In India about 80% of the population find work in the informal sector (Sen 2005), and hence for this vast majority of the population the planned city is out of reach as a living environment. Moreover, this particular unplanned settlement housed several different businesses such as the large scrap business in

Nizamuddin Basti, which was important not just to the local area but also to the city. The Basti also offered several community-developed and governmentally provided facilities to the poor related to adequate standard of living such as schooling, healthcare, and work opportunities. Such facilities were completely absent in the new mono-functionally planned peripheral housing areas for the poor in the city of Delhi such as Bhalaswa, Holambi Kalan, Narela etc. thus making Nizamuddin an attractive living environment for the poor.

The Hope clinic offered free health checkups and free healthcare for all the girl students of the school. Besides mobile healthcare facilities were organized by various NGOs and organizations that regularly visited the Basti. The public toilet facility within the Basti was one of the largest in any Delhi slum, and kept clean through a pay per use system. Other community facilities included a library, a night shelter and a sewing center for women, all three being provided by MCD in the pink building with scalloped arches on its roof parapet. The Hope Project ran vocational training facilities such as a bakery unit, embroidery and tailoring center, and a crèche besides the girl's non-formal school. The MCD ran seven preschools within the Basti, and had just started a polyclinic. MCD had for sometime operated a van for dispensing medicines among the poor. None of these facilities were adequate as the quality of service provided was questionable, and was questioned by the NGOs and the poor community. But all these facilities at least allowed the poorest people of the Basti, who earned below minimum wage and worked under exploitative conditions, to make a home in Nizamuddin.

5.1.2. The Physical Landscape of Nizamuddin Basti

The first time I saw an aerial photograph of Nizamuddin Basti and its surroundings in the terraserver.com website, I was disappointed. I had half expected the built forms to be shrouded in a dark cloud. Not by a real cloud, but by a cloud of hawks that perpetually hovered over the Basti. From whichever direction I had approached the Basti during my frequent field trips, I had always been reassured by the low-flying hawks, knowing that the Basti was fast approaching, and more importantly, that it was still around, with all its problems, squalor, history, and humanity. This strong visual element comprising of birds of prey to my mind is a strong metaphor for what the Basti Nizamuddin represents in the city. The eagle, the falcon, and the hawk, are birds commonly associated with Islam—the eagle was the symbol of the Prophet's tribe, the tribe of Quraish, and several Islamic flags carried this symbol to battle such as the flag of Saladdin at the height of the Ottoman empire. The present day nation of Egypt still carries this symbol in its flag. '*Shaheen*' or the falcon, which frequently appears in the poetry of Rumi, is said to symbolize the values of a perfect human who soars high, has sharp vision, does not make nests and is hence detached from worldly attachments, and has perfect form. On one hand, the presence of so many birds preying

on a tiny settlement in the heart of the city symbolizes the contested nature of Nizamuddin as a minority Muslim settlement where hordes of people descend to pray, to work, to eat, to survive and live, and on the other hand, Nizamuddin like the *Shaheen* is detached from the city, continuing with its unique way of life, resplendent in its monuments, poetry, culture, and tolerance for the human condition on earth while making way for the future most notably through girl's education.

On my field trips to Nizamuddin, I would come from the southern part of New Delhi, past posh 'planned' neighbourhoods, past fast commercializing city corridors, past the landscaped greens and city sewers. Right across from the almost shy post-modernist architecture of a giant institutional complex, on the east side of the wide and busy Lala Lajpat Rai Road, lay the low-key, humble graveyard for Muslims, flanked by the diverging arms of a city sewer that eventually drains into the river Yamuna to the east. Next to the graveyard, however, is the Hindu cremation ground with an impressive entrance gate and freshly painted high walls. The northern arm of the channel snaked its way past the cremation ground. On its north bank was a jagged wall of closely packed homes with peeling or no paint, and garbage littered all along the green slopes, right down to the narrow stream of water in the sewer. That is the first glimpse of the basti while coming from the south. However, in order to reach the Basti, cars take a U-turn under the flyover, and come past a triangular landscaped island, which on winter afternoons and summer evenings is filled with men, some women and many children. But one also starts getting glimpses of the front face of Basti Nizamuddin from this point—a lot of green with a pink backdrop in the foreground, and glimpses of jagged multi-colored houses behind. Set amidst a fenced off green park, are three prominent pinkish structures (see figure 5.2): a Hindu temple with colorful gods and goddesses painted at the base of the pyramidal roof; next to the temple is a structure that looks like a miniature fort with a dark pink windowless façade, articulated at the top by scalloped hollow frames of pointed arches. A reddish wall next to the fort hides the public toilet complex from the gaze of the city and the park users.



Figure 5.2: Pink Structures in the Park hiding the Basti from the Road

The open space on the right on entering the Basti is always crowded with men huddling in groups to play cards, gamble, smoke or drink. The Basti people considers these men to be bad elements, addicts, and possible kidnappers. Some ragged children played in the grassy undulations of this open space. The open space on the left appears more controlled, with a demarcated entrance gate, boundary wall, well-defined pathways and plants protected by tree guards. There are some city appointed gardeners around in this open space in addition to Basti folks, their goats, ducks and hens. Both these open spaces are designed, supervised and owned by DDA and separated by a narrow sinuous street. This street with its overloaded carts, cycle rickshaws, and running children, ended in a fork. Right in the middle of the fork was a tree, surrounded by a large circular base, resting against which is a barbershop. I had never seen the chair in front of the barber's ornate mirror and console empty. Men, young and old, and an occasional little girl, kept the barber busy. Behind the barbershop the Basti, the real Basti, presents itself as a row of structures, buildings that a friend of mine thought was as if the wrong pieces of a jigsaw puzzle were forced to come together (see figure 5.3). Bright maroon two-story, next to a freshly painted mint green three story jostled with crumbling graceful ancient gateways, and the elegant new stone structure of the new Inayat Khan dargah.



Figure 5.3: "Wrong pieces of a jigsaw puzzle were forced to come together"

Urban historian Narayani Gupta (2003) described the process by which the morphology of the Indian neighborhood was shaped with the advent of the British colonizers. Before mid-nineteenth century, homes in Indian neighborhoods were not an indicator of a person's personal wealth, as wealth was accumulated through "portable property". As a direct consequence, houses on the streets were small, and often against or above shops and business premises as people lived and worked in the same area. Typically as the settlements reached a certain size and density, the pre-industrial vernacular settlements would lie out new quarters or abandon the settlement and build a new larger one nearby (as in medieval Europe). But with cartography and rules for property rights introduced by the British colonizers, towns, settlements, and neighborhoods got fixed in place. Thus a settlement like Nizamuddin Basti had no way to expand its boundary, even though the population density increased, especially after the planning bodies were institutionalized in the mid twentieth century in Delhi. These planning bodies such as DDA and MCD took control of land in Delhi including the land around Nizamuddin Basti following a land socialization policy where citizens had right to use land on leases, but had no absolute ownership of land.

The Basti, despite its congestion, narrow lanes, innumerable scattered graves, had great food, spiritual music, bustling markets and mosques. Its historic and architectural importance was borne out by several publications documenting the antiquity of its many monuments including a recent mapping of the best routes for viewing the several different monuments by British architect Lucy Peck. A figure-ground drawing of the basti prepared by Peck (2005) showed two axial streets, one running east to west and the other running north to south (see figure 5.4). Both these streets according to Peck connected with the outer limits of the old, now non-existent, settlement wall in the four cardinal directions. Some of the main monuments such as the *Kali Masjid* or Black Mosque, Nizamuddin Auliya's Dargah, lay along or just off this main spinal system. Secondary and tertiary roads emanated from this main street system to give access to houses, though houses lined either side of the axial streets as well. Along the periphery, and outside of the razed settlement walls, were the new streets, which were also the only ones, carrying cars. However, an occasional car could be seen struggling somewhere along the N-S spine.

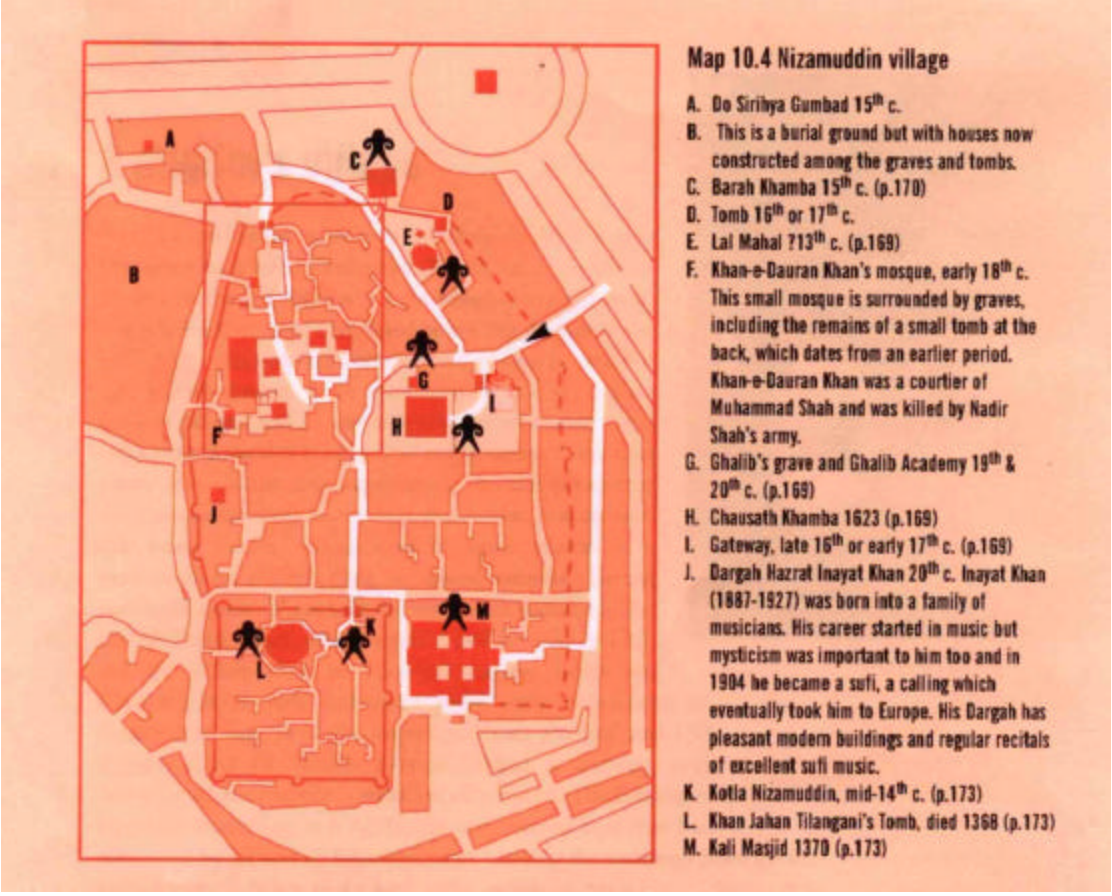


Figure 5.4: Street and monument map of Nizamuddin Basti prepared by Lucy Peck, 2005

Lucy Peck took me on a guided tour of the Basti on February 26, 2005. Lucy had brought along a printout of her book chapter where she had included the settlement map that showed the street network and the monuments in detail. Individual buildings were not shown in the map. We both lamented the lack of good documentation by city organizations, and the sinister taboos imposed by the government on civilian access to satellite images of Indian cities.

Being the wonderful and scholar and guide, Lucy took me to all the important monuments in the Basti explaining in detail the history, the construction techniques, and the best routes to each monument. We got talking during our walk, and sensing my interest in active places and the living heritage of the historic community, rather than empty monuments, Lucy took me to Nizam Nagar where her maid lived. This was my first trip to that housing area and I was not prepared for the visual onslaught that followed. Lucy told me that Nizam Nagar used to be a graveyard. She said, " you can still see the graves" and to prove her point she took me up a blind alley, pushed a curtain aside and revealed a grave marked with a tombstone. I had to hold my breath as we snaked through these alien magical spaces with mysterious semi-dark corners lit up here and there with shafts of light. We saw a tiny courtyard packed end to end with a large cemented grave and its equally large tombstone. Lucy wanted to take me to her maid's house. She told me that her maid's sister was one of the success stories of Hope's adult literacy program. Apparently, the woman armed with her training enrolled in Delhi University, and got a job as an assistant to a high court judge. We past many courtyards in our walk down the narrow winding streets of Nizam Nagar. All the courtyards had one to many graves in them. We saw children playing among them climbing over the tombstones, chasing each other around and playing hide and seek among the raised platforms. Clotheslines gently swayed over graves, and normal everyday activities of households unfolded around the dead. A family had just sat down at their threshold near a grave for their mid-day meal. They beckoned us to come and join them in their frugal lunch. We thanked them and moved on.

5.1.3. Changing Socio-Spatial Landscape

The cultural landscape of Nizamuddin changed too with the onslaught of migrants. The locals looked upon the migrants with suspicion. However, fear of strangers had as much to do with migrants as with the large floating population who came to the Basti not only for legitimate reasons but also in search of illicit drugs. Nizamuddin's association with drugs was more than two decades old now. In fact the recent news expose (Times of India, July 8, 2005) on Delhi's leading drug don revealed a strong connection with Nizamuddin Basti.

"The man who is widely known as the drug lord of Delhi, Sharafat Sheikh, has been arrested again. Sheikh was arrested from his house in Nizamuddin, which is named Bihar Bhawan. An Italian pistol and 500 gm heroin was seized from him.

Owner of dance bars in Mumbai and several properties in Delhi, Sheikh was also arrested last year in June. He was also booked under National Security Act (NSA), but managed to get bail from the high court…

Sheikh is said to be behind 90% of the drug trade in Delhi. In the last few years though, he has also emerged as one of the biggest diamond merchants in Delhi. Senior Delhi Police officers admit that he has managed to carve out an Rs 100 crore empire since he came to Delhi from Bihar in 1985…

Sharafat is also said to be the head of several gangs of juveniles who are into pick-pocketing and other petty crimes. He himself started as a burglar and later took to drug trafficking. Now his friends include Bollywood stars to whom he apparently supplies jewellery. An actor is said to have recently bought an old Pajero car from Sheikh…

The man who once washed utensils in a Nizamuddin guest house went on to own that guest house and purchased vehicles like Pajero and Lancer. Sharafat's drug empire ran from a guest house in Nizamuddin bang opposite which is a police picket…

Sheikh owns several properties in Nizamuddin (West) and he had recently bought a house in Nizamuddin (East). He also owns a house in Punjabi Bagh and two automobile showrooms in Uttam Nagar. He is said to be the owner of another hotel in Uttam Nagar. The police said that he has married thrice and has six daughters and two sons."

Children had often pointed out Bihar Bhawan to me and said, "The local don lives here!" and walked quickly away. Bihar Bhawan was the most well-maintained house in the Basti, with a fresh white paint, and pitched red roofs and red trims. A large flag of India fluttered on a tall mast atop Bihar Bhawan creating a strong visual element in the Basti skyline, visible from all the approach corridors.

Nizam Nagar, the graveyard settlement behind Bihar House, was the place where Sheikh's peddlers and customers freely roamed around, traded, and used drugs. A poor family in Nizam Nagar, who had lost a father to drug overdose and rehabilitated two adolescent daughters, had this to say about the cleansing that took place in Nizam Nagar following Sheikh's arrest:

> *Don't you see how clean the streets look? They used to sell smack right outside our door. My father, who passed away eight months ago, had reached a stage where he needed the stuff so bad, that we had to sell almost every saleable item we had and buy tablets for him for Rs.50 a piece. His cycle repair shop shut down, and my mother started the small tobacco shop from the front of our house. When the drug trade flowed here, she could earn up to Rs.200 a day because the addicts would come and buy cigarettes and matches from her all the time. Now that the police had cracked down, her business has suffered, she only makes about Rs.40 a day (less than a dollar, Rs. 45=$1). But we don't complain, its much better to live in poverty and peace than to constantly live with the menace of drugs, theft, and abuse in our street. (Interview with married eldest daughter, July 28, 2004)*

Peace of mind seems to be an all-important asset in poor families without bank accounts, savings or any other real asset except for the house that they have built up over the years. In an environment where heroin was effortlessly traded, all lesser forms of addiction were seen as harmless. The men who sat in the DDA parks on the periphery of the Basti, who played cards, openly consumed alcohol, and smoked marijuana, were seen as lesser evil to the "smackies" (term coined by the children to refer to the heroin addicts) who had held the community ransom by restricting movement, and making everyone vigilant all the time.

5.2. Children's Perception of Resources Within the Basti

As part of the social science curriculum adopted by the Hope adolescent girls' school, the students were involved in mapping their neighborhood and annotating the resources in each precinct. The girls worked on a giant wall mural, which was a series of concentric circles illustrating the different socio-spatial systems in their lives. The pivotal system or the center of the innermost circle was depicted as the self and its most innate connection to nature. The concentric circles then fanned out to include family systems, the immediate precinct, the neighborhood and ultimately the city. In this "econograph", as the school called this mural (see figure 5.5), children summarized the resources present in each concentric layer. I had asked a group of adolescent girls to explain this

mural to me. Pointing at bulleted text and images within each circular layer, one teenage girl explained the "econograph":

> *This is me, this is my family, and this is my neighborhood. I am deeply connected to all aspects of my family and community life. My family comprises of my grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, my eldest uncle and his wife, my younger uncles and their wives, my brothers and sisters and cousins.*
>
> *"My street" has the following resources: hotel, laundry, grocery shop, cobbler, dairy, public toilet, mosques, medicine shop, cosmetics shop, monument, electric substation, a cooking gas depot, kebab stall.*
>
> *"My neighborhood" has the following resources: Inner Kot, Dildar Nagar, Musaffir Khana, Alvi Chowk, Bara Khamba (names of older precincts); public toilets; night shelter; street roundabout; Phoolwali Gali (name of the most feared street); Umbrella Park; market; Archies gift shop; meat shops; restaurants; police station; bus stops; Ghalib academy (cultural center named after the famous Urdu poet); Markaz, Dargah.*

These listings of resources were a collaborative work of several girls living in different precincts. The girl who read out from the mural, was a Pirzada, and lived in Dildar Nagar. She selected several of the resources that was meaningful to her, and left out some which had been recommended by girls in other precincts. But even the selective list reported above, shows the richness of fine-grained community facilities that catered to day-to-day needs of families (see figure 5.6). The econograph and the community maps also illustrated children's deep local knowledge about the socio-physical resources within the Basti.



Figure 5.5: The Hope School econograph showing socio-physical resources for Nizamuddin girls



Figure 5.6: Shops in the street

5.3. Contested Legal Status of the Basti

When I had started my fieldwork in Nizamuddin Basti, I was certain, based my review of previous studies, that the Basti was an urban village with *Lal Dora* status. However, clouds of doubt soon gathered over whether this historic village still enjoyed that status. Residents of Nizamuddin as I found out through my research did not pay property tax, and nor did they follow any building bye-laws to construct their modest homes. In fact, building related activities were a constant feature in the Basti. Construction, repairs, and demolition of squatters were a cyclic happening in this place where the outside world seemed far off and distant, almost forgotten in the bustling immediacies of everyday activities everywhere.

In order to find out who controlled land in Nizamuddin, whether it was still considered *Lal Dora* etc. I made several inquiries, and found out that even if residents wanted to pay taxes, they like the city offices I telephoned, had no information as to which was the correct agency to approach with payments. In one afternoon I called DDA, MCD, the Mayor's office, and the chief townplanner's office to find out the legal status of Nizamuddin. At the end of the conversation with the townplanner, there was a nebulous concensus that Nizamuddin did not have *Lal Dora* status. Nebulous because the townpanner did not specifically say that it was *not* but, at least clarified that as soon as an urban status was bestowed on a village, it stopped enjoying exemptions granted to *Lal Dora*. The urban settlement then was governed by the plans drawn up for the zone to which it geographically belonged. In reference to Nizamuddin and my continued prodding the townplanner said, "Because it is an old settlement it is not possible to ascertain original owners. You will find it difficult to get any information from the revenue department about the jurisdiction of the city agencies in the Basti. But the fact remains that whosoever is occupying a building or structure in the Basti is liable to pay taxes because the status of the village is urban and not rural."

After the notional trappings of *Lal Dora* had been removed from my conception of Nizamuddin Basti, I followed up on property taxation rules for the Basti, and also sought a firmer confirmation on the legal status. Other than finding out the obvious 'most urban villages fall in Lal Dora areas,' my google sessions didn't reveal much. I realized that I needed to search for listings of *Lal Dora* areas.

I called the property tax department of the municipal corporation of Delhi. A youngish male voice answered the phone. I told him, "I need some information on Lal Dora areas, is there any listing of all such areas available with MCD?" the voice faltered a little, then asked me, "Lal Dora meaning rural areas? Which exact area do you have in mind?" I replied, "Nizamuddin Basti. I want to know whether this urban village is still a part of *Lal Dora*." The MCD officer asked, "which side of

Nizamuddin, east or west? There are only two villages in Nizamuddin. They are *Bangarpur* and *Naharpur*, I think. Nizamuddin Basti is not an urban village." I asked him, "is there a listing of this that I access and see for myself?" He gave me the url for MCD's official website, and asked me to follow the link to property tax, and then download the different lists for rural and urban villages. I thanked him for this information, barely containing my anxiety as the information he provided completely shattered all juridico-political conceptions of the Basti I had till that point.

I followed the links in the already open MCD webpage in my computer. I could very easily get to the list of urban villages and rural villages. I scanned rural villages first. No mention of Nizamuddin either under village or ward. The urban village listing had Behlolpur-Bangar and Sarai Kale Khan listed as urban villages in ward Nizamuddin. There was no mention of the Basti whatsoever. I decided to look up the list for colonies. Sure enough Nizamuddin East and West were listed in high tax categories, B and C respectively. Looking through all these latest property tax documents for the city, was forced to conclude that Nizamuddin Basti was not an urban village, certainly not Lal Dora. In fact the Basti as Delhiites such as myself knew it did not exist by itself any more. It is now a part of Nizamuddin West, carrying a unit area tax assessment for category C, (one of the higher tax brackets of the city) amounting to Rs. 400/unit value of area.

A friend in the development sector suggested that I called Manjeet Singh, the ex-Additional Commissioner of the slum and JJ cluster department. He gave me Mr. Singh's number. Mr. Manjeet Singh answered the phone himself. I introduced myself as a PhD student who was conducting a study in Nizamuddin Basti. I said, "Sir, I want to understand the status of the Basti. Is it an urban village, is it under Lal Dora?" Silence on the other end prompted me to continue. "I have talked to four city departments this past week, but no one had been able to tell me conclusively the correct legal status of Nizamuddin Basti. In fact just a while ago, I found out from property tax department of MCD that the Basti does not exist as a tax zone, but the Basti as we know it is part of Nizamuddin west, which is in a high tax paying neighborhood category." Mr. Singh then replied, "First and foremost the Basti is a human settlement, and it is ruled by taxation laws just as any human settlement in Delhi." "But sir, the tax category that it is a part of now, makes no sense looking at the ground reality. In fact, as far as I know no one pays residential property taxes in the Basti simply because they do not know which city agency governs them or what the tax protocols for them are." Mr. Singh, "You should talk to the tax inspector and find out from him who is paying taxes and at what rate. Ask to see his revenue map, and ask him if people are not paying taxes, why is that happening and if he has done any survey to find out the reasons. Also the Basti as it is an old settlement will be looked after by….(he tried to remember the name)…….check with the city zone office in Asaf Ali Road to see if they have any documents on Nizamuddin." Sensing that the conversation was deviating from the central question, I asked, "But sir, I need to know more

than anything else if Nizamuddin Basti is no longer considered an urban village, when did this recategorization occur?" "I think in the mid 80s when a lot of slum areas were denotified. At that time some slums and urban villages became colonies." "Where can I find this information?" "Call the slum dept. and ask for a list of denotification of slum areas."

After this conversation I made a few futile phone calls to the slum department. No one could direct me to the denotification documents. But through my contacts with the NGOs in Nizamuddin Basti, I got confirmation from the local councilor that indeed the Basti was considered a part of Nizamuddin West. The councilor had petitioned for reducing the tax burden from category C to category G[1]. I however continued to be baffled by the decision of the city to take away the urban village status from the Basti. Nizamuddin Basti not only had historical and tourism potential of international significance, both of which were high priorities in the Delhi master plan to improve environmental qualities within *urban villages*, but the Basti also embodied all the characteristics such as strong identity, economic activities related to place, compact built-form with mixed uses, to qualify as a *special area* worth special intervention in the master plan. Moreover, looking at the failures of the subsequent governments over the years since independence in 1947 to provide adequate housing for the poor, the residents of Nizamuddin deserved the highest achievement awards for looking after thousands of people, mostly poor Muslims, who would find it very difficult to sustain themselves and their families anywhere else in Delhi. Nizamuddin did that while preserving its own unique cultural, historical and religious identity.

5.4. Muslims in India and in Nizamuddin

"*Mussalman jumme ke jumme nahate hain.*" (Muslims bathe only on Fridays). The stereotypes riddling the Muslim community in India deserve a research project by itself. The Manmohan Singh government has in fact initiated a large national study under Rajinder Sachar Committee to assess the status of Muslims in India vis-a vis other communities.

The right wing Hindu political parties levelled all kinds of charges against Muslims—Muslims married more and produced more children in order to outnumber the Hindus in India, Muslims should be part of the national mainstream and not be dictated by their Personal Laws etc. The

[1] I left India after completing my fieldwork in Nizamuddin in January 2006. In mid-April, The Hope Project informed me that the local councilor, Farad Suri, has become the Mayor of Delhi. One of the first things he did was to reduce the tax category of Nizamuddin from C to G.

blame game that followed the recent rape of a woman, called Imrana, by her father-in-law, where the father-in-law after the rape was considered her new husband in the eyes of a section of the Muslim community, led many including several Muslim scholars to question the role of secularism in India in providing justice for all citizens. Arshad Alam's critique (July 22, 2005 in architectindia yahoo group) of the blame game that followed in the media after an important Muslim cleric refused to see the difference between rape and marriage is instructive of the pros and cons of the Muslim perspective of Indian secularism:

> *Muslim issues are not and should not, be made immune from the general concerns of Indian public, as sections of Muslims would like to have… Had it not been for secularism and secularists, the status of Muslims would have been very different by now… there is a section among Muslims who think that secularism is nothing but the protection of orthodox Muslim interest. They want a secular state, not secularisation of their society. Rather than blaming others for conspiring against them all the time, it would be far better if Muslims turned inwards for some introspection. There are lots of issues, which should make heads hang in shame. Appalling is the level of education, even more appalling is the level of employment. There is a reluctance to plan families…*

Just as some Muslims viewed secularism as a protection for their way of life, the non-Islamic Indian society including some Muslim academics such as Arshad Alam above, saw that very way of life as a threat to secularism. This is one of the reasons youth from Muslim communities such as Nizamuddin Basti found it hard to find employment in secular India, which in turn perpetuated the anti-Muslim myth— 'apalling level of unemployment among Muslim youth'. Youth of Nizamuddin Basti in fact struggled with their identities related to both religion and place. Kamini Prakash, executive director of The Hope Project, told me the story of a competent hard-working young man, Mehtab, who had to give up an excellent job opportunity outside Nizamuddin Basti because he refused to change his praying habits. He had worked with The Hope Project's youth groups, and was a successfully trained as a tour guide. He later got an office job with Hope. When Mehtab found a job outside, everybody at The Hope Project was happy for him because the new job would pay much more that what he earned in the Basti. On the day he was to sign the contract, his new employers asked him if he offered *namaz* everyday. Mehtab said yes. The employers told him that theirs was a secular company and many people might feel offended by his daily offering of prayer. At that point the youth said he did not want the job. Hope workers told him later that he was perhaps a bit hasty in rejecting the offer outright without thinking the issue through. A British Sufi who was present when this story was being told. He said that in order to avoid attracting

undue attention he would say his prayers in the privacy of the bathroom. He asked Mehtab if he would consider doing that. Mehtab replied no, because according to Islam hiding one's praying habits was a sin, and the Sufi's believed in the message, "Dare—have the courage to be who you really are."

From 1982, The Hope Project had worked hard to provide education to every child living in Nizamuddin Basti. This was an especially daunting task as education was not a priority for most poor Muslim parents and in the case of girl children parents often actively resisted school. To ameliorate the social dogmas, in 1983, The Hope Project started a Non-Formal School for girls who could not access education because of gender discrimination. As most poor children in the Basti were first generation learners, Hope started an educational support program through afternoon tuition classes for boys who attended government schools, and vocational classes in typing and short-hand to enhance contemporary skills and hence employability of young men and women in the Basti. A crèche was also started to support working mothers. The Hope Project in fact provided much needed hope to the community in preparing for a life out of poverty. But when competent young people from the Basti found it hard to be part of the formal workforce outside the Basti based on their religious identities, the director of The Hope Project rightly asked, "what are we preparing these children for? Better education is to create better life opportunities, but where are those opportunities for these children?" Nizamuddin Basti had a large population of children and youth. It was impossible to avoid them on a visit to the Basti. They were everywhere in the landscape, "playing" in the eyes of the visiting adult, apparently having a good time. But the future of these children or what they would *become* was uncertain.

Religious identities of Indian Muslims were also linked to place of residence. Dr. Hameed of Hamdard University in his lecture at the India International Center on July 25, 2005 on the topic of "Growing Consciousness of the Other", said that Muslims will have to leave their ghettos and take up residences in other places as a first step toward getting mainstreamed in Indian society, and in order to enjoy better educational and employment opportunities. However, in this section I would like to argue that growing up in a ghetto such as Nizamuddin has other advantages. Other than its widely acknowledged roles of historic pilgrimage for Sufis, training center for Tablighis, virtual *mecca* for conservation architects and history afficionados, and eating hot spots for Mughlai cuisine, Nizamuddin also played two other significant roles. Nizamuddin was not only a sustaining habitat for poor Muslims who found it hard to get assimilated in secular India, but it also housed several different friendly places for children. These places provided choices for nurturing Nizamuddin children's present state of *being*, choices and the kind of childhood which children from more desirable planned neighborhoods did not have. The rest of the chapters will be

devoted to the discussion of children's friendly places in the Basti, however, the next section discusses the Basti's role in providing for poor Muslims.

5.5. What makes Nizamuddin Basti a sustainable habitat for poor Muslims?

Residents of Nizamuddin Basti prided themselves in talking about the safe and peaceful character of this settlement. The example that they liked to cite in order to qualify this claim was: "there has been no fighting or riots here during Babri Masjid or even Godhra." [Babri Masjid (destruction of a mosque called Babri Masjid in the town of Ayodhya by Hindus in 1991) and Godhra (killing of passengers in a train, mostly Hindus, by Muslims 2002) represented the two events which triggered the bloodiest communal riots in the recent history of India.]

The Basti however was the site of veiled conflict between two towering religious institutions of international significance that represented a clash between Indianization of Islam and purist Islam. The *Dargah* or tomb complex of the Sufi saint Hazrat Nizamuddn Auliya was an internationally acclaimed Sufi monument. In stark contrast to the soulful music, the ritualistic offerings of flowers, drapes, the many festivals and bustling life and activity in Nizamuddin's Dargah where people of all colors, religions and walks of life were welcome, was the international headquarter of the Tablighi movement. Inspired by the bare-bone eighteenth century Arabian Wahibi movement, the Tablighis who were often pejoratively described as "fundamentalists" housed their headquarter inside the sterile, heavily guarded, windowless fortress of the *Markaz* through the gates of which no uninitiated person could pass. As Mark Tully (2003) observes in "India in Slow Motion", the Tablighis strongly disapproved of the devotional aspect of Sufism, its strong attachment to the Dargah and its religious symbols—all characteristics that purist Muslims associated with Hinduism. However, despite this inherent conflict within the two predominant religious bases, the Basti as a human settlement had not suffered from the violent conflicts resulting from religious fundamentalism, particularly the disputes between fundamental Hindutva proponents and Indian Muslims that had racked India in recent years specifically after Ayodhya and the more recent communal carnage Gujarat after the Godhra killings. The Basti housed a less than 5% population of Hindus and Christians. Both these groups talked about harmonious coexistence over the years.

The stories of disharmony and disrespect in the Basti were not of a religious kind. Class-based discrimination and deprivation by the city, and by the more affluent residents of Nizamuddin West were rampant. The 2021 draft master plan stipulated that a neighborhood with a population of 10,000, must have a senior secondary school, a multipurpose community hall, a local level wastewater treatment facility among other basic facilities. None of these were available in Nizamuddin Basti whose population exceeded 10,000. The lack of all these facilities had

compromised the quality of life of residents. The reason why girls dropped out of school after class five, was because the senior schools were in Jungpura or Kotla or Khan Market. Families typically did not allow girls to walk that far alone, though there were some girls who attended these schools. This was the reason for The Hope Project to start the adolescent girls non-formal school. However Hope workers actively advocated sending children to formal government schools, which were mainstream, and hence provided better life opportunities for students.

Most community events and ceremonial functions took place in the open space in front of the scrap sorting godowns. A community hall could have provided a better, and cleaner environmental setting for celebrations. Recently the president of the Nizamuddin West Residents Welfare Association (RWA) had approached The Hope Project in connection with building a community center in their planned neighborhood. The cemented yard across from the park in C-block was earmarked for this community hall. The RWA had acquired finance from the Member of Parliament's Development Fund, and wanted to construct the hall as a community project of the *Bhagidari Scheme* (a city initiated citizen participation project that allows citizens to manage local resources and develop community projects in participation with the city). The disbursement of the development fund was contingent on a showing partnership between RWA and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi or a local NGO to develop the project. The Hope Project being a NGO, was approached by the Nizamuddin West RWA. However, the RWA made it very clear that the Basti people would not be allowed to use the facility. The middle class population of Nizamuddin West was 2000 strong, whereas the Basti had over 12000 residents. Fear of vandalism, overuse by the Basti folks, and other fears related to bringing in the underclass such as petty thefts etc. colored the middle class perception of the Basti community. The Hope Project had to say no to RWA, though they invited them to come and see the work that the children produced in the school to dispel the "up to no good" perceptions of the Basti children.

A local compost pit for onsite composting of organic waste was proposed by The Hope Project and endorsed by the local councilor Farad Suri earlier in 2005. The councilor proposed a site by the sewer right next to his office. The location was in the long narrow park along the sewer on the outskirts of both the Basti and the middle-class homes of Nizamuddin West. However a row of West houses faced this park. On the day of the ceremonial flag-off of the project, a few West residents strongly objected to the treatment plant as according to them it constituted an eyesore and a stink hole and hence a definite NIMBY (not in my backyard). Hope and the councilor backed off, choosing to make peace with a powerful minority group and find an alternative site.

In contrast, there were several community narratives in the Basti itself that tell a tale of a great sense of community, and shared destiny amongst the poor Muslim families living in Nizamuddin

Basti. There had been two recent fires, within ten months of each other, in Nizam Nagar, the squatter settlement on a graveyard that housed 200 families of ragpickers and other dalit Muslims. Ever since MCD had taken away the land where ragpickers used to sort the scrap, there was no choice but to store and sort from the small homes. The fires were a direct result of these hazardous living conditions. The migrant Muslim families from Bihar, Bengal, and Bangladesh who typically comprised the workforce in the scrap godowns, and lived in Nizam Nagar, were affected the most. When the fire devastated many of these families, the community stepped in much before any NGO had entered the area for relief work. I had asked Zeba, a young Hope graduate who helped me with Hindi transcription of interviews, about the fire. " What did the people do, how did they cope? Did they leave the area?" Zeba said, "A camp was set up in the raised ground in front of Nizam Nagar. People whose houses had burnt down took shelter there. The local MLA helped with money and materials. No stranded family left the area. Neighbors fed them, gave them clothes, utensils and helped them rebuild their homes." This story was corroborated by the school principal Rita Matthews, Kamini, and a 11 year old boy from Nizam Nagar whose house burnt down in the fire.

When The Hope Project started a night shelter in collaboration with *Butterflies* (NGO working with street children in Delhi) to house homeless children in the school premises at night, the community initially resisted. This is because these children came in late at night, some of them were on drugs, and were typically perceived as antisocial elements. A meeting was called. Kamini, said, "We told them about the plight of the children, their circumstances, the harassment they faced on the streets, and finally appealed to them as Muslims to look after their own There is a tradition in the Basti of never returning poor Muslims in need. They all agreed! They said, that we were right and the community must embrace these unfortunate Muslim kids."

The Hope Project had an apartment in Nizamuddin West, which was a posh middle-class neighborhood to the south of the Basti. One idea that was discussed in Hope was to move the night shelter to this apartment instead of using classrooms. But Hope social workers felt that it was easier to convince the poor to be more generous and share whatever they had. Kamini said, "The better-off people would never allow these ragged children to live among them. There will be lots of complaints and political pressure to move them [from Nizamuddin West]. So we thought of making space for them in our already over-burdened project building in the midst of the more sympathetic poor."

I had a long chat with Hope's financial director, Quddus Siddiqui, who was also an Islamic scholar on June 28, 2005. We discussed many issues, how Islam treats the girl child, what's the correct way of life according to Islam and who is a Muslim, among others. Quddus also talked about his two

daughters and his fear of strangers and kidnapping for his daughters. When I asked him if he personally knew any one who had been kidnapped, he said, "No not in the Basti. But one keeps hearing about how girls get abducted from public places in cars. Its not just a fabrication of parent's imagination, there is real danger out there." I wondered about the feasibility of this proposition—a car entering the narrow crowded streets of the Basti, and then kidnapping girls with a few hundred eyes watching the abduction. Quddus then offered the case of Rashid, a 24 year-old semi-blind youth who had been kidnapped in childhood, and who now lived in Nizamuddin Basti. Rashid wore thick glasses and did not always remember everything. But when he had first come to Nizamuddin, he had recalled being kidnapped, tortured by a "holy man", begging in the streets of Delhi only to hand over his collection to the man every evening. Rashid finally managed to escape one day and landed in Nizamuddin. He had no recollection of his family, place of origin or his real name. The community christened him Rashid (a Muslim name), though Quddus acknowledged that he might as well be Hindu. Rashid did odd jobs for everyone, and was allowed in almost every home for meals. He even traveled along with neighbors from the Basti to distant places to attend marriage parties of the neighbor's relatives. However, Rashid was always on the lookout for his real parents. Whenever there was any news of a boy being kidnapped, he would turn up at the house of the parents just in case he was the one. Once, he came back to the Basti after one such hopeful adventure, and distributed sweets. He said that he found his parents in Chandni Chowk (this is the another Muslim area within the walled city of Delhi). He took all his belongings, his cycle and savings to his newly found parent's place. He came back a day later empty handed. He was robbed, conned and heart broken. Rashid continued to live in Nizamuddin with his large extended family in the community, where he was assured of meals, shelter, odd jobs, and empathy.

All three stories that I offered above tell a tale of a sense of community, bonding and tolerance amidst severe poverty, and lack of publicly available social security networks. When real estate developers, both private and public, develop so-called new communities around Delhi in Gurgaon, Noida, Pappankala or Dwarka, they actually push people apart from one another in the name of providing more livable space in high-rise apartments. They create physical and social distance between people and reduce the chances of interactions with neighbors in the vertical anonymity of high-rise apartment blocks. Rashid, and the Butterfly children would not survive a day in these new communities. Stories such as Rashid's were heard and shared at the street level, in the *chowks* (street nodes), in the cheap hotels, in the free-meal lines of the Dargah. Rashid did not show documents to strangers telling the tale of his misery. He was still sympathetically assimilated in the many places within the community. These places existed on neutral ground, and to borrow an expression from Ray Olderburg's description of *third places*, "within these places,

conversation is the primary activity and the major vehicle for the display and appreciation of human *condition*, personality and individuality (1997, 42)." [The italicized word is my addition]. Oldenburg described third places as the "core settings of informal public life". Nizamuddin Basti, surviving entirely on an informal economy, abounded in such settings that tirelessly nurtured informal public life.

A pirzada woman once told me that one could wake up hungry but no one goes to sleep on an empty stomach in Nizamuddin Basti. And it was probably true. Even the poorest families I worked with would buy fresh bread from the many cheap food hotels every evening. And when they had no food at home they would get a meal ticket from the Dargah and get free food. Though men more than women availed of the free food facilities. People also regularly sheltered the destitute and the needy like Rashid.

Chapter 6
Constraints on Place Use

6.1. Constraints on children's use of the neighborhood outdoors

Though children in Nizamuddin spent much more time outdoors than in any typical planned neighborhood in Delhi, the constraints to children's active use of public places were many. As Valsiner (1997) rightly points out, the term *constraint* has a negative connotation in common language within Western cultural meaning systems with "an implicit reference to the control of actions against the actor's wishes or well-being" (p. 90). However Valsiner argues that scientific use of the term constraint should remain neutral in reference to child socialization processes as most socialization processes such as norms of acting in different settings, moral beliefs, socio-political and religious convictions constitute internalized sets of constraints. Valsiner also suggests that these constraints cannot be studied by analyzing the external environment alone without observing children's actions within that particular environment and without knowing children's thinking about these actions.

My initial 31 interviews, which included interviews with 16 girls, aged 11-12 years, revealed a pattern of active use of outdoors by all responding children. On talking to teachers one day about some of the emerging patterns of the study, I was told that girls' active use of outdoor space was not socially promoted in the community. On further discussion I was told that the age-group I interviewed—11 and 12 years—was represented in the Hope school by girls from the lowest socio-economic classes of the Basti. This is because the school over the years had sensitized the community to send their children to formal schools and not to the project's non-formal school. As a result, only the poorest families who cannot afford formal schools send their children to The Hope Project. The teachers told me to talk to older girls who came from more economically stable backgrounds to get a more balanced view of girls' use of public place in the Basti.

In order to explore children's perceptions of constraints in their everyday lives, I designed two school wide workshops to facilitate focus group discussions on this issue among others—the first one with 70 girls in the age-range of 9-16 years, and the second on with 45 boys aged 9-16 years. Four teachers helped me conduct different activities during the two-day girls' workshop. The girls were divided into 5 groups, and each group had one facilitating adult. The first day the groups were arranged such that the entire age of 9-16 years range was represented in any given group. The idea was to encourage discussions among the different ages, and also validate the interview findings. Interesting debates around the topic of use of outdoor place revealed that the younger children enjoyed greater mobility licenses within the community. But the younger children

reported negotiated access to outdoor spaces, which they did not talk about during the initial interviews when they reported their use of public space. Thus the focus groups revealed the agency of children, who earlier had reported active use of outdoors, in defying parental control and structural norms of the culture. The focus groups further showed that in addition to age of girls, the location of the home within the neighborhood, and the identity of the precinct and its places, played a significant role in determining which places children used. Places close to home, which were considered safe by some girls, were considered unsafe by others who lived far away from them. The older girls' range were often restricted to their homes, terraces or friends' homes within the same street.

In contrast boys reported having no constraints on their use of outdoor places. Younger boys however mentioned parental consent to play outside, and devoting time for homework to win consent to play outdoors. Some of the other constraints for their play outdoors were the narrowness of streets and crowding.

6.1.1. Gender as a Social Constraint

To explore how gender influences constraints imposed by families, the focus groups were asked if girls enjoyed equal rights as boys and girls. The majority felt they did not (60%); boys typically received preferential treatment over girls. In fact some of the groups wrote,

> *"Boys and girls do not enjoy equal rights in our community. Boys can stay out late. But girls stay at home most of the times; they are never allowed to stay out late. Boys can seek employment outside, but girls are not allowed to work outside home. Our families feel that the outside world is unsafe for us."*

> *"Girls in my family attend non-formal school here at Hope because it is close by. But my brother goes to a formal government school."*

> *"Girls are not given the same opportunities as boys. Girls' education seldom goes beyond high school. Whereas boys have the freedom to choose what they want to do—study further or work."*

> *"Parents discriminate between boys and girls. Boys are allowed to play outside, we are not."*

"We are not allowed to step out of the house unescorted, nor are we allowed to talk to boys. Playing with boys outdoors is out of the question!"

"We can play inside the house. The streets outside are not big enough to accommodate play. We cannot play much inside houses also, because of the amount of housework we are expected to do everyday."

"Younger girls still get permission to pay outside, but older girls do not enjoy this right. The outside environment is considered unsafe for older girls."

When boys were asked if girls enjoyed equal opportunities as boys in the community, many felt that girls did indeed have good opportunities and boys had to obey their sisters in escorting them to their places. But when the debate revolved around use of public place, boys agreed that their sisters did not have the same freedoms as themselves. In fact they reinforced the social constraints on girls mobility by citing the declining moral landscapes in the public environment as detrimental to girls' safety outdoors.

"We can go out anytime we want, we are free to play outside. But girls are not given this right here because they are girls. Our families feel concerned that girls will be teased and offended in public. There are in fact many boys here who wait for girls to come by to tease (Group of 13-14 year old boys in the workshop)."

"Our parents don't allow girls above 15 years to go out alone. The neighborhood environment is very bad for older girls. If an older girl walks down the street alone, two young boys will follow her closely making catcalls. Younger girls are still safe outside, so they are sometimes allowed to go out. In fact girls shouldn't be allowed to come out alone at all. The environment outside is too hostile for them, there are too many men outside, lurking in dark desolate lanes. If something bad happens, in today's world no one might come forward to protect them (Group of 15-16 year old boys in the workshop)."

Within group analysis according to age in the girl's focus groups revealed that even for younger girls permission to play outside is won only through negotiations. The girls in the focus groups were asked to write the reasons why they were not allowed to go to parks and other open spaces on their own, and also if they were allowed what were the conditions under which they could go out (see Table 6.1). In the overall workshop population, a common consensus emerged that girls

below age twelve had greater freedom of movement than older girls. However, participating in the discussions of one group, the reasons for negotiated access as well denial became clear when these girls meticulously prepared a chart tabulating reasons under both why allowed, and why denied. Of the 13 girls in this group, only 4 (all under age 12) were allowed to go to parks on their own. The rest 9 girls could only go with parents, brothers or some other approved chaperon like aunts or cousins.

Table 6.1: Access to play outside home for girls

Why access is denied	How access is won
The reason why I am not allowed to go to the park is because my family thinks that the social environments of the nearby parks are unsafe.	Since I am the youngest of all the children, I am allowed to go to the park to play.
My brother does not allow me to go to the park because the parks are full of men taking drugs or playing cards.	I go to the park to play despite my parents telling me not to. I disobey them simply because I love playing too much.
My mother and brothers do not like me to roam around by myself in the outdoors. They think any place outside the home is unsafe for me. But they themselves go to the park every evening when it cools down. They never take me along even if I really want to go. I miss going to parks. But I have to stay at home and do housework.	I go to the park to play despite my parents telling me not to. I argue with my parents telling them if other children can go out and play, so can I.
In my family, women do not have the permission to go to parks or anywhere outside by themselves.	I can go out after taking permission from my parents. But I can also go out without telling them under the condition that I get back home before it gets dark.
My family does not allow me to go to the nearby parks because ("*udher khule aam romance hota hai*") lovers hang around, romancing in front of everyone.	I can sometimes go out by myself after taking permission from my elders. They allow me if they are in a good mood.

Note: The word park has been used indiscriminately to describe open spaces of any kind including designated parks near home.

What was clear from this discussion was that these younger girls succeeded in navigating the patriarchal system that dictated everyday behaviors and spatial limits of the girl child. The older girls seemed more readily accepting of the dominant community narratives about gender and its spatial constraints. Even relatively active outdoor users, the younger girls, could do so only through negotiation with families, demonstrating the tension between social structures of family and wider society, and the space for individual maneuver. Streets and open spaces in front of home, (see Figure 6.1), even if they were filthy, and crowded, often were the negotiated spaces where children's agency could be manifest as a result of the girl child's active resistance to societal constraints.

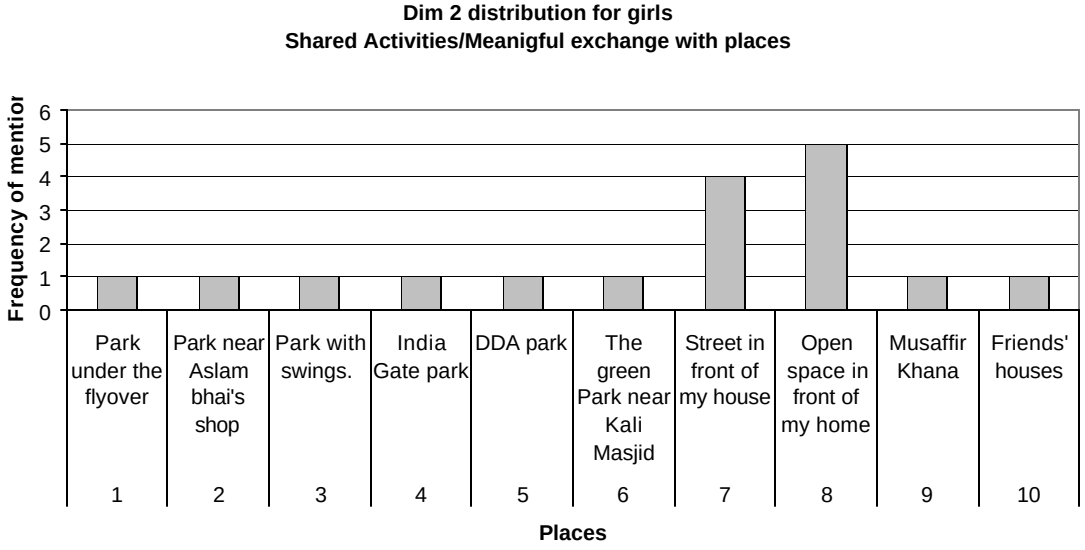


Figure 6.1: Girls' responses of places in which they engage in meaningful activities outdoors

6.1.2. Constraints Due to Place Fear

Just as the meaning of the environment for the guardians of children played a role in constraining children's freedoms outdoors, the children of Nizamuddin themselves had constructed meaning of places that constrained their movement and choice of places. Some of these meanings were derived from community narratives of fear in places, but others were based on more first hand experiences of fear.

6.1.2.1. Fear of Crime and Violence

Fear of crime against women in public places perhaps was the biggest factor that limited independent mobility of adolescent Muslim girls. Lack of opportunity to socialize and know the opposite gender outside family circles, succeeded in othering of boys for girls and girls for boys, and in constructing narratives of fear for women in public places.

> *"Didi*[2]*, I feel scared at night because many people here drink alcohol and what not. I am afraid they might tease me. (10 year old girl from ragpicking family)"*

> *"Even I feel scared when I return home in the evening after my maths tuition. It gets dark when I walk home, and I am not sure whether I will be able to take care of "my own safety" "What are you afraid of?" "The fear is that someone might grab me from the back, I mean I am scared of my* personal safety. *(13 year old girl living in Dildar Nagar)"*

> *"The area behind the Dargah has a good environment, that's why I like it. My grandmother forbids me from going anywhere else. Drug addicts lounge around in the parks, and boys stand by the streets. That's why we are forbidden from going anywhere else. (14 year old girl living nearDargah)"*

Boys' place fears that constrained their actions outdoors were mainly fear of fights breaking out between different interest groups. Due to the small size of streets, and crowding their games were disrupted. Also territorial control by other users in larger spaces prevented older boys from playing their favorite sport, cricket.

> *"The streets are very narrow, and many people go up and down all the time. So we can't play cricket. If we hit someone, there is a fear of a fight breaking out. So we feel afraid to play cricket in the streets, and prefer to go to the park and play."*

> *"In our street, which is very wide, we still cannot play cricket. A drunkard sits there the whole day. He pours water on us if we play in the street and fights with*

2 Didi is a Hindi term for elder sister but commonly used to refer to young Hindu women including teachers.

us for no reason. He drinks the whole day and has no control over himself. So we cannot play even though its is a good sized street for cricket."

6.1.2.2. Fear of Ghosts

Besides the fear of men which would qualify as a well-formed argument for constraining independent mobility and freedom of choice in this Muslim settlement, the other fear that restricted use of streets and open spaces in the basti by children, especially girls, was the fear of ghosts. 45 out of 70 of the girls reported being afraid of ghosts, and more than thirty wanted to tell the stories of first hand encounters with the supernatural. Unlike the reasoning inherent in the fear of men, this fear of the supernatural fell in the narrative, descriptive and contemplative mode of thought. According to Bruner (1986), human thinking was essentially of two kinds—reasoning that leads to well-formed, empirically verifiable arguments on one hand, and narrative thinking that creates good stories. Bruner clearly suggests that these two modes of thinking are of two different natural kinds as they differ radically in their procedures for verification: "arguments convince one of their truth, stories of their likeliness (p.11)." However, Bruner acknowledges that "both can be used as a means of convincing another". The ghost stories narrated by the children living in Panch Peer, a squatter settlement by the sewer, and the graveyard, showed how the narrative imagination influenced and created the argument for possible actions.

"Ma'm, I feel scared of ghosts…my house is in PanchPeer near the graveyard. Sometimes when I travel at night, I feel someone is following me and will grab me from the back (she shivered and laughed covering her mouth with her hand)." (11 year old girl living in PanchPeer)

"When I go home, the road I take to go to PanchPeer is by the graveyard. Sometimes I get late in the evening, it becomes 7pm, and it gets dark, and strange sounds can be heard, and a strong sweet scent wafts through the air. Like the scent of a flower, like the scent of jasmine oil. When I walk quietly, the sound comes, like the sound of laughter from the back, I walk straight never looking back, and I walk quickly and straight to get away from it."

Just as girls in squatters next to the graveyards had ghost stories to tell, girls living in the heart of Nizamuddin Basti also had several stories to share. This also being the last session of the workshop, the participants had warmed up and were more forthcoming with stories and personal experiences. Fear of ghosts emerged as a predominant place fear among girls in Nizamuddin. Boys

typically dismissed it in their workshop. The place experiences of boys were first hand, direct and free of the gendered constraints of the girls. Maybe because of lack of direct action stories, and in order to justify the landscapes of fear they had constructed in their minds, girls forged links between the exceptional and the ordinary to create place narratives.

> *“* Didi*, I had come out at night, around 3:30am during Ramzan in this road in front over here (Hope School). There was a man standing there. He was small but as he kept coming closer, he grew taller and taller and taller. When he was a little distance away from me, I broke out in cold sweat and ran home. I looked back from my door, but there was no one there. There was but this little gap between him and me (she indicated an inch between her right hand thumb and index finger) when I ran away.” “When did this happen? I asked. “*Ji*..?” Tasneem asked, “Was it during last ramzan, last November?” “*Ji*. I broke out in such sweat despite it being so cold that time!”*
>
> *“Does anyone else want to share any such experience?” I asked. Some hands went up in air. “You raised your hand, do you want to speak?” I asked a girl. Many others tried catching my attention by calling me to them. I said, “one by one, I will come to everyone.” I took my ipod near the girl who had stood up and waited for me to come over to her. I told her to speak up. “One time, my mother was sleeping in our terrace during a powercut…” it was impossible to hear her amidst the rising din. “Shh..Shh…let her speak. We should all listen to her.” “One time my ‘mummy’ was sleeping during a powercut, and as she was sleeping someone slapped her face and said, ‘get up from the terrace and go to your room and sleep.’ So ‘mummy’ got up and woke up my ‘papa’ and said, someone who was wearing white clothes, and had long long beard had slapped her. She kept complaining that she was hurting a lot, a lot, like that. My ‘papa’ then said, okay you go down and sleep. So she went down. My ‘mummy’ said never again would I sleep upstairs again in my life. And she has not slept up in her life again for fear of a slap!” “Where do you live?” “In the ‘basti’.”(The children refer to the area beyond the dargah, the original settlement as the ‘basti’)*
>
> *“Didi, there was one…there was one…” “Shh..Shh.. listen no? To the stories?” I quieted the other girls. “There was one girl here. She used to go to the park*

everyday, god knows why. Then one day she went to the park. She was eating an ice-cream. Then she was taken by a spirit. She came home saying 'I will beat up every one, I will beat up every one'. She even started yelling at her father. Then when she was taken to the maulan*, he said a witch has gotten into her."*

I went on to the next raised hand. It was little Nadia again. "Speak up, stand up and speak up." "Okay I will stand up and speak. Listen up all you kids, listen with your ears wide open…(Rolls of laughter greeted her dramatic high-pitched opening line. I felt that Nadia was deliberately dramatizing her speech for comic effect. She beamed every time she managed to make the crowd laugh.)" "Speak," I said to her. Turning toward me, Nadia said, "ma'm, in our Nizamuddin there is a date tree, a very big tree. Over there no… one day no…at night, many kids play under the tree at night. Then one day, all the kids went away. One girl was still playing. Then for that one girl no, two big big eyes came out of the date palm tree…hee hee (giggle)…she saw the eyes. Then that girl no, she started playing with those two eyes ..hee hee (giggle). "How?" I asked. "Ma'm , she grabbed them and played with them then she ran from there. As she was running from there, a ghost came out of there and grabbed her. She fainted. Then every one came, and picked her up. She beat every one up like this (demonstrating big blows on the imagined back of a person). Then there was an old man over there who prayed for her, but she beat him also." Nadia sat down. Taking that as an indication of end of story I moved away.

Though the last narrator might have dramatized her presentation, and perhaps even the story, the fact remains that other children even during the initial interviews connected spirits to trees. Such stories of spirits and ghosts in trees is part of the community narrative and folktales in India and often shown on TV as children's stories. The place that was most connected to supernatural happenings was a narrow street behind the Hope school called "Phoolwali Gali (when translated: the flowerseller's street)". The physical qualities of this street contributed to the narrative imagination of fear, as this was the only street in the Basti where large stretches were unsupervised by doors and windows of houses, or active functional uses. The aspect ratio of width to height was exaggerated as well. The street was a four feet wide passage that twisted and turned without any indication of what was ahead. The thick stone walls lining this passage are over twenty feet high. Almost all the workshop groups mentioned Phoolwali Gali as a fearful place, "We are scared of Phoolwali Gali because it is desolate, boys roam around there, and spirits scare

people who walk by." Several stories referred to actual interactions with vanishing figures in the street.

> *A small girl stood up and started telling her story. "My* appa *(elder sister, in this case a young female teacher) was coming down the Phoolwali gali one day to teach us, when an old woman stopped her and asked for one rupee to buy food.* Appa *said, 'wait, let me see if I have any change. She searched in her purse, and when she finally found a coin, the old woman had disappeared. From that day, my appa stopped taking that route."*

According to Matthews' model of environmental knowing (1992), environmental information is communicated to children through a) first hand direct experience of places on a daily basis and on special occasions, and 2) secondary sources such as popular media, interpersonal communication, educational media etc. The child does not passively receive this information but selects, stores and interprets the information, and this process is mediated by particular social and cultural experiences of children. In exploring the processes involved in construction of meaning, Bruner (1990) puts forth two connected arguments: "the first is that in order to understand man you must understand how his experiences and his acts are shaped by his intentional states, and the second is that the form of these intentional states is realized only through participation in symbolic systems of the culture (p.33)." The ghost stories were situated within the established patterns of belief, both canonical, and exceptional within the cultural tradition of Sufi mysticism. Most of the stories were believable—ghosts next to graveyards, ghosts in trees, ghosts in dark desolate narrow lanes were very much part of local folk tales. The fact that girls' place fears were shaped through ghost stories more than boys suggested that the girls of Nizamuddin narrativized supernatural experiences in everyday places, to which they had limited access, perhaps as a way to make sense of a possible world. This world for them was experienced more through second hand messages and through social and structural constraints, than direct interactions with place. By constructing stories of fear about places that everyone else actively used, girls accepted their lack of access, or contested access to public places.

6.1.3. Social Exclusion as a Constraint to Place Use

Though boys in Nizamuddin enjoyed considerable freedom in exploring their local area, they did in fact experience constraints related to their lower social status as poor Muslims, slum dwellers, and threatening adolescents in the city controlled open spaces.

"We play cricket in the park. But not in the parks in the Basti. The parks over here are not large enough, so we have to cross the main street and go to a far-off park. Here in the DDA park, we can play but if the gardeners see us they chase us out. (15 year old boy in the Boy's Workshop)"

"We cannot play in the park during the day. The gardener does not allow us. So we play in the streets near home. That ways we can also run errands when asked to. The gardener says we can play in the park after five, because his duty gets over at that time, but we have our evening tuitions from six. (16 year old boy in the Boy's Workshop)"

"We cannot go to the Chhatri park. If we manage to enter somehow, we are captured and handed over to the police. There had been some teasing incidents over there, after that, young boys are not allowed to enter the park. We are only allowed in with our families. (16 year old boy in the Boy's Workshop)"

6.1.4. Environmental Qualities Constraining Choices of Action

Parts of Nizamuddin basti would qualify as extremely hazardous living environments. The fact that Nizam Nagar, the precinct where most of the scrap sorting business was located, had two large fires within ten months points to the risk involved in living there. MCD had taken away the scrap-sorting yard after the first fire, and as a result, poor families had no choice but to bring their business indoors. Lack of proper infrastructure was not relegated to Nizam Nagar precinct alone, but all over the basti in different forms. Five of the children I originally interviewed reported suffering injuries while playing in the streets, which were dug up for underground pipe repair work. The Basti environment had constant building activities and visible signs of demolition and repair. With narrow streets used as material stores, children who were often barefoot got hurt easily. This environmental risk was compounded with the lack of proper healthcare facilities in the Basti. Though children who study in the The Hope School have access to the free Hope clinic, others did not find it easy to avail medical care.

During the final session of the focus groups, I had asked the girls "are your streets, and neighborhood safe? Do you have any fear?" The first person to shoot up her hand in air shared her fear of mad dogs in public places. Though it sounded frivolous and funny to the group at first, but on probing further, the deeper environmental hazards surrounding the life and work of some children in the basti was revealed. The following excerpt is from the workshop transcript.

One girl (little Nadia who had been wisecracking since morning) said, "Baj[3]i, there is fear of being bitten by mad dogs!" All the girls laughed aloud. I said, laughing, "so mad dogs bite children do they? Has any one been bitten so far?" A chorus of no followed.

Tabassum said, "Don't you have a door in your house that you can lock? We have doors in our houses for keeping out things like that, don't we?" Nadia, stood up, and waving her hand said, "but baji, dogs don't come home to bite us, its when we are playing or roaming in the streets that they get us."

I asked Nadia, "Have you ever been bitten?" "No baji." Do you know anyone who has been bitten? "Yes baji, my neighbor was once bitten, when he was sorting scrap in the garbage vat."

Nadia belonged to a family of ragpickers who lived in Nizam Nagar. She and her neighbors collected and sorted garbage by hand often inside large garbage vats which typically attracted many other scavengers like pariah kites, dogs etc. Hence her story when reviewed in the context of her life situation stops sounding funny, and raises larger questions about environmental risks that some children in the Basti are exposed to on an everyday basis. The scrap business is the largest informal economy that employs the poorest families and new migrants to Nizamuddin. It is backed by local political muscle, and it is the single largest barrier to cleaning the Basti.

All workshop participants both boys and girls unanimously agreed that the Basti environment was unclean, that nobody picked up the garbage from the streets and in fact actively added to the filth. The Hope Project started a new community initiative at Ramzan in 2005 involving community leaders, local residents, and the municipal corporation to clean the Basti. Religious leaders were called upon to emphasize every citizen's duty to maintain cleanliness as advocated in the Koran. Then "amidst songs and slogans extolling the virtues of cleanliness, the school children performed a street play on cleanliness," the basti cleaning expedition started with sweeping the local streets with brooms. This was the first time the community partnered with the NGO and the MCD to tackle the issue of Basti cleaning. Such community initiatives are important for creating awareness among people and for initiating partnerships that could in future tackle the powerful garbage collection network.

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[3] Baji is an Urdu term for elder sister, but commonly used to refer to an older young woman including female teachers

Chapter 7
Care and Respect for Places

Childhood Friendship (Doll 1996)	**Mutual Affection and Personal Regard**	Shared Interests and Activities	Commitment	Loyalty	Self-disclosure and Mutual Understanding	Horizontality
Children's Place Friendship	**Care and Respect for Places**					

The first friendship criterion in the framework of childhood friendship, mutual affection and personal regard, is one in which each friend demonstrates a caring responsibility for the other. In other words, concern and respect for a friend or place is translated into action through demonstration of care. Conceptualizing 'care and respect for places' as a place friendship dimension in childhood is strongly anchored in the notions of environmental concern of children. Childhood animism or the "tendency to find intention and consciousness in things that are inanimate (Hart 1997, 18)" has often been cited, as the basis for children's caring for the non-human world. According to Chawla & Hart (1995) childhood animism may form the emotional basis for environmental concern. Following the notion of animism, a child develops mutual affection and personal regard for a place that has pleasing intrinsic qualities capable of delighting, and holding the child from harm. When the opportunity is provided to the child to care for such a place, the child is likely to participate in reciprocating care for the place.

7.1. Cared for and Respected Places in Nizamuddin Basti

To understand the place friendship dimension of environmental care, I asked children to talk about places for which they had respect and a desire to care for the place. Additional questions were asked to probe if children actually participated in environmental care. This category received forty-one responses from thirty-one children nominating fifteen unique places that children respected and cared for (see table 7.1).

The highest nomination in this category was a carefully landscaped neighborhood park, called *Umbrella Park*, located in the heart of the adjoining middle-income neighborhood of Nizamuddin West. My sample of thirty-one children came from all over the low-income settlement of Nizamuddin Basti. Only the girls who lived in Nizam Nagar, one of the nine

precincts in the Basti and the farthest precinct from Umbrella Park, did not refer to this park as a friendly place under this dimension. The second highest nomination was for another park on the outskirts of the Basti. This park was designed and maintained by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). The Nizam Nagar girls voted this DDA Park as a friendly place under most place friendship dimensions more than any other place as this park was right in front of their residential precinct. Both these parks were devoid of any play equipment and they did not allow any active sport like cricket or football, the two most loved sports in the community.

Table 7.1: Place Recommendations from Children under Dimension One

Places Recommended Under Care and Respect for Places	Number of Recommendations
Umbrella Park	11
DDA Park	7
India Gate Area	4
Streets Near Home	3
Eleven Other Places (see appendix 7 for detailed list)	1 each

7.2. Formally Designed Parks as Most Respected and Cared for Places

It is interesting to note that children growing up in a densely built urban neighborhood with crumbling infrastructure and litter in their surroundings, but with several different social and religious settings of immense importance (for example, Nizamuddin Auliya's tomb complex popularly called the *Dargah* in the community is an internationally acclaimed Sufi monument), nominated two of the three designed open spaces in their local area as places that they respected and cared for. These parks—Umbrella and DDA parks—were not designed as places for children as any lack of play equipment readily suggests. It was even clearer when the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) appointed caretakers of the DDA Park told me, "we repeatedly tell the children not to play cricket here, but still they play! This is a public park, it is not meant for one group to control the park through its play. They should be playing in the fields designated for sports." No sports fields existed within miles of this local area.

However, contrary to the gardener's talk, the DDA Park (see figure 7.1 and 7.2) did not result from an Olmstedian vision of providing a general recreation ground where classes and ethnicities easily mixed in common enjoyment. The DDA park located on the western edge of

the settlement adjoining a major city traffic artery, instead, is closer to the Lynchian idea of edges where (to quote Kevin Lynch) "Such edges may be barriers, more or less penetrable, which close one region off from another… (1960, 47)." According to Bowman and Pagano (2004) cities strategically use vacant land along edges to isolate, rather than to unite: "Vacant lots and abandoned structures assume the mantle of the proverbial 'railroad tracks' that separate people by income, class, and race. That is, vacant land often sets apart neighborhoods, creating boundaries between human settlements (p 93-4)." The DDA park, created by demolishing a slum called Katra Ahiran in the mid- eighties, serves many purposes for the city—it helps to create a green buffer zone between the city and the unsightly low-income settlement, it helps to maintain the property values of surrounding high-income residential and commercial plots, and it enhances the image of green Delhi.



Figure 7.1: DDA created a green buffer zone between the city and the Basti



Figure 7.2: DDA Park, greenery and pathway inside

The Umbrella Park was created by the Residents Welfare Association (RWA) in Nizamuddin West in the heart of C-Block (see figure 7.3 and 7.4). The children christened it *Umbrella Park* because it had three concrete umbrellas over the entrance gate. Nizamuddin West residents call it *C-Block Park*. However, Umbrella Park was open to users for only a few hours during the day—7-10am, and 5-7pm. Not all children were allowed inside. For example the adolescent boys of the Basti were not allowed inside, nor were Basti children allowed to bring in play objects such as footballs or badminton equipment or anything else. They mostly came empty handed, in groups. They played tag, hide-n-seek or sat around and played more passive rule-bound games. In contrast, the children from Nizamuddin West, the legitimate users whose parents funded the local RWA, and for whom RWA created the park, came loaded with sports gear. They skated on the grass wearing heavy roller-skating boots; they played football, and badminton mostly with their attendant maids. The park caretaker did not tell them off. The Basti children as long as they played by the stringent rules, were allowed in.



Figure 7.3: Umbrella Park, node in the path



Figure 7.4: Umbrella Park, benches and lawn used for playing and relaxing

On April 6, 2005, I went on a fieldtrip with three boys—Rameez, Islam, and Zoheb, from the Hope afternoon tuition classes. An American undergraduate architecture student, Julie Kozwacka, who was doing fieldwork in Nizamuddin Basti as well for her study abroad project under my guidance, accompanied the boys and me on the fieldtrip. After seeing all the other places that the boys had recommended as friendly places we headed for the Umbrella Park around 5pm. When we reached the gate of the park, we saw Salma and Razia, both Hope schoolgirls, waiting outside the gate with a football. The gatekeeper told us he would open the gate at 5pm sharp. We had ten minutes, so the kids took us to the cemented enclosed open space right across from the Umbrella Park. The five children, both the boys and girls, played a game of football. Some other children, one adolescent girl, two girls and one young boy, entered this space. These children were better dressed and unescorted by adults. They watched the match, but did not join in. Instead the four of them sat in a pavilion in one corner and watched the Basti children play football. I checked my watch. It was ten minutes after 5pm. So I called the five children and we went over to the Umbrella Park. The gatekeeper stopped us. He said, pointing at the football Salma was holding, "you cannot go in with that." I asked him what he suggested we did with the football. He appeared uncertain, and then reluctantly said, "You can keep it behind that bush, and I will keep an eye on it."

We finally entered Umbrella Park and strolled down the central paved path, past the five elderly women who sat in the colorfully painted park seats in the grassy quadrant immediately to the right of the entrance gate. The children took us further afield, where the trees in the circular node in the path drooped over the grass. Julie and I sat on a bench under the tree. The three boys, who had been very well-behaved and quiet during most of the field trip with two strange adult women, piled on each other wrestling in an entangled mess of arms, legs, and heads, releasing their bottled energy while the girls decided what to play. The girls wanted us to join them for a game of tag. Julie volunteered. The boys also joined them. As the group played, I noticed the children who were watching us outside the park, walked in with a football. They went over to the quadrant across from the path and us. The Hope students and Julie meanwhile were on a roll, and their game attracted many children to come over and watch. Probably for the first time they saw an adult female, a foreigner at that, playing so boisterously with the Basti children. The children with the football also came over, and joyfully clapped when tall, athletically built Julie Kozwacka grabbed skinny little Islam. Julie asked these kids, seeing the football in their hands, "Do you want to join us for a match. I am a football player." These children understood English, unlike the Basti children, and they readily agreed. For the first time I witnessed a mixed game between the Basti children and Nizamuddin West children facilitated by an adult who did not know or care for the class based

rules that children played by in Umbrella Park. The match ended after fifteen minutes with Julie twisting her ankle while tackling wiry Zoheb.

Despite the active discriminations that children suffered at the hands of the appointed caretakers of these formally produced parks, both these parks held special meaning for children, and they managed to carve out territories despite being told off several times. The lure of a structured well-kept landscape in their otherwise filthy, debris-strewn local streets and open spaces seemed very strong. Analysis of interview transcripts of this dimension of "Care and Respect for Places" allowed me to understand why these children cared for, and respected these two parks so much more than the other thirteen places (see appendix 7, table A7a) they nominated under this dimension of place friendship.

7.2.1. Place Attributes of Cared for and Respected Parks

The attributes that were common to both the parks for invoking respect and concern of children were: providing experiences of nature; a clean, well-maintained environment, a safe, controlled environment; and opportunities for play and social interactions. Umbrella Park scores over the DDA Park as a well cared for place in children's perception. It does in fact provide a better maintained, more strictly supervised and prettier environment than DDA Park. Even though both parks are owned by the city, Umbrella Park is privately controlled, designed and supervised by the local RWA in Nizamuddin West. This RWA takes an active interest in maintaining their beautiful neighborhood park unlike the routine institutional maintenance offered by DDA in the DDA Park.

7.2.1.1. Environment Providing Contact with Nature

> *"The best things about Umbrella Park are the flowers, the trees and the grass. This park has different kinds of flowers."*
>
> *"There's greenery all around (in DDA Park). There are different kinds of trees as well."*

This indicates that children growing up in a dense, heavily built-up inner city neighborhood did feel connected to nature even though nature was experienced through flowers, trees and grass in small park settings (see figure 7.5), which were not created for the enjoyment of the children's community. The children sought out nature-rich environments as part of their everyday neighborhood exploration and through play. Even though this particular

neighborhood had several different historic settings with interesting architectural features such as in the different tomb complexes, children chose parks over buildings for reasons as varied as countering boredom at home (*I go there quite often. Whenever I feel bored at home, I go over there*), for feeling good by being in a natural setting away from the cramped living quarter, and for peace and quite away from the noisy, bustling neighborhood (*Over there in the park, it is very peaceful. One can sit around quietly, walk around exploring things…).*



Figure 7.5: Contact with nature in Umbrella Park

7.2.1.2. Clean, Well-Kept Environment

> *"I love to go there (Umbrella Park). It remains clean."*
>
> *"The care taker looks after the place (Umbrella Park) well. It is a very special place."*
>
> *"The gardener here (DDA Park) looks after the park."*

The children of Nizamuddin Basti lived in an environment that many planners and architects would describe as "nightmarish" due to the state of the crumbling infrastructure, filth on the streets, and hazardous scenarios such as jumbled up electricity cables hanging low over the streets within adult and often child's reach. Many children told me that they had to hold their breadth when they stepped out of their homes due to the garbage on the streets. This often was a reason, other than gender restrictions for older girls to not want to go outdoors.

In India, the public place is the *profane* space with its material and sensual pleasures. The details of doorways in traditional homes emphasized the sharp polarization of the inner sacred realm and the outer profane space. The doorway was the point of transformation between the outer, mundane world of men and the holy inner world of God (http://www.amarilloart.org/bt_outer-inner.html, 2002). Other scholars studying public places in India have noted that the public place was meant for peeing. And that was how many Nizamuddin residents used public place, as most people did not have toilets at home, and the public toilets were pay per use.

In this context the lure of a well-kept, clean environment even if it meant following strict rules, and suffering social class-based discriminations (such as limited play options for Basti children in Umbrella Park as compared to C-block children who brought in many toys and gadgets for play), drew both boys and girls in their middle childhood years to the most accessible (DDA Park) and best maintained (Umbrella Park) parks in their local area.

7.2.1.3. Rules for Protecting the Place

> *"Littering is strictly forbidden in this park (Umbrella Park). So it remains very clean."*

> *"Cricket is not allowed. If we want to play cricket we play in the y*ard across from Umbrella Park."

> *"Plucking flowers is not allowed here (Umbrella Park). But I don't like plucking flowers anyway. We never create a mess when we play. It is not allowed."*

The children of this study were accustomed to living in environmentally degraded surroundings where littering in the public space was the norm. Moreover the cultural apathy to civic cleanliness in places beyond *self*-ish domains made the neighborhood environment

both filthy and disorderly. In addition, the major business that employed most poor migrants to this neighborhood from Muslim communities across India and Bangladesh was the scrap sorting business owned by powerful local men with political connections. This was one of the major reasons why municipal action to clean the neighborhood were resisted as that action directly harmed the business interest of power groups.

The rules against littering, plucking flowers and playing active sports in well-maintained places contributed to the children's sense of high degree of maintenance and care in these rule-bound designed places. Children seemed to have internalized the message that the character of these places needed to be protected when they told me: "We feel that a beautiful place should be kept that way. We never create a mess when we play there (in the parks)." Though this was not strictly true as several children and adults littered the DDA Park, which did not enforce rules as rigidly as the Umbrella Park. But disobedience is more due to the lack of proper maintenance provisions such as garbage bins than bad intentions.

7.2.1.4. Environment Supportive of Play

> *"Umbrella Park is a large park. Though there is no play equipment here, but we can run around and play many things. We visit the park in the evening. We play pakdan-pakdai (tag), ba*raf-pani (a variation of tag)."

> *"I go there (DDA Park) mostly with my friends. We play 'pakdan-pakdai' (tag), 'chhupkan-chhupka' (hide-and-seek). We hide behind the graves and the wall. Most of the time we play 'pakdan-pakdai'. We can a*lso play 'bat-ball' (cricket)."

Both the parks had clear circulation paths, and grassy lawns other than trees and flowering shrubs. Most of the time children ran around the lawns, tag being the most popular and appropriate play for children without many toys and gadgets. Children also played hide and seek, using the volume of the vegetation and other features such as the graves and raised platform in the DDA Park to hide their bodies. As long as children played by the rules where they were not using very visible equipment to aid their play, the gardeners and caretakers did not ask them to leave (see figure 7.6). Though the DDA Park often was a site of contest between boys' need to play ball games such as cricket, and gardeners' dominant egos to control the park environment. Gardeners of the DDA Park admitted to me that there were no designated places for boys to play active sports in the neighborhood, but they had been instructed by DDA to keep such activities away from the park.



Figure 7.6: Boys at play in the DDA Park

7.2.1.5. Environment Supportive of Social Interactions

> *"Lots of people from my neighborhood go there (Umbrella Park).* I always meet people I know."

> *"…sometimes if I go with my brother (to Umbrella Park), I take a cloth for spreading on the grass for* sitting."

> *"I like to roam around the open spaces in and around the park (DDA Park) with my friends. I don't think there is anything special in the place. I like it because my friends come with* me and we spend time together."

> *"I go there (DDA Park) with my broth*ers and sisters and my father."

The DDA Park was the space where the community relaxed in fair weather. It virtually became a living room in summer evenings for families who did not have that facility at home. This was the space where they met their friends and neighbors, and held family meetings while cooling

off outdoors in hot summer evenings. The Umbrella Park was first of all not in the heart of this poor community, and secondly was a site of class conflicts where better off Nizamuddin West neighborhood residents kept a watchful eye on the visiting poor community. Hence the Basti community met each other in Umbrella Park on their evening visits for short periods of time. Further the recent gender segregation of this park—men (and children) in the morning, and women (and children) in the evening— and limited timings, restricted opportunities for social interactions especially for adults.

7.2.1.6. Safe Environment

> *"I feel safe in Umbrella Park because it has a gate and a gatekeeper. So bad people are kep*t out."
>
> *"It (DDA Park) is safe from the cars that go by* in the roads next to the park."
>
> *"I feel safe to cycle in the DDA park."*

Girls' fear of places in this Muslim community, as revealed during a focus group discussion, included boys, and ghosts. With increasing age, the independent mobility of Muslim girls was curbed. Till about age twelve, girls managed to negotiate outdoor mobility licenses with their families. But the culturally imposed taboos of no interaction with members of the opposite gender post puberty created a fearful construction of gender in the minds of girls—boys were up to no good, and will harm girls in public spaces. Similarly lack of opportunities of knowing the other, and cultural constraints to do so, aroused the curiosity of boys about girls. Incidents of boys roaming the streets, taking pictures of the opposite sex with hidden cell phone cameras, and jeering at them are part of the street gossip in the community today. Hence the fact that the Umbrella Park was a temporally gendered space with a confining boundary wall, and a gatekeeper keeping men and adolescent boys out in the evening, added to the perceived safety of the environment in the minds of girls.

The DDA Park, though it had a boundary wall all around, kept its unsupervised gates open throughout the day and night. This park abutted a major city-level traffic road, and the thick masonry walls cut out the view of the road from the park. This feature added to the perception of safety in the park. The streets outside in the Basti, though narrow were filled with two-wheelers and rickshaws, which often deceptively came close to children playing in the streets. I had myself witnessed young children being run over by large speeding goats in the streets.

Injuries from accidents were rampant even though there was restricted movement of cars and other high-speed vehicles within the Basti.

7.2.1.7. Attractive Design Features

> *"There are nice umbrellas over the gate, and colorful benches (in Umbrella Park). It (the park) is very pretty and c*lean."

> *"There is a path all around the park (DDA Park), grassy areas and clayey areas. Near the temple they have put flowers over the mesh. It looks very pretty now. There are dif*ferent kinds of trees as well."

Nizamuddin West residents called it "C-Block Park", but Nizamuddin Basti children called it "Umbrella Park". Children's naming of the park was influenced by the most iconic visual element in the park—the red concrete umbrellas or *chhatri*s over the gate. We could differ in our liking for this piece of gate design, but this designed feature of the umbrella dominated the children's mental image of the park (see figure 7.7), as well as their use of language to describe the park. And this was not the only cognitive marker that the design of the park offered. The neat landscaping with linear pathways, lined with trimmed bushes arranged in layers of two different heights, and the landmark canopy trees at the nodal cross-section of the paths appeared in children's drawings. This tamed and manicured natural setting was both alien and novel for the child used to the disorderly, crowded, largely abiotic Basti environment.



Figure 7.7: A child's Drawing of Umbrella Park as his Most Favorite Place in the Basti

Though the layout of the DDA Park on paper appeared more interesting, its design quality was undermined by its context. This park was located at the periphery of the crowded Basti, with three large pink colored community facilities in the middle of the park forming an edge to hide the Basti from the road. However, the DDA Park wrapped around these deceptive structures to mingle with the crowded and poorest precinct of Nizamuddin Basti—Nizam nagar. On the northeastern edge the park ceased to loose its orderliness near Nizam Nagar where residents spilled out with their meals, clothes drying, and cattle. Moreover, during the rainy seasons, homeless people pitched tents on this side of the park. In contrast, Umbrella Park located in the heart of a higher income neighborhood, and surrounded by paved pedestrian streets on three sides, a low-traffic street in the front, and respectable middle-income family homes all around, kept its gates locked to both vagrants, and neighborhood residents for most of the day.

7.2.2. Similar Place Attributes, but Not a Friendly Place: The Twelve Pillars Park

Basti children recommended two of the three city owned, and DDA designed parks in their local area as friendly places that they respected and cared for. The third park called Twelve Pillars Park, was very similar to the DDA park on several attributes. Both DDA Park and Twelve Pillars Park were owned by the city and designed and maintained by DDA. Both parks were on the periphery of the Basti, DDA Park on the north-western edge and Twelve Pillars Park on the north-eastern edge. Both were part of DDA's strategy to green the edge of the Basti and hide it from the city. Both were designed by the landscape department of DDA under the supervision of its deputy director, and had very similar design elements, materials and specifications. DDA Park had a Hindu temple in one corner, and Twelve Pillars Park had an ancient 15th century monument with twelve pillars in its central chamber (and hence the name of the place) in one corner. Despite the similarities in their planning, design, and environmental attributes, these places had very different meaning for children. Several of the children (five out of thirty one) in fact, in their free recall sketches of liked and disliked places, drew Twelve Pillars as the most disliked place in their neighborhood.



Figure 7.8: A Non-Friendly Place

In the above drawing (figure 7.8), a girl clearly annotated the different illegal and frowned upon activities such as gambling, open drug abuse, and playing cards, near the Twelve Pillars pavilion in the park. Children, who I interviewed, perceived this park as an unsafe place. It has to be mentioned here that none of the thirty-one children I worked with lived near this park and monument. In fact, the location and context of the park is also instructive of its perceived identity (see figure 7.9).

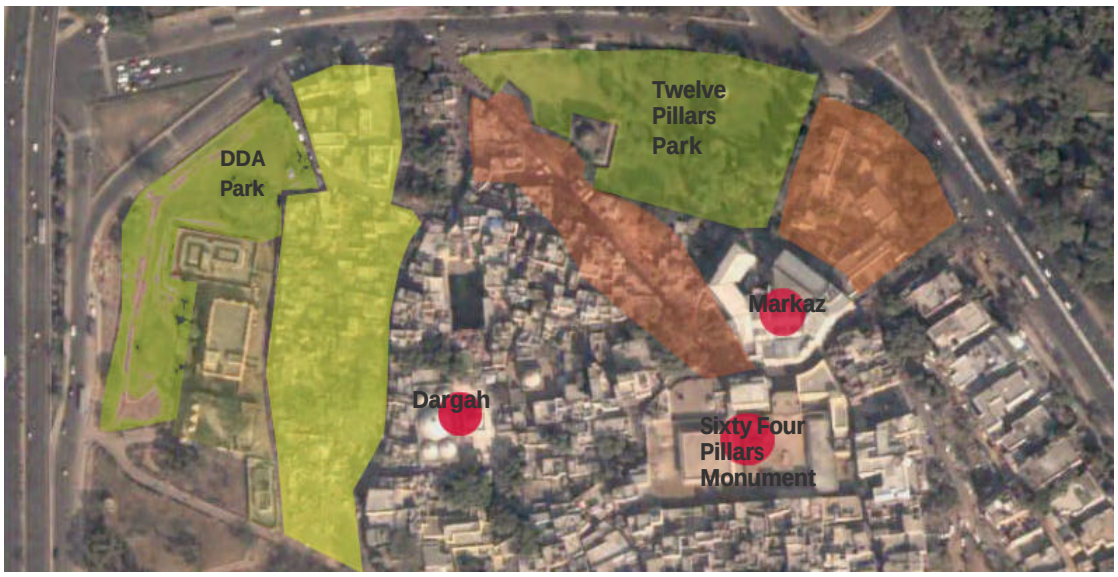


Figure 7.9: Context of DDA (surrounded by residential precincts), and Twelve Pillars Park (adjacent to commercial streets.)

DDA Park is L-shaped and smaller than the Twelve Pillars Park. But more importantly, DDA Park is surrounded by a residential precinct and compatible community facilities for the residents such as a public toilet complex, a public library cum vocational training center, and a Hindu Temple. These community facilities do not open into the park, but in fact present a solid edge between the park and the community. But toward the northern side, the park wraps around these facilities to join the residential precinct. This part of the L actually stops being well-maintained and is very actively used by the community as an extension of the living place, to prepare and have meals outdoors, to hang out, to let domestic pets loose, and to allow children to roam around freely.

In contrast, the Twelve Pillars is almost exclusively surrounded by a busy commercial street, which also has several religious institutions including the headquarters for the Tablighi movement, the Markaz. Moreover the very public and popular nature of the religious institutions brings in strangers from all over the city, country and the world near the Twelve Pillars Park. Though, I have seen cricket, being played in this park, adolescents and adult males played these matches. Moreover, the antique Twelve Pillars pavilion provides a shelter in a very public open space to men looking for places to carry out forbidden activities. This is predominantly what gives Twelve Pillars a bad name. The DDA Park in contrast has no shelter, and a large community presence. Though men play cards in this park too, children feel safer here than in Twelve Pillars simply because they are in the midst of known faces and closer to home. The presence of the gardeners during the day enforcing DDA rules of park maintenance such as no cricket, no littering, no illegal activities, further reinforces the perception of a cared for place in DDA Park.

7.3. Socially Constructed Nature of 'Care and Respect for Places' in Nizamuddin Basti

> *"The Umbrella Park is also very clean. It is cleaned every morning. Children don't help to cl*ean it, the caretaker does it."

> *"This place (DDA Park) remains clean. We don't clean it. There is no trashcan inside, but the large garbage container is near one end of the park, th*ough outside the park's fence."

Even though children talked about valuing the intrinsic qualities of these parks and respecting them as "beautiful" places that allowed them peace and quiet, to enjoy nature, to play and to socialize, almost all children said that they did not actively participate in caring for the place. What prevented affective concern from being translated into action for care of the

environment? The reasons for inaction were many. In this particular community, children had no real sense of ownership in the two parks they nominated as special places that they respected and cared for. In fact they were very clearly the 'other' in these settings. Children had simply chosen, and used the properties owned by the city. The purpose of production of these city parks were, 1) in case of the DDA park, to hide a blighted slum behind a green zone, and thereby maintain social segregation between classes, and preserve the land values of adjacent higher-income residential, and institutional properties; and 2) in the case of Umbrella Park, to create a neighborhood park for the enjoyment of higher tax paying residents of Nizamuddin West. Appointed interest groups controlled these parks—RWA in Umbrella Park, and DDA in DDA Park. As these places were under surveillance for appropriate behavior, and the park use dictated by the interest groups controlling the parks, children had limited opportunities for manipulating them. Yet they were happy to obey rules and enjoy somewhat tamely these natural settings, which were very different from their everyday environment in the Basti. Rene Dubos's (cited in Tanner, 1974, p.39) analysis of effects of inner city poor neighborhoods on children, "the wholesale and constant exposure of children to noise, ugliness and garbage in the street, thereby conditioning them to accept public squalor as the normal state of affairs" perhaps motivated these poor children to seek out islands of reprieve from the contested spaces of everyday.

Poor children from the Basti community in addition were viewed with suspicion in these settings, as evident in the gardener's and caretaker's opinions about their community, "these Nizamuddin people will never improve…people here are not like people in other parts of the city. They are like gypsies." Gardeners and caretakers always kept a watchful eye on the activities of these children, and looked for opportunities to evict them from the parks.

Inaction toward care and respect for places as discussed earlier was also culturally rooted in considering the public place as profane in Indian society. Contrary to western ideals of civic sense, individual responsibility toward the public place whether through direct action or payment for civic facilities, was often a contested notion in India. When I asked children if they were personally involved in cleaning parks, or taking care of plants, most children laughed, probably at the cultural absurdity of the idea. This cultural apathy toward caring for what was not private property, was further reinforced by the lack of environmental education in school curriculum. Most municipally run public schools in India (most children of this study attended these schools) had deplorable state of school infrastructure and very little open space. Children learned by rote in a didactic teaching environment where teacher absenteeism, beating, and lack of respect for the public schooling system were common sentiments.

All these factors—the nature of production of parks and open spaces in the city, children's lack of control over accessible special places, children's social status, cultural apathy toward care and respect for places of publicly owned property and place, and lack of EE in school curriculum, contributed to children's inaction toward demonstrating their care for chosen special places.

At this point I would like to discuss the socially constructed nature of care as understood in the context of public places in India. The reason why most state-owned and controlled public places in India had metal plaques, publishing rules of use near the entrance, was mostly because the people in power distrusted care by civilians. Given the way open spaces and streets in low-income neighborhoods looked, urban bodies tended not to like the *look* of citizen care. Though the reasons for public places looking filthy were many, as discussed above, the lack of even the most basic systems in low-income communities such as daily garbage collection, garbage disposal points near home, further promoted negative stereotypes against the poor as filthy and unable to care for their place. But the look of care in places where people were structurally empowered to keep the environment clean was different. Such as an example could be found even in the midst of the littered Basti environment, in the Hope School. Here the poorest children in the community, who lived in some of the filthiest surroundings in the Basti, worked alongside teachers and staff of this NGO to make their school an exemplary well-cared for, clean yet cheerful environment. The reason The Hope School was that way was because guidance and tools for cleaning were readily available.

In the context of the Umbrella Park, and DDA Park, I would like to argue that even though children were not directly included in demonstrating care through cleaning, looking after plants or directly manipulating the environment, children did in fact participate in caring for the environment by not disturbing, and by respecting and honoring the order of the existing. Restraining action to maintain and preserve what *is*, is just as much a manifestation of care as one that enhances the aesthetics of care. This form of care was probably a more acceptable one in the social, cultural, and political context of these children's lives. Because children participated in caring for the parks by obeying the prescribed rules, and by limiting and often modifying their behavior and actions in these settings, children had access to Umbrella Park and DDA Park even though they were "dirty" underclass children. The custodians of these parks did not have reason to throw them out of these public places, even though these places were meant for the enjoyment of better and higher tax paying populations as long as children respected and abided by the behavior codes encrypted in the place.

7.4. What Does Caring for Places Mean to Children's Everyday Lives?

The findings of this study indicate that children's concern and care for places were based on children's feelings for and about the places, and children's socially acceptable responsible environmental behavior. Children's concern was not so much based on level of factual knowledge about the environment (not one child cited a reason that was based on factual understanding of the park ecology as their reason for liking the place). Though there is some evidence that show that both environmental knowledge and affect influence actual and verbal commitment to pro-environmental behavior, these influences operate additively rather than interactively (Borden & Schettino 1979). Others (Kellert 1985) have pointed out that concern and knowledge succeed each other in importance with maturing age. The child progresses from the egocentric, uninformed, and unfeeling attitudes towards the other, to emotional identification with the inanimate environment, and finally and hopefully to gradual acquisition of more sophisticated ecological knowledge (Chawla 1988). Kellert had further suggested that educational efforts for 6 to 10 year olds need to focus on "the affective realm, mainly emphasizing emotional concern and sympathy for animals (p. 33)" and as most other scholars would agree with me, concern and sympathy for the natural world. This empirical literature shows the need for a strong emphasis on affective learning about the environment in younger years, progressing on to more factual knowledge with maturing age. The current study adds to that literature by showing that affective learning about the environment is just as important in middle childhood especially for children who had not been sensitized toward environmental issues earlier. This implies that even in middle childhood, objective, factual knowledge cannot substitute affect but is additive to affect. The path to making informed choices about the environment, and participating in caring for the environment through action (which includes both enhancing and restraining strategies) may be through EE that lays a foundation for environmental concern and care in early and middle childhood, and consolidates this learning through increasing environmental knowledge over the years. The component of participation in care and respect for places through enhancing strategies (such as direct participation in decorating, and manipulating the environment itself) was missing from the lives of these children in Nizamuddin Basti, especially in caring for state-controlled public spaces. Though some of the inaction was due to structural reasons (nature of production of public place, legal ownership of place, and locus of control in these places), and some cultural constructions (the notion of public place itself in India), I suspect that lack of focus on environmental ethics and EE in school curriculum in public schools that most of these study participants attended (24 out of 32), as well as the socially constructed notion of care in

this context, also played a role in children not getting involved in enhancing the aesthetics of cared for places.

Buntings and Cousins (1985) had found *pastoralism*, or an attraction for natural settings and open spaces, the most commonly endorsed environmental disposition in a large sample of 9 to 16 year olds. The current study also shows that even for children growing up in a dense inner city neighborhood in a fast urbanizing city in a developing nation with very little nature in the immediate living environment, children were emotionally attracted to the well maintained designed parks in the periphery, and outside of their neighborhood. These parks provided contact with nature, and were the places children respected and cared for the most in their everyday environment. Though children had access to several other unstructured open spaces with no rules and constraints on their behavior and action, and wilder nature, places that were more orderly and had clear visible signs of care and maintenance invoked respect and caring in children. This is not to suggest that unstructured open spaces had no significance in children's lives. In fact some of these left over wild places near home were chosen for most of children's daily play activities and were nominated under the other dimensions of place friendship such as *meaningful exchange with place*, and *creating and controlling territories.* To summarize, the findings under this dimension indicate the importance of 1) an emotional focus in EE for middle childhood, 2) understanding the socially constructed nature of care and respect for places in a culture, in order to promote responsible environmental behavior in children, and for responsible environmental citizenship, and 3) designed places in communicating clear evidence of care and respect to invoke caring behavior in the child user.

7.5. Communicating Care and Respect for Places Through Design

The communicative aspects of a caring environment that invoke feelings of care and respect in children growing up in poor inner city neighborhoods seems to play an important role. Some of these aspects are:

1. Environments communicated visual signs of care through well-kept gardens and lawns, and general cleanliness that was strictly enforced through rules by the appointed custodians of the environment.
2. Environments communicated visual signs of safety through protective design features such as gates, enclosing fences and boundary walls, and prescribed rules of entry.

3. Environments were considered attractive when they had clear paths, lawns, diversity of plants, features such as benches, low walls, platforms to aid social interaction and play.
4. Environments that were cared for were not completely closed off to children, but allowed access even if for a limited period each day.
5. Environments that were cared for were created for everyone and not just for poor communities.
6. Environments that were cared for provided an escape from the poverty-stricken, contested geography of the everyday, and were not far off but close to home, in the heart of the children's community.

Poor children's notion of caring environments was based on their feelings and emotions for places that were laden with non-verbal signs of care. Children chose settings that were not exclusively created for their class or community, but for the city, and better social classes. The choice of parks by underclass children makes obvious their rejection of the pitifully put together play spaces closer home as cared for places. The hidden agendas that programmed and designed these parks perhaps had not included extensive use and participation in care by poor communities and their children. In fact overt and covert strategies were fashioned to exclude the poor from these places. However, children were willing to change their normal behavior of littering, and aggressive play just to be part of these settings that aesthetically delighted them and satisfied other personal needs. In their own way, by restricting their normal play preferences, and inventing new, more setting-specific acceptable play and socialization, and by respecting and abiding by the rules to maintain the existing order, children cared for the two most coveted parks in their local area.

Chapter 8
Meaningful Exchange with Places

Childhood Friendship (Doll 1996)	Mutual Affection and Personal Regard	**Shared Interests and Activities**	Commitment	Loyalty	Self-disclosure and Mutual Understanding	Horizontality
Children's Place Friendship	Care and Respect for Places	**Meaningful Exchange with Places**				

The second dimension, in the framework of childhood friendship, is shared interests and activities. In early childhood, children consider "friends" to be other children who are readily available for play. Sharing activities in early childhood, often facilitated by the convenience of the children involved, lead to better understanding of the other if the interaction is sustained over a period of time. This subsequently expands the range of friendship to include extra-play activities and other interests. Doing things together then is an important building block, if not the most important, of friendship in childhood. Meaningful exchange with place, or place and child doing things together, is the second dimension of place friendship and an important building block for making sense of the socio-spatial world.

8.1. Places That Shared Activities and Interests of Children in Nizamuddin Basti

To understand the place friendship dimension of Meaningful Exchange with Places, I asked children to talk about places in their local area where they could be active through play, exploration, and where they could pursue different interests and hobbies. Additional questions were asked to probe the nature of activities and interests that were pursued in these places. This category received thirty-six responses from thirty-one children, with sixteen unique places named (see table 8.1).

The most frequently nominated places in the category of place-child exchange were the streets near home, followed by open spaces near home. The DDA Park on the northwestern corner of the Basti was the third highest nominated place in this dimension. The fourth highest nominations were for the Umbrella Park and "my precinct" (both had been nominated thrice). The remaining thirteen unique places had only been nominated once, and hence will not be discussed under this dimension in this chapter.

Table 8.1: Place Recommendations from Children under Dimension Two.

Most-Nominated Places That Supported the Interests and Activities of Children	**Number of times Nominated**
Streets Near Home	8
Open Spaces Near Home	6
DDA Park	5
Umbrella Park	3
"My Precinct"	3
Eleven other spaces including the home, friend's houses, the India Gate area in the heart of central Delhi, and several different small open spaces within the Basti	1 each

8.2. Streets and Open Spaces in the Basti as Most Friendly Places for Meaningful Exchange

Jane Jacobs wrote, "Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs (1969, 31)." In the case of a pre-industrial settlement such as Nizamuddin Basti, predating land use zoning and demarcation of proprietary rights streets played multiple roles besides the most obvious one of circulation, and were indeed vital organs for the functioning of the community. In this settlement, which was often referred to as a "slum" because of the high density of its habitation, and degraded housing stock implying poverty, the streets were convivial and animated through active use, much in the manner that Jacobs saw being eroded in the modern planned western city. All the internal streets of this historic urban village were almost free of cars, though there were cycles and scooters that snaked through the streets. Independent mobility of children was high *within* the Basti, between the major city roads that encircled the Basti on the east, west and north sides.

The streets that the children of Nizamuddin nominated as friendly places, which had the most opportunities or affordances for sharing their activities and interests, evolved over 800 years not according to a planner's proposal, but more indigenously following site conditions, and direction of expansion of the settlement.

In contrast the streets in the adjoining higher income neighborhood of Nizamuddin West followed a grid with neat rows of houses, and well-maintained parks such as the Umbrella Park on the backside of the houses. These houses had front and back yards, and pedestrian back lanes that

encircled the parks. These houses were a variation of the bungalow typology (house in a plot with gardens all around), adapted to narrow plots in rows sharing common walls on either side. This house typology was in stark contrast to the vernacular houses in the Basti, which followed the traditional courtyard typology, with house surrounding an open space in a plot. Though with subsequent generations living in the same house, the courtyard got built upon incrementally to provide new livable space.

On August 8, 2005 I introduced the Basti to Rima a fresh architecture graduate from TVB School of Habitat Studies in New Delhi. Rima helped me with the mapping of the local parks around the Basti. I decided to start her first walk by taking her through Nizamuddin West, and then down the street parallel to Khusroo Nagar that ended in Alvi Chowk, which was the local street market in the north-south spine. The tall white apartment buildings near the beginning of the street at Nizamuddin West end, soon gave way to two-storied dense common walled housing with shops in the lower floors (see figure 8.1) where men were busy packaging garbage in large white bales. We watched out for the occasional but reckless two-wheelers, both cycles and motorcycles loaded with goods, and the many small children huddling over marbles or pieces of wood and stone in the street. We were careful to save ourselves from being hit by the two-wheelers. We ourselves watched out for the children who huddled on the street playing marbles, much below our line of sight.

The street had an air of hectic activity. Men shouting, sound of motorbikes starting, cyclists ringing their bells to clear the way of pedestrians. Sometimes one could also hear rickshaws and autos honking in an attempt to navigate the tight street. People were busy buying food and groceries at the small house front shops. Every few steps the smell of the street would also change from bad, and rotten to appetizing biryani (a traditional Muslim preparation of rice and meat) aroma. Grappling with this sensory onslaught, I noticed a two-wheeled wooden cart perched on one end and parked ahead to the right against a raised entrance platform to a house. A small child about five years was using the inclined cart base as a slide. The little boy slid down the three feet length of the inclined wooden base, and went right back to the entrance platform to climb back into the top end of the cart.

I immediately thought to myself, here is a good example of perceiving an affordance of sliding down from an inclined wooden plane offered by a parked hand-pulled cart. Adults will not perceive this as an affordance. The physical proportions of the five year old's body in relation to the three foot inclined wooden plane played a critical role in utilizing this perceived affordance. However this same action would have been constrained had the child been closely supervised from street dangers by adult caretakers. In the Basti, even the youngest children from poor

families, with both parents working outside, typically existed in a field of free action, which allowed them to utilize many more affordances than children living in middle-class neighborhoods.

This street at its widest was about twelve feet wide, but as shops and platforms jutted into the street with their canopies, the width appeared considerably less. Steep staircases went up behind opened doorways and vanished without any sign of a landing platform. Sometimes dark suspicious looking liquid would flow down the base of the stairs. Eleven-year-old Islam ran down such a flight of stairs with another friend chasing him down the stairs. He beamed at me, quickly said "Baji" in recognition, and then sped up the stairs again with his playmate following right behind.

The streets in Nizamuddin were full of single flight staircases starting at the level of the street and vanishing somewhere above eyelevel (see figure 8.2). Children such as Islam made full use of these as readily climbable features that afforded climbing, racing, jumping off from, taking shelter during hide and seek games, and for looking out into the street. The staircase acted as an important threshold between the street, the arterial public space of the community, and the private domestic space. For children the staircase acted as an important play and socialization platform that made them a part of public life.



Figure 8.1: Shops Protruding into Local Streets



Figure 8.2: Cascading Steep Staircases Off Streets

Towards Alvi Chowk, the node in the north-south spinal street, butchers sat on platforms with wire cages filled with hens. A mother and her six-year-old daughter approached a butcher; a bird was brought out of the cage, and swiftly slaughtered. The feathered remains were tossed in an overflowing bucket outside the shop in the street. I winced. But I quickly realized that the child with the mother was not affected by this violent act. The street and the bazaar were where the child got initiated into material transactions, and customs and practices of the community. Children learned culturally accepted practices of food procurement such as through slaughter of animals. Such scenes afforded gradual socialization of children into the community.

At Alvi Chowk the vegetable vendors sold seasonal vegetables from open carts. Black burkha clad women with children in tow haggled with the vendors of fruits and vegetables morning and evening. Several men hang around this nodal public place at any time of day and night, chatting with passersby and friends. Being strangers with clipboards and large bags, we were checked out by these men with sharp eyes. Later in November, when I had taken three urban design graduate students for a walk down this same street, we heard a comment directed at me saying, "She has come again! Why does she need to walk these streets so much?" So just as streets afforded business for the informal markets and social space for chance meetings as well as pre-arranged ones, the streets also allowed keeping a vigil, even if subconsciously, on the goings on of the community. These casual people watching activities were mostly enjoyed by men, women only went out for a very good reason.

We took the street behind Hope that went off Alvi Chowk to the north. This street to my mind, looked like a stage set. And I had witnessed many street dramas of interaction, play, mischief and fights that unfolded in this feature-laden street (see figure 8.3). The protruding two-way staircase against the yellow walls of the Urs Mahal (festival hall) had a sloped balustrade made of solid masonry. This staircase narrowed the street down at its mouth. Children slid down the balustrade and jumped from the steps into the street, especially when it rained and when the street was under logged water. In fact the office of the director of The Hope Project directly looked out into this back street and this staircase. And on countless days during the rainy season Kamini told me, "Sudeshna, you should have seen what these kids were up to last evening. The streets were waterlogged, and they jumped from the top of the balustrades into the water, splashing around."

A little further on, there was a bend in the street. A couple of graves backed on to a wall with arched niches. The bend forced the street to deflect to the right and flow into an extended open space in front of the Music Hall. Boys played among these graves in the bend, picking at the offerings of flower petals. I have seen a ten-year-old sitting under an umbrella on the grave waiting for someone, probably a friend, before he went in for his afternoon tuition class in Hope

School. A ramp led onto a closed door on one of the walls of the Music Hall complex. I had seen boys running down this ramp trying to give some momentum to their kites, egging them on their skyward journey. This open space also had a series of stone graves placed diagonally in the opening. Between the ramp and the graves, many marble games had taken place in the last few months (see figure 8.4). On every Monday, the weekly bazaar took over this space completely. All the features in the street, the staircases, the graves, the ramps that afforded multiple activities for children, offered a different set of possibilities to the merchants (see figure 8.5). Almost every raised surface including graves, ramps, stairs were used for storing and displaying wares. Customers also milled through the graves, as they would pick their way in any open market. The nature of the space and the features changed completely through the different uses that the community put them to at different times.



Figure 8.3: Feature-laden Street Behind Hope Project with Abundant Potential Affordances for Children's Actions



Figure 8.4: Street Behind Hope Project, and its Actualized Affordances by Children



Figure 8.5: Street Behind Hope Project, and its Actualized Affordances during Monday Bazars

Out in the mainstreet, where the settlement wall was supposed to have bounded the Basti on the western edge, Rima and I saw several children playing on top of the raised open space that

actually comprised of consolidated garbage. Three boys used the raised flat surface as a perch to look down on the street. To the right was the debris-strewn open space near The Hope Project with the important Sufi graves. A cricket match was going on in the clearer patch that extended toward the MCD school play equipment. Five children, about eight to ten years of age, used the graves under the shady Keekar trees as seats. Three teenage boys were sitting on the broken car and watched everyone that went by. This gutted skeleton of a car had fascinated me from the first day I started working in the Basti. I guess my enthusiasm about the car was passed on to the teachers and staff of The Hope Project as well. Rita, the school principal, sat in a room right across from the open space where the car was parked between the trees. Rita had two large windows in her room that afforded her a view of the open space. But as these windows were west facing, Rita tried very hard to protect her windows from the scorching sun by hanging electric blue, plastic-lined bamboo screens from the outside of the building. However, once in a while, at sunset, if she was still around, Rita rolled up her screen to let in some fresh air. It was on such a day Rita and Kamini had an evening meeting in the small office. The next morning Kamini caught up with me in the wide central staircase, which was the vertical public place of this building. She said, "Sudeshna, you should have been here yesterday evening. Rita and I were sitting in her office, when we heard these shrieks from outside. So we looked out. The kids were all over the car. My first reaction was to get them out as I thought they might get hurt, and the next one was, Sudeshna should have seen this!" I asked, "What were they doing with the car?" "They were all over it, in it, on the roof, everywhere, obviously having a ball. Ask Rita about it." Kamini said as she went down towards her office.

I went up to Rita's room. "Hi Rita. I believe you were witness to some car adventure outside yesterday?" " Oh Sudeshna, you should have been there! It was in the evening after school got over. We were having a meeting here. We heard these shouts from outside. We both went over to the window and looked out. There was a boy sitting in the driver's seat pretending to drive vigorously. A girl was sitting next to him in the front passenger's seat. There were three kids sitting on the roof with their legs dangling over the frame of the windscreen. We actually saw the roof buckling in and our hearts nearly stopped as we thought the kids inside the car would get squashed. When the roof started buckling at a precarious angle, the kids on top got off. They collected some stones and sticks and started propping up the roof again. The moment they were satisfied, they were up on it again. There were several adults standing around near the teashop as they always did. We heard some of them shouting at the kids, 'children get off the car, its rusty, you will get hurt, and if you fall you will break your limbs, so please get off'. But there was no stopping the children. Somehow the roof even though it kept buckling never caved in on the

inside passengers. They repeatedly cranked up the roof till they were tired of it, at which point they left the car alone and went off to the other side." I said, 'I really wish I was there!"

Rima and I continued our walk down the east-west axial street of the Basti after passing the open space with the car. This time I very consciously noticed the variety of features that added to the visual complexity of this long narrow street. Through a hollow doorframe in a masonry wall I saw a grassy slope going up to the window of a building that was set back from the street. A few steps later, to the left, in a narrow street, seven eight- to nine-year-old girls were playing near the semi-circular entrance staircase at the threshold of a house. A little further down, three girls, one about ten years old, and two younger girls, stopped to pet two goats on the street side. The goats were tied to the doorway of a house. One of the animals had an especially melancholy expression. I heard the girls say, "looks like the poor thing has lost its mother."

I saw Shaheen, a small built ten-year-old girl, coming down the street, carrying her little sister Umama. They stopped and we greeted each other. I asked them if they were coming from Umbrella Park. Shaheen nodded to indicate yes and continued down the street. Rima and I exited this street behind the last row of middle-class homes of Nizamuddin West. I knew a short cut to the Umbrella Park. We found the park to be uncharacteristically empty. Nevertheless, we did a round. Only ten children and four adults were inside. The day before, we had seen at least forty children and twenty adults. It was almost closing time for the park. So we decided to call it a day.

The above account of our walk exemplifies two obvious physical aspects about the neighborhood—high density and mixed functional use. There is however another important aspect to these spaces, a sense of vernacular design that created patterns of spaces suited to the particular lifestyle and culture of the people. These three conditions overlapped in physical space to create a deep sense of life in every street, and open space of the Basti. The high density allowed everyday living to spill out into the streets and open spaces near home, either directly through activities or indirectly through symbols such as overheard conversations or smell of food. The mixed use allowed different types of spaces to coexist in a dense space. But vernacular design, and later informal design in the new precincts, created spaces which could support multiple uses, and embrace new uses. These conditions allowed coexistence of adults and children, work and play, pedestrians and smaller vehicles in the same space making it socially vibrant and safe. However to gain a more objective understanding of the physical attributes of these vibrant spaces, I present the results of my evaluative observations in the Basti using behavior maps, photographs and the validated Heft-Kytta (2003) affordance scale.

8.2.1. Place Attributes That Made Streets and Open Spaces Near Home Friendly for Children?

8.2.1.1. High levels of actualized affordance in streets and open spaces

Children's everyday life in the street and open spaces in the local area as described through my walk on a typical summer afternoon, suggest that these places in the Basti had ample environmental attributes, which supported a number of physical activity and social interactions. To more categorically document the nature of children's activities and the role of the five most nominated places under this dimension of "Meaningful Exchange with Places" in supporting those activities, I decided to use the Heft-Kytta affordance scale (2003) of children's outdoor activities. This scale provides a checklist for recording a range of physical and social activities of children in their middle childhood in relation to environmental characteristics of different outdoor settings, which afforded those activities.

Needless to say some of the activity items listed by Heft-Kytta affordance scale were specific to settings and their characteristics in northern temperate climates, as well as to the western cultural context. These activities are uncommon if not impossible, in similar settings in the hot dry climatic, and non-western, developing society study context in Delhi. For example flat relatively smooth surface does not afford skiing in winter due to lack of snow and ice. Even skating is not afforded by these surfaces within the Basti due to lack of skating gear, though skating was observed in the adjacent higher income neighborhood. Similarly relatively smooth slopes do not afford skateboarding, as this sport is a cultural alien in this context. Nor is snow a probable moldable material for play with loose parts. So the affordance taxonomy and the scale based on it were validated for this low-income community in Delhi before use.

The items discussed above were changed to more context specific activities—playing ball games, drawing on flat surfaces, playing with marbles, and building out of debris. These new affordances had been marked with asterisks in the affordance table included in appendix 6. This affordance scale is a measure of children's actualized activity and sociality affordances outdoors. I used the scale to document the actualized affordances in the four most nominated places, streets near home, open spaces, near home, DDA Park, and Umbrella Park by observing children. The fifth most nominated place, "my precinct" subsumes "streets near home" and "open space near home", and hence was not included for recording actualized affordances. The scale has twenty-seven items of physical activity affordance, and six items for sociality affordance.

All twenty-seven activity affordances and all six of the sociality affordances were actualized in the open spaces near home. Streets near home recorded twenty-one actualized affordances, and five sociality affordances. The activity affordances that were not actualized in streets near home, but actualized in open spaces near home, were: involving plants in play (due to the lack of plants in these densely built streets), peace and quite (due to the crowding), building structures with loose parts, swinging and hanging from non-rigid attached objects (such as branches of trees), and swimming in water (such as in the drainage channel). Overall, all four places that children nominated as places where they could be active through play and pursuing other interest recorded a high numbers of actualized affordance on an everyday basis (see table 8.2).

Table 8.2: Summary of Actualized Affordances in Four Top Places Where Children Shared Most Activities and Interests [4]

Type of Affordance	Maximum Actualization Possible as per Scale	Streets Near Home	Open Space Near Home	DDA Park	Umbrella Park
Physical Activity	27	21	27	15	11
Social Activity	6	5	6	6	5

All four places had very high sociality affordance as the table above shows. This is not surprising as all four places were intergenerational community places to which everyone in the community had access. But where do these social affordances get actualized? *Role-playing* happens everywhere in the neighborhood whether enacting scenes from Hindi movies or tv serials, or pretending to be a family out on a drive in the skeletal car. *New games were created* in all four places. Rani and Meher best friends, along with their other friends, Wahida and Rashida invented the game "bhagwan (generic name for Hindu God)" where the girls pretended to be Hindu gods in the DDA park in front of the Hindu temple. *Rule bound games* also happened everywhere. Typically, for the girls, rule-bound games happened in the open spaces near home such as in front of the toilet complex and on top of the garbage dump, where traces of hopscotch grids can be found in the early evening. *Playing home* also happens in the left over open spaces with loose parts such as baking mud cakes in makeshift clay ovens behind the Black Mosque, or making a picnic shelter by the

[4] See appendix 6 for the detailed list of actualized affordances in these four places

sewer for cooking a meal. Wherever I had seen building materials stored for conservation and reconstruction in the many monuments, boys had used planks of wood and stone to fight each other with imaginary swords or guns and *played at war*. Most outdoor human activity in the Basti was *noisy*, and children were no exception to this rule. Whether shouting out to each other during play, or singing at the top of their voices while swinging, children added to the clatter of human action outdoors. In every setting in the basti, due to the high density of habitation, children were a part of adult activities. But children also actively *participated in adult businesses* at home (through sharing housework), in the streets and market (through procurement of groceries), and in the places of worship.

The wide range of actualized activity and sociality affordances of children in the most nominated places under place-child exchange indicate that children in the Basti had considerable freedom of choice of actions. This choice of action seems to be largely based on many accessible public spaces in the local area. And freedom to choose seems to be based on not having too many restrictions on actions in places that had little rules due to their uncertain ownership status such as in the open space in front of Hope Project which housed the broken car. Also children had the space to resist or negotiate those constraints as was seen in the episode where children completely ignored adults' warnings about the car as an unsuitable play object. The different constraints to children's place use and the forms of children's resistance and negotiation of those constraints are discussed in detail in chapter 6.

"No one scolds us if we play here (in front of public toilets)". "No one stops us from playing there (the main Dargah complex). We play there a lot." The general adult perception of Nizamuddin Basti is that children play all the time everywhere. In fact one social worker in the Basti told me, "the parents want the boys out of the house. They tell them to go out and play. What can they do? Poor families have so little space in their homes." Though this perception is by and large true, parents do in fact tell their children to play close to home, not to cross the major city streets that bound the Basti or go near the drug addicts in the big open space between the busy traffic road and the MCD school. Several children repeated these parentally imposed constraints during the course of their interviews. But the interviews also revealed that children had often chosen to ignore these constraints to explore not only attractions within the Basti and its different precincts, but also to visit favorite places in the city such as the children's park in India Gate and the zoo.

An eleven-year-old boy from Nizam Nagar told me, "I roam around freely. Have even been to India Gate and the zoo…I go by walking…I have been to the zoo alone twice." However, this boy never actually went inside the zoo as entry was ticketed. The children's park in India Gate was a free park maintained by a private corporation. Children who had managed to take a bus or trek the three

miles to either of these facilities, despite parentally imposed constraints, across busy city streets, typically preferred the park over the zoo for its free access. However visits to these far off city level attractions were more of aberrations than the norm with only three of the responding children, two boys and one girl, admitting defiance. On probing further, I found out that all three children were recent migrants to Nizamuddin as opposed to being born and brought up there, and belonged to very poor families with both parents working outside home. Therefore their familiarity with the many places in Nizamuddin was far less than the children who were raised there. These children had lesser number of friends in the neighborhood, and had larger chunks of unsupervised time. For them, as new migrants to Delhi, mostly from Bihar (the Indian state with the worst human development record), the attractions of the children's park at India Gate, a tourist landmark for the city of Delhi, was synonymous to being part of a better life in Delhi. As one Bihari migrant child said in reply to whether she considered Nizamuddin a good place to live in, "*Delhi* is a good place for living, much better than Bihar!"

8.2.1.2. Positive Identity of Familiar Places

For most responding children (60%), proximity of the street and the open space to home was an important factor for spending most of their outdoor time in these places. In fact the importance of proximity is borne out when children nominated an open space near a public toilet complex and a dirty stretch of the sewer bank as places where they played most often.

> *"There is a large space in front of the toilets. For me the place makes no difference. I like to play everywhere, and wherever I play, I like the place. I don't like to play far from home though. The space in front of the toilets is paved and big. We need a big place to play. That is the closest big place, and no one scolds us if we play (girl in Nizam Nagar right across from the toilet complex)."*

> *"I play whatever the other kids are playing by the sewer. I don't go to any park, there aren't any nearby. We run around, play with bat-ball, sometimes we play football also. When we play we have fun, but the place is not very good. The dirty sewer flows between the grassy slopes where we play. It stinks and also causes many diseases (boy living in a squatter settlement next to the sewer)."*

In a focus group discussion with fourteen 10-12 year olds girls, I found out what proximity of friendly places really meant to children. Nizamuddin basti was perceived as a homogeneous enclave of poor Muslims by outsiders. But within the Basti, the area was defined through smaller precincts each of which had an identity related to the background, class and caste of the residents.

As many scholars had noted (Sikand 2003, Alam 2003, Kader 2004), Islam in India was not a classless, casteless religion, but Indian Islam had incorporated the notional divisions of people on the basis of caste and class from Hinduism. So places where people resided within the Basti got identified with the perceived status and caste of the people. The different precinct identities of people living in the nine different precincts of the Basti had been discussed in chapter 5.

Given the diversity of identities of the sub-local areas, proximity of places to home not only afforded easily accessible public places but places that were familiar because the people who lived around these places were known and often had similar status as the children's families. This familiarity of places near home as well as the people in those places, helped construct positive identities of these places for the children and their families even though the places may have several negative environmental qualities such as polluted the banks of the sewer.

> *"We had been asked not to roam in the other side of the Basti, near the Dargah. We can only stay within our own precicnt…Khusroo Nagar. Near the Dargah, people of all colors come, and the police chowki is also there. Everyone says don't go to that side. They say, if you have to go that side, go through the Basti or from the* Kot *area. Roaming in that area is forbidden" (14 year old girl living in Khusroo Nagar)*
>
> *"…we are a little afraid of going near Nizam Nagar…Bihari and Bangali people stay there. We are from the main basti. We don't like going to that side. All the ragpickers live there." (15 year old girl living in Sarai Kale Khan)*
>
> *"Every other precinct, other than where we live, is 'unsafe' for us. If we go to other precincts, the local boys over there tease us, and make cat-calls." (16 year old girl living in Khusroo nagar).*

What the above narratives imply is that places that were far from home were unsafe and hence off limits because they were unfamiliar, populated by strangers speaking a different language, and engaged in frowned upon work, and other activities. The same place very often had both a negative identity and a positive identity for children and families who lived at varying distances away from it. Living far from a place resulted in lack of familiarity with that sub-local area which then cultivated perceptions of "unsafe" and hence "off-limit" spaces. As the two tables below indicate, the identity of a place as "safe" and "unsafe" was directly linked to proximity and hence familiarity and identity of the places.

Table 8.3: 9 to 12 Years Old Girls' Perceptions of Unsafe Places

Places unsafe for us			
Living in Nizam Nagar	Living in Dargah Area	Living in Kot	Living in Panchpeer
Umbrella Park: too far from home	**DDA Park:** bad environment	**DDA Park:** bad environment	**Basti side of Sewer:** unknown territory
Planned open space across from DDA Park: drug addicts, alcoholics and bad men	**Planned open space across from DDA Park:** drug addicts, alcoholics and bad men	**Planned open space across from DDA Park:** bad environment, bad men	
Hotels: too many strangers, foreigners	**Black Mosque:** boys play there, the tree over there has a spirit, and it is a desolate eerie place	**Sewer:** bad environment, diseases from the filth	
Twelve Pillars Park: too far, drugs, cards, illegal activities	**Sewer:** far from home, dirty banks		

Table 8.4: 9 to 12 Years Old Girls Perceptions of Safe Places

Places Safe for Us to Visit			
Living in Nizam Nagar	Living in Dargah	Living in Kot	Living in Panchpeer
DDA Park: Close to home	**Baoli gate:** Close to home **Dargah complex:** Close to home	**Nasim Emporium (shop):** Close to home	**The flyover:** Close to home
The dump yard park: Close to home, can make things out of loose objects	**Home** **Streets**	**Post office:** Close to home	**The Chhatri Park:** as close to home as the Basti
In front of night shelter: Close to home, remains clean, can easily run home when called	**Neighborhood** **Terrace**	**Alvi Chowk (market square on north-south spine):** Close to home	**My aunt's house**
My home	**Alvi Chowk:** Close to home **The market:** Close to home	**Katrewali gali:** Close to home	

8.2.2. Why were streets near home not friendly in the adjoining neighborhood?

Nizamuddin West was not very different from other gated communities in Delhi that were planned according to the bye-laws of the city. These planned environments were the most legitimate, and most desirable living areas within the city. The contrast in the two adjoining living environments and in childhoods nurtured by each, led me to investigate how children in the

planned neighborhood perceived friendly places. The five children I managed to talk to, who lived on these clean, well-laid streets never mentioned the streets as a place for any of their daily activities. In fact these children despite having well-kept parks in their backyards were not allowed to venture out on their own across the back pedestrian streets to the park. I abandoned my initial plan of comparing the friendly places of children living in these two very different environments after several attempts to gather enough (about thirty) Nizamuddin West children in their middle childhood, and secure adult consent for interviewing these minor children. But I did manage to talk to some of the parents of these middle-class children and learned the reasons for their reticence to send children out to play by themselves. In fact one mother of a twelve-year-old girl, who was the only person I came across to have grown up in the same neighborhood in the 60s and 70s, talked to me at length about the differences in her childhood experience and her daughter's current experience of living in the same neighborhood.

"I think the biggest difference is that huge amounts of community before, when I was growing up. Because lots of kids in every home, everybody knew everybody. Electricity would go out and everybody would be out in the streets, listening to radio, talking and playing all over… we could ride bicycles right up to Mathura road. It was never so busy. We had permission to cross it, and go all the way up to Humayun's tomb on the bike. Nobody bothered those days about kidnapping or accidents. We could ride bikes all around Nizamuddin. But the Basti was off limit."

Then she recalled an incident from her own childhood, which was her only visit into the Basti. "Dad used to go into the basti, and the only reason you would go in was to buy meat. Coz it had the cheapest meat, beef...actually probably one of the only ones in those days, now there are probably other places where you could buy it. Yeah dad would go, I don't think us kids were ever allowed to go there. I think maybe once I accompanied dad, and I was "all eyes" [laughing aloud] like it was a different life. And it wasn't built up in those days. There was nothing there, maybe a couple of stalls and stores…scattered, with a lot of open space and dirt road kind of thing. There was definitely a demarcation but no fence or anything. There was a line, which we knew as kids not to cross. Right now there is the road and B-block to separate. But before, that whole area was open."

When asked about the range of independent mobility of her twelve-year old daughter, she said, "Sonia is not allowed actually to go anywhere. I mean, outside the front gate is actually not permissible. Which is sad, but one can't take a risk because it's not worth taking."

"What do you fear most?" I asked.

"In those days, everybody knew everybody. And actually interestingly enough, in this little strip [there's been] a lot of deaths, young deaths, kid deaths. And a lot of accidents, car accidents." She began counting them. "I'd say 1, 2, 3, 4...yeah 4 homes lost a child."

But then she began to reconsider. "Actually, not all of them were in Nizamuddin. Yeah, I shouldn't say that, not all of them were here. But they were car related accidents in Delhi."

This exchange captures the power of danger perception in children's mobility, especially among the middle class. This very mother, who recalled with great delight her own ability to travel both within and beyond her neighborhood, had placed extraordinarily tight limits on her daughter's mobility due to a vague sense of perceived danger ("kidnapping or accidents"). On first reflection, she was able to support this by reference to local families who had lost children to traffic; but upon consideration, she acknowledged that there had not been serious traffic-related danger in her own neighborhood. (Even those cases she referred to were "car related accidents," which may well have included instances in which the child was a passenger in a car, rather than a pedestrian.) Her fears were based on broad impressions of the ways that the world had changed since her own childhood: "lots of kids in every home, everybody knew everybody…" or "Nobody bothered those days about kidnapping or accidents…"

Other than traffic calming measures, the Nizamuddin West RWA had also blocked off streets that connected the neighborhood with the basti as early as in the 1970s. Nizamuddin West was created by the DDA by grabbing land around the Basti and populating it with Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan following the partition of India in 1947. The generation that grew up in this new heterogeneous community did not fear the anonymous neighbor as much as the poor Muslims who lived in the Basti within a few hundred yards as was suggested by Sonia's mother's account of the invisible line that she and her friends never crossed to venture into the Basti. This is not surprising given the fact that most of these Nizamuddin West residents had to leave their birthplace in north-western India (now Pakistan) when the country was divided in the name of religion, to create a secular India and an Islamic Pakistan. Several residents talked about how Muslims were buying up property between Nizamuddin Basti to the Jamia Milia Islamia University to the West of the city in an attempt to create a Muslim belt. It seems from the perceptions of parents from the original non-Muslim backgrounds that there was a fear of being marginalized once again in a place they had made their home, by Muslims.

Even though the previous generation, as children, had enjoyed considerable independent mobility and freedoms in the local area, their children's lives were more tightly controlled by fear of traffic, which within the neighborhood's internal streets was not heavy by any count. But

deeper was the fear of the other, the people who floated in and out, "people who one had no track of" and hence letting children explore this unknown dangerous world was a risk not worth taking. The neighborhood had consistently taken concrete steps to ward off the floating unknown population who thronged the Basti and its many famous Islamic institutions. "…because there was a slew of thefts, and other things they [RWA] chose to block off our Block A from the Basti and put in an entry and exit [to Nizamuddin West that were guarded. If you go to A-block, there is a dead-end now. But that used to be an open exit before from our neighborhood. I think the concern of the residents association was I think that Nizamuddin attracted not just residents but *that area* [Basti] attracted all kinds of people that one had no track of. And they could enter the neighborhood from that side and that became a concern. So they blocked that off."

However these fears that parents in this new heterogeneous community talked about were really global fears. Valentine (1996) had shown how contemporary parents in the UK perceived their own children as innocent and vulnerable (angels) particularly to traffic accidents and violence, and the streets as dangerous and belonging to adults. The classic study on children's mobility licenses in the UK in the 1990s by Hillman and Adams (1992) blamed traffic as the major reason for forcing children out of the public space. Other studies from both the UK and the USA (Blakely 1994) suggested increased concerns about dangerous strangers as a reason for withdrawal of children from streets and public places. As Cahill (1990) had pointed out, perceptions of lack of safety in public places for children are further heightened by the media through highly publicized kidnappings and murders. The Indian media is no exception. During the time I was in Delhi for the fieldwork, on more than one occasion, leading newspapers carried stories about accidental child deaths and kidnapping in different parts of Delhi on the same day in the front page. On July 8, 2005, one of the leading English language newspapers carried these two columns in the front page of the city section, " 8-year old comes under school bus in Rajinder Nagar" and "two held for raping paralysed 10-year old". On November 11, 2005, the same newspaper again had similar twin items, "Kidnap Drama: Delhi cops says they haven't been able to talk to Pak official's son", and "Student killed: quarrel over girl turns deadly in Katwaria Sarai".

According to National Crime Record Bureau in India, rape is the top crime committed against children in the country with 75% of all rape recorded cases involving minors as victims, and 25% of these were committed against children under the age of twelve. The second and third most commonly committed crimes against children in India are kidnapping and murder respectively. Data from 2001, 2002, and 2003 have shown that all these crimes were on the rise with each subsequent year. Most notably though, among all Indian cities, Delhi is ranked first as the city that committed the most crimes against children. There is, however, no disaggregated data on which are the most committed crimes against children in Delhi. The national records do not even show

accidental deaths in road accidents as a major crime against children, which incidentally was the greatest fear of parents in Nizamuddin West. The Nizamuddin West mother who justified her strict monitoring of her daughter's mobility, referred to this heightened perception of Delhi as an unsafe city for children: "probably and the most obvious is not so much the Basti and our neighborhood have changed, that's not so much a big change as Delhi has changed. The community idea has changed."

The well-educated, middle-class parents of Nizamuddin West who increasingly lived in a connected global world, bought into these highly publicized global newsworthy fears and restricted mobility licenses of their children. The middle-class children who lived in well-constructed houses in the planned city stood out in contrast to ragged Basti children especially in the Umbrella Park. The very fact that the young Basti children came to this park every evening unescorted, and often with younger siblings in tow, suggested that Basti children had greater mobility licenses in the local area. It was no wonder then the Basti children, and not one Nizamuddin West child, nominated streets and open spaces as friendly places. From the behavior patterns of children and parental concerns about children's independent mobility in the planned neighborhood of Nizamuddin West, it would seem that the planned *purified community* (Sennett 1970) was a more unsafe and threatening place than its crowded, disorderly, unplanned neighbor, Nizamuddin Basti.

8.3. Critical Factors in Promoting Meaningful Exchange with Place

The empirical data from this study suggests that certain factors favor active meaningful exchange with places in neighborhood outdoors through different physical and social activities. These factors are:

1. Potential affordances: Places that were abundant in diverse settings with different physical attributes offered a large range of possible actions to children.
2. Actualized Affordance: Potential affordance rich places were acted upon by children to actualize the affordances when children had freedom to choose their actions and when children were provided the space to negotiate the constraints to certain actions
3. Proximity: Places that were near home, offered easy access any time and hence potential affordances in these places were actualized more often and in different ways than similar places far off.
4. Familiarity: Places close to home that were available to children were visited more often and became familiar. The range of affordance actualization or diverse actions in familiar

places were more and increased with use due to figuring out new ways of doing things or in other words through discovering nested and sequential affordances.

5. Identity: Familiarity of close to home places and often visited places led to a perception of safety, whereas the unfamiliarity of places far from home or less frequently visited places led to a perception of "unsafe". Children, in their middle childhood, felt more comfortable doing things and hanging out in places, which were safe, and in limit.

All the places which children recommended as friendly places which allowed them to be active outdoors, were open public places. Whereas streets near home, open spaces near home, and my precinct were typically created outside the formal planning process, the DDA Park and the Umbrella Park were formally produced open spaces by the city. Of all the five places, Umbrella Park was the only one that was outside of the Basti but close by. But Umbrella Park had a positive identity as a safe, well-kept and beautiful neighborhood park, where children were allowed to be active as long as they followed the behavior codes of the park. Streets near home, and open spaces near home because of their familiarity, several different features, contested ownership and little rules afforded children considerable freedom in choosing activities.

The five factors discussed above that allowed children to have meaningful exchange with their local area were greatly influenced by the interaction of three physical variables—high-density, mixed-use, and more informal design. The interaction between these three physical variables shaped several of the places children recommended as child friendly under this dimension.

Chapter 9
Learning and Competence Through Place Experience

Childhood Friendship (Doll 1996)	Mutual Affection and Personal Regard	Shared Interests and Activities	**Commitment**	Loyalty	Self-disclosure and Mutual Understanding	Horizontality
Children's Place Friendship	Care and Respect for Places	Meaningful Exchange with Places	**Learning and Competence through Place Experience**			

The third dimension in the framework of childhood friendship is commitment or "the intention on the part of both friends to continue fostering the relationship over time". Reciprocal commitment transcends immediate observable events between friends to include a deeper understanding based on highly personal experiences that builds interpersonal trust and empathy. Continued interactions on an everyday basis certainly helps in knowing the other better. When place-child exchange happens in a continuous manner with the everyday environment in a field where children are relatively free of action constraints, children create new affordances and hence new meaning of places. Previous research suggested that children's direct and indirect experience of place contribute to children's environmental learning and environmental competence including making choices about the environment in future. Hence learning about the environment and gaining environmental competence are important factors for developing a committed relationship with the environment. In other words we could say that commitment in place friendship is manifested through gentle accretion of environmental knowledge, learning from participating in everyday life, and gradually gaining competence to be informed actors on behalf of the social, physical and cultural environment.

9.1 Places Children Said They Learned From

Not surprisingly, when the children of Nizamuddin were asked which places helped them in learning new things about places, most children drew a blank. On prodding with sub questions such as are there places where children could see new things or do new or different things most times they visited, Nizamuddin Auliya's Dargah (important Sufi tomb complex) was recommended by children as a place where children learned new things and saw new things almost on every visit. This is followed by the city-level tourist attraction of India Gate and its environs (see table 9.1).

Table 9.1: Place Recommendations from Children under Dimension Three.

Most-Nominated Places That Supported Learning and Competence of Children	**Number of Times Nominated**
Dargah	8
India Gate Area	4
Umbrella Park	3
Open Space Near Home	2
Twelve Other Spaces (see appendix for detailed list)	1 each

9.1.1. Learning from Places of Symbolic Value

About thirty per cent of the children voted the Dargah as a place where they learn something new, or get to see new things on every visit. To understand why the Dargah was considered an important learning context, I went to the Dargah with two Hope school girls—Rani and Zarina (both had nominated the place under the third dimension), and an American photo journalist, Jennifer Macpharlane on the evening of an important Muslim religious festival, called *Shab-e-Barat* or the night of the dead, on September 19, 2005.

I had been to the Dargah several times before that. But on that particular evening it was very crowded, as people had come from all over India to pray at this important religious institution. Rugs were spread out on the black and white striped marble floors, and the ornate crystal chandeliers in the tombs were lit. A few men in dark green robes went around the crowd carrying large feathered fans. They stopped every now and then to fan some fresh air amidst the gathered devotees on the floor. Our young escorts told us that people had come from afar to be part of the celebrations within the Basti and to pray for the dead all through the night. The girls talked to one family near us. They were told that the family they had come all the way up from the western state of Maharashtra.

Right behind where we were standing were a few shops selling religious souvenirs that glittered in the electric lights. Next to the shops was a chamber crowded with men. Zarina pointed to the chamber saying, "that's the office of "Tikriwale Baba". People go to him when they have any kind of problems, when someone falls ill, or something else happens to them. He gives medicines, and solves people's problems. There is one more *Baba* (literal translation *father*, but often used to refer

to holymen) just round the corner." I had never focused on what happened inside the chambers as they were kind of out of bound zones for strangers. Nor had I understood the significance of the signage that advertised the name of the interpreter of maladies. We walked around to the other side to where it was relatively less crowded near the simple grave of the daughter of the great Moghul emperor Shah Jahan, the maker of the Taj Mahal. The center of the courtyard had Nizamuddin Auliya's tomb and attracted the most crowds, though women could only sit outside in the courtyard. We saw a long orderly queue of men very close to where we were standing. Zarina promptly said, "these men are waiting to offer flowers at Amir Khusru's tomb. See the tomb over there! They also get food from that window on the other side. Want to come? Though women are not allowed inside the shrine, we can go around it." As we went around the small tomb chamber, we saw the "women are not allowed inside" signboard hanging from a screened window. Our guides took us around the screened corridor outside Khusru's tomb. Several women were sitting on the floor praying close to the screens. Rani said, "*Baji*, women tie threads through the lattices of these screens. It's like a form of prayer petition for marriage or children. They do the same around Nizamuddin Auliya's tomb as well." The girls also knelt down next to the women, adjusted the dupattas (the long scarf that girls wore as part of their everyday clothing in the Basti) over their heads to more firmly cover all their hair, and prayed. Once they were done we left the famous Sufi poet Amir Khusru's tomb.

We had heard the call for prayers, and saw men with their heads covered either with the Islamic cap or with handkerchiefs standing in rows facing west. Several small boys were also present in the lines of men. We stood behind the devotees and watched. Suddenly a young man came up to us and verbally attacked my friend Jenny. Being her first trip to India, Jenny was completely engrossed in shooting the vibrant scenes in front of her. Both Jenny and I had uncovered heads. But the man targeted Jenny and said in English, "You first cover your head, then take photos. This is not the way to behave here." And he vanished just as suddenly. Rani and Zarina were both very agitated and said, "His own head was uncovered. How dare he talk to our guests like that! You know baji, this is the problem here, men will always try and be rude to women. What do they think of themselves?" I told them not to worry and since this was a first time I had witnessed something like this in the Dargah, I was ready to forget it, and so was Jenny. We took the girls home, as it was getting dark.

Children had said in their interviews that they learned new things from others in the Dargah—"People read quietly by themselves in the courtyard. We listen to them read and learn things", "My uncle lives in the Dargah. He takes us around and tells us many things." A small madrasa operated from the back of the complex. Eleven-year-old Ashraf, who was a new migrant to the neighborhood, talked about learning a new language, Urdu, in the Dargah school. Though most of

the time, the "things" in children's narratives were not elaborated upon in the interviews, my trips to the Dargah revealed that other adults and children in the Dargah often collaborated directly to help a novice child learn a new activity, or direct the learner's attention to different features of the place, its history and functions. On the evening of Shab-e-Barat, Jenny and I were the novices, and Rani and Zarina the experts. We learned new things about the Dargah from them from their verbal narratives and instructions. Our new learning was effortless; we simply followed the cues on offer—"look!" or "listen" instructions. The kind of learning the children experience in social places within Nizamuddin, are the kind Jenny and I experienced in the Dargah on the night of Shab-e-Barat. The conditions, under which this form of learning takes place, are the conditions of apprenticeship in the broadest sense (Rogoff, 1990), and the Dargah presents the context for social learning that is so characteristic of humans. Moreover the perceptual newness of the physical environment of the Dargah complex came from the many visitors of different races, cultural backgrounds, languages spoken within the complex and its surroundings, the seasonal alterations done to control the micro-climate of the Dargah as a comfortable place for pilgrims such as by covering the courtyard in summer to keep out the scorching sun (see figure 9.1). Regular maintenance work that replaced doors, windows, wall paints etc. These, in addition to the social learning context of this place, were also the conditions for perceptual learning.



Figure 9.1: Canopies cover the dargah courtyard in summer to provide shade to devotees

The second most nominated place, India Gate, had also been chosen for perceptual newness of the settings on most visits. India Gate was a monument of national importance that commemorated the Indian soldiers who fought in World War I. The monument itself was a large

gateway made of sandstone. Its significance as a tourist destination in Delhi had as much to do with its history as it's setting. Located strategically as a focal object surrounded by landscaped gardens, India Gate marked the culmination of *Rajpath* or the ceremonial axis along which the houses of government were arranged in the grand Baroque inspired city planning that gave shape to the new British capital in India in 1930s. The grand palace that housed the president of India was at the other end of Rajpath. On visiting India Gate with the children, I realized, that when children referred to India Gate, they actually meant the area around the monument and not the monument itself. Sometimes, the term "India Gate Park" was used to describe the children's park near the monument.

> *"They've cut the long grass over there and planted new flowers…it no longer looks like India Gate!"*
>
> *"I get to see new things there. Cool breezes blow over there. There are lots of fun things to do in that park. I love to see the fish swim in water.*

However the sweeping views afforded by this area which was often referred to as Central Vista in New Delhi, and its majestic baroque landscaping, was a very different reality for not only the children of Nizamuddin but also the average Delhiite who lived in the planned city. Several of my graduate students in Urban Design nominated "India Gate" as their third place in the city of Delhi.

> *"…my grandfather took me and some my friends to India Gate grounds in the evenings. I spent some of my most memorable times there. The ideal summer evening in my childhood was an excursion to India Gate followed by a grand orange bar treat (popsickle). There were ice-cream*walas *(walas is Hindi for vendors),* bhuttawalas *(men selling roasted corn), monkey walas, toy walas, balloon walas, cinema walas, and the magicians…I really feel that if Bombay has the huge sea, Delhi has India Gate to match…today when I sit in a grimy DTC bus (#620) and pass this garden precinct of New Delhi, past the large lawns basking under the vast blue sky, I feel the adrenalin rush in me. The place was different almost every day. I have seen it through the merriment of childhood, innocent of any defects. I have seen it through the prism of youth. I have seen it change; I still visit it and pass through it everyday. (Excerpts from a graduate student essay on third places in Delhi, Department of Urban Design, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, 2005) "*

Both Nizamuddin Auliya's Dargah, and India Gate and its precincts are part of the national architectural heritage of India. They are monuments of historic significance but they also qualify as active places that stand apart from their context, have symbolic value and meaning for users, and are active settings for human interactions on an everyday basis. As the eminent scholar on Indian architecture, Dr. G. H. R. Tillotson points out, Nizamuddin Auliya's Dargah complex is of little antiquarian value due its many layers of reconstruction under different Muslim rulers, but "it provides a living example of how such places are used, developed and administered. The people and the purpose are of more interest than the edifice, for its antique value is lost through their survival (Tillotson 1990, 49)." As a result the Dargah was a monument of living history, Sufi culture, and the ways of life within the Basti. It represented a diverse, dynamic community who followed Hazrat Nizamuddin's message of prayer, love and unity of all things and provided a space for multi-cultural interactions. It was one of the few religious places in Delhi where Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and Jews were all equally welcome. Despite being another international religious landmark (headquarters of the Tablighi movement) occupying a large, ugly concrete building in the north-east corner of the Basti, where serious Islamic scholars came to study the barebone tenets of Wahibi inspired Tablighi Islam, the Markaz, was not mentioned by children as a place where they learned anything new. Whereas the Sufis embraced everyone in the Dargah and spread the message of love, the Tablighis kept the gates of the Markaz tightly shut to everyone but the initiated.

India Gate and its precincts too provided a place for easy integration of diversity and multi-culturalism. In fact, several people in Delhi including the graduate student who wrote the essay on India Gate as a third place, considered this place as the only true public place in Delhi, a place that fulfills the need of a waterfront in a city, and one of the few free access places in an increasingly privatized landscape that imposes restrictions on nature of use, and profile of users. The analogy of the waterfront to this vast axial landscaping means that India Gate was a place that afforded experiencing a vast natural landscape, the prospect of seeing the horizon, and witnessing and participating in the social action of an active recreational area within the city. Both these places—Nizamudin Auliya's Dargah and India Gate and its precincts, were created as symbols of respect to heroes—Hazrat Nizamuudin Auliya as the founder of the Sufi Silsila school, and brave Indian soldiers who died for the country and the world. Besides their commemorative symbolism both these places over the years had collected new meaning as inclusive public places that celebrated human diversity, active social life, hope, and restorative experiences.

9.2. Situated Learning of Children in the Community

The local MCD school called the "Katra School" by the community, among all formal educational institutions had the largest resources in the area in terms of land and building mass. It was a dark gray grit-finished building with thick bars in the windows. This building could have easily qualified as a prison. The local community considered this school as a substandard educational institute. During the course of my fieldwork, I had witnessed mothers coming to the non-formal Hope school to admit their children, specifically daughters, despite being dissuaded by councilors. A non-formal education would limit chances of higher education. However, mothers insisted that their children should at least learn something. Parents, I was told later by Hope social workers, were convinced that their children not only learn nothing in the government provided formal primary school, but their children were also mistreated by teachers.

Given the condition and the common perception of state provided educational resources, it was no wonder that among thirty-one children only one child had mentioned school as a place where she learned something new. The community with its multiple everyday settings, in contrast, allowed the child to play multiple roles and learn from them. Though none of the children mentioned what they learned from their community in the interview, it became clear to me after a few months of immersion in the Basti.

Ten-year-old Farida was a new migrant from the under-developed state of Bihar. Her father was a construction worker, and her mother had a grain store near the Dargah. Farida also sat in her mother's shop and was learning the trade. Farida had never been to any school before she joined the Hope non-formal school in January of 2005. During her interview, she had said that there was no such place in her neighborhood where she learned new things. But she also said conversationally, "There are lots of Bengali people (Bangladeshi migrants) around where we live. We are Biharis you know. So I know how Biharis talk. But the Bengali people have a strange way of asking for things. When a Bengali comes to our stall with a child, and if I return two rupees to him after his purchase, he would say, "*Ek taraf ghurai de* (turn one around for me)". What he actually means is give me something worth one rupee for my child." Farida laughed when she finished telling me this. Unschooled Farida not only demonstrated knowledge of a new language but also the coded meanings of multi-cultural exchange within the community.

To further explore how everyday settings played a role in forging relationships with children, I had given journals to all thirty one children I had interviewed. The instruction was simple: at the end of each day, for a week, write what happened during the day, and where you were throughout the day. In addition I asked children to draw the maps of their neighborhood, and pictures of their

most favorite and least favorite places. Though about twenty children completed the drawing assignments, only four children, two girls and two boys, returned the weeklong journals. The journals were an invaluable source for getting a glimpse of these children's lives. But unfortunately, the children of the study were not very comfortable with prose writing. In fact writing was perceived as a tedious task and best to be avoided if it did not relate directly to schoolwork. The journal accounts of the small self-selected group suggested that the community and its settings were not only integral to children's everyday living but also learning out of school and becoming competent as social actors within the community. This was particularly true of 11 and 12 year old girls from very low-income families such as Rani and Wahida (the two girls who completed their journals).

9.2.1. Rani's Journal

Rani played multiple roles in her life. She was eleven years old, and a student at the Hope adolescent girls non-formal school. She spent six hours of her day, six days a week in the school premises, and at least one hour in preparing for school and doing homework everyday for school. In her diary, she gave detailed account of her morning hour before going to school. School happened for six hours marked by the 8 'clock bell and 2pm. She did not discuss what goes on in this setting except for the assembly in the school terrace, and the non-structured activities of the Saturday when the girls watched a film. The only time school activity had been mentioned by Rani was on a day when a visitor came to talk to her class and when the girls saw a film. Rani provided vivid details of what happenned after she came back from school. It was through these other details that one gets glimpses of the many roles that she played on a regular basis.

First day (Wednesday)

> *I got up at 6am this morning. Said* namaz *(prayers) and then went back to sleep. I was still in bed, when my friend came in and asked if I wasn't going to school. I said, "of course I will go to school. Wait a while, let me put on my uniform." I got up, washed my face, and went to get tea from the market. I asked the tea-stall guy to give me a cup tea. He started making tea. From there I went to my friend's house. I asked her, "Meher, what are you up to?" She replied, "I am packing my lunch for school." I chatted with her a little while. I told her, "I will join you after my breakfast." I went back to the tea stall. I asked, "Hassan* bhai *(literal use: brother, colloquial: used to refer to young man in the community) where's my tea?" He had it ready, "here's your tea." I took the tea and went home. I*

divided the tea in two cups, and gave one to my mother. I had my breakfast, and went over to Meher's again. I told Meher, "Let's go to school now." Meher asked me to wait as she put on her shoes. She said goodbye to her parents and then we went to school chatting all the way. We heard the final bell at 8am from the street. We ran up to the terrace of the school to join the assembly. After finishing the assembly, we went to our classes. School ended at 2pm. We all went home after school. I said my namaz (prayers) as soon as I got home. Then I went and sat at the shop, and after a while I had my lunch. I finished my household chores after my meal, and went out to play. I played for a little while and then went over to Meher's house. I played with Meher for sometime. Then I came back home. I said my namaz and sat in the shop for a while. In the evening, I said my namaz and then went for studies at 7pm. When I got back home, I made the bed, had dinner, did my homework and went to sleep.

Second day (Thursday)

I got up at 6:30am, said my namaz, and went out to buy milk. Afterwards, I freshened up, put on my uniform, and had breakfast in preparation for school when Meher came to my house. We both went to school. We reached school at 8am. The 8 o'clock bell rang, and all of us children reached the terrace. The assembly started. The children left for their respective classrooms after the assembly. School got over at 2pm. Everyone went to their own houses. I came back home from school. I said my namaz, when I started feeling dizzy. So I slept. When my eyes opened, it was 4pm. I said my namaz. I asked my mother for one rupee. With that one rupee I bought raspberry and ate it. Then after washing dishes, saying namaz, I went to study at seven. I returned home, said namaz, made my bed, ate dinner and went to sleep.

Fifth day (Sunday)

This morning I got up at 6:30am. After getting up, doing Wuzu (ritual ablution before prayer), saying namaz, I went to the toilet. After coming back, I washed my face, and got milk. Thoughts of my abbu (father) were coming to me, so I started talking to my mother. As we were talking, my mother started crying. I started crying too. I went to fetch tea. After getting the tea, and having breakfast,

I sat in the shop. Ammi came back from saying namaz and sat down in the shop. I did not know that the tea has been spilt, and my sister scolded me a lot. I felt very angry, but I did not say anything. My mother called me. I went to her. Ammi told me to get five cups of tea and a packet of 'No. 10' (brand of cigarette). I went out to get the cigarettes. Came back, and then went to the toilet. Came back. Then I went to Parchun's shop with my sister. We bought rice, wheat flour, tea, and sugar. We roamed around a bit, then I came back and sat in the shop. Started filling color in pictures. Ammi came back after saying namaz, and I went for a bath. After the bath, after saying namaz, eating food, plaiting my hair, sweeping the floor, cleaning the house, saying namaz, I went to Meher's house. Meher's house was locked, I came back. I took my niece and roamed around with her. After that I came and sat in the shop. Then I said the namaz, and went to the toilet. After washing up, I went to study. Getting back from there, I said the namaz, made the bed, ate food, did housework, got the 'tortoise brand' (popular mosquito repellant), did Sudeshna didi's assignment, and went to sleep.

Seventh day (Tuesday)

[This was a school holiday for *Maha Shivaratri,* which is a Hindu festival. It was part of the school's Sufi philosophy to declare one holiday a year for each religion practiced in India.]

I got up at 6:30 this morning. Said my namaz, and went back to sleep. My sister started saying, "Ran Shahzad (literal: Prince Ran, affectionately ascribing the masculine gender to this royal title while referring to Rani), Munna, get up. I am making tea." We went to sleep (literal translation, implying we ignored her and continued sleeping). I was sleeping, when my niece suddenly took away my blanket. I sat up suddenly. Then I went to the toilet. After coming back, washed my face, plaited my hair, drank tea and went off to play. Played a little and then came to the shop. Then I went home. Took out Sudeshna didi's drawing book from my bag and started drawing. Ammi asked me to fetch two Gold Flakes (brand of cigarette) and one packet of Howdah (cheap leaf rolled tobacco). One rupee was left. I bought two toffees. Then I came back home. I told my mother, "I bought two toffees with one rupee", and sat down on the 'takht' (platform). Then I went to call my niece. After fetching her, I gave her food, and I also ate. I sat in the shop to do school work. I said my namaz, and sat in the takht, when my sister

took my drawing from me and started studying it. She said, "did you do all this?" I said, "yes". As I was sitting in the shop, Rashida dropped by. I got her to do school homework. She finished her work and went home. Then Taslima dropped by. She showed me her Himalay picture book. She brought the book for doing homework and filling colors. Then I said namaz, and ate food. I washed clothes, got tea, and washed utensils. Then I went for a bath. Coming back I said my namaz. I went and got two paan *(betel leaf wrapped mouth freshener). After getting the paans, I asked my ammi for two rupees. I got* daal *(pulse-based snacks) for two rupees. My mother had some and my sister had some. We finished the snack and chatted. Afterwards my mother went to say her namaz. She said namaz and came back to the shop. Then I filled water, mopped the floor, made the bed, went to the toilet. Came back, ate food, finished homework and went to sleep.*

The four days of Rani's life presented above (two weekdays and two holidays) show that Rani was responsible for fetching milk for tea every morning so her family could have breakfast. In poor families such as hers, food was purchased on a daily basis, as there were no refrigerators for storing groceries. She then becomes a *provider* for her family as her family depends on her for their morning meal. We see Rani as a good *practicing Muslim*. She washes herself in the morning and says her prayers. In fact she routinely offered all five prayers or namaz throughout the day. We even find Rani reminding her mother to pray one day (on the sixth day in her journal) when she heard the azan or call for prayer. We see Rani as a *loyal friend*, calling on her friend every morning before school, and then walking with her. Her friend, Meher, even referred to Rani's generosity and their mutual understanding when she told her mother that the two of them always shared food (on the third day in Rani's journal). The daily household chore Rani performed makes her a *home-maker*. We see Rani as a *guardian* of her little niece, playing with her, feeding her, looking after her. She was a *part-time shopkeeper*, and sits in their small house front shop everyday to relieve her mother of her shop-keeping duties for sometime. She was a *handy body* fetching cigarettes, snacks, groceries both for the shop and home. Rani was a *good student*, other girls came to her for homework help, and she diligently worked on Sudeshna didi's assignment every night besides doing her school homework. She was a *child* who liked to play with domestic pets, and friends. She bought sweets with small change.

9.2.2. Wahida's Journal

Unlike Rani, Wahida was an orphan who had grown up in many households. She split her time between the houses of her older siblings, her grandmother and her friend Rani's family. Her days were filled with household chores, besides non-formal Hope school, and evening religious studies. Wahida however attended a vocational training course in tailoring and sewing every afternoon in the community center across from Nizam Nagar. She wrote about the sewing class in greater detail than what happened at school.

Day2: Daily Diary of Thursday

I woke up at 7 o'clock. Got ready and went to school. Came back from school at 2o' clock, and freshened up after coming back. At 2.15 I went to the sewing center. At 4 I came back from the sewing center. I could not play today, as I got very tired. So I went to the toilet and bathed. Then my tiredness became less. Then I went and ate my food. After that I got foodstuff for the evening meal. Helped out with the cooking--ground spices, cleaned vegetables, and cut the vegetables. Washed the dishes with the spices afterwards.

When this work got over, I went to my girlfriend and asked her what all she had done, and talked of many things. Then both of us went to read the "sipara" (chapters of the Koran). At 8 I came back and watched TV. Then ate dinner and washed the dishes. While watching TV I wrote my daily and drew pictures. Did homework and went to sleep.

Day3: Daily Diary of Friday

Woke up at 6.50. Washed my hands and face and said my 'namaz'. Then got ready for school, had breakfast and went to school. Came back from school at 2 o'clock, put down my school bag and went to the sewing center. At the sewing center I learned about sewing the straight 'kurta', the straight pajama and shorts. Then I did some embroidery. Then I came home at 4oclock and took off my school dress. Then I had my food, washed the used utensils and then played with my girlfriend.

Then I went to Rashida's house. Then Rashida and 'Wahida' did the homework together. Then I got the foodstuffs for dinner and helped with the cooking. I washed the spice dishes. At 7 went to read the "sipara" with my girlfriend. At the madrasa I learned the Koran. Our respected 'maulvi' taught us prayers also. Then at 8.30 I came home. Then I saw a play. "Kasauti" is a play about life.

At 9, I washed the dishes and ate dinner. Then I was sitting and thinking how crazy I was, that I had not even said my 'namaz' yet I was thinking of so many things! Then I went to sleep.

Day5: Daily Dairy of Sunday

Woke up at 6.50. Washed my hands and face, and made tea. Then drank the tea, rolled up the bed, swept the floor, mopped the floor, washed the dishes, washed clothes, bathed, put "kajal" (black eyeliner) in my eyes, combed my hair, dried my clothes, ate food, washed the used dishes, picked up the dried clothes, ironed my school uniform, and watched TV. Then I went to Rashida's house. Then we chatted for a while and then went to read the "sipara". Then after coming back from there I went to play outside the (public) toilet. Then I went to ride on the swings. Rani came to take my notebook, and then I talked to her a bit. Then I ate dinner, washed the dishes and went to sleep.

The settings that allowed Rani and Wahida to play the multiple roles typically were outside school premises. In Rani's case, these other temporally short everyday activities were nurtured by her small house, the family shop in the front of the house, streets in and around her homes which were free of traffic, the paved open space in front of the public toilet complex right across from Rani's house (in an earlier interview Rani had said that this was the place she went out to play with other girls, and sometimes the DDA park, right next to the toilets, in the evening), friend's house in the same precinct accessible via narrow sinuous streets and courtyards, and utilitarian places in the Basti like Hasan bhai's tea stall, Parchun's grocery shop etc. Many of these places fulfilled needs that were above their immediate perceived function. The neighborhood and its various third places or the core settings of informal public life (Oldenburg, 1997) such as the two shops mentioned in Rani's journal facilitate place-child exchange in an easy practical fluid fashion. The child was a patron and a participant in these settings (Rani had marked all the third places in her neighborhood by the proprietor's name in her sketch of the neighborhood).

In Wahida's case, the sewing center, the evening religious class, her friend Rashida's house, the public toilet complex as well as the evening television watching experience all fell outside school. Wahida unlike Rani did not report any family experience; instead her time spent at home (which I later found out was a shifting base) was filled with domestic work, and some TV watching. Wahida purchased groceries everyday and ran errands for families she stayed with. This child never mentioned the interactions she had in the market or shops in her diary. In fact in her first interview she had said, that she did not like crowded places because she feared being teased by boys: "When I go to read the scriptures in someone's house, I walk ten to fifteen minutes to get there. There are lots of boys in the streets who stare. I feel very nervous. So I walk fast, and talk to myself to keep myself company."

Through their journals, Rani and Wahida emerged as the apprentices who interactively engaged in performing several roles, often simultaneously in everyday life. These roles, fit in the apprenticeship categories proposed by (Hanks, 1990), and are as varied as—school student (*status subordinate*), practicing Muslim (*learning practitioner*), handy body, messenger, grocery shopper (*sole responsible agent in minor parts of the performance*), home maker, responsible student (*aspiring expert*). All these roles imply "a different sort of responsibility, a different set of relations, and a different interactive involvement." (Hanks 1990, p23) The conditions under which these role configurations take place constitute what Lave and Wenger (1991) call *legitimate peripheral participation* (LPP). Viewing learning as a practice, LPP takes place in widely differing contexts of time and place. In Rani's case LPP starts from the moment she woke up and left the house to fetch milk and buy tea from stalls in the neighborhood. Throughout the day both Rani and Wahida negotiated between the home, school and several different community settings, playing different roles and engaging with different communities of practice. Though their time was somewhat structured by six hours of school everyday and the responsibilities of the many roles they played, Rani and Wahida had considerable control over organizing their chores over the course of the day.

The narrative of the girls' weeklong diary exemplifies Hank's (1990) iteration of LPP as "not a structure…but rather a way of acting in the world which takes place under widely varying conditions." This conceptualization of LPP according to Hank positions learning as "a way of being in the social world" (Hanks 1990, p24).

However in contrast to the eleven year old girls' active engagement in everyday settings through different roles where both Rani and Wahida, non-formal students of Hope school display situation specific competencies, the two available male diaries, that of Zoheb and Rameez, reveal more than anything else a very different form of childhood from the girls. Zoheb and Rameez, also eleven, went to a formal government primary school in nearby Pant Nagar. Zoheb only managed to write

daily accounts for two days, and Rameez for four days. Both diaries were returned to me considerably later than the girls, and that too after much coaxing. The boys did not report doing any household work except for running quick errands. Their days were spent studying in school, tuition and in playing around in the neighborhood.

9.2.3. Zoheb's Diary

Day One

I woke up in the morning at seven o'clock, washed my face, brushed with (tooth) paste and had breakfast and put on school clothes, when my friend came to my house. Then I went off to school. On the way I met another friend. Then while chatting with him I went on to school. In school the ma'am said that we should study our book. I read my book. Then the ma'am said that we should do question answer from the book. Then I did question answer. Then it was closing time of our school. I came home and I had a bath and ate food and went to sleep. Then I went for tuition. 'Baaji' made me do question answer in Hindi. I did the question answer and then it was closing time. I came home and then I flew kites. I cut two other kites. Then I came down and watched the India-Pakistan (cricket) match [on TV] and went to sleep.

Day Two

I woke up in the morning at seven o'clock, washed my face and brushed with (tooth) paste. Today is a holiday so I went to play a (cricket) match. I hit five runs. Then I came home, ate food and then went out again. Then I played a match with my friend again. Then I came home, ate food and then I went to sleep.

9.2.4. Rameez's Diary

Day Two

Today I woke up in the morning and bathed. Then I put on my uniform, put oil in my hair and had my breakfast. After that I put on my shoes and went to school. There I had lunch with my friends (free mid-day meal was provided in government schools). I returned home from school and took off my uniform. I put on my house clothes and sat down to eat, and I watched TV. Then I slept and

when I woke up I went for tuition (the evening supplementary classes at The Hope Project). I read the book of Science in tuition. The lights (electricity) went off in the tuition place. At quarter past six our "baaji" (referring to teacher) let us go. Then I came back to my house. And my mother got me to get some things for her and then I went to the park. When I returned home and sat down to write this.

Day Three

Today when I went to the bathroom after waking up in the morning I felt dizzy. My mother told me son don't go to school today. So I got up from bed after a while and my mother got me a pill. I got some relief. Then I started washing my hands and face, and then I had breakfast. Then my mother told me son go out for a little while. It became one o'clock and at one oclock I opened the TV. I watched cartoons. Then I fell asleep watching cartoons. Then I woke up at 5 o'clock and my mother told me get some rice from Shobha's shop. At half past five I went to the tuition. Then two 'didis' (referring to teacher's at Hope Project) came and started teaching us English. After that we were made to write the names of animals in English. Then at half past six one 'didi' let us go. Then I returned home and I remembered that 'didi' (referring to me) had told me to daily note all that I did and said, and all this I have written down.

From the brief accounts of daily life of Zoheb and Rameez, it was clear that the roles they played in their community life were defined by the discourse of "innocent childhood" where the only responsibilities of the child were school and play (Nieuwenhuys, 1999). Resnick (1987) had suggested four factors that differentiated learning that happened in school and out: 1) Individual cognition in school versus shared cognition outside, 2) Pure mentation in school versus tool manipulation outside, 3) Symbol manipulation in school versus contextualized reasoning outside, and 4) generalized learning in school versus situation-specific competencies outside. The girls of this study participated in the everyday life and work of the community as apprentices where more than individual performances, understanding and participating in socially shared activities, manipulating cultural tools used in cooking and housework in the domestic realm, using contextualized reasoning and situation specific competencies in both the private and the parochial realm of markets and streets (such as Wahida's talking to herself to overcome her fear of boys in the streets) were crucial to successful functioning of girls within the community. Boys, however being formal learners in government schools, were judged on what they could do for

themselves. That is why above all else, recording "I hit five runs" was important for Zoheb in his diary. However as Rameez's daily accounts showed, and in the interviews, boys, including Zoheb, did report running errands for other family members and escorting their sisters outdoors. But these activities were not part of the primary responsibilities of boys.

9.2.5. School Experience Across Diaries

The only common theme in diaries of both boys and girls was the almost fleeting mention of school—

> *…we went to school chatting all the way. We heard the final bell at 8am from the street. We ran up to the terrace of the school to join the assembly. After finishing the assembly, we went to our classes. School ended at 2pm (Rani, day 1).*
>
> *Got ready and went to school. Came back from school at 2o' clock, and freshened up after coming back (Wahida, day 2).*
>
> *Then I went off to school. On the way I met another friend. Then while chatting with him I went on to school. In school the ma'am said that we should study our book. I read my book. Then the ma'am said that we should do question answer from the book. Then I did question answer. Then it was closing time of our school (Zoheb, day 1)*
>
> *…went to school. There I had lunch with my friends. I returned home from school and took off my uniform (Rameez, day 2).*

Figure 9.2 below charts the daily timelines of twenty-seven responding children, both boys and girls, attending formal, and non-formal schools. In each case, the school, additional tuition classes, and koranic studies take up more than seven hours in each child's day. But the experiences in these places are not reported in as much detail as what happens at home or in the one or two hours spent outdoors each day.

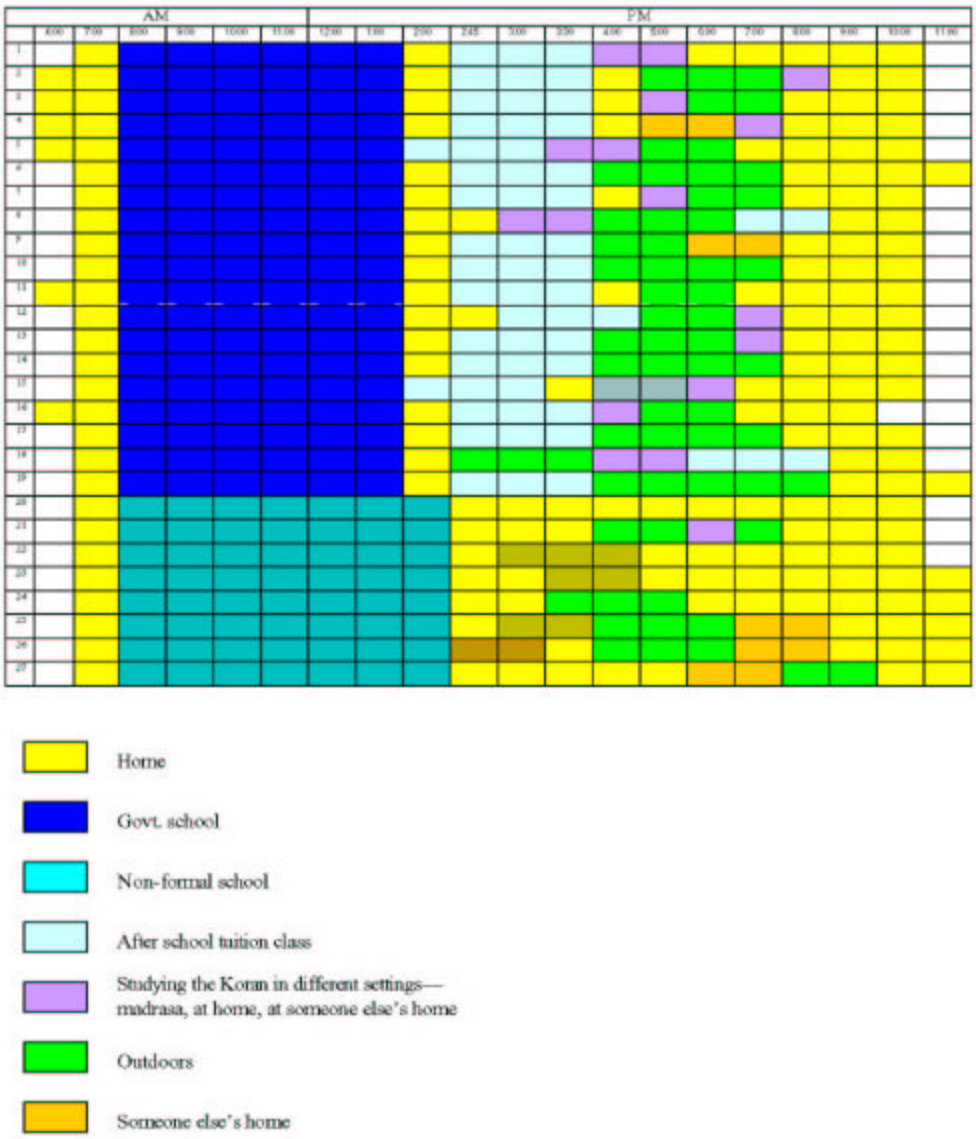


Figure 9.2: Daily Timelines of 27 Responding Children

The 8 o'clock bell and 2 pm marked the beginning and end of the largest contiguous temporal activity of the day for the girls. Even though, school was not a homogeneous activity for six hours, it was interesting to note that the girls treated it as a monolithic block of time. Having spent quite some time in their school setting myself, I have to admit that the Hope school was far more interactive and child-centered in its curriculum than not only other schools in the locality, especially the government schools, but also other expensive private schools in the city.

During weekdays, students after the morning assembly in the terrace at 8am, filed into their respective classrooms, and formal classes started by 8:20 am. Though the classrooms had loose

furniture with two-seater desks and chairs, typically these seats faced the blackboard and the teacher's table in the front of the classroom. This school had no open space, being built as an in-fill between two existing buildings within the dense fabric of the Basti. Also being a Muslim girls' school, the cultural constraints on girls' outdoor use would have required a protected open space, which was hard to procure in the high-density neighborhood. Typically, when the mid-day break was from 11:15 to 11:45 am. During the break the girls hang out in the corridors, the main staircase, and visitors' area, more than in the designated common room, which was close to the school office with teachers and administrative staff keeping an eye on the common room. Every week there were three "Rishta" or relationship periods that encouraged students to discuss any problem, and issues of interest with their teachers. The Saturday however devoted some time to social science and non-academic curricula. On Saturdays students watched movies, discussed them in focus groups, engaged in arts, music practice and yoga. It was through these extra-curricular Saturday activities and annual social science workshops, the social science curriculum engaged students in mapping their community and developing the echonograph where students mapped what were important to them and their lives in the Basti and the city. In both the girls' diaries, the experience of Saturdays got mentioned in some detail.

9.2.5.1. Longest Account of School on Saturday

> *We reached school at 8:05 am. The assembly was going on. After it finished, we went to our class. After half an hour, we went downstairs, when Pritha didi told us, "Come quickly and sit here. I will be showing a film." The door was opened [social science classroom], mats were spread, we sat in lines, when Pritha didi came in and put a* 'cassette' *(dvd) in the computer. A little later the film started. The film was called "Bhagat Singh". We started watching the film. Pritha didi said, "Watch carefully, there will be exam questions set on this." We watched carefully, as we were watching 11am came around. It was then time for lunch break [11:15am]. One girl said, "everyone out, we have to close the room." We all came out. The school got over at 2pm (Rani's Journal).*

> *The assembly happens at 5minutes past 8. At 8.20 the assembly gets over. At 8.20 the math period starts. At 9oclock the math period gets over. From 9 o'clock the Hindi period starts. It gets over at 9.40. From 9.40 the social science period starts. It gets over at 10.40. At 10.40 the Science period starts. It gets over at 11.15. Then lunchtime starts. At 11.45 lunchtime gets over. From 11.45 the English period starts. It gets over at 12.40. From 12.40 the "Rishta" ("relation")*

period starts. At 1.15 the "saturday practice" starts. At 2oclock school gets over. Then I came home (Wahida's Journal).

On Saturdays the girls were encouraged to construct knowledge based on their own life experiences, and not just sit in classrooms and receive knowledge from teachers even though the teachers were very committed to active teaching through developing personal relationships with students. It is also possible that earlier experience in a government school had put the girls off schooling (as several interviews reported teacher indifference, and low-quality instructions in previous schools). Even though The Hope School was a cheerful, clean environment with students' work displayed in every nook and cranny of the small school building, and had committed teachers and social workers who interactively worked with each student, the two available student's diaries did not record the school as a place where they had meaningful experiences during the course of their day. The diaries instead suggested as Illich (1972) had suggested that school was after all obligatory confinement (in this case for six hours marked by 8 am and 2pm), whereas learning happened outside.

9.3. Environmental Competence

A review of the cognitive maps of the neighborhood drawn by both boys and girls using free-recall sketching, also suggested difference in competencies of boys and girls. Contrary to previous findings by Matthews (1987), where 6-11 year old boys performed significantly better than girls in drawing a map of their home-area, "both in relation to the quantitative accretion of environmental knowledge and in the qualitative manner of representing place (Matthews 1992, 163), the girls of Nizamuddin Basti drew very detailed maps which recorded more number of places in the neighborhood and in greater detail than boys. The maps drawn by boys were not free hand drawings, but carefully proportioned geometric shapes made with a ruler. This way of making "neat" drawings is a legacy of government school art instruction. The girls on the other hand were surrounded by colorful community maps of their Basti drawn by the students in their nonformal The Hope School. Some of the girls in this study participated in a few map-making workshops. The quality of instruction in the schools that boys and girls attended maybe a factor in influencing children's environmental competence. The boys in this study were also a part of The Hope Project through their one-hour afternoon tuition class, and were hence exposed to those same maps in the walls as the girls from The Hope School. So the reason for the difference in competencies in girls and boys has to be deeper than just exposure to good quality maps in the everyday school environment. I would like to suggest that girls' enhanced environmental competencies are rooted in their everyday negotiations of the private and local places of the neighborhood through work, play and participation in different communities of practice.



Figure 9.3: "My neighborhood" by Rani

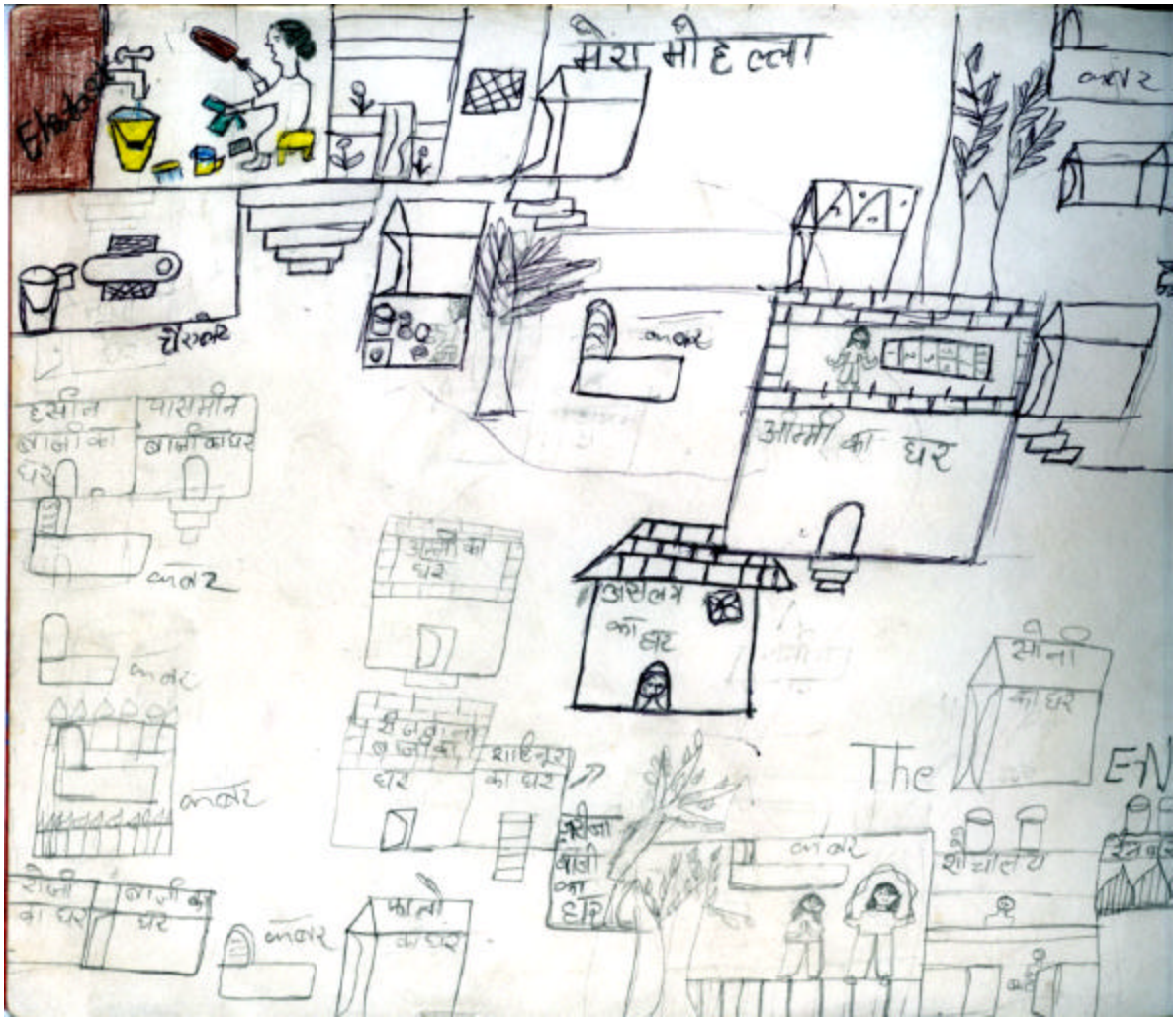


Figure 9.4: "My neighborhood" by Wahida

The constraints on girls' mobility were discussed at length within the parochial system of this Muslim community under constraints to place use. Girls had talked about household duties as reasons for not being able to use parks and recreation areas in their free time. In fact going out, for girls, was very conditional:

> *"We stay within the area, there is no need to go outside. To leave the area we need a very good reason, some important work, otherwise there is no need to go out."*

Despite these constraints, eleven and twelve year old girls demonstrated environmental knowledge superior to boys during free recall sketching and greater environmental competence in negotiating everyday community life by playing multiple roles at home and in the community. Though typically, in Muslim societies, women's seclusion restricts women's spatial range, as Bose (2005) found out in her work with Muslim women in slums of Calcutta, these boundaries of spatial range shift between private, parochial and public realms for women depending on stage-in-family-life-cycle (age, marital status, number of children etc.), household structure, and specific circumstances such as economic needs, sickness of spouse etc. Even though teachers of Hope school doubted the testimonies of eleven and twelve year old girls' spatial mobility as recorded in the interviews, I found out that the respondents' family backgrounds (dire economic needs in many cases, female headed households as in Rani's family, dependency on extended family and friends for orphaned children as in Wahida's case) and early unmarried stage-in-family-life-cycle expanded the environmental mobility licenses of pre-adolescent girls as well as allowed these girls to participate more fully in the life and work of the community.

9.4. Implications for City Design and Development

The findings of this study imply, children, in this case girls in their middle childhood years, participated more in the everyday practices of community life through sharing of responsibilities and roles, and hence demonstrated greater competencies and learning from the environment. Though both boys and girls nominated places with deep symbolism for the community and shared meaning as places from which they learned, the ethnographic observations revealed that children who actively participated in different community practices learned everyday as apprentices, and legitimate peripheral learners in the community.

What implications can we draw for production and management of places from these findings? Delhi is a city strewn with monuments, a legacy of several layers of continuous history from 1450 B.C. There is in Delhi, as historian Dr. Narayani Gupta points out, "a continuous history of recycling,

of vandalism, of partial demolition, of occupying old buildings (Nanda et al. 1999, p.ix)." While conservation circles in the city debate 'conservation and development', the discourse has included conservation as an alternative strategy for development in improving quality of life. Developing special conservation areas and the many monuments of Delhi as special places with distinct identities, cultural traditions, and built heritage is a welcome strategy as these places teach children history, culture, and active participation in the public life of the city as citizens. However, because these places are important heritage assets, they should not *only* be viewed as potential revenue generators for the city, but also as learning environments for children and youth. The first condition that would enable such learning environments in the city is ease of access that is physical connectivity with the rest of the city via special transport strategies, and free entry for children. There could be monument special buses that were free for children every afternoon after school, and over the weekend. The London Underground in its attempt to become more child-friendly, made off-peak hours free for children under 11 years. For the free travel, up to four children must be accompanied by a paying adult and ride after 9:30 a.m. on weekdays, or anytime on weekends or public holidays. Similar attempts could be made in any city, to make public transport easily available to children including in Delhi where such a strategy would greatly enhance access to the 1200 listed grade A and grade B monuments scattered all over the city.

As the children of this study considered new learning on an everyday basis to happen in out of school settings rather than within school, the curriculum of formal and non-formal education may want to include community settings in the learning environment. A good example of out of school, minimally invasive, learner–driven model of learning is to be found in the "Hole-in-the Wall" project where computers were placed in a wall in an informal open space within a low-income neighorhood in New Delhi. This technological experiment found that children using the hole-in-the-wall "Learning Stations" required little or no inputs from teachers and learned on their own by the process of exploration, discovery and peer coaching. Children, in freely experimenting with the Learning Stations, picked up critical problem solving skills, and learned in collaboration with self-taught, expert children who shared their knowledge.

Keeping in mind children's everyday participation in community life in enhancing environmental competence in children, participation in design and management of community facilities seems to be an obvious arena for children's involvement. The roles children play in the domestic realm are influenced by family values, cultural traditions and beliefs. Children's roles in the public realm are probably easier to influence through participatory practices within a democratic setup. Gain in environmental competence through participation in planning, design and management of community settings is well recorded in the Growing Up in Cities proects (Chawla 2000).

Chapter 10
Creating and Controlling Territories

Childhood Friendship (Doll 1996)	Mutual Affection and Personal Regard	Shared Interests and Activities	Commitment	**Loyalty**	Self-disclosure and Mutual Understanding	Horizontality
Children's Place Friendship	Care and Respect for Places	Meaningful Exchange with Places	Learning and Competence through Place Experience	**Creating and Controlling Territories**		

The fourth dimension of friendship is loyalty or the intention of both friends to protect the interest of the other. In place friendship, loyalty can be interpreted as a place that is available to the person over a long period of time (maybe over the years), and allows the person to own, to personalize and defend the place from other interest groups. In return the place also protects the interests of the users. This reciprocal relationship leads to creation of identifiable territories over time. Characteristics of human territoriality include using personalization of a place or object and communicating that it is 'owned' by a person or group with regulated social interaction including defense responses when unwanted violations of territorial boundaries occur. Unrestricted and reserved use of space at one time and not another, and emotional bonding with these claimed spaces are essential characteristics of territories created by children and youth. Children's territorial behavior, as recent studies in children's geography have shown, is a vehicle for identity construction where territorial practices of inclusion and exclusion of others are determined by shared residence and locality of children.

10.1. Places Children Territorialize Through Action in Nizamuddin Basti

Open space near home and the DDA Park were places that children appropriated as their territories most easily (see table 10.1). It is worth noting that the top three nominations under this dimension were the same as under the second dimension of place-child exchange, except the preferential order of the nominated places are different. Street near home, which was the top of the list under the second dimension as the place where children shared most activities and interests with place, was the third most nominated place under territories controlled by children. The DDA Park, which was third under the second dimension, was tied at first place with open space near home with six nominations each under the fourth dimension of territorial control. As discussed in the chapter on Meaningful Exchange with Places, streets near home, in this high-density, mixed use settlement were very active places for children because these streets had

evolved over hundreds of years with narrow widths, determined by the proportions of animal drawn carts and not modern automobiles, and abundance of features in streets to support active public living through multiple uses in same space. The question that comes to mind is how is it that open space near home and DDA Park are preferred as controllable territories over the most accessible outdoor space, street near home? A possible explanation, borrowing from the affordance analysis of places under the dimension of meaningful exchange with places (chapter 8), is that the range of environmental features offered by outdoor open spaces near home and the actualized affordance in those places were in fact larger than the range of features and actualized affordance in streets. The most significant difference is noted in provision of more loose parts or graspable detached objects as well as non-rigid attached objects and plants in open spaces, which contributed to construction activities and hence creation of identifiable territorial markers. As the predominant function of streets was circulation, play and other activities get disrupted when they come in the path of pedestrians, animals, and small vehicles. Also the fact that the streets had several different adult eyes due to the high density, was not conducive for more personal interactions with place such as in imaginative construction activities. In a later section I will discuss what made the DDA Park a place where children could easily create and control territories.

Table 10.1: Place Recommendations from Children under Dimension Four.

Places Recommended Under Territories Created and Controlled by Children	**Number of Recommendations**
DDA Park	6
Open Space Near Home	6
Streets Near Home	4
Umbrella Park	3
India Gate Area	2
Open Space Next to Sewer	2
Eleven Other Places *Including mostly small open places with local names near home, which could very well be considered under "open spaces near home"* (see appendix 7 for detailed list)	1

There were three recommendations each for the Umbrella Park, the most coveted park in the children's local area, and two recommendations for the Children's Park in India Gate. The two

children, one boy and one girl, who recommended India Gate also referred to the Basti as a place where they were not allowed to do many things. The girl who reported a large outdoor exploration range and a strong desire to be outdoors, talked about the social constraints imposed on girls' activities. The boy, was a new migrant and did not have too many friends in the Basti, and due to his family's very low social status in the Basti, was excluded from most territorial play of children. For both these children, the far off Children's Park at India Gate represented a free, fun environment with lots of play structures designed specifically for children (see figure 10.1). This far-off city park, for these two children represented a place where they could freely be children and engage in any activity they wanted.



Figure 10.1: Children's Park at India Gate

10.2. How Did Children Create and Control Territories in Open Spaces Near Home?

As the discussion on constraints to place use in chapter 6 suggest, the Basti outdoors were not especially sensitive to children's needs and welcoming of children. However, children still quite successfully carved out and controlled territories by appropriating public spaces. The open space in front of The Hope School was on a raised ground with several Keekar trees, a broken car, a madrasa (school for Koranic studies), a teashop, important Sufi graves, and lots of debris from several rounds of constructions and demolitions. Ownership of this space, toward the Basti and

The Hope Project, was contested. Hence there was no direct supervision or maintenance of the space. As a result, this open space had abundant loose parts and unconventional play equipments—broken car, an upturned broken three wheeler shell, graves, remnants of demolished structures, and lots of debris. But where the open space merges with the space in front of the local primary school provided by the municipal corporation of Delhi, ownership claims by DDA are apparent through published notice boards. DDA has put a couple of cheap slides and seesaws in front of the school to make a play space for children. Right next to this barren designated playground is the planned public open space, also owned by DDA that firmly separated the Basti from the busy city corridor in the west. The access road to the MCD School separated the larger planned open space from the contested, messy one in front of The Hope Project including the patch of owned space in front of the school. This ambiguous space in the heart of the community was "open space near home" for several children living in Khusroo Nagar, and served as a continuous strip of undulating activity space.

On March 3, 2005, I sat on the ramp in front of the beautiful new mosque dedicated to Inayat Khan, the Sufi credited with spreading the work of Nizmuddin Auliya in the western world. I was watching the street in front, and the open space in front of Hope from my excellent vantage point. Two barefoot children, one girl of about three years and one boy of about four years of age, crossed the dusty street and headed for the open public urinals. Right next to the urinals was a large gap in the chain link fence that surrounded the open space to retain the debris from falling into the sreet. This gap afforded the easiest entry into the space beyond. The boy managed to get up easily on to the raised platform, which was about 10 inches from the ground. The girl however fell down. I winced as I watched her fall, but she did not cry. She got up, and tried again, this time more carefully hauling herself up. She ran after her friend. There was a cricket match going on in the open space behind the public urinals. Three adolescent boys were engaged in the match. I couldn't help but wonder how much dirt they had stolen from the nearby scattered dirt graves to create a level top for their cricket pitch. I had witnessed boys doing this on several occasions before starting a game of cricket. These adolescents had stood up a foot high thick stone slab on its head to make a wicket. Two small pieces of stone were put on top of the vertical slab to create the two bells. The little children who I followed from the streets crossed this pitch on a run, and went over to the cluster of large stone Sufi graves under the trees. Another little boy of about five years was playing among the graves. He had a branch in his hand. In order to get a better view of what the children were up to inside the fenced off enclosures of the graves, I quickly went up to the first floor terrace of the tomb complex. I could not hear the children at play, but my raised position gave me greater prospect for observing children over a greater area. The two young children, meanwhile, had collected stick branches that were lying on the ground under the trees

and all three got busy among the graves. These graves had rectangular sunken enclosures marked by large ornate tombstones. The young children made full use of the sunken enclosures by firmly planting themselves inside the graves. I could no longer see their bodies fully, but occasional bobbing heads and waving stick branches assured me they were still inside. The threesome got busy beating the tombstones with their branches. From my new vantage point I had a clear view beyond the graves. On a higher ground close to the large garbage vat, three boys of about eight years took their pants down and started to pee. Their heads were bent, as they sent off jets to the dusty ground in what appeared to be a competition of some sort.

The three different episodes that I witnessed show several patterns of children's territorial behavior. The same open space allowed co-occupation by three different groups of children—adolescents, elementary school aged children, and very young children all were engaged in different forms of play by appropriating different parts of the same open space. When the two young children entered the already occupied open space, instead of intruding into the adolescent's game territory, they hurried off toward the periphery of the open space. Similar behavior had been recorded by Sommer and Becker (1969) in their experiments where anonymous people upon entering an already occupied room chose to be away from the occupied areas. The simple act of spatial occupation serves as a territorial marker and deters intrusion. The young children I observed sensed an occupied territory as soon as they entered the open space. Moreover older adolescent children controlled the territory, a dominant group in relation to younger children. The children's choice of the peripheral setting was a defined protected setting amidst large graves with enclosed space inside, where another child of their age was actively engaged in play. Instead of shying away from this occupied territory, the children entered it probably because the territory holding child was not perceived as a dominant power who would evict them, and also to take advantage of an interesting play opportunity.

The other two territories created by the adolescents and the eight-year-old boys were influenced by the affordances of the chosen settings, which helped them create easy physical territorial markers for claiming public space. In the case of the adolescents, a dirt top rectangular patch between trees open on all sides, afforded playing cricket, the favorite sport in the community that required a defined hard top pitch for the batsmen, and open space around the pitch for fielders to fetch the ball. The adolescents clearly marked the pitch by leveling a rectangular patch with loose dirt, and putting up stone wickets. Eight-year-old boys perceived the affordance for a mischievous activity of urinating in a circle, and competing with each other while doing so, on a mound of dirt on a raised ground. In doing so, these boys labeled their territory in the most primal fashion characteristic of animal territories where space is overtly regulated through bodily-related activities that lets "others know who is the owner and occupier of a place (Altman 1975, 129)."

Each group of children created very different types of territories in the same open space. Several different adults were also part of this open space and went about their daily business without stopping the children from doing whatever they were up to. As children did not face any constraints on their action in any of these settings, they could engage with and define territories for action geographically within the same open space in several different ways. Rich affordances were on offer in multiple settings dispersed in the space. The space was also big enough to hold several different territory seeking groups. Children in fact had "unrestricted and reserved use of resources" which according to Malmberg (1980) signified the everyday nature of territories. At whatever time children decided to claim public space as their territory, whether to play cricket, to beat up large cold tombstones or to pee, children were the dominant power in those settings.

On August 15, 2005, I was about to leave Nizamuddin after talking to a group of children who were busy fetching fallen kites near the broken car. It was the Indian Independence day, a national holiday, and the Basti was celebrating through intense kite flying from every roof terrace. I started walking toward the MCD School. As I crossed the trees over from the Sufi graves, I noticed several children playing near the cheap play equipment in front of the MCD School. I went close to them. On top of one of the slides sat a girl of about ten years. She was busy untying what appeared to be a tangled heap of stiff plastic rope typically used for tying large bales of scrap in the community. I switched on the movie mode in my digital camera and started filming her. The girl seemed to be completely oblivious of her surroundings as she managed to untangle and hang part of the rope from the top the slide. She tied the rope to the handrail of the slide. Then she slid down and went under the slope near the vertical back ladder. A boy of similar age was standing near the ladder. She asked for his help to be seated on the simple rope swing now dangling from the handrail. As the boy hoisted her up, the girl realized that the swing was a bit too high for her to sit comfortably. She went back up to the top of the slide, not by climbing the ladder, but by climbing against the slope of the slide. She untied some more length of the stiff plastic rope. Meanwhile in the slide next to her another girl about the same age had already managed to create a swing under the slope of the slide. This girl rotated about the swing as she swung and sang at the top her voice a popular Hindi film song, "*Gajra re, gajra re tere kale kale naina*…" The girl I was filming turned around briefly to check out her singing neighbor. She struggled some more and then again slid down to try out her swing. This time she climbed up a few rungs of the ladder while holding on to her swing. Hoisting herself up into the swing from the ladder she could start swinging in no time. Her neighbor meanwhile had picked up a small child in her lap and continued to turn, swing and sing. I left soon after the girl had successfully created and started enjoying her swing. I was back the next morning; the swings were gone from under the slide. I asked the children playing around

the slides about the swings. They said that children hung swings when they came to play, but took them away when they left.

In the makeshift swing episode on the Indian Independence Day, I witnessed children creating swings out of existing slides. It would seem that the only play equipments formally provided for children by the city did not satisfy children's play needs. But children were free to adapt these play equipments because these equipments existed in an uncared for open space with contested ownership. These conditions provided children with a field of unconstrained action. Children changed the existing play settings in innovative ways by creating swings under the slopes of slides. However the fact that children took the rope swings away after they were done swinging for the day suggest that children were in fact defending their self-created play territories from others. This defensive action probably stemmed from the prevalent community narrative of theft in public places. Even in my initial interviews, children after suggesting more trees, flowering plants and swings in the open spaces of their neighborhood to make them more child friendly, often as an afterthought would say, "you know it's not going to work because people here steal everything. The swings would go the next day. They would sell it. They sell everything they could get their hands on." By taking the swings away, children defended their territories from harm, and thereby retained their control over these shaped play settings.

This particular episode, besides showing that children could as easily manipulate formal facilities as easily as informal spaces with loose parts, also suggests that the physical territories carved by children were *temporal*, the aspect of territoriality that Sack (1986) had emphasized on. Though children enjoyed absolute control and hence power in these settings while they were active in these settings, children had no control over these physical territories in their absence. Thus these territories functioned as child friendly places when children were in these settings, owning and personalizing the settings. But when children exited the settings with their props that helped define the territories, the nature of these places also changed till such time when the children returned to reclaim the setting and recreate the territory once again as a child friendly place.

10.2.1. What Made Open Spaces Easily Controllable Territories by Children in Nizamuddin?

A host of factors worked toward making the open spaces, particularly incidental spaces with no direct traceable ownership, the most easily controllable territories of children in the Basti.

10.2.1.1. Affordances for Creating Easy Territorial Markers Through Play

An eleven-year-old boy, Badshah, who lived in a squatter by the sewer, built shelters and played house in this open space. He told me, "We play *kabbadi*, *icebais*, and *bat-ball*. We collect sticks and branches and construct shelters. We play inside the shelters, pretending that we are on a picnic. We also cook food. Not real though. Some of my friends bring small play utensils, a little rice and bits of vegetables for cooking. We don't play like this everyday, only sometimes. But this is the *only place* where we can play this way."

Sabiha, an eleven-year-old girl, who did not live by the sewer but in a street close by preferred this relatively uncontested open space over better designed and maintained places. Sahiba said to me, "I play by the sewer near my home. I actually enjoy playing here more than in Umbrella Park because I can just step out of my home to play here anytime I want. This place has grass, stones and also lots of cow-dung. It stinks a little bit. But my mother tells us to play here near home more than in any other place. We play Kho-kho, blindman's bluff (ankh-micholi), kabbadi, catching each other (pakdan-pakdai). We also play at cooking meals. We bring small utensils from home and cook in the open. We first take a vote to decide the menu. We gather stones and firewood to make a small oven. Then we cook real food with whatever materials we have managed from homes. We make dal-chawal, sometimes we also make khichri or rotis."

Jyoti, the only Hindu girl I interviewed in The Hope School lived in a predominantly Hindu street in Nizamuddin basti toward the eastern end of the east west spine. There were two open spaces at the end of this spinal street. The open space to the left had a dirt top and often had construction material stored in it, though domestic animals were also kept there. The open space to the right had grass, a few trees, and flowering shrubs and acted as a buffer between the last row of houses in Nizamuddin West and the Basti. Children such as Jyoti who lived at the eastern end of Basti, and near Kali Masjid, considered these open spaces near their home as territories they controlled. Jyoti said during her interview, "Though I like the Umbrella Park better, I play in the open space in front of home as well. Here I can do many things with my friends. We can play and make things here. We bake clay cakes in this park. We can make an oven with stones and clay, and make many things in it. We also make TVs out of clay. We pretend to see cartoons in it."

The above narratives suggest that the plentiful potential affordances offered by loose parts in informal spaces allowed children to personalize the territorial marking through the products of their play. This according to Altman (1975) makes stronger territories as "more personal the marker, more effective the protective value (p.145)" of a territory.

10.2.1.2. Lack of Constraints to Open Place Use, and Resistance to Control

"Children can play anywhere here [Khusru nagar] anytime they want."

"There is a park here [around the monument Bara Khamba*]. We play there from 4pm onwards. No one stops us."*

"We can play anywhere we like [referring to all the public spaces of Nizamudin basti]. But mostly we play after school and tuitions, 3pm onwards. Sometimes people tell us not to play, but we don't pay much attention to that."

"I can play anytime I like in front of my house. No one can say anything to me."

During the initial interviews, children did talk about parentally imposed constraints on using outdoors. But these constraints only restricted their spatial mobility range to within the Basti with instructions for playing "close to home", or "not allowed to cross the traffic roads" during neighborhood explorations. Children were not really instructed on how to behave when they played outdoors except for staying out of trouble such as staying clear of the drug addicts, and gamblers in the DDA open spaces, and strangers and bad boys in other precincts. But children often defied these cautionary restrictions to roam around and play anywhere they wanted as I found out through my observations of place use. It seems that once children were outdoors, parents or others had little control over the activities of large peer groups that dominated the landscape of the Basti (see figure 10.2).



Figure 10.2: Peer groups dominated the open spaces near home

10.2.1.3. Contested Ownership of Open Spaces

Typically, left over spaces or vacant lots with many loose parts and signs of disrepair and decay were easier to appropriate and control by children since no one else had a direct immediate interest in these spaces. Often the varied "open spaces near home" had disputed ownership with DDA, local families, MCD and Wakf Board (this board is the custodian of all Muslim properties of religious significance in India) claiming ownership. One Pirzada woman whose family still looks after the Dargah complex, when asked about who owns the open spaces in and around the basti, said, "if you look at it historically, all the land around here belongs to us, the Pirzadas. That's because we were settled here by Allauddin Khiljee 800 years ago, and given this land to look after. Let DDA or MCD say whatever they have to, they are actually grabbing land that rightfully belongs to the Pirzada. In fact it is probably our own fault that we lost control over the land in and around the Basti. I used to ask my grandfather why he didn't grab land by putting boundaries and fences when the others started coming in. He should have taken a page out of the migrant's way of claiming land (she laughed)."

After India's independence, the exodus of refugees from the newly created state of Pakistan, prompted DDA to acquire land in and around villages and older settlements including Nizamuddin Basti to create residential enclaves for the refugees as well as recreational open spaces for the enjoyment of the whole city. Over the years, the legal status of Nizamuddin Basti got blurred from being an 'urban village', a status that still persist in the minds of many Delhiites. It took me several months to find out that the current legal status of the Basti was a residential neighborhood with a tax burden at par with the higher-income neighborhood of Nizamuddin West. However even the best intentioned NGOs working in the Basti were not aware of this change of status, as this information was not readily available in any one place. Given this contested history of land ownership, where development still followed the customary laws of the Basti and not city bye-laws, all the open spaces in and around the Basti saw a lot of construction by new migrants and demolition by city authorities. The contested legal ownership of land served children well by allowing them unconstrained use, where children were free to choose their actions similar to the space claiming activities by other interested user groups.

10.2.1.4. Lack of Developability of Left-Over Open Spaces

The reason children succeeded in claiming left over open spaces from other groups is because of the lack of developability of left-over open spaces. Developability of left over open space was influenced by:

1. The physical features of the land. The presence of adverse slopes in some leftover open spaces within the basti, and in the banks of the sewer reduced development potential of these places. Sometimes left over spaces were too narrow or uneven for suitable construction.
2. Legal and financial complications (contested ownership of land), local real estate market (open spaces within a perceived slum have little real estate value), and the city or country government's land use plan (from Minister Jagmohan's time, no open space in sub-zone D, which governs land use in and around the Basti, can be converted into uses other than recreational green space).
3. These factors in combination prevent land speculation, but also prevent basic maintenance and upkeep of these developmentally unsuitable parcels of open space within a perceived slum environment.

As a direct consequence, the large populations of children in the Basti who lived in cramped houses found it easy to explore and play anytime, anywhere. These same factors deterred active claiming of land by most adult interest groups who were constantly on the lookout to extend their living space.

10.3. What Made DDA Park a Controllable Territory by Children?

Given the rich affordances and relatively constraint-free context of "open spaces near home", it is understandable why children found it easy to create territories in those places. But what made DDA Park, a place that city appointed gardeners closely supervised during the day (often preventing children from doing what they want), a place that children claimed to territorialize easily through their action? Children had also recommended this same park as a well-kept place for which they had high regard and desire for care. The notion of cared for places, as already discussed in chapter 7, was influenced by strict rule bound settings such as Umbrella Park and DDA Park. How does a strict rule-bound setting afford territorial claiming?

DDA Park was a contested open space, not from the perspective of ownership, which DDA firmly claimed, but from the point of view of the community who wrestled among themselves to claim parts of the park for different use throughout the year. This is a direct consequence of the park's shape and location right next to the most dense residential precinct in the Basti. This L-shaped park had two arms. The north-eastern corner or the upper arm was surrounded by Nizam Nagar houses. The south-western corner or the lower arm was separated from the residential precincts of the Basti by a bank of public utilities which turned their back on the park.

During the year that I visited Nizamuddin almost every week, I witnessed the physical deterioration of the park environment from a well-kept grassy lawn with few trees, to a slushy unkempt open space during the rainy season, and in the months of major Muslim festivals when poor pilgrims visited the Dargah from far off places. When children recommended the park as a well-cared for place, it was early in the year, in March, and the park did in fact have a look of care brought about mainly through the disciplinary supervision by the city. However, with the advent of monsoon, several homeless people took shelter in the park by pitching tents along the periphery. These shelters first started in the area close to Nizam Nagar in the northeastern corner of the park, but gradually spread all over, even near the main entrance. The landmark date palm tree was felled in August 2005, and its trunk lay in the park even in January 2006. During the winter months, the shelters again receded to the less visible corner of the park near Nizam Nagar, though I witnessed four families regularly cooking meals along the boundary of the park toward Nizam Nagar after the gardeners had left, in the winter evenings in December 2005 and January 2006. At any given point in time, the park had users who were busy doing different things. These uses were as varied as sleeping, eating, sitting around, and playing. Domestic animals such as hens and goats also freely roamed around the park, though more toward Nizam Nagar. The DDA Park embodies the principles of tactics vs. strategies proposed by Michel de Certeau (1984). The claiming of the northeastern corner of the park by the local community of Nizam Nagar is representative of the dispersed, tactical, makeshift creativity of groups of individuals already caught in the nets of discipline. Moreover the modification of this park, which was strategically created by the dominant city as a green buffer between the city and the Basti, into an active living environment by the Basti, represents a victory of the tactics of the weak over the strategies of the strong. The following behavior maps (see figure 10.4) of the park suggest how each group of users including children had carved out well-defined territories in the park.

In the behavior maps of Sunday and Monday, Nizam Nagar girls, who among all the girls interviewed were the most frequent users of this park, could be seen near the north-eastern corner of the park because that corner was adjacent to their precinct. The boys playing in the southwestern corner of the park came from everywhere in the Basti as that corner was perceived as a well-maintained park (see figure 10.3). In fact the gardeners had stopped bothering with the maintenance of the northeastern portion of the park, as the community laid too strong a claim on it through their everyday activities. What the behavior maps and my observations of the park indicate is that the two arms of the DDA Park were perceived and used in very different ways. The northeastern arm in front of Nizam Nagar worked like any other open space near home, whereas the southwestern arm worked as a more formal park setting.



Figure 10.3: Boys playing in the center of the southwestern arm of the DDA Park

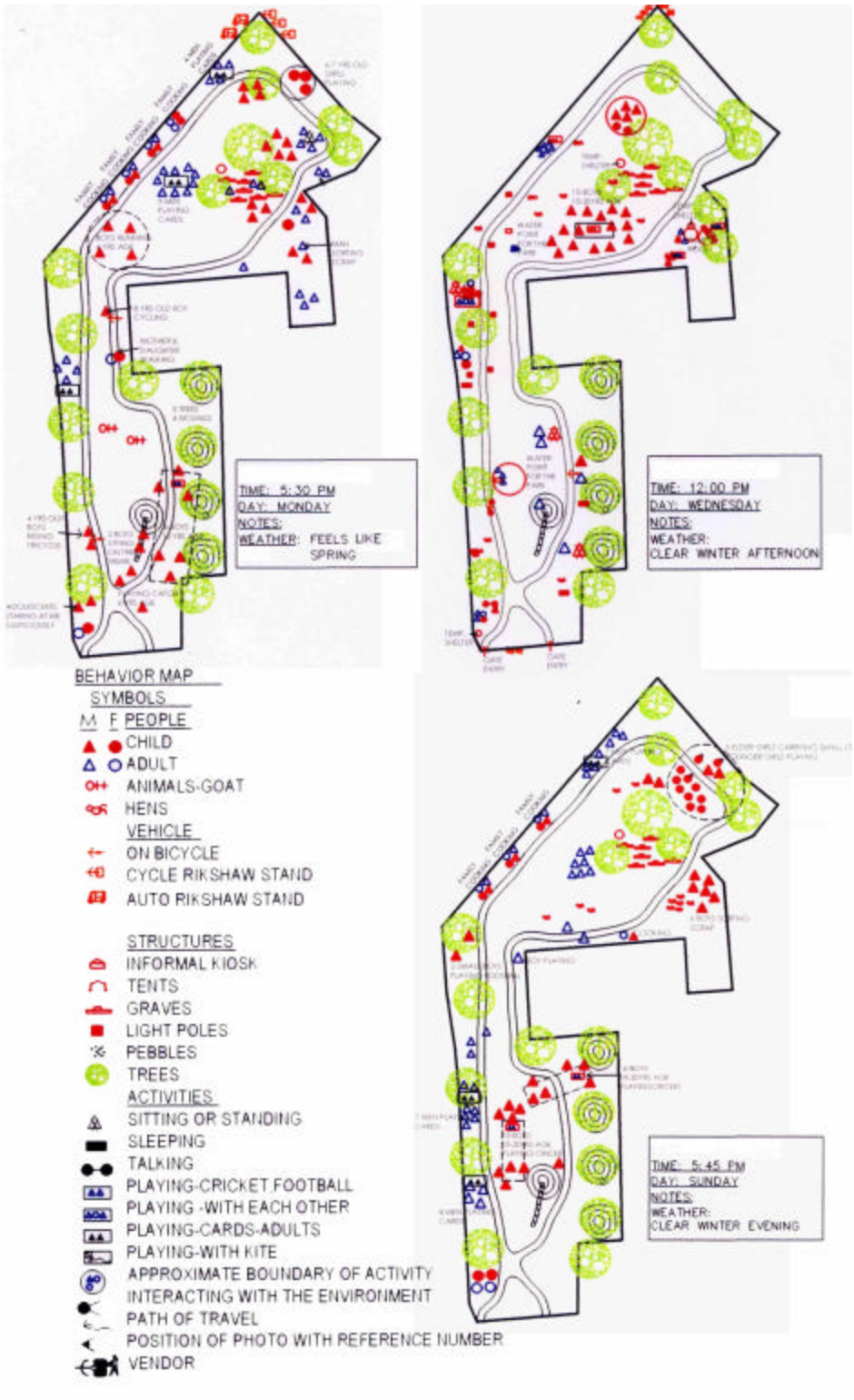


Figure 10.4: Behavior Maps of DDA Park

10.3.1. Nested System of Territories in DDA Park

Analysis of the behavior maps suggests that multiple behaviors involving different actors simultaneously occurred in the park. These behaviors allowed the actors to carve out identifiable territories. The DDA Park in fact afforded a nested system of different territories due to its unique physical characteristics.

10.3.1.1. Distinct Territorial Nodes in Two Arms of the Park

The two arms of the park on the Basti side had very different functional adjacencies. The high-density housing area of Nizam Nagar precinct surrounded the northeastern corner, and the upper arm. The behaviors recorded in this arm were cooking, eating outdoors, resting, playing cards, boisterous games of boy gangs, local girls hanging out in groups, carpenters working on their projects. These are scenes of everyday life, and the space was used as an extension of the living space in the precinct. The park was separated from the precinct by a narrow, active pedestrian street and hence daily activities easily reached out for this extra space. In contrast the southwestern corner and the lower arm backed onto high walls that hid public facilities such as toilet blocks, community center and local library. The lower arm was under the strict supervision of the gardeners and was maintained as a park setting. The behaviors recoded in this lower arm were respectful of the rules in the presence of gardeners, with no littering or active sports during the weekday till about 5pm.

10.3.1.2. Clear Demarcation of Center and Periphery Within Each Node

The second level of analysis of the behavior maps showed that besides the obvious difference in the two behavior nodes afforded by dissimilar arms, the layout of the park pathway very clearly created distinct centers and peripheries in each of the arms. This path was the physical marker that separated dominant groups in the centers from the marginalized ones in the peripheries. The behavior maps show groups of boys in the center playing cricket, or running around in packs, and groups of men hanging out together in the centers. The peripheries were populated by homeless families, men engaged in gambling, and Nizam Nagar girls moving around in groups. Altman (1975) commenting on dominance and territorial behavior suggested that highly dominant groups or individuals in social settings, other than typically claiming central positions, also were free to move around claiming space wherever they went. This was true of the activity patterns of boys and men from the Basti community in the DDA Park. These dominant groups besides claiming the central parts of the park, circulated all over the park, and wherever they went they created and controlled space around them as exclusive territories. But when high-dominant boys

were absent in central locations, low-dominant groups of girls laid claim over the central desirable settings.

On April 15, 2005, on one of my field trips with three girls from Nizam Nagar who had recommended the DDA Park as a friendly place under several place friendship dimensions, I learned how easy it was for the girls, a low-dominant group, to create territories within the desirable well-maintained central part of the park through imaginative play when dominant groups were absent. As we walked along the curved dirt path of the park toward the lower arm, I noticed just how prominently the lone date palm tree sat on its little grassy mound in the center of this lower arm of the park. All other trees, were along the outer edge. We saw several metal tree protectors around new plantings. Meher said, "*Baji* there used to be another such tree [date palm]" "Soni added, "Didi I had made that tree in my drawing". In fact that was the only tree Soni had depicted in the park around which she played with her friends. Huma quickly pointed out, "the other tree *baji* was burnt down." Soni said, "there was a spirit in that tree. It killed my cousin." I asked her how it happened. She said, "we don't know exactly. But he used to play around that tree a lot. One day the spirit bit him and he could not be cured any more. Good thing that tree burnt down." Meher smiled and said, "the tree was reduced to a small stump by the fire. We used the stump as a pedestal to play *Bhagwan* (generic Hindi name for Hindu god) [she indicated a flute like Lord Krishna's]. I used to climb up on the stump and play the flute while my devotees worshipped me from the ground." I thought that was a fitting game to play as in the backdrop of the tree stump was a Hindu temple. The girls pointed to the temple to say that was how the devotees prayed inside the temple. The girls would wander down to the more desirable part of the park away from their known base in the upper arm and claim play territories when dominant male groups were absent. The girls did not leave personal markers behind, and the territory would vanish when the girls left the setting.

10.3.1.3. Local Edge Conditions Dictating Peripheral Claiming

The pattern of use among the less dominant groups in the peripheries suggest that children and the Basti community claimed the peripheral edge abutting the Basti, whereas new migrants, homeless, and floating populations claimed the edge abutting the city corridor next to the park. This is the third level of nesting in the territorial landscape of the DDA park which ensures that not only local less-dominant groups could own space but also further marginalized groups. Multiple and diverse activity nodes were embedded within the larger center-periphery dynamic of distinct nodes, which in turn were embedded within two functionally and environmentally different zones in the park.

10.4. Children's Territorial Politics in Public Places

My observations of children's activities in the Basti outdoors suggested that territorial control of public places was certainly influenced by children's freedom to actualize affordances which included rearranging loose parts and activities in creating and controlling exclusive territories that children defended from harm. But the nature of these territories was not only influenced by age and gender, but also by territorial politics based on children's residence in a particular sub-local area or precinct. Wridt (2004) also found similar political control of territories in different residential blocks of New York City, a phenomenon Wridt called *block politics* and describeed as " an expression of young people's gendered and racialized identities and social struggle to spatially differentiate themselves from one another using 'the block' as a group signifier…" Wridt coined the term *blockism* as underpinning block politics and defined it as "a sense of belonging to a particular community delimited by a specific territory to which one can develop a sense of solidarity and pride (Wridt 2004, 199)". Children living in the nine different precincts in Nizamuddin similarly had very strong sense of belonging to their precincts and the politics of children's territorial control strongly reflected the precinct identities of children. This is one of the reasons beside proximity and familiarity that Nizam Nagar children, especially the girls, played near their precinct in the northeastern corner of the DDA Park, and the other Basti children played in the southwestern corner. This was also the reason why in the Umbrella Park, the Nizamuddin West children stayed away from the quadrants in which the Basti children played. In particular, while making the behavior maps of the planned open space across from the DDA Park, I realized that the politics of territorial control of public space was strongly influenced by the precinct identity of children.

It was a Sunday afternoon in winter. The planned open space, across from the more closely monitored DDA Park, was filled with people, mostly men (23 adult male, and 30 boys), and some women (1 grown up and 8 girls). Four cricket matches were played in this open space (each match is encircled in dotted line in the diagram below), even though this planned DDA green space is typically perceived as an out-of-bound territory due to the gambling, and open alcohol and drug use. Two of the matches were near the MCD School, and two near the main road. In each adjacent match the age of the participating children were the same. For instance, the two groups of players near the MCD School were in their middle childhood, whereas the players participating in the two matches near the road were adolescents (see figure 10.5). The next day, Monday afternoon I saw a similar pattern except there was only one group near the MCD School playing cricket. Two ten-year-old boys watched the two adolescent teams at play near the fence of the open space. When I walked over to the fence, the boys came over to see what I was scribbling on a clipboard. I asked these boys to go and count the players in each team, which they happily did, "six in the game near

us, and eight in the one next to it." I asked the boys, "why are there two matches in parallel pitches when they can all play together and make a real team?" the boys replied, "Didi, the boys near us are from Nizam Nagar, whereas the boys in the next group come from the Basti. The Basti boys will never play with Nizam Nagar boys."

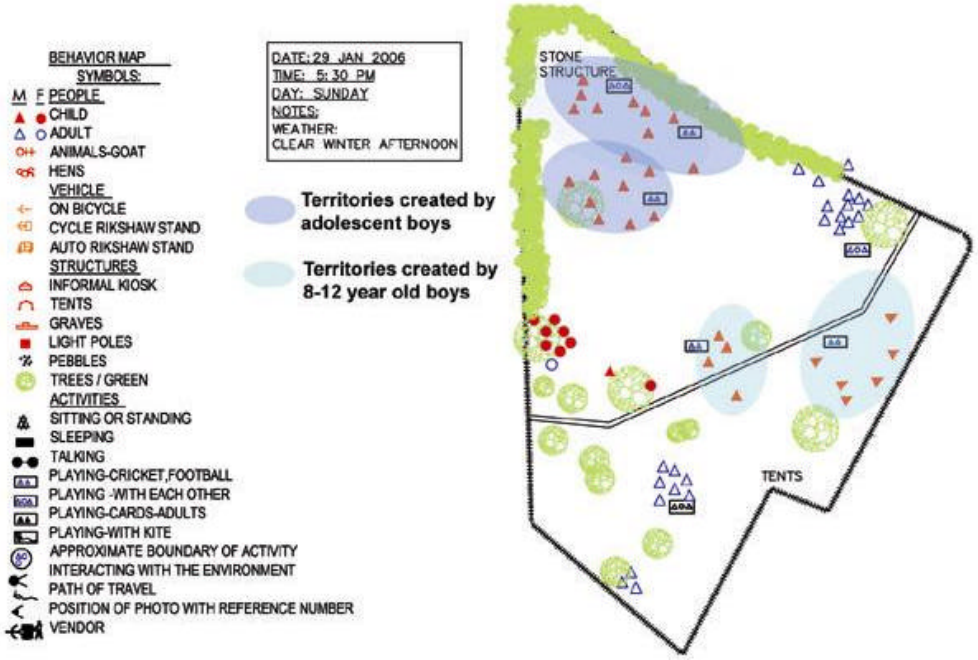


Figure 10.5: Behavior Map of the Planned Open DDA Green Across from the More Bounded DDA Park

I mapped behaviors for a week in all the major open spaces in the Basti that children had recommended and taken me on field trips. I witnessed age, gender, and precinct identity based territorial politics in almost all of them. In the three main open spaces, DDA Park, Umbrella Park, and the large planned open space across from DDA Park, despite different geometric layouts children managed to carve out distinct territories according to their social identities related to place of residence. The L-shape of the DDA Park easily afforded territorial politics between Nizam Nagar and Basti children in the two arms of the L. Also, these arms afforded segregation of genders with girls and women typically staying close to Nizam Nagar, and men venturing further afield. The planned open space, across from DDA Park, despite being one large open space, promoted territorial politics where children from different precincts carved out distinct play areas by excluding children with social identities different from theirs in the Basti. The well-defined quadrants of Umbrella Park, in contrast, very easily promoted segregated group play by design in its different quadrants. The territorial politics witnessed in Umbrella Park was of a different nature. Here territorial politics was played out between two adjacent neighborhoods housing children

from very different socio-economic backgrounds—the higher income Nizamuddin West and lower income Nizamuddin Basti.

10.5. Promoting Opportunities for Children to Create and Control Territories Outdoors

In every human community around the world, there are differences among individuals and social groups based on class, caste, religion, educational levels, political affiliations, sexual orientations, and gender among other factors. Though the vision of a democratic society is to bring all these people together as equal citizens in a shared space, the visions of modernist planning is almost always to separate these different groups of people with particular identities in segregated geographical locations. Foucault and Certeau would describe this as an effort to discipline people whose lives are assumed to be passive and guided by established rules. Sennett (1970) called these segregated communities "purified communities" and saw them as discouraging social interactions among different groups, and often fostering enmity through alienation. Children of Nizamuddin West, being the products of a protected, purified community would not normally socialize with children from lower classes in public places even if those places were in their backyard. The Umbrella Park allowed these other underclass children to come in, and claim their own play territories. Nizamuddin West children watched these other children from their own territories but did not join in their play. But when invited by someone in their social class or above their social status such as Julie Kozwacka on April 6, 2005 (see chapter 7), they willingly joined in the games of the poor children. This story has two implications for territorial behavior of children in Umbrella Park. First, the park, a formally created setting for the dominant group of upper-class Nizamudin West residents, allowed less-dominant groups to claim territories in the same space. The design of the park afforded this multiple territorial claiming. Second, when a more-dominant power entered the setting, the existing dominant-territorial relationships reorganized to accommodate a new social system once it was clear that all the actors were compatible in performing the same task. Thus physical design and human agency came together to create a successful new territory for disparate groups with different identities.

Altman (1975) had long argued that even though diverse groups may display different territorial behaviors, as long as these territories coexisted in the same space, or in close proximity, without intruding, people eventually get used to difference, and a new social order emerges. This was also Childress's (2000) recommendations for planning inclusive places: "Better to encourage small-scale contact on our sidewalks and business areas that will allow us to see one another as people, with concerns and lives that are not entirely alien to our own (307)." The ultimate goal of a democratic society is to have different people coexisting peacefully in the same community, city and world. In order to do that, Altman advised that we needed to allow people to carve out

different territories for different needs in the same geographic space. For children especially, fostering territorial claiming is important not only from the perspective of their privacy, play and social interaction needs, but also in order to learn how to coexist with others in the same social space, knowing them yet respecting the boundaries of other territory holders.

Children's self-report and my own place observations suggested that informally produced public spaces in the local area that were supervised by the community such as open spaces near home, the ambiguous open spaces around designed facilities such as the cemented open space in front of the public toilet complex, and even the vernacular streets within the Basti offered more opportunities to children to create identifiable territories through abundant offerings of loose parts and moldable materials than formally produced public spaces in the local area or the city. Besides proximity, familiarity, positive identity, and tolerance of children, these spaces allowed children to use them on an everyday basis and create new territories over time. However, children in the Basti, equally successfully created territories in the formally designed open spaces such as in the DDA Park, the Umbrella Park, and the planned open space across from the DDA park alongside other interest groups. In this section I will discuss what cues were provided by public places to successfully foster multiple and diverse childhood territories.

1. Multiple diverse territories were supported by places, which included at least three groups in different settings. These settings were protected either through distinct physical features or inter-setting distance that prevented easy intrusion.
2. A more irregular shape with multiple nodes, at least two nodes, was more conducive to territorial claiming by different groups than a regular square and rectangular shaped space.
3. In regular shaped spaces, clear physical markers such as pathways, walkways helped create distinct zones that were open to claiming by different groups.
4. The nature of these separate zones depended upon their location and size with respect to the whole space—that is central or peripheral, large or small. Dominant groups typically claimed more central larger spaces, though they of course had greater flexibility to move around and create new territories all over the place.
5. Edge condition and adjacencies of peripheral zones determined claiming by marginalized groups. For example, less marginalized groups were likely to claim peripheral zones which were closer to their familiar surroundings than more marginalized groups who had to make do with whatever smaller areas were available to them.
6. Places that had more loose parts, and places that other interest groups found hard to claim due to lack of developability, ownership contestations etc. allowed children to create stronger territories through personalizing the markers around their territories.

7. Places that had multiple interest groups active in them, allowed children for at least a short time to claim settings, even though the form of territory around the settings would change once the children left.

Humans have a natural proclivity to create territories as means of appropriating space. As was evident from the behavior of children in the formally designed, and more informally produced spaces in Nizamuddin Basti, public space was claimed in different ways on an everyday basis. Diverse interest groups occupied and controlled space displaying different territorial behavior. Even though these territories appeared distinct from each other, with each group or territorializing individual engaged in doing unique things, when these territorial activities happened within the same open space, they brought people together while respecting their specific needs. Places that afforded such diverse territorial activities were to be found in both informal and formal spaces. In formal spaces such as the DDA Park, territorial activities of the Basti community were manifestations of creative tactics of the weak that introduced everyday practices into the strategically planned spaces designed to discipline and further marginalized the urban poor. In both formal and informal place typologies multiple territories were afforded by 1) nested systems of affordances present in the diverse settings, 2) the differing conditions of centers and peripheries, and 3) the unique edge conditions of the spaces.

Chapter 11
Having Secret Places

Childhood Friendship (Doll 1996)	Mutual Affection and Personal Regard	Shared Interests and Activities	Commitment	Loyalty	**Self-disclosure and Mutual Understanding**	Horizontality
Children's Place Friendship	Care and Respect for Places	Meaningful Exchange with Places	Learning and Competence through Place Experience	Creating and Controlling Territories	**Having secret places**	

The literature on privacy in childhood suggested three dimensions that define privacy experiences in childhood: 1) interpersonal, 2) environmental, and 3) self-ego dimensions. In the interpersonal dimension, privacy is achieved through interaction management and information management. The first involves choosing the forms of interaction including non-interaction with others (others also include objects and the physical environment). The second involves choosing how much information to share with others. The self-ego dimension of privacy involves autonomy or freedom to choose the boundaries that allow being alone or being with others in pursuit of both enhancement of self and protection of self. The environmental dimension of privacy has three elements: cultural, socio-physical and life cycle which together either limit or facilitate privacy experiences for a person or a group. Secret places in childhood nurture these privacy dimensions by allowing 1) children to conceal information, suppress truths, desires and dark knowledge (often a characteristic or a secret of the place itself), and 2) children to manage interactions with others by retracting into these private spaces in the everyday landscape.

11.1. Children's Secret Places in Nizamuddin Basti

On 15th August, Indian Independence Day, I spent a few hours in the early evening in Nizamuddin. The Basti had taken on a festive mood. Loud music was played in the streets; people danced on rooftops and young people flew colorful kites everywhere. On a closer inspection, I found that the younger children were busy collecting trapped kites from trees and overhead electricity cables. Young boys were running around with forked bamboo poles fetching kites for the warring adolescent teams of kite flyers.

In the rough ground where the broken car was parked in front of The Hope Project, a couple of young boys had climbed up to the top branches of the Keekar trees. One little girl waited on the

ground for the boys to throw kites down. As soon as a pink kite floated down to her from the tree, she quickly grabbed it and ran to the car, opened the rusty, skeletal back, threw the kites in and ran back to the tree. I could see the patches of color inside the skeletal car from where I stood. I was amused by this action. I asked the little girl, "what are you doing?" she said, "These are our kites, we are hiding them in a safe place." I asked, "But don't you think others can see through the car?" she replied, "Of course not! We hide here all the time when we play hide and seek in the evening. It's a secret hiding place."

Of all the dimensions, secret places had the least place nominations. Many of the children said, "There is no secret place in Nizamuddin, everyone knows every corner of the Basti." The other reason for not responding to the question of whether children had a secret place was, "I will not tell you about it". This I thought was a fair answer given the place in question was in fact a secret place.

Even then, many children managed to carve out hiding places, and places for doing secret things in their local area as in the kite episode above. The 23 secret place nominations were sorted in 20 unique places. This large repertoire of uncommon places demonstrates the subjective nature of this dimension.

Only three places had been recommended twice as a secret place (see table 11.1): street other than my own, a park near the government school in a neighborhood outside Nizamuddin in Pant Nagar, and the graveyard across the sewer. The park was a typical neighborhood park but away from the familiar gazes of neighbors. So was the street away from home. So any act, in the very public space of a park or an unfamiliar street, was secret from families and neighbors who crowd every corner of the familiar everyday spaces. The graveyard by nature was an isolated place. This isolation was physically reinforced by its separation from the community by the sewer, and mentally through fear of spirits and ghosts.

Table 11.1: Place Recommendations from Children under Dimension Five

Most-nominated places that supported secrets of children	**Number of times nominated**
Streets other than my own	2
Graveyard	2
Park in Pant Nagar	2
Seventeen other spaces (see appendix 7 for detailed list)	1 each

11.2. What Attributes Made Places Secret Places for Children in Nizamuddin?

Majority of children (42% of the responses) described a secret place as a place where they could hide from others and act as they pleased. The next category of responses (about 26%) described secret places as places where access was forbidden by parents but still sought out by children for reasons as varied as experiencing nature, carrying out forbidden acts, and play experiences. The last category of responses (21%) referred to secret places as places where children enjoyed being alone, or being in a beautiful place away from the crowded living quarters with family and friends. Some responses (11%) combined two or all the above attributes as reasons for visiting the secret place. Very few children (except two) actually described the secret acts that took place in these secret places. In all these categories of responses, there is a strong underlying common thread—children were actively managing their needs for privacy in places by managing 1) how they interacted with others (hiding from some and playing with others in the same setting, being alone or with friends or families in some settings), and 2) what they chose to share with others (no information was shared about visiting forbidden places with parents, and no information was shared with anyone other than collaborators in a forbidden act or secret activities in places). These two aspects had been called interaction management and information management under the interpersonal dimension of privacy (Wolfe 1978). Often secret places nurtured both these aspects of privacy for children.

11.2.1. Secret Places for Managing Interactions with Others

11.2.1.1. Hiding from Others in the Secret Place

> *"Behind my friend's house in Nizam Nagar, there are many graves in an open space. We can go there only through her back door. No one can find us there. (11 year old girl from Nizam Nagar)"*

> *"In the street by the sewer, there are lots of hiding places. We play hide and seek there. (12 year old boy from Nizam Nagar)"*

> *"We have lots of places to hide in the neighborhood itself. We hide behind the two-wheelers that are parked in the streets; we hide behind the front door of any building. (12 year old boy from Inner Kot precinct)"*

"We hide behind the raised graves. Its fun to play there (graveyard). We can be hidden even if other people visit the graves. (11 year old boy from Dildar Nagar)."

It is interesting to note that all the hiding places of children were in fact outdoor spaces, perhaps not such a surprising fact given large family sizes and shared cramped spaces inside the home. Though girls sought out more private secret outdoor spaces, and places close to home, boys sought out more desolate spaces such as the graveyard across physical barriers. The range of these special private places where children performed secret activities reveals the environmental dimensions of privacy within a given culture. Graves, parked vehicles in the streets, and features in the street afforded children hiding places, playing pranks and other play spaces. More importantly, these socio-physical settings allowed children to use these places as they pleased. These same settings will not allow adults of this community to claim these places as private places. Imagine adults hiding behind graves and parked vehicles to jump on an unsuspecting member of the public! These same settings in another culture (including the culture of higher-income groups in other Indian neighborhoods) may not allow even children to use these places for privacy experiences including carrying out secret activities. Similarly, in contrast to most western studies on children's place experiences in suburban or rural landscapes, the children of Nizamuddin did not build tree houses, or tree forts and bush dens in the landscape. This is again attributable to the environmental qualities of the landscape inhabited by Nizamuddin children. The scarcity of trees and natural elements in the dense inner-city urban fabric, and the material poverty of children's family lives, did not allow them to construct identifiable structures as commonly seen in the West. However, as discussed in the last chapter, children's territories were marked more through activities and children's identities than through physical territorial markers. Children did report constructing out of loose parts such as debris from construction activities, and garbage. In my one year in the Basti as a participant-observer, I had not seen a single play structure constructed by children anywhere outdoors. But when I asked children to describe these structures, they used gestures to indicate very two-dimensional delineations of space with bricks and stones, with small three-dimensional constructions of household objects such as ovens or stoves. In their imagination, these delineated spaces took on meaning as private places within which children role-played as Badshah and Sabiha reported doing in the banks of the sewer when they cooked meals in makeshift stoves inside shelters.

11.2.1.2. Choosing to Be Alone or With Others in the Secret Place

> *"There are lots of trees here, with flowers and places to sit. I sometimes go there with friends, but I don't know what it's called. (11 year old boy from Baoli Gate precinct about an anonymous place near the basti)"*

> *"I go to my grandmother's house when I want to be alone. No one else lives there except for* nani *(granny)."*

> *"I like going to the Lotus Temple. Not too many children here are aware of it. I like it because there is a beautiful lotus built over there. I sometimes visit this place with my parents (11 year old boy from Khusroo Nagar)."*

Children's privacy experience as found out in the Wolfe and Laufer (1975) study, showed the experience of aloneness or managing information (such as "no one knows") as the most frequently reported elements of privacy for children of all ages. The places where children of Nizamuddin went to be alone allowed them to manage information and hence address the interpersonal dimension of privacy by choosing people (friends, grandmother, parents in the above narratives), and the settings, and activities in the settings, which in these cases actually provided them with the opportunity to be away from the crowded living quarters in the Basti. However, the choice of nature rich or aesthetically pleasing landscape settings (the landscaped place near Basti, and the serene Lotus Temple complex) suggests that children chose these settings for their restorative qualities as nature-rich, peaceful environments.

11.2.2. Secret Places for Managing Information from Others

11.2.2.1. Concealing "Going" to Forbidden Places

> *"I love to go there (park in Pant Nagar near government school, outside Nizamuddin area) to play. But my mother tells me not to. She says gypsies and Hindus live on that side of the sewer, and I might get kidnapped. They come to get kids from this side also. One girl from Nizamuddin disappeared, and everyone says the beggars got her. The kidnappers chop children's head off as a sacrifice to their gods on the night of full moon. They have shown this on TV, and people also talk about it here. That's why my mother doesn't want us to go to that park by ourselves. So we cannot tell her when we go. (11 year old girl from the Basti)"*

Places far off from home often had negative community narratives associated from them. This might well be a strategy used by parents to deter children from seeking these places out in their everyday explorations.

> *"I go to India Gate and Raju Park without telling my family. (12 year old boy from Dildar Nagar)"*

For boys, far off places such as the two parks mentioned above were forbidden territories because of the high-speed vehicular traffic roads that separated these places from the Basti. But a well-maintained city park with attractive play equipments offered not only several different activities but also the possibility of privacy.

> *"No one goes there (the planned DDA open space across from the DDA Park) from my family. It is a forbidden place. But sometimes I go and sit there, and my other friends come and join too. We sit away from the men, under the trees, in the shade. The soft grass under us feels like silky sheets. The Umbrella Park does not have as much shade. I sometimes take my younger brother there (11 year old girl from Baoli Gate precinct)."*

Some places were off limits or forbidden areas because of the activities that were typically associated with them. In the case of the planned DDA open space mentioned above, gambling, open substance abuse and male dominance in the space made it a forbidden territory for children, and especially young girls. Yet almost all the boys sought out this place for active sports, as this was the only large space in the Basti where they could play sports without being told off by a caretaker. And girls defied parental constraints to use this forbidden place for privacy experiences, and hence this place became a secret place, information about which, as with the forbidden park near the school in another neighborhood, needed to be carefully managed.

11.2.2.2. Concealing Acts, Desires or Dark Knowledge in the Secret Place

Though several children named their forbidden places and secret hiding places in and around the Basti, very few of them actually talked about the *secret* or the truth that was suppressed, information that was concealed, and the desires and dark knowledge that were preserved in these places. Two children shared their secrets.

> *"I sometimes go to the wooded area by the sewer with my friends. Not many people go there. I feel a little scared to go there alone. So I only go in the*

company of friends. No one knows what we do over there.[pause] We play golf! My friend's father works in the golf club, so we have golf clubs. My friend brings the clubs for us to play."

The reader might ask what's so secret about playing golf? I asked myself this question after the interview. I casually asked a Hope social worker the connection between the Delhi Golf Club across from the Basti, one of the most elitist social institutions of Delhi, and the people of the Basti. One great success story in the Basti was of a man from Nizamuddin who became a national level champion golfer. However, I was told that typically men from the Basti found employment in the golf club as minimum wage laborers, and sometimes as caddies. The social worker jokingly told me, "often when we visit homes on community work, we are offered water on glasses with "Delhi Golf Club" written across them. Some people find their household stuff at the club!" she laughed. The golf clubs that the children played with were probably property of the Delhi Golf Club. This is why participating children needed to seek out a hidden place, in this case a desolate wooded strip near the graveyard to play golf with the clubs which they knew did not rightfully belong to them or their families.

"In the lane in front of the Rayan Basera *(night shelter) a row of rickshaws are parked. When the men are not looking, we hide in the rickshaws, and jump at them (the men) or overturn the rickshaws and run!"*

The above story signifies the role of props in playing pranks in public places. Because these pranks are at the expense of someone or some group, and are generally forbidden by adults, their success relies on unexpectedness and sudden execution.

Children managed information in secret places in several ways. By defying parental orders to explore forbidden places, and hiding their whereabouts from parents children both suppressed truth and concealed information from parents in the form of a secret. Children's desire to play pranks on unsuspecting rickshaw-pullers is a secret act, which nurtured a desire for imaginative mischief. In playing golf with stolen objects, children preserved dark knowledge as a secret from the gaze of the community.

11.2.3. Physical Characteristics of Secret Places

The children of Nizamuddin Basti, despite growing up in a very public, crowded neighborhood, managed to preserve secrets, and fulfill privacy needs in places. The wide range of places reported

as secret places made categorization difficult, but an attempt is made here to isolate and group these different places according to their environmental qualities.

11.2.3.1. Open Spaces on the Outskirts of the Community

The graveyard, the wooded area by the sewer (see figure 11.1), the planned DDA open space, the park in Pant Nagar near school were all open spaces that fell outside the housing precincts of the Basti. But these were accessible open spaces, where entry was free. These spaces, because they were outside the immediate settlement, were protected from the stern gaze of the community and provided a space for secret acts while preserving the anonymity of children.



Figure 11.1: The wooded area near the graveyard across the sewer is a secret place for boys

11.2.3.2. Unwanted Incidental Spaces

Spaces that were left over within the dense residential fabric tended to accumulate garbage, and stray animals. The community typically had no business to go in these places especially if these places were not along the main circulation streets. Children as a result claimed and owned these spaces not so much for active sports and games but for privacy and secret activities. As an 11-year-old boy said about one such unwanted incidental space, "we go to the open space behind the

gumbad (anonymous domed building). It is a secluded area, with lots of cow dung. Few people go there." These unwanted places see more place-making activities of children due to abundance of loose parts as discussed in the previous chapter. However, the negative environmental qualities of these places that allowed children to experience privacy and preserve secrets, were of no use to dominant adult interest groups in the community who typically used these places as garbage dumps.

11.2.3.3. Streets with Props for Hiding and Playing

Two streets had been mentioned by children as providing places to hide. These streets were the main street, running north to south, on the western periphery of the settlement, and the street running parallel to the sewer between Khusroo Nagar and the Inner Kot. The first street had several parked vehicles, cars, two-wheelers etc, which acted as excellent props to hide behind during hide and seek games. This street also had unplanned open spaces with a constantly changing landscape due to active community use. The second street had high-density housing on either side, with steep staircases going straight up from the street level, and several narrow lanes off the street (see figure 11.2). Both streets were active public places, but children were also active social actors in these settings.

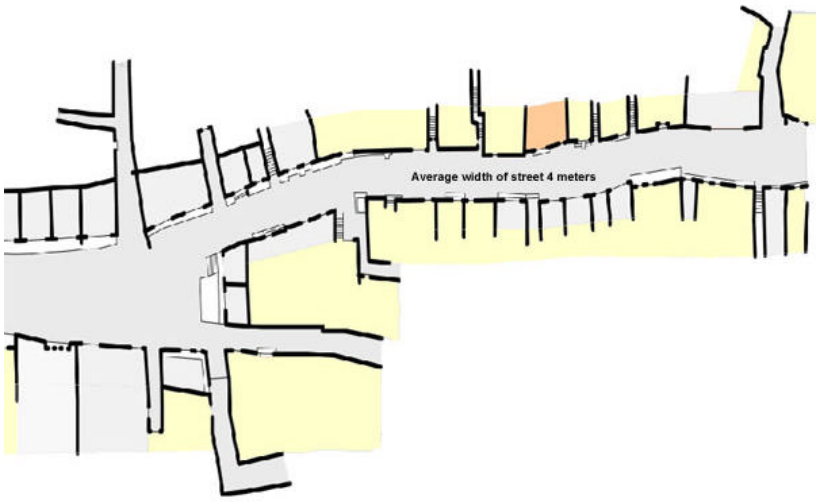


Figure 11.2 Part plan of street running parallel to sewer but inside basti. Children reported this street as having several places to hide.

11.2.3.4. City Level Parks Outside the Basti

Of course beautiful and distant city level parks and open spaces were an attraction to all children. However, access to these places involved crossing major city roads. For poor children, typically the only means of travel was by walking or by taking public buses. Parents understandably forbade children in their middle childhood to venture out on their own, and these places such as India Gate, Lotus Temple, were often family outing spots. But for children from single parent families, and children living in abject poverty, going out with the family often was not an option. The children who reported defying parental orders to visit far off places were the ones belonging to these other forms of family. The reason why these places were secret places were because, 1) children concealed information about going there from parents, and 2) children were able to be autonomous as well as anonymous in these settings—a very conducive set of factors for nurturing secret acts.

11.3. How Can We Help Children Find and Create Secret Places in the Everyday Landscape?

Of all the design briefs that a designer of children's environment could get, "design secret places for children in the neighborhood outdoors" would by far be the hardest. Olwig (1990) touched upon this theme of how the plan or the map that a designer might draw up "gives priority to the visual information and can be expected to foster a professional discourse that gives primacy to space and to visual forms and appearances." Olwig argues that children's preferences of environments are not based on these professional discourses. Rather as several studies on children's environment have shown (Moore 1987, Childress 2000), children's preferences are guided more by the phenomenological aspects of the environment, which lead to rich experiences and hence construction of meaning of places by children. Secret places above all other kinds of phenomenological place types, relies solely on the meaning and experiences children associate with these places.

Children's secret places in Nizamuddin Basti while addressing this point with great poignancy also showed us that there is a pattern of the experiences of children in these places—interaction management and information management. In selecting places to hide, to conceal information from others including parents, to preserve dark knowledge and to perform forbidden acts, children chose everyday places that were somehow out of the ordinary based on environmental qualities such as "far off" or "away from known gazes", or "secluded" due to attributes such as dirty, smelly left over places. Cultural and social meanings of feared places such as wooded area next to graveyard, or places dominated by bad men were also choden as secret places. Children in their middle childhood also enjoyed more licenses than adults in seeking out private places in the

most unlikely of public places such as behind parked vehicles, behind the front door of any building or behind low graves. The common characteristics of all these places chosen by children were free and easy access for children, unfamiliarity of children in these places, and high potential affordance for activities. The implications for design are creation of several different open spaces of different scale and characteristics scattered all over as well as along the periphery of neighborhoods.

The empirical findings of this study suggest that the interpersonal and environmental dimensions of privacy were nurtured in secret places of children (middle childhood) in the low-income Indian neighborhood of Nizamuddin Basti. This study, despite Sobel's strong emphasis on the nurturing of the self-ego dimension of secret places, did not offer much insight on how the special private place nurtures the "self" beyond glimpses of role-play (playing house) and fantasizing other behavioral roles in real life (practicing golf). This is not to suggest that the self-ego dimension was not significant to privacy experiences in secret places of these Indian children, but the data required to analyze the influence of that dimension of privacy was extremely hard to gather. Children with some reluctance named their secret places, but were very loyal to the nature of the secret itself.

Chapter 12
Freedom of Expression in Place

Childhood Friendship (Doll 1996)	Mutual Affection and Personal Regard	Shared Interests and Activities	Commitment	Loyalty	**Self-disclosure and Mutual Understanding**	Horizontality
Children's Place Friendship	Care and Respect for Places	Meaningful Exchange with Places	Learning and Competence through Place Experience	Creating and Controlling Territories	**Having Secret Places**	Fredom of Expression in Place

The sixth dimension of friendship is horizontality or sharing of power in the relationship. This dimension focuses on how friends are able to balance their reciprocal commitment and expectations of each other such that the relationship has equilibrium as opposed to a dominance-subordination dynamic. To be able to exercise and share power, one needs freedom to communicate and engage with the other, and freedom to express oneself without fear of the other. The Convention on the Rights of the Child in several articles uphold different forms of freedom of expression as a means by which children could participate in matters affecting their lives. Through the very act of occupying and claiming space, children share power by negotiating constraints to freely express themselves in different ways such as through art, music, personalizing space through activities and physical modifications of settings. The notion of freedom of expression in place is related to the act of manipulating the environment to implant new meaning within the public landscape.

12.1. Places in Nizamuddin Basti Where Children Were Free to Express Themselves

As in the case of the second dimension, the DDA Park, streets near home were the top two choices. But instead of open space near home, my precinct, and whole neighborhood had been recommended as places where children could express themselves freely in different ways (see table 12.1). Though during the interviews, children mostly interpreted freedom of expression in place as freedom to move around and do anything they wanted, children rarely articulated what that "anything" was. Streets near home, of course afforded free and unconditional access to the boys and girls of this particular study. But it is interesting to see that open space near home with its large repertoire of affordance has been substituted by a place that commands a larger geographic area around home such as 'my precinct', or 'neighborhood', both of which include open spaces near home. Maybe because children saw freedom of expression as freedom to move freely in the area to explore and claim space, they chose larger areas over smaller open spaces. The

DDA Park as discussed earlier under the previous dimensions was a far less rule bound setting, especially toward the Nizam Nagar end, than the Umbrella Park. Though Umbrella Park had also been recommended by three children as a place where they could freely express themselves.

Table 12.1: Place Recommendations from Children under Dimension Six

Places Recommended Under Freedom Of Expression In Place	Number Of Recommendations
Dda Park	6
Streets Near Home	4
My Precinct	4
Whole Neighborhood	3
Umbrella Park	3
Three Other Places (see Appendix For Detailed List)	2 Each
Ten Other Places (see appendix 7 for detailed list)	1 each

12.2. What Form Does Children's Freedom of Expression Take?

In order to explore children's free expression in places I will offer four stories that helped me understand how and where children chose to express themselves freely.

12.2.1. Favorite Activities in Favorite Places

On April 5, 2005, I had taken three girls from The Hope School on a field trip. These girls, Jyoti, Razia and Salma, were part of the subsample I had selected to get better understanding of children's place experiences. All three girls had nominated several different outdoor settings in public places in and around their local area as friendly places. Salma in particular was chosen because she talked about one place, a famous monument, outside the Basti as a favorite place under many dimensions. This trip was to see these places through the children's eyes.

Salma had nominated the Humayun's Tomb, a world heritage site, as a friendly place under many dimensions. She used to live in a squatter settlement with her family on the grounds of the tomb complex before massive conservation efforts stepped up to restore the tomb and its precincts. The squatters were evicted from the grounds. Salma said, "when our homes were broken, and we had

to leave, I cried a lot and refused to leave Humayun's Tomb. My mother could not bear to see me that way and she kept me with her friend, the flower seller and her family who lived closer to Humayun's Tomb, for the first few nights. Even now, I really miss my home in Humayun's Tomb. That is my true home not the Basti." No other child had reported such strong attachment to a place of residence. So I was curious to visit Humayun's tomb with Salma. This girl had also nominated the tomb complex as a place where she could freely express herself.

The three girls, Julie Kozwacka and I crossed the road from the Basti and walked to the tomb complex on an April afternoon. Salma was very excited. She told everyone, "it (Humayun's tomb) used to be old and broken. But now it has become very beautiful. I know my way around by heart." I bought tickets for Julie and me after much negotiation over Julie's ticket. As in most protected Indian monuments there were two different rates of tickets for Indian nationals and foreigners. However, foreigners who carried international student identity cards could enter at reduced rates. Julie unfortunately, despite being an international student, had no proof of identity on her. Children under 14 years could enter for free. When we finally managed to sort Julie's ticket out, and entered, Salma sped ahead to the right toward a smaller monument set amidst a garden. Most visitors to the tomb complex would normally ignore this lesser monument set to one side of this grand complex. We all followed Salma's lead. She turned around and told us, "be quiet now, the peacocks are around. They will fly away if we are not careful." Sure enough in front of us were two magnificent peacocks pecking on the grass and walking gracefully around the lawn. Our party almost tiptoed around them. At times we came real close to the big birds. For about fifteen minutes we watched and heard the peacocks in awed silence, only occasionally discussing the size of peacock eggs, and the diameter of the fantail in soft murmurs. The peacocks finally flew away and we decided to explore the other parts of the complex. Salma again took the lead. We then headed toward the main monument past a well, and a stone paved open space filled with pigeons. The air was filled with chirpings of different birds. Instead of taking the majestic front stairway, Salma took us up to the high podium through a hidden side stairway. Once up on the raised platform, the three young girls sped ahead to a chamber on the left.

When we caught up with the girls, we found them shouting at the top of their lungs inside a tall, cavernous, domed chamber. The ancient stonewalls echoed back the girls' names—"SALMA, JYOTI, RAZIA". The shouting and echoes lasted for about five minutes when another party of Japanese tourists walked in. Salma said excitedly, "You can call out any name and it will have the same effect! I love to come here and call out stuff!" Salma then said, "Let's go around the back of this monument to see the trains. I love that." We again followed her enthusiastic lead. It was truly a very picturesque vista. One could see the horizon beyond the beautiful manicured gardens of the tomb complex. Somewhere in the middle of this depth of field were the train tracks. We could

hear the trains go by. Salma said, "I love to imagine what it would be like to sit on a train and go off to a far off place!" Then Salma turned around and said, "Today, I am here after a long time. Baji (referring to me) I can't tell you how happy I feel!"



Figure 12.1: Girls watching the long-distance trains in the horizon from the raised podium of Humayun's Tomb

Salma freely demonstarted her happiness at being taken to her favorite place, her "real home" from which she was uprooted as a child. Salma freely showed off her indepth knowledge of her favorite place by taking firm leadership of the touring party. She engaged her friends in one of her favorite activities, shouting inside vast closed spaces to produce echoes. Salma had talked about this very place specific activity as being one of her favorites. In addition, she shared with the group her favorite spots for watching magnificent peacocks, and for dreaming about traveling to distant places when she took us to see the trains in the horizon (see figure 12.1). Salma truly expressed herself freely in Humayun's tomb, a place that was no longer easily available to her once the city stepped up the security and maintenance of this popular Moghul monument. All the activities Salma engaged in Humayun's tomb complex were free expressions of happiness of one child who had intimate personal knowledge based on previous experience in the place. The place, Humayun's Tomb, shared power with Salma in allowing her to express herself freely and in investing different settings with meaning through her favorite activities.

12.2.2. Celebrating Important Holidays through Sporting Events

On August 15, 2005, I went to Nizamuddin in the afternoon to meet with another researcher who had worked with the adolescent boys of the Basti. I waited at the scheduled spot for about fifteen minutes, but this new colleague failed to turn up. I realized that I had left my cell phone and his phone number behind, and with no other way of contacting him, I decided to observe what seemed to be a very active afternoon in the Basti. It was a national holiday being the Indian Independence Day. I saw people on every possible rooftop flying kites (see figure 12.2). Loud music was played in the streets. Behind the raised garbage-filled open space, people flew kites and danced to popular Hindi film tunes on rooftops. I had never seen the Basti celebrate so expressively before that day. I went round to The Hope Project office hoping to get to the rooftop because I had seen boys flying kites there. The security guard on duty behind the desk looked a bit sheepish when I asked him if I could go up to the terrace. He took his bunch of keys and led the way up to the roof. On the way up he mumbled, "the boys wanted to fly kites from the terrace." The door was locked from the terrace side. I was a bit surprised. A teenaged boy opened the door when the guard knocked on it loudly. The guard told the boy, "Madam will go up to the terrace. She comes to The Hope Project regularly. And don't lock the door from inside. Keep it ajar."

The roof terrace of The Hope Project was in two levels. The boy who unlocked the door for us, went back to the upper terrace where his friends were flying kites and partying. Four younger boys were flying kites from the lower terrace. A couple of large pariah kites sat on the parapet. The excited voices from above suggested that the more intense kiting was happening there. I climbed the steep metal ladder to reach the music-filled top terrace. There were 19 adolescent boys in this space flying kites, snacking, dancing, and egging the flyer's on. A small portable tape recorder near the water tank blared away Hindi film music, and some of the boys sang along. They appeared a little surprised to see a woman coming up, but my otherness in the setting was only too obvious. They ignored me completely, and moved away from where I stood taking photographs. One of them asked, "What is she doing here?" There were some murmurings, but a bold voice answered, "She has come to see if poor people can fly kites properly." This was followed by some laughter. These boys unlike the middle school children of the Basti did not know about my purpose in their midst. I was someone from outside who roamed around frequently, and visited The Hope Project. When I left the terrace, I witnessed younger children, the ten to twelve year olds who I had worked with, busy collecting kites and hiding them (see in chapter 11on secret places). I also saw some of them making swings under DDA provided slides (see chapter 10) in front of the MCD school.



Figure 12.2: Kites being flown from every rooftop on August 15, the Indian Independence Day

12.2.3. Celebrating Religious Festivals through Carnivals

I passed by Nizamuddin basti on the morning of January 11, 2005 on my way back home from the railway station. It was 6 am, and still dark. There was no light in the Basti, but I could see the silhouettes of the big *jhulas* (the commonly used generic term for all children's play equipments)—the tall giant wheel, and the squat merry-go-round in the dump yard park (see figure 12.3). This was an indication of festivities during the day. That day, was in fact Bakri Eid—the annual Muslim festival when animals were slaughtered for feasting. I decided to come back later.

I went back a little after noon. As I slowly drove down the sinuous street off the main road, I saw a camel strolling down my way with several children on its back. I backed the car off the street, and parked in front of the temple near DDA Park. I walked down the path, passed two camels, and was

pleasantly accosted by Razia and two of her friends. All three girls were dressed in colorful chiffon salwar kameez, and artificial cheap stone jewelery. I was struck by the fashionable styles of the new clothes, very much cheap replicas of what TV soap stars were wearing that season. Razia had thick uncharacteristic makeup on. Razia asked me, "How are you didi? What are you doing here today?" I greeted her, though it took me a minute to recognize her in her finery "Oh Razia you look so pretty! What are you girls doing?" She replied, "Didi today is Bakri Eid. We will have lots of fun roaming around, going on the rides." I asked, "what's the difference between this Eid and the last Eid?" "Didi that one was *meethi* (sweet) Eid. On that day people ate different kinds of sweets, and distributed sweets. But on this Eid, we cut animals. I think I will enjoy this Eid more than the last one!" "Why?" "Didi on last Eid, I was hardly here. I went to children's park (in India Gate) with my friends and spent the whole day there. But today we will stay here and go on all the rides." I asked, "how much do these rides cost? The camel ride and the jhulas?" Razia replied, " Five rupees each." I said, "that is not cheap, if you want to go up many times." She nodded her head and said, "yes, but I have already been on the giant wheel twice!"



Figure 12.3: Joy rides for children in the Basti during Eid

A familiar face came by and greeted me. It took me a moment to recognize little Nadira. She had cast away her shabby school uniform and had donned a shimmering gold salwar kameez. I asked

Nadira, “What are you going to do today?” she said, “didi, today the whole day we’ll have fun.” “How?” “we’ll roam around, eat good food, go to India Gate…” I asked, “won’t you go on the rides?” “Didi I feel giddy when the wheel spins.” I told her I totally sympathized with her, as I also couldn’t ride giant wheels for the same reason. The girls and I walked over to the dump yard, which had become a carnival ground once again as on the last Eid a few months ago. An elephant with its back full of children passed us by. I took some photographs. Nadira said, “Didi, the elephant and the camels will be cut up afterwards.” I looked a little incredulous. As if to convince me, one of the other girls said, “yes didi it is true, camels are also slaughtered. Though not elephants.” The girls wanted their photographs taken. I obliged. Then I told them I needed to take a look around the Basti. I strolled down the front street past Hope, and took a turn at Alvi Chowk to go down the lane next to the sewer. Three young boys were chasing a goat in front of me and they vanished round a corner. I decided to follow them. I entered a narrow uphill dirt lane that was flanked between houses. Suddenly the lane opened up to form a larger space with remnants of broken houses. The boys now chased two cows that were resting in this sunny open space. A group of three girls came around, and seeing a camera in my hand wanted to be photographed. As I took their photographs a woman in a ragged salwar kameez came toward me asking for alms. I ignored her, but she persisted. I walked away; she came after me for a few yards and then fell behind. I stood in front of a bend in the alley. I could see a gathering of men in the front room of a house near the bend. The men were sitting in a relaxed manner sipping cups of tea, with biscuits laid on a tray in front of them. Somebody came from inside and shut the door probably to cut off my prying eye and the conspicuous camera in my hand.

I came out onto the main east-west spine in front of a sweet shop. A young girl, who was walking in front of me, suddenly turned into a narrow side lane off this spine to the left. This side lane looked very interesting, and so I decided to cut through it. But as I went in, I realized that it was a blind lane. The young girl stood in front of an ornate wooden door. I asked her if the lane ended there. She nodded her head to say yes. I retreated my steps. Towards the mouth of the street where it meets the E-W spine, a woman was standing. She smiled at me. She asked me, “What are you doing here?” pointing at my camera. I said, “I am doing a project in the Basti with children” She smiled broadly at my answer. Emboldened I asked, “Is it true what the children told me near the fair ground—is it true that camels and elephants will also be slaughtered today?” She said, the smile vanishing a little, “for three days now, animals will be slaughtered, but goats, and yes camels but not elephants. Also the camels that are giving rides to children will not be slaughtered. They bring special camels from outside. Also there are special people who slaughter the animals, it’s an art, not every one can do it. It will happen near the dargah.”

I got back on the E-W spine and walked westwards. This street ended at a t-junction with two bounded open spaces on either side. To the right sat a family—three generations of men, with the older men watching over the children who were busy playing around. To the left, inside what looked like a narrow dirt park, were five buffalos tied to the iron grille of the boundary wall. I turned to the right as several children playing in the park caught my eye. One boy was herding a goat around. As I went round the park, I found several goats tied to the fence. Two small boys, about five years old, with long branches in their hands were standing near two buffalos. The buffalos were sitting down basking in the sun. They were both tied to the fence. The boys moved around the buffalos poking the animals with their sticks. Then one of them said, "let's slaughter them." The boys came forward and raised their arm in the air and brought the sticks down with force on the buffalo's neck. The buffalo shook its head vigorously; the boys backed off a bit, but again came forward to strike at the buffalo's neck. I was filming the boys. Though they were not aware of this, a young girl came forward and stood by the boys. I asked them what they were doing. The boys looked up, surprised, probably taking note of my presence for the first time. They did not answer me. After a while they continued with their buffalo slaughter. I walked away.

The second and third stories are about special events in the Basti and how children expressed themselves during a time when very few restrictions were imposed on them. I witnessed three major religious festivals during my yearlong observations at Nizamuddin—Shab-e-Barat in September 2005, Mithi Eid in November 2005, and Bakri Eid in January 2006. During all three festivals, children played very prominent roles in the celebrations of the community. The first festival, Shab-e-Barat, was the night of prayers when Sunni Muslims prayed to the souls of their ancestors at the graves. The Basti was beautifully lit including the main graveyard across from the sewer. On every street corner, bonfires were put up and on them were large cauldrons of sweet tea to keep everyone awake the whole night. Along the main E-W spine, and on the concrete slab over the sewer that served as a bridge to go to the graveyard, many children had set up temporary stalls selling candles and matches to the worshippers. They demanded high prices laughingly, and if a customer were in a good mood, would even get it. On Mithi Eid as well as on Bakri Eid, the open space, created on consolidated garbage near Nizam Nagar, was turned into a fair ground. Several different joy rides which the children generically referred to as *jhullas* were put up on that open space. Several vendors set up their stalls or simply sold snacks from carts and cycles. Children from all nine precincts of the Basti as well as their relatives and friends from far off places thronged the rides and enjoyed the festivities. Boys and girls were dressed in new clothes, often many sizes larger than their current proportions. Girls especially put on a lot of makeup, jewellery and even painted their hands with different patterns using paints and the more traditional herbal pastes. The second story showed that dressing up on a festival day was a culturally accepted practice and

a way in which preadolescent girls could freely express themselves by embracing the latest styles and fashions of film and TV stars. On the days of Eid, children also got extra pocket money to buy little treats or go on the rides. Very few restrictions are put on their mobility, and by and large children hung out in groups. Even very young children, as was seen in the episode where two five-year-old boys freely slaughtered two buffalos with stick branches, enacted the cultural practices of a festival through play.

12.2.4. Modifying the Environment through Play and for Survival

On January 31, 2005, I went for a walk in Nizamuddin Basti for the last time as part of my fieldwork before leaving for the US. After covering most of the open spaces, I walked over to the debris strewn open space that housed the broken car near The Hope Project. It was 6pm and quite dark. I noticed a group of boys around 10-12 years near a tree to the left of the public urinals. I watched them from outside the chain link fence. Two of the boys were busy tearing off the bark of a tree, leaving angry orange scars on the trunk. They used a sharp piece of metal to take the bark off. I asked them what they were doing. One of the boys replied, "We are collecting firewood for home." On looking around I saw another boy behind the tree collecting the torn pieces in a sack. I watched for some more time and then left the boys to their debarking.

The fourth story allows us to think about the thin line between freedom of expression related to life within a setting and possibly criminal activity. Scraping barks off trees would have been considered a criminal activity in city controlled green spaces. In other places outside the Basti, people would have stopped the boys from disfiguring the trees. But in this particular place on a winter evening, somehow when I saw the boys busily scraping the barks off, I thought, "Children here can do anything they want!" Perhaps the context in which this activity happened, a left over open space inside a perceived slum, where a few throny trees grew wild, and where children easily ignored adult control, I saw the children's action as one of free expression. But soon that thinking was clouded when I found out that the activity was directly related to basic survival of poor families on a cold winter evening. Episodes like this one made me think how best we could rephrase and problematize children's activities such that not everything is subsumed under "play".

12.2.5. Nature of Activities in Free Expressions of Children

The two of the four stories reported above showed how children were free to choose any activity they wanted (dancing, kite flying), or projecting new identities through dressing up on special days of the year. On festival days children had considerable freedom in expressing themselves freely in place, and often in ways that were different from their everyday practices of the Basti. The

first story explored the meaning of special places, which were directly linked to free expression in children. The last story provided a glimpse of the complexity within the concept of children's free expression through commonly perceived "play" activities. All the different forms of expressions saw children sharing power in the settings; children were very much in charge of their forms of expression. On any day, in Nizamuddin, it was easy to come across children drawing on walls in public places (see figure 12.4), making innovative play structures such as swings under slides, or engaging in imaginative play, pretending to be Hindu gods outside the temple in the park. All these represent different ways in which children chose to express themselves, and the nature of these expressions were strongly related to the nature of the place itself.

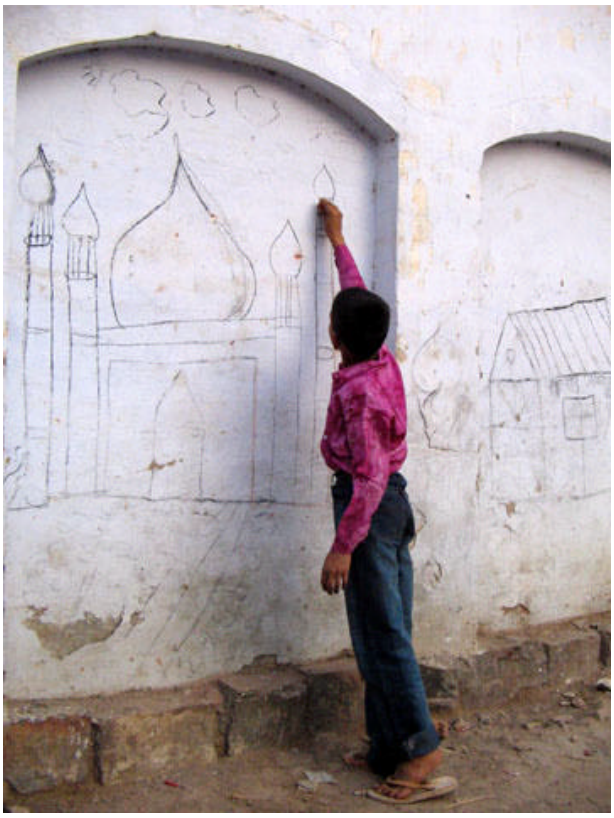


Figure 12.4: Sketching on walls in public places

12.3. Why Were Children Able to Freely Express Themselves in the Basti?

The free expressions of children on special days were very much rooted in accepted socio-cultural practice within the community. Independence day in Delhi was marked out for kite competitions in most neighborhoods, and especially traditional ones such as those in the walled city of Shahjehanabad where most Basti families had relatives. Not only adolescent boys, but also entire

families were on rooftops celebrating with food, music, and competitive kite flying on that day in the Basti. The younger children who were less adept at flying participated through gathering fallen kites and hiding them from groups they did not like. In this way younger children started a sub-competition in hoarding kites and holding the good ones ransom for favors and deals. Similarly on Eid, it was expected of children to dress up and roam the streets, eat snacks and treats that were freely sold in the streets, and go on rides. These behaviors on those same days outside of the community in other middle-income non-Muslim neighborhoods would have been conspicuous. But in Nizamuddin Basti, the dominant cultural practices expected children to engage in these kinds of behaviors.

In the context of the everyday, children could draw on walls, modify play structures, play whatever they wanted in some chosen settings. Because these children enjoyed easy and free access to a large number of settings in their everyday environment in the heart of the community, they found it easier to engage in a large number of outdoor activities than children living in middle-income neighborhoods with more closely supervised activities. Once outdoors, boys and girls in Nizamuddin found it easy to do "anything" they wanted in most settings as these settings were not private property, but often contested ones and had few rules. The same set of factors that promoted place child exchange and creation of control of territories—pedestrian environment, rich activity and social affordances in several different places, as well as proximity, familiarity, positive identity, and informality of these places, contributed to children being able to express themselves freely and share power in these places. The nature of these expressions were typically defined through territorial, event- and place-specific, culturally and contextually situated activities of children which allowed children to make sense of their lives and their living environment.

12.4. Factors contributing to children's freedom of expression in places

1. Easy access to a range of places of different types
2. A socio-physical context that supports free action of children
3. More informal spaces through preservation of vacant lots and allowing children access to them
4. Active participation of children in the life and cultural practices of the community including in special festivals

Chapter 13
Child Friendly Places

The starting point of this inquiry was the child friendly city, and my proposition that from an environment-behavior point of view, a child-friendly city can only be studied as a disaggregation, made up of numerous and interlocking child-friendly places that children themselves explore, engage with and develop emotional and affective relationships with their own everyday environments. In order to explore these several different friendly places in the child's repertoire, I proposed a new theoretical construct, place friendship, as a heuristic to understand environmental child friendliness. My definition of place friendship consisted of six dimensions. I used these dimensions to create an interview instrument for obtaining recommendations of different friendly places from children in their everyday environment. Through a year-long observational study I explored why children considered these places to be friendly.

The last six chapters presented the places that thirty-one middle school children considered friendly within the geographic, social and political context of their everyday lives. Overall, forty-three places were nominated by these children under the six dimensions of place friendship. Through fieldwork in the children's neighborhood, I found that places varied across children based on individual preferences, residence in a particular precinct, duration of stay in the Basti, and gender. The different attributes of places allowed children to use different places in different ways, and when a place offered multiple affordances, the same place was used in different ways as in the case of the DDA Park. As one of the goals of this research was to understand the implications for design of child friendly places, it will be useful to analyze how the places that Nizamuddin children considered friendly were produced in the city. Across the dimensions, looking at the array of forty-three places, three factors related to the nature of production of places—ownership, supervision, and design inputs were found to influence children's access to places, engagement with places, and developing relationships with places. These factors in addition to the functional type of the place itself such as open space, street, monument, retail, residential etc. influenced children's choice of a friendly place. Constructing a typology of friendly places in the studied environment, based on these findings, would be a logical strategy to synthesize the patterns suggested by the large range of friendly places in children's everyday environments in Nizamuddin. This categorization will allow generalizing child friendly places for other contexts

13.1. Child friendly Place Typology in Nizamuddin Basti

Constructing typologies is not just a matter of simple categorization of empirical data. As Read and Russell (1999) point out "typologies are constructed in terms of goals, and these goals determine the criteria used to decide on the adequacy of the typology (1)." The typology of child friendly places that I am proposing in this chapter is grounded in the personal experiences of a group of children in their middle childhood in a particular local area of an Indian city. The construction of the typology on child friendly places grew out of data based on the main criteria of place friendship structuring the study, and furthers the goal of understanding the nature of child friendly places within a context, culture and population. This child friendly place typology in addition will provide an analytic tool for commenting on the transferability of findings to similar types of places in other parts of the city, where places were likely to be produced in the same way as in Nizamuddin Basti.

Categorization of places into place types was informed by the three forms of *ownership* (city, private, contested), five forms of *supervision* (neighbors, institutional caretakers, privately appointed caretakers, no one, owner), and two types of *design input* (formal and informal) patterns as found in the overall dataset of unique places. Further differentiation within the categories was achieved on the basis of location of these places—local and city-level. Here local refers to places falling within the Basti and its immediate area that can be easily accessed without crossing a major traffic corridor.

The setting of the study, Nizamuddin Basti, was seen primarily as an informal housing environment housing people who worked and survived within the large informal economic sector in India. Majority of Delhi's population, more than 70%, lived in such housing. However the peripheral land around the settlement was owned by the city, the graveyard and all religious properties were owned by private trusts, and open spaces within the settlement had contested ownership.

City owned formally designed recreational open spaces such as the DDA Park or the Umbrella Park, typically had appointed supervisors who cared for and protected the places from vandalism. Owners and neighbors supervised private property and the space immediately around their properties; religious and cultural properties were supervised by privately and institutionally appointed caretakers. However contested vacant land had no active or continuous caretaker other than the individuals and groups who directly use it at a particular time.

In Nizamuddin Basti, the production of spaces historically had been informal in nature. It was possible to categorize the old core of the settlement as vernacular design, which evolved through customary practices. But the constant merging of historic layers with new evolving housing as a direct result of migration, blurred the line between traditional vernacular and new illegal informal housing activity. This made exact identification of the extent of the historic core difficult. The nature of design inputs for the purpose of categorization is defined through informal and formal design inputs where informal design activity is defined as, *the courses of action which brings in preferred change in the living environment without following or abidingby the regulations prescribed by the city for those actions.* By this definition the traditional vernacular as well as the new illegal and semi-legal actions of creating new housing and associated infrastructure, both fall under "informal" design inputs.

I reduced the forty-three unique places, such as street near home, DDA Park, Umbrella Park, that were nominated across the different dimensions to twelve higher-level place types. This typology categorizes places on the basis of a) functional type of the place, b) location of the functional type of place in relation to the Basti—local or city level, c) nature of production of place including ownership, supervision and design inputs in case of open spaces. Following these criteria, the forty-three places were categorized into twelve place types as follows (the ordering of places within the typology is dictated by their rank order in the data):

1. Formally produced open space local (FOSL)
2. Informally produced open space local (IOSL)
3. Streets in the local area (SILA)
4. Formally produced open space city level (FOSC)
5. Monuments (MON)
6. My precinct (MPR)
7. My neighborhood (MNGBD)
8. My home (MHM)
9. Other private residences (OPR)
10. School (SC)
11. Neighborhood other than my own (NOTMO)
12. Neighborhood retail (NRTL)

Formally Produced Open Space Local (FOSL) is a category that includes the parks in the local area such as the DDA Park, Twelve Pillars Park, Umbrella Park, that were designed and supervised by a city agency such as DDA or a city entrusted agency such as RWA and owned by the city. Children recommended places in this place type sixty-six times across all dimensions, thus making it the

most popular place type in children's everyday environment in the Basti (See Appendix 8 for the complete list for places under each place typology).

Informally Produced Open Space Local (IOSL) is a category that includes all the open spaces near home, and spaces left over from the vernacular and more formal planning efforts in and around the Basti. Ownership of such places was typically contested, and there was no supervision of these places except by neighbors if they had a direct interest of active use in these places. This category also includes vacant lots such as the open spaces next to the sewer, space in front of The Hope Project etc. Thirty-eight responses from children recommended places that belonged to this place type as friendly places, thus making this the second most preferred place typology across all dimensions.

Streets in the Local Area (SILA) is a category that includes both vernacular streets and city created streets outside the historic core of the Basti neighborhood. Though in the case of Nizamuddin informal streets were in larger numbers than their formal counterparts, but for reasons of transferability of findings to other neighborhoods where formally produced streets were likely to be in larger numbers, streets had been kept as a separate place type from informally produced open spaces local. Twenty-five responses from children recommended places belonging to this type as friendly places, thus making this the third most preferred place typology across all dimensions.

Formally Produced Open Space City Level (FOSC) is a category that includes the parks and open spaces outside the local area such as the Children's Park at India Gate, the park near the government school in Pant Nagar, that were owned by the city, designed and supervised by city agencies such as DDA or the NDMC or a city appointed private agency. Twenty-two responses from children recommended places belonging to this type as friendly places, thus making this the fourth most preferred place typology across all dimensions.

Monuments *(MON)* is a category that includes both local and city level historic structures, both religious and secular. Though in some cases, where monuments were set in newer landscaped parks created by the city, children referred to the open spaces by the name of the monuments such as in the case of India Gate, or Twelve Pillars Park. In these cases, the places were included under formally produced open spaces and not under monuments. Seventeen responses from children recommended places belonging to this type as friendly places, thus making this the fifth most preferred place typology across all dimensions.

My Precinct *(MPR)* is a category that includes the residential precincts within the neighborhood. Though precincts represent a place type within the neighborhood with definite place identity, for each child, "my precinct" is a unique place. However, for the purpose of higher level categorization "my precinct" represents a place type, that incorporates several different unique precincts for the responding children. In Nizamuddin Basti, as discussed earlier (see chapter 5), there were nine distinct precincts. The ownership of the precincts were contested; supervision patterns varied from private owners taking care of house fronts, to community organizations taking care of religious places; and design inputs were almost exclusively informal. Nine responses from children recommended places belonging to this type as friendly places, thus making this the sixth most preferred place typology across all dimensions.

My Neighborhood *(MNGBD)* is a category that includes the particular neighborhood of the child. Though the responding children all lived in the same neighborhood, and hence "my neighborhood" is a unique place common to all of them, but for the purpose of higher-level categorization "my neighborhood" represents a place type due to the complexity of its functioning and incorporation of several different place types already categorized in this typology. In the neighborhood of Nizamuddin Basti, ownership was contested; supervision patterns varied from private to community organizations; and design inputs were almost exclusively informal except for the peripheral land. Six responses from children recommended their neighborhood as a friendly place, thus making this the seventh most preferred place typology across all dimensions.

Other Private Residences *(OPR)* is a category that includes residence other than that of the child. The ownership of the other residences was private, and often contested; supervision was purely private; and design inputs were almost exclusively informal. Only five responses from children recommended these other residences as friendly places, thus making this the eighth preferred place typology across all dimensions.

School *(SC)* is a category that includes formal governmental schools, local and city level, private schools, local and city level, and NGO run community schools that the children of this study attended. The ownership of school properties ranged from public, to private; supervision was institutional; and design inputs were mostly formal. Only four responses from children recommended the school as a friendly place, thus making this the ninth preferred place typology across all dimensions.

Neighborhood Other Than My Own *(NOTMO)* is a category that includes neighborhoods other than that of the child's own. The land ownership patterns of other recommended neighborhoods were likely to vary from private to public to even contested; supervision also was likely to vary

involving several different actors; and design inputs too were likely to be both formal and informal. Only three responses from children recommended neighborhood other than my own as a friendly place, thus making this the ninth preferred place typology across all dimensions.

My Home *(MHM)* is a category that includes the residence of the child. For each child, "my home" is a unique place. However, for the purpose of higher-level categorization "my home" represents a place type that incorporates several different unique homes for the responding children. The ownership of the homes was private, and often contested; supervision was purely private; and design inputs were almost exclusively informal. Only two responses from children recommended the home as a friendly place, thus making this the least preferred place typology across all dimensions.

Neighborhood Retail *(NRTL)* is a category that includes all types of neighborhood retail including grocery shops, tailors, mechanics, hotels and street vendors. The ownership of retail properties are likely to vary from public, to private and even contested; supervision almost exclusively by the owner or appointed custodians; and design inputs were most likely to be informal. Only two responses from children recommended the neighborhood retail as containing friendly places, thus making this, along with "my home", the least preferred place typology across all dimensions.

13.3. Place Type and Overall Contribution to Children's Place Friendship

Table 13.1 below provides the quantitative breakdown of place distributions across the categories and dimensions. This table suggests that formal open space local (FOSL), informal open space local (IOSL), and formal open space city level (FOSC) contain places that catered to all the six place friendship dimensions. In fact formal open space local (FOSL) as a category contributed the most (34% of all nominated friendly places across all dimensions) to children's place friendship. Informal open space local, streets in the local area, and formal open space city level follow at 19%, 13% and 11%.

Table 13.1: Distribution of Unique Places Across Place Types and Dimensions, and Percent Contribution of Each Place Type to Place Friendship

Place types across dimensions	**Dim1** Care and Respect for Places	**Dim2** Meaningful Exchange with Places	**Dim3** Learning and Competence through Place Experience	**Dim4** Creating and Controlling Territories	**Dim5** Having Secret Places	**Dim6** Freedom of Expression in Place	**Total responses in a place type**	**Contribution of place type to place friendship (%)**
Formal open space local (FOSL)	21	11	4	13	4	13	66	34%
Informal open space local (IOSL)	6	9	3	10	8	2	38	19%
Streets in local area (SILA)	3	9	0	4	4	5	25	13%
Formal open space city level (FOSC)	6	2	7	2	3	2	22	11%
Monuments (MON)	2	0	10	2	1	2	17	9%
My precinct (MPR)	1	3	0	1	0	4	9	5%
My neighborhood (MNGBD)	0	0	2	1	0	5	6	3%
Other private residences (OPR)	0	1	1	0	2	1	5	2%
School (SC)	0	0	1	1	0	2	4	2%
Neighborhood other than my own (NOTMO)	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	
My home (MHM)	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	1%
Neighborhood retail (NRTL)	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	1%
Total places nominated	41	36	29	34	23	36	199	

Darker highlight indicates the top contributing place type to each dimension, and the lighter highlight indicates the other important contributing place types.

Key findings and implications of Table 13.1

1. Formal open spaces local, which comprised of all the designed parks and open spaces in the local area of the Basti such as the two most loved parks by children the DDA Park, and the Umbrella Park, was the place type that contained the most number of child friendly places (34% of all places recommended).
2. My home was the least preferred child friendly place type with only two children recommending "my home" across all the dimensions. In fact one child had recommended her home as the least friendly place, as well as drawn it as her least liked place because of the lack of space and material resources, and action constraints imposed on her by her mother (see figure 13.1).

These two key findings highlight the fact that limitations of the home environment of poor urban children in low-income settlements in developing countries, make the non-home environment (especially attractive, well-cared for, open spaces that afford contact with nature and allow children to engage in different activities), functionally valuable for children. Just as Bryant (1985) found out that children in their middle childhood living in small nuclear families in western industrialized cities, with limited social networks, peers and siblings sought out environmental resources in several different places outside the home to fulfill interpersonal needs, the findings of this study suggest, that children in their middle childhood living in large extended families in non-western developing cities, with large social networks, many peers and siblings in physically limited home environments sought out environmental resources in several different places outside the home to fulfill diverse needs. Whether limitations come from the home environment or social networks, children across the world seek out places in their environment to satisfy their needs. The type of places that children most prefer also has some similarity across the globe. Poor children living in a predominantly informal living environment in a developing country, India, with several different vacant lots and left over open spaces, preferred formally designed environments such as parks and playgrounds in the local area for fulfilling functional needs. Children in three different neighborhoods in England had the same preference for favorite places—lawns, parks and playgrounds over any other kind of place (Moore 1986). It would seem that formally designed open spaces in the local area have a global appeal for children.



Figure 13.1: Depiction of Home as a Disliked Place by A 12-Year-Old Girl Place Types and Individual Dimensions

Table 13.1 shows us that formal open spaces local is the top place type that contributed the most to children's place friendship in Nizamuddin through unique places such as the Umbrella Park and the DDA Park. But how does formal open spaces local or any other place type contribute to each of the dimensions of place friendship? In order to understand that, table 13.2 calculates recommendations across dimensions for each type of friendly place. This table tells us that even though a type may have significantly contributed to place friendship in general (34% overall place friendship contribution by FOSL), it may not have uniform high contributions to each dimension (FOSL contributes only 6.1% each to Learning and Competence through Place Experience and Having Secret Places). This table tells us that by providing *which* type of places within neighborhoods, *what* dimensions of place friendship may be nurtured if children have access to these places.

Table 13.2: Each Type Across All Dimensions: Percent Contribution of Each Place Type to All Place Friendship Dimensions

	Place types in Nizamuddin across dimensions	**Dim1** Care and Respect for Places %	**Dim2** Meaningful Exchange with Places %	**Dim3** Learning and Competence through Place Experience %	**Dim4** Creating and Controlling Territories %	**Dim5** Having Secret Places %	**Dim6** Freedom of Expression in Place %	**Total number of responses in each type %**
1	Formal open space local (FOSL)	31.8	16.7	6.1	19.7	6.1	19.6	66
2	Informal open space local (IOSL)	15.7	23.7	7.9	23.7	21.1	7.9	38
3	Streets in local area (SILA)	12	36	0	16	16	20	25
4	Formal open space city level (FOSC)	27.3	9.1	31.8	9.1	13.6	9.1	22
5	Monuments (MON)	11.8	0	58.8	11.8	5.8	11.8	17
6	My precinct (MPR)	11.1	33.3	0	11.1	0	44.5	9
7	My neighborhood (MNGBD)	0	0	0	16.7	0	83.3	6
8	Other private residences (OPR)	0	20	20	0	40	20	5
9	School (SC)	0	0	25	25	0	50	4
10	Neighborhood other than my own (NOTMO)	33.3	0	66.7	0	0	0	3
11	My home (MHM)	50	50	0	0	0	0	2
12	Neighborhood retail (NRTL)	0	0	50	0	50	0	2

Darker highlight indicates the top contributing place type in a dimension, and the lighter highlight indicates the other important contributing place types within each dimension, the hatched highlight indicates low total responses in some place types which may be ignored for understanding patterns of place type contributions to all dimensions.

Key findings and implications of Table 13.2:

1. By promoting more formal open spaces in the local area, more places will be created that children will respect, care for and love for being well-maintained and aesthetically pleasing environments.
2. By promoting more informal open spaces in the local area, safe traffic controlled streets within precincts and neighborhoods, more places that nurture the active doing of children will be created, including secret places.

3. By promoting more formal open spaces at the city level, and monuments and other symbolic places at both local and city level, more places that children learn from will be created.

Table 13.2, however, does not tell us how each dimension fares across all the twelve types of places. In order to find out how the twelve types contributed to individual dimensions, table 13.3 calculates the recommendations across friendly place types for each dimension as percentages.

Table 13.3: Each Dimension Across All Types: Percent Contribution of All Place Types to Each Place Friendship Dimension

		Dim1 Care and Respect for Places	Dim2 Meaningful Exchange with Places	Dim3 Learning and Competence through Place Experience	Dim4 Creating and Controlling Territories	Dim5 Having Secret Places	Dim6 Freedom of Expression in Place
Total number of responses in each dimension		41	36	29	33	23	37
Place types in across dimensions		% Contributions of types to each dimension					
1	Formal open space local (FOSL)	51.2	30.5	13.8	38.3	17.4	36.2
2	Informal open space local (IOSL)	14.8	25	10.3	29.4	34.9	5.5
3	Streets in local area (SILA)	7.3	25	0	11.8	17.4	13.9
4	Formal open space city level (FOSC)	14.6	5.6	24.1	5.9	13	5.5
5	Monuments (MON)	4.9	0	34.5	5.9	4.3	5.5
6	My precinct (MPR)	2.4	8.3	0	2.9	0	11.2
7	My neighborhood (MNGBD)	0	0	0	2.9	0	13.9
8	Other private residences (OPR)	0	2.8	3.5	0	8.7	2.8
9	School (SC)	0	0	3.5	2.9	0	5.5
10	Neighborhood other than my own (NOTMO)	2.4	0	6.8	0	0	0
11	My home (MHM)	2.4	2.8	0	0	0	0
12	Neighborhood retail (NRTL)	0	0	3.5	0	4.3	0

Darker highlight indicates the top contributing place type to each dimension, and the lighter highlight indicates the other important contributing place types within each dimension

Table 13.3 above shows the variability of contributions of each place type to the six dimensions. For example formal open space local, contributed the most (51.2 %) to the dimension of Care and Respect for Places in providing well-maintained, aesthetically pleasing contact with nature in small park settings as in the case of the Umbrella Park. Chapter 7 explored why these kinds of places were respected and cared for by children, and the socially constructed nature of respect and care in this community. Monuments (34.5%) and formal open spaces city level (24.1%) contributed the most to the dimension of learning, whereas informally produced open spaces contributed to having secret places, Creating and Controlling Territories and also to Meaningful Exchange with

Places. The table indicates what kind of places to promote if we want to nurture any one dimension of place friendship in creating child friendly places.

Key findings and implications of Table 13.3:

1. If the goal is to promote concern for and caring of the environment among children in low-income communities living in informal housing in New Delhi, more formal open spaces in the local area needs to be created (about 50% of all child friendly places created), followed by equal efforts to preserve vacant lots and creation of accessible formal open spaces in the city (about 15% of all child friendly places created needs to belong to this place typology).
2. If the goal is to promote active doing of children, almost equal numbers of formal open spaces in the local area (about 30% of all child friendly places created), informal open spaces in the local area (about 25% of all child friendly places created), and safe traffic-controlled streets within neighborhoods (about 25% of all child friendly places created) needs to be created. Though this particular proportion of child friendly place types will still allow children to modify the environment through their actions to create territories, and create meaning through free expression in place, in order to allow children to have privacy experiences in secret places more informal open spaces than formal open spaces needs to be provided in the local area (about 50% IOSL including informal streets; 20% FOSL).
3. If the goal is to promote learning and environmental competence of children, more formal open spaces at the city level (about 25% of all child friendly places created), and monuments and other symbolic places at both local and city level (about 35% of all child friendly places created) needs to be made available to children.

13.4. Influence of Gender on Choosing Friendly Place Types

There were 102 responses from sixteen girls, and 99 responses from fifteen boys recommending places across all dimensions. Figure 13.2 displays the preferences of boys and girls in choosing places within each of the twelve types across all six dimensions.

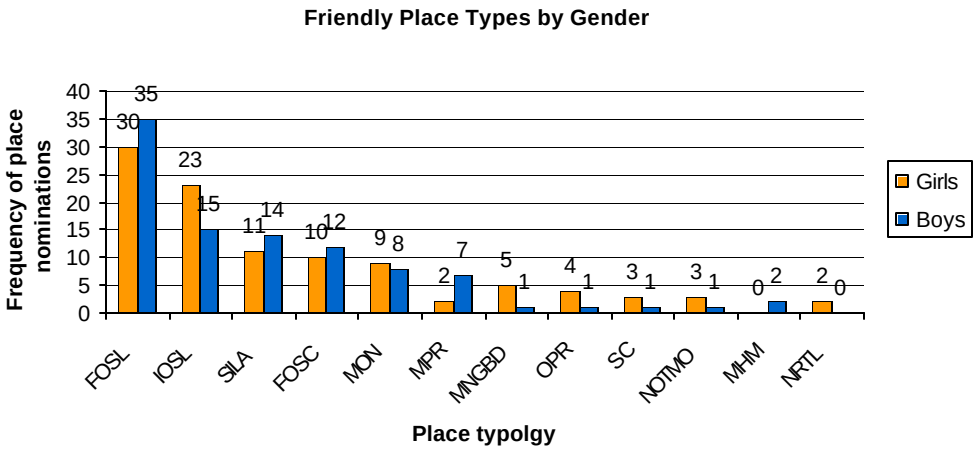


Figure 13.2: Responses of Boys And Girls to Places Within the Proposed Place Typology

Discussion of Key Findings of Influence of Gender

If we consider the first five types of places, which elicited the most place responses from children, there does not seem to be much difference in the types of places boys and girls chose across dimensions. Even though this finding may be surprising in the context of a conservative Muslim community, this maybe an artifact of the age of children selected for the study. Girls were tolerated in public and had negotiated access to outdoor places till about twelve years. This was also the age when formal gender segregation happens in the government schools where several of the students studied. The first two categories, *formal open space local, informal open space local,* which had the most places recommended under them, however does show some difference across gender. This is because the DDA Park that falls under *formal open space local* is a highly preferred and actively used place for boys due to its multiple affordances for creating easy territories as discussed in chapter 9. Though girls also used the DDA Park, as the behavior maps and place observations suggest, girls and other marginalized groups as homeless and new migrants were pushed to the peripheral smaller settings by the active large territories of boys in the center. Open spaces near home that falls under *informal open spaces local,* on the other hand is the most active place for girls who are constrained due to gender restrictions in a patriarchal Muslim community to play in the streets or the more actively used spaces dominated by boys and men. Table 13.4 compares the preferences of boys and girls under the two discussed place types. Even though boys and girls recommended similar places across the dimensions, the nature of use of these places by boys and girls were different.

Table 13.4: Comparison of place preferences of boys and girls under the two types recording most gender differences

Formal Open Space Local (FOSL)	Girls	Boys
Open space next to petrol pump	0	1
Park near Black Mosque	4	0
Park under flyover	4	0
Long park next to sewer	1	1
Open space near MCD school	3	2
Umbrella Park	12	11
DDA Park	6	19
Twelve Pillars Park (historic monument and precincts)	0	1
	30	35
Informal Open Space Local (IOSL)		
Open space behind domed building	0	1
Behind a house in Nizam Nagar	1	0
Open space close to Basti	1	0
Elephant Park	0	3
Graveyard	0	3
Open space near Hope Project	3	1
One open space next to sewer	3	4
Open space near home	15	3
	23	15

13.5. Exploring Similar Dimensions

Table 13.3 above suggests that some place types contributed to a similar degree to certain dimensions. Since table 13.2 indicates what kind of places to promote if we want to nurture any one dimension of place friendship in creating child friendly places, given the similarity of contribution of certain place types to several dimensions, we might promote something else other than the dimension that we wanted to if we followed the indications of this table. However, it also might be possible, that the dimensions that responded similarly to same place types might not be very different at a construct level. In this section the similarity and difference among constructs that responded similarly to place types will explored.

The twelve place typology categories were developed generically for neighborhoods similar to the one studied in the Indian city, and not specifically according to the unique nature of places in the studied neighborhood. However, the studied environment, as discussed earlier, had greater

proportions of informal places that included streets in the local area, my precinct, and my neighborhood. If these place types were brought together with informally produced open spaces in the local area under a broader type called informal spaces local, a similar pattern of contributions of place types appear for the dimensions of Meaningful Exchange with Place, Creating and Controlling Territories, and Freedom of Expression in Place (see table 13.5 below). This collapsing of place typologies to include a higher level "informal spaces local" category will hold true for most informal settlements in Indian cities.

Table 13.5: Comparing Similar Patterns of Contribution by Place Typologies to Dimensions Two, Four, Five and Six

	Place Types Across Dimensions	**Dim1** Care and Respect for Places	**Dim2** Meaningful Exchange with Places	**Dim3** Learning and Competence through Place Experience	**Dim4** Creating and Controlling Territories	**Dim5** Having Secret Places	**Dim6** Freedom of Expression in Place
1	Formal open space local (FOSL)	51.2	30.5	13.8	38.3	17.4	36.2
2	Informal spaces local (ISL) Streets in local area (SILA) My precinct (MPR) My neighborhood (MNGBD)	24.5	58.3	10.3	47	52.3	44.5
3	Formal open space city level (FOSC)	14.6	5.6	24.1	5.9	13	5.5
4	Monuments (MON)	4.9	0	34.5	5.9	4.3	5.5
5	Other private residences (OPR)	0	2.8	3.5	0	8.7	2.8
6	School (SC)	0	0	3.5	2.9	0	5.5
7	Neighborhood other than my own (NOTMO)	2.4	0	6.8	0	0	0
8	My home (MHM)	2.4	2.8	0	0	0	0
9	Neighborhood retail (NRTL)	0	0	3.5	0	4.3	0

There are in fact commonalities between the actualization of these four dimensions in different places. All four place friendship dimensions, Meaningful Exchange with Places (dim 2), Creating and Controlling Territories (dim 4), Having Secret Places (dim 5), and Freedom of Expression in Place (dim 6) are underpinned by the active doing of children in the environment that both shapes the environment and produces meaning of places as friendly places for children. Moreover, all four dimensions favored informally produced spaces within the settlement that were rich in

activity affordances. But there is a large difference between dimensions, two, four and six on one hand and dimension five on the other (see table 13.6). Meaningful Exchange with Places (dim 2), Creating and Controlling Territories (dim 4), and Freedom of Expression in Place (dim 6) typically happened in places that were close to home, familiar, had positive identity, were informally produced, and had very little action constraints. The dimension of Having Secret Places saw children recommending places that were far from home, unfamiliar or where children were anonymous, and places with dubious reputations. Since secret places were typically sought out in defiance of adult constraints, if children had secret places, actualizing affordances were easy.

The empirical data from this study suggest that children created and controlled territories mainly through their activities in shared public place. When children left the settings, the places often ceased to be childhood territories as others claimed and owned the physical settings vacated by children. While children were in the settings, they were the dominant powers as children typically chose informally produced spaces to territorialize, places which had few rules of behavior, and where they could actively resist constraints imposed by adults. Similarly, free expressions of children were primarily through a diverse range of activities in places, which allowed children to mark out special territories and give meaning to their local area and place. Since both these dimensions (four and six) were operationalized through activities of children in relatively constraint free places, conceptually they fit within the construct of meaningful exchange with places. Even in Doll's friendship framework, sharing interests and activities was the starting point of friendship, which over time and sustained interactions leads to deeper mutual bonding between friends. In place friendship, similarly meaningful exchange with places allow children to create and control territories and freely of express themselves in place. The empirical evidence from this study in suggesting similarity of place typologies for these three dimensions reinforces their conceptual closeness. Instead of having three separate dimensions we can include 'Creating and Controlling Territories' and 'Freedom of Expression in Place' under the higher level construct of 'Meaningful Exchange with Places' which introduces children to the affordances outdoors.

Table 13.6: Comparison of Environmental Characteristics of Four Similar Action Intensive Dimensions

Environmental characteristics	**Dimension 2** Meaningful Exchange with Places	**Dimension 4** Creating and Controlling Territories	**Dimension 5** Having Secret Places	**Dimension 6** Freedom of Expression in Place
High potential affordances	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
High actualized affordances	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Proximity of place	Yes	Yes	No. In fact places are deliberately chosen away from home base	Yes
Familiarity of place	Yes	Yes	No. Anonymity of place preferred	Yes
Positive identity of Place	Yes	Yes	No. Often places with negative identities embraced due to their ability to hide forbidden acts	Yes
Informally produced places	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

13.6. A Generic Typology of Places for Nurturing Place Friendship in Childhood

It may be possible to develop a generic typology of places based on the four dimensions of place friendship such as "places that children *care* for", "places that children *learn* from", "places that children *create through action*", and "places that children *nurture secrets* in." Once we have sufficient empirical data on these new typologies from different social, cultural, political and economic contexts, we will be able to generate patterns of attributes that could be the starting point of developing design guidelines for child friendly places in each of the studied areas.

The empirical data from Nizamuddin Basti suggest the following attributes of places belonging to this generic place typology:

Places That Children Care For: qualifying places invoke respect and care in children, though notions of care and respect were socially constructed within the children's community. Such places are typically characterized by:

1. *Visual signs of care* through well-kept gardens and lawns, and general cleanliness that was strictly enforced through rules by the appointed custodians of the environment.
2. *Visual signs of safety* through protective design features such as gates, enclosing fences and boundary walls, and prescribed rules of entry.

3. *Attractive features* such as clear paths, lawns, diversity of plants, benches, low walls, platforms to aid social interaction and play.
4. *Easy access for children*, even if for a limited period each day.
5. *Democratic spaces* created for everyone and not just for poor communities.
6. *Spaces in the heart of the children's community* that provide an escape from the contests of the everyday

Places that children create through action: qualifying places allowed children to freely engage in a diverse range of social and physical activities including 1) creation and control of childhood territories and hence investment of meaning in places, and 2) children's freedom to express themselves in ways that helped construct their own identities. Such places are typically characterized by:

1. *High potential affordances* or abundance of diverse settings with different physical attributes offering a large range of possible actions for children.
2. *High actualized Affordances* or high degree of recorded action in diverse settings
3. *Proximity* of a wide range of places to home, offering easy access any time
4. *High degree of familiarity* of accessible close to home places as these places were visited more often and became familiar. The range of affordance actualization or diverse actions in familiar places were more and increased with use due to figuring out new ways of doing things or in other words through discovering nested and sequential affordances.
5. *Positive identity* of familiar of close to home places based on a perception of safety as compared to perception of the "unsafe" in unfamiliar places far from home or less frequently visited places. Data from this study suggest that children, in their middle childhood, typically felt more comfortable doing things and hanging out in places, which were safe, and in limit.
6. *Potential for creating controllable territories* through providing distinct but nested center and peripheral conditions that allow different age-, and interest groups and individuals to claim public space
7. *Multi-nodal* spaces because such places are more conducive to territorial claiming by different groups and hence promote sharing of the landscape
8. Places with more loose parts because such places allow children to create stronger territories through personalizing the markers around their territories
9. *Potential for supporting free expression of children in places* by providing
10. *Access for children* to a range of places of different types
11. A socio-physical *context that supports free action of children*

12. *More informal spaces* through preservation of vacant lots and allowing children access to them

Places That Children Learn From: qualifying places allow children to learn about place history, culture and socialization by participating in everyday activities and community life as apprentices and legitimate participants. Such places are typically characterized by:

1. *Historic and cultural significance* where people and purpose of the place are more important than antiquity
2. *Active social interactions* where children learn through participation in community life
3. *Children playing multiple roles* in everyday activities to contribute to the life of the family and community

Places Children Conceal Secrets In: qualifying places allow children to seek out special private places where children and their acts can be concealed from adult gazes. Such places help in unfolding of the self in the developing child. Such places are typically characterized by:

1. *Distance from the home* base to avoid known gazes
2. *Anonymity of children* in those places
3. *Lack of interest by other interest groups* such as in dirty or smelly incidental spaces
4. *Abundance of fixed and temporary features* that act as props for hiding, constructing, and playing

13.7. How Does This New Child Friendly Place Typology Contribute to the CFC Discourse?

This new typology of child friendly places based on the four collapsed dimensions of place friendship will allow us to investigate places in a wide variety of contexts by asking questions such as "are there places in children's everyday environment that allow children to care for them? How do children care for these places? What do these places look like?" By addressing the four place friendship dimensions of Care and Respect for Places, Meaningful Exchange with Places including creating territories and free expression in places, Learning and Competence through Place Experience, and Having Secret Places, this new typology will enable conceptualization of child friendly places in any living context in the world. Empirical inquiry based on this tangible framework will definitely allow creation of child friendly city strategies for enhancing the experience for children living in any context, instead of fixing mere infrastructure problems in poor neighborhoods. Child friendly places thus created will become valuable environmental resources for children living in small nuclear families in western industrialized cities as well as for

children living in large extended families in small houses in non-western developing cities. In addition, this typology of child friendly places will provide an empirical framework for evaluating the child friendliness of the diverse and divergent range of design projects promoted under that label. This evaluation will be on the basis of whether children learn to care for, are allowed to be active in, learn from and gain competence, and are allowed privacy in these designed places.

Chapter 14
Implications for Children's Environments and Child Friendly Cities

I have thus far only talked about child friendly places mostly because my original hypothesis envisaged that children construct the child friendly city through their first and second hand experiences with numerous and interlocking places in their cities. Since the last seven chapters explored in depth where and how such meaning construction happens in different kinds of places in the child's everyday environment, in this last chapter, I would like to comment on how the knowledge and understanding of the child friendly place could inform policies for child friendly cities through urban development.

14.1. An Ecological Approach to Children's Environments

Places, including child friendly ones, are to be found in immediate smaller settings as well as in distant larger ones. Given the diverse scope of places in the child's environment as was evident from the study in Nizamuddin Basti, the only way to address policy implications for child friendly cities, is by adopting an ecological frame of reference as suggested by Bronfenbrenner (1979) and adopted by several researchers to study the complex relationships of children and their environments (Hart 1979, Moore 1985, and Matthews 1991). Moreover, as these places are influenced by decisions taken outside the local sites, it makes sense to study the ecological environment or the overall context of these places from a systemic perspective to understand the wisdom of the system in the production of these places.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) envisaged the child's environment as a multi-level dynamic system where each level within the system comprised of a set of physical and social structures that combined to form a particular environmental system. For the first time, the ecological frame of reference introduced "an extended conception of the environment (ibid, p. 22)" in developmental psychology as an inter-connected ecological environment within which the relationship between the child and the immediate settings was influenced by "forces emanating from more remote regions in the larger physical and social milieu (ibid, p. 13)." Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed four dynamic environmental systems, which were nested, each inside the next higher level.

Microsystems are represented by settings and structures in children's immediate environment. The physical places comprising the microsystem would be the home, and the social milieu would be the family and immediate caregivers. But as the child grows older, more places, and more people are added to the child's socio-physical repertoire through a process by which an active biopsychological human organism enters into progressively more complex reciprocal interactions

with persons, objects and symbols in its immediate environment. This dynamic process is a characteristic of the microsystem, and is called *proximal processes* (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci 1994). According to Matthews, "negative effects result from a microsystem characterized by a narrowly defined set of activities, impoverished environmental experiences and a lack of social interaction. In contrast, wide-ranging, enduring, and reciprocal social relationships in diverse geographical settings provide enriching environmental circumstances for the child (1991, 7)."

Mesosystems are represented by settings and structures in the world beyond home, with which a growing child comes in increasing contact. The relationships between the child, and school, child and the local community form important mesosystems. In reviewing this ecological framework from the perspective of children's environmental experience, Matthews writes: " in essence, the stronger, the more diverse, and the more positive the links between settings, the more beneficial and influential will the resulting mesosystem be upon a child's environmental opportunity. A dense ecology of links is seen as a positive influence, whereas a poor set of mesosystems produces impaired opportunities. Of particular, significance to the way in which children encounter geographical environments, especially in an urban context, is the relationship between family and the neighborhood (1991, 9)."

Exosystems are represented by larger social and organizational structures that play a decisive role in the quality of children's everyday life such as religious structures, class structures, value systems of the society, local government agencies, and educational systems. The child does not play a role in shaping these structures or the decisions flowing from them such as that of local planning authorities or educational policies, which influence life opportunities for children. The Growing Up in Cities projects aim at creating better environments for children through impacting at the exosystemic level by providing opportunities to children and youth to participate in the planning and design of their neighborhoods alongside local planning authorities. As Matthews point out the exosystem is a site of contest between adult perception of resources such as vacant land, and children's construction of meaning of these spaces.

Macrosystems are represented by a society's worldviews that may include, to cite a few examples, notions of child rearing; appropriate place behavior in public places; notions of privatization of children's environments; and child rights based interventions for children at every systemic level of the ecological environmental model.

Bronfenbrenner's model allows us to see the broad local-global connections of most place-based experiences of children in their everyday environment. In using this model to evaluate environmental child friendliness, we may find that some socio-physical places are friendly at one systemic level and not another. The next section will use this model to evaluate child friendliness of Nizamuddin Basti as an ecological environment for the thousands of children living in its many streets and precincts.

14.1.1. An Ecological Model of Environmental Child Friendliness for Nizamuddin Basti

From the analysis presented in Chapter 12, it was clear that Nizamuddin Basti had several different child friendly places spread all over its local area for children in their middle childhood to enjoy. But how child friendly is Nizamuddin Basti as a *living environment* for children? The environmental systems in children's environments and the places embedded within each system level has been mapped in figure 14.1.

14.1.1.1. Microsystem

At the microsystemic level, children of Nizamuddin Basti enjoyed several different forms of social relationships within large family structures, often over three generations, with many siblings and cousins, and with extended kin in the Basti. The proximal processes Bronfenbrenner and Ceci refers to in the case of Basti children were not restricted to blood relatives alone but includes peers, and neighbors. Therefore interactions happen in mostly local, diverse settings including streets in front of home, house thresholds, open spaces near home, markets, and the precinct. In contrast the five middle class children in the planned Nizamuddin West neighborhood that I interviewed, talked about a narrowly defined set of activities, impoverished range of direct experience with places within the microsystem (all places nominated by them were within the home or in other cities), and limited social interactions outside the immediate small nuclear family. The several different places affording place friendship to children in the immediate environment certainly makes Nizamuddin Basti a child friendly environment at the microsystem level.

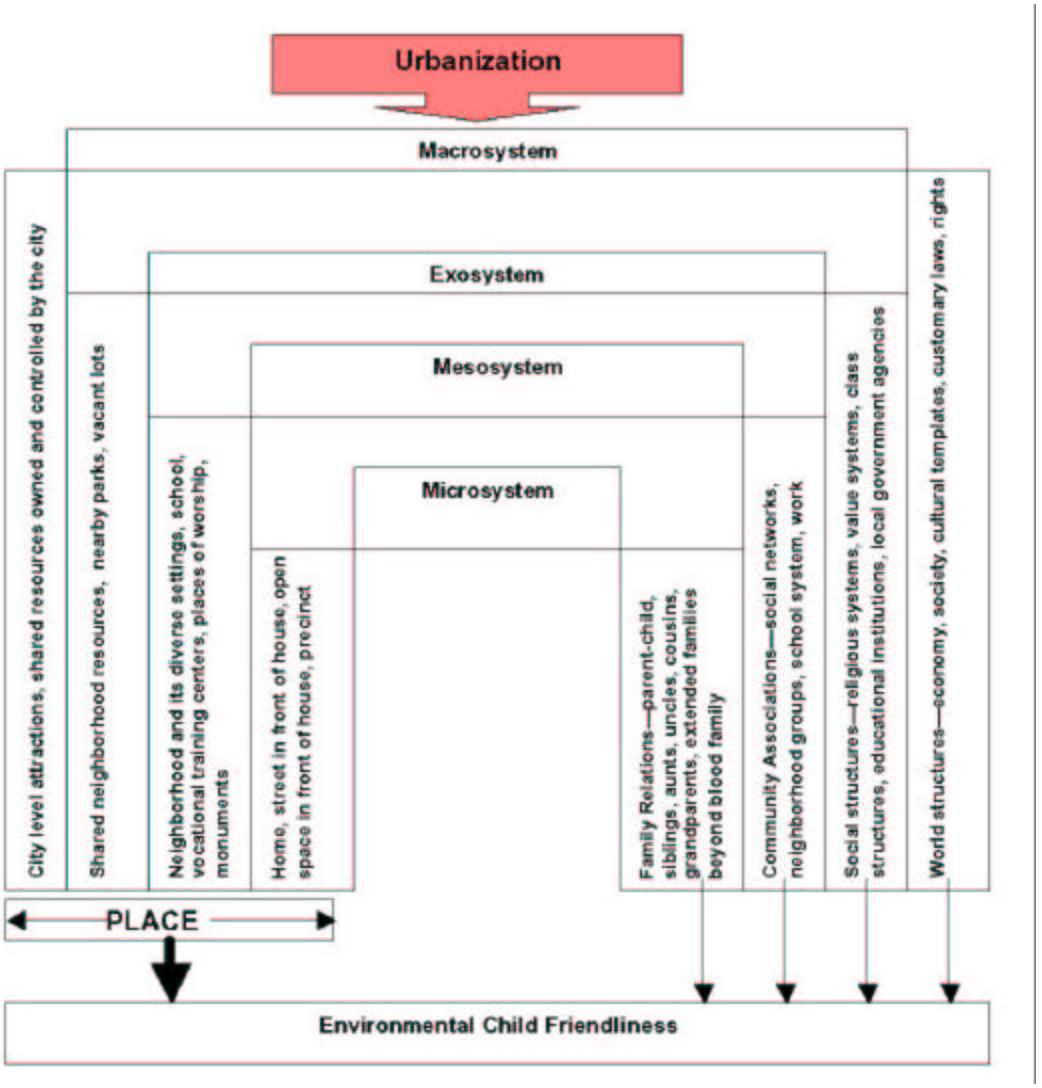


Figure 14.1: Environmental Systems of Childhood in Nizamuddin Basti (based on Bronfennbrenner 1979, and Wachs & Shpancer 1998). Arrows indicate influence on construct. Figure to be updated

14.1.1.2. Mesosystem

At the mesosystmeic level also, children in their middle childhood, had considerable freedom to explore the neighborhood and interact with the community at large including professional networks provided by religious organizations and NGOs. As discussed in Chapter 5, Nizamuddin Basti despite its widespread poverty provided a safe and sustainable habitat to poor Muslim families. These conditions according to Warren, (1989) provide important *ecological niches*, serving to strengthen family subsystems, and in the case of the Basti, community and social subsystems. Of the forty-three unique places recommended by the children of the Basti, only nine were

outside the local area. Though it is true, that Basti children relied on walking, or expensive public transportation to get around the city, the range of everyday places and nature of exploration enjoyed by the Basti children, were far greater than those enjoyed by Nizamuddin children who had cars and drivers to facilitate greater mobility within the city. Children encountered these recommended friendly places on a daily basis and had unconstrained access and activity opportunities in them. This is only possible when the community structure is embracing or at least accepting and tolerating of children in everyday outdoors.

14.1.1.3. Exosystem

Exosystemic structures of educational policies, local governmental planning and design decisions on behalf of the poor community, perceptions of social class, cultural values and religious dogmas worked together to restrict the life opportunities for children in the Basti. According to the draft Master Plan of Delhi 2021, a neighborhood housing with more than 10,000 people must have a senior secondary school in addition to nursery and primary schools. However, Nizamuddin Basti with a population over 12000 only had a primary school provided by the government. If The Hope Project did not run the non-formal school for adolescent girls, few of the Muslim girls would have received an education beyond primary school as the senior schools were all outside the neighborhood and conservative Muslim families did not allow older girls to step outside without an escort. For an everyday activity like school, finding an escort on an everyday basis in poor families become problematic. Moreover, older girls were responsible for a large share of the housework.

Chapter 7 discussed the conflict between the city and the Basti over use of designed open spaces in the local area. The hidden agenda of the local planning and design agencies in transforming vacant land around the Basti into green barriers between the city and the Basti were also discussed. The Basti community, especially children, however saw these landscaped spaces as their play and sometimes living spaces (in the case of children without homes or overcrowded homes). Children had no role in creating these places, but at every opportunity they actively shaped these places through their actions as discussed in chapters 8, 10, and 12.

The Basti community is viewed by the city as a ghetto for poor Muslims. This is the reason why Nizamuddin West children had historically stayed out of the Basti despite its proximity to their neighborhood. The Basti children however found their most cared for place in the heart of Nizamuddin West. Residence in the Basti constructs a conservative Muslim identity for youth. As I discussed in Chapter 5, this identity limits career opportunities for youth and hence their assimilation in mainstream Indian society.

Formal education is not valued as much in the community as Koranic studies. This is often the reason why large families would not send children to school, formal or non-formal. The Hope social workers spent most of their time convincing parents of the value of non-religious formal education. This value system of the community greatly limited life opportunities for children. And so did religious dogmas that prevented campaigns on HIV Aids awareness and sex education in the Basti. The Hope Project faced great community resistance when they held a fair in their premises promoting the use of condoms. The men, including some youth and religious leaders, openly protested, shouting slogans at the distasteful display that apparently disregarded religious sentiments and beliefs. Through several community meetings, Hope negotiated with the community to host smaller more intimate counseling sessions on the issue.

14.1.1.4. Macrosystem

Things get even more complicated at the macrosystemic level for children in the Basti. The economic, political, and legal structures that impact the Basti at a global scale are all unfavorable toward this marginalized minority community of several new, and often illegal migrants, who lived on a piece of prime urban land in the most coveted sub-zone of Delhi without paying house taxes. Moreover, the original Pirzada community, and several different city departments contested legal ownership of the land itself.

To understand how the Basti environment fared on child rights based indicators, I used the toolkit developed by the Habitat International Coalition for evaluating the adequacy of children's housing environment during the focus groups (the complete assessment on all thirteen indicators see appendix 4). The responses from seventy girls (9-16 years) were negative mainly related to basic infrastructure, perceived safety in streets, and gender equality—56% of the respondents said that they did not have good waste disposal systems in the community and that was why their streets stank; 66% said they could not live, learn and play at home and on the streets with out negotiating severe gender constraints (discussed in detail in chapter 5); 60% said they did not enjoy the same opportunities and rights as boys.

Lack of job opportunities, lack of education and training, and a degraded living environment imposed great hardships on children and their families in Nizamuddin Basti. Theoretically children living under the physical environmental conditions of poverty are more likely to be born with a low birth weight; more likely to die from birth defect, in fires, from infectious diseases and parasites; more likely to be hospitalized for asthma; more likely to be diagnosed as learning disabled; more likely to drop out of high school; and more likely to be reported as neglected (Gonzales-Ramos 1997). Several of these ill-fates visited many of the children of the Basti. But

these obstacles were mainly due to exo- and macrosytemic failures by structures and policies that were beyond the control of the children or the adults of the Basti community. At both these systemic levels the Basti would be not only be an un-child friendly environment but an un-human friendly environment in the city. However, at the levels, in which people including children had some control over their lives and environments, the Basti would be a very child friendly place at the micro and mesosystemic levels. The fact that in the housing rights workshop with girls, out of thirteen child rights based indicators only three were voted as negative, suggest that children's own perceptions of their living environment was generally positive despite strong narratives about constraints and infrastructural problems (see appendix 4). During the workshop, The Hope School girls agreed that their educational rights were fulfilled within the Basti. One of the teachers pointed out that The Hope School being a non-formal NGO run school will not be considered adequate in the rights discourse even though it offered not only better infrastructure but a more adequate curriculum that focused on the specific needs of each child than the government schools. This brings home the point that Nieuwenhuys (1998) makes about limiting the caring for children to only family ad the state in the context of developing societies. The girls' positive response to most housing rights, suggests, that inspite of structural failures, policy inadequacies, and commonly held perceptions of a poor misery-ridden ghetto by the city at large, children living within the Basti drew sustenance and formed their own ideas about their living environment as a child friendly place based on their everyday interactions with their rich socio-physical environment.

14.2. Creating Child Friendly Environments in Cities

Research in children's environment in the non-western world, in New England, USA (Hart 1979), in Montreal (Jacobs & Jacobs 1980), in Netherlands (Verwer 1980), in Toronto (Hill & Michelson 1981), and in England (Moore1986), has shown time and again that urban neighborhoods in order to better cater to the needs of the young, should provide a safe environment (through road safety, water safety etc.), and access to diverse resources which could be easily explored and modified by children. Neighborhoods, these studies reveal, should be multi-purpose including small-scale landuses of different kinds rather than specialized coarse-grained facilities, which overwhelm the residential scale of neighborhoods and bring in more traffic. Childress (2000) in studying teenagers in an American small-town had similar advice: "Zoning should be primarily by scale of development rather than type (307)."

Colin Ward, in his panoramic exploration of urban childhood in industrialized western cities, affirms that in order to forge the link between the city and the child in ways such that children's urban experience was made meaningful for the child instead of alienating, the solution was not to

create discrete pocket projects for children that catered to some specific needs. Instead Ward (1978) wrote:

> *I don't want a Childhood City. I want a city where children live in the same world as I do. If we seek a shared city, rather than a city where unwanted patches are set aside to contain children and their activities, our priorities are not quite the same as those of the crusaders of the child. We have enormous expertise and a mountain of research on the appropriate provision of parks and play spaces for use by children of different ages, but the ultimate truth is that children play anywhere and everywhere. Because some bit of the city is designated as play space on a plan, there is no guarantee that it will be used as such, nor that other areas will not be. If the claim of children to share the city is admitted, the whole environment has to be designed and shaped with their needs in mind…I can think of no city that admits the claim of children, though I can think of many which seem deliberately designed to exclude them (204).*

Hugh Matthews also came to the same conclusion after reviewing the policy directions suggested by several empirical studies (cited at the beginning of this section) in the western world:

> *Highly formalized and partitioned environments are unattractive to most children, especially as they spend much of their time in streets and on empty sites, and encourage a division of activities between children and adults, whereas a preferred goal is a shared landscape.*

Children of Nizamuddin Basti live in an environment that is perceived as safe and secure for their particular ethnic community, and had ample opportunities for exploration and scope for modification of the local environment through their actions. The children's neighborhood is a mixed use one, where small-scale landuses of every kind can be found. The only specific facility that visually looks out of scale with the rest of the settlement is the Markaz or the tall and squat concrete headquarters of the Tablighi Jamat movement. This is perhaps because of the larger purpose of this institution, which is to train Muslims from all over the world in the Tablighi way, and not just Muslims in Nizamuddin. Every place that children recommended as a friendly one was a shared space with many actors present most times of the day. It would seem from the recommendations of the western literature that Nizamuddin Basti embodied all the factors that could possibly make a neighborhood a shared landscape, but which also catered to particular needs of children.

However, one key finding of the existing literature does not hold true for Nizamudin Basti. Contrary to the findings in western urban environments, which had several, designed playgrounds for children in the local area, children in the Basti by themselves, actively sought out formal parks and playgrounds (such as the attractive Children's Park in India Gate) not only in the local area but also in the wider city. This is because no one had ever designed a playground specifically for the Basti. These children enjoying considerable freedom of movement defied parental control to seek out far-off designed landscapes as a secret act. Probably if they had a playspace specifically marked for their use, such as the Umbrella Park for Nizamuddin West children, the Basti children would not queue up outside the park missing evening tuition classes just to be in a cared for setting for two hours. This would indicate that in low-income non-western neighborhoods where majority of the world's children live, there is indeed a need for providing well-cared for parks and playgrounds that welcomed children's activities alongside adult ones, in addition to conserving special childhood places such as informal vacant lots. The children of Nizamuddin Basti were in fact lucky to have several parks and open spaces in their local area even though these were not created for, or legally owned by their communities.

The CFC initiative envisages the city to be a complex governmental organization that has institutional, legal, budgetary and planning powers to develop strategies for transforming "the living environments of children at the family, neighborhood and the city levels" (Riggio 2002, 45). Child friendly places in Nizamuddin Basti were, however, found at the micro-, and mesosystemic levels where the presence of the government was minimal. It seems, from the experience of children in Nizamuddin Basti, the power to create a child friendly environment lies within the hearts and minds of the community including children and youth, and not governmental organizations who had already made up their minds about "the slum". As Harper and his colleagues (2004) rightly point out, the dominant cultural narratives, or "shared stories that are communicated in media and popular symbols to describe a particular group of people in a stereotyped fashion (200)," about "people with few material resources tend to be negative and often these negative narratives are accepted into the personal stories (and identities) of the people who are their target (200)." At the higher structural levels, the dominant narratives about the Basti were similarly negative. After interviewing a high-ranking landscape architect in DDA who was responsible for design of the two parks in the periphery of the Basti including the coveted DDA Park, and the gardeners responsible for looking after the DDA Park, I found out how the dominant cultural narrative influenced production and use of public spaces for the poor. There seemed to be subliminal messages in the acts of design, and rules of use: provide the cheapest equipment as in any case they would be stolen, didn't matter if children get hurt or injured (as indeed one child did in front of my own eyes while coming down a slide); no wasting money on

trashcans, what's the point the community littered anyways; send children away if they engaged in ball games, ask them to go to designated sports fields even if you knew there were none, but its not your headache as long as messy children left the city park.

Many of the children during their interviews with me revealed that they had internalized these negative stereotypes as part of their community image. They reinforced what the DDA landscape architect and the gardeners had said about the vandalism within poor communities, when they told me that however much they craved for better play facilities in their parks and open spaces, their neighbors would come and steal the equipment. The other fallout of this negative cultural stereotyping was focused attempts by youth to get even, or to defy authority. Twelve-year old Zoheb who had been thrown out of the DDA Park for wielding a cricket bat several times, sneaked back at night with his friends and smashed every light on posts with his deadly strokeplay. He proudly told me, "I hit every light with a sixer. It was not as if I had climbed on the pole to smash the lights!"

To suggest design guidelines to help the city to improve the Basti environment within the existing framework of perceptions of the Basti, would be "to accept that narrative, to surrender to the terms that had already captured [the community] (Childress 2000, 297, insertion mine)." According to Harper et al (2004), by knowing community narratives or shared stories told by community members about themselves and their personal and shared experiences in making sense of their lives in the setting, existing dominant cultural ones maybe influenced to modify the terms of reference for the people and hence their needs. This is why Childress (2000) advices, "What we need is not new rules, but a new story (297)." The new community narratives, according to Harper et al (2004) would further aid the construction of more positive personal identities of the people, and ultimately bring in behavioral change in both the people under scrutiny, and the larger community who took structural decisions on their behalf. What this means is that if the policy planners, city agencies, and better-off citizens stopped seeing Nizamuddin Basti as "a poor Muslim ghetto", and instead saw it as a sustainable habitat for poor Muslims, and a child friendly place for children who actively sought out outdoor resources on an everyday basis, the attitudes of people, who managed and supervised the many resources owned by the city within the local area of the Basti, toward the community would be very different. Under such positive community circumstances, children would not feel unsure about recommending objects of desire such as swings in their neighborhood, because their first thoughts would not be to suspect stereotyped neighbors of stealing public goods. Nor would design professionals critical of the governmental interpretation of development goals in low-income communities feel troubled to recommend design guidelines to improve the physical environment of the neighborhood.

14.2.1. Influence of policy

Ruback & Innes (1988) suggested that researchers needed to include policy variables as predictor variables, and dependent variables as variables of interest to the policy maker in order to influence policy through their research. If researchers were able to make clear connections between how these policy variables affected dependent variables that were of interest to a wide cross-section of society—such as health, education, recreation etc.—the research will be considered utilitarian from a policy standpoint. This approach to utilitarian policy research when scientifically strengthened through better research methodologies and evaluative strategies as suggested by Campbell (1969) would create more readily interpretable evidence, and make causal statements with confidence, and hence would make policy actors pay attention. However, as Lindblom point out "A policy is sometimes the outcome of a political compromise among policy makers, none of whom had in mind quite the problem to which the agreed policy is the solution" (Lindblom, 1968; p. 4). In recognizing the tension between reason and politics, Lindblom wrote:

> *The conflict between reason, analysis and science on the one side, and politics and democracy on the other, remains. If a society wants more reason and analysis in policy making, perhaps it must surrender some aspects of democracy (Lindblom & Woodhouse, 1993, p.12)*

March, offered some valuable skepticism about Campbell's calculated rationality and Lindblom's learning from the political process. March (1994) thought decision makers routinely ignored available information and asked for more. According to March, "knowledge can be inimical to making decisions. Knowledge seems to increase questions at a faster rate than it increases answers. It provides too many qualifications, recognizes too much complexity" (March, 1994, p. 265). To guide decision-making about design and development of the living environment, Kaplan and Kaplan (1982) suggested *usefulness of new information or knowledge was more important than scientific precision*. The Kaplans' point of view found resonance in the words of eminent landscape architect, Ian McHarg, who commented on the pitfalls of scientists making decisions about the environment:

> *One of the most serious criticisms is that they are thoroughly irresolute in the absence of impeccable evidence, and this is a profound weakness in a world which is finally unknowable (1969, p.125).*

Kaplan and Kaplan (1982) strongly advocated making *any* research available to the decision-making process by saying,

> *Decisions about the environment are being made everyday. Designers, planners, and managers continue to ply their trade, with or without adequate information. Often guidance from research can be enormously helpful, but the decision will be made without if the data are not available. People continue, as they have for centuries, to fumble along, doing the best they can. This is no different now than it ever was. The difference is how widespread an impact such decisions can now have. As it is possible to make bigger changes in the environment and to implement them more rapidly than ever before, the scale of possible mistakes, even disasters, has risen proportionately. Thus there is disproportionate payoff for even a few data—if the data are available in time and in comprehendible form (200).*

The Growing Up in Cities projects had typically worked with children living in poor communities in fast urbanizing contexts around the globe with the ultimate goal of developing "a set of models for research-based participatory urban planning, design and community development with children and youth (Chawla 2000, 30)". These projects revealed, especially in the very low-income contexts of communities living in Boca-Barracas in Argentina, and Sathyanagar in India, that despite positive micro- and mesosytems in children's environments mainly due to the social and cultural richness of the communities, similar to Nizamuddin Basti, the dominant structures that decided the fate of these communities through provisions for children and families such as in providing "piped water, sanitation, secure housing, education, employment for parents, and protection from pollution (Chawla 2000, 33)" were inexcusably inadequate. The GUIC approach was to engage children as collaborators to recommend changes so that children's quality of life could be improved through children's participation. Small-scale projects resulted that cleaned up trash, renovated plazas, reopened adolescent centers, built quiet study centers, planted and protected more trees. In other words GUIC enabled micro- and mesosystemic improvements in children's environments. One of the reasons that this global effort did not influence exosystems through urban development policies in any of the eight countries to improve children's lives in cities was because the research did not directly explore policy variables or variables which policy makers control and change, such as zoning laws, or mandatory provisions within neighborhoods etc. in relation to structural issues of children 's health, education and well-being. However even when policy makers were invited to review the findings of the study that clearly showed infrastructure failures at a structural level which the city could rectify, they chose to ignore the evidence. This finds resonance in March's (1994) idea that decision makers routinely ignore available information and ask for more.

Reviewed together, the GUIC studies, and the current study in Nizamuddin Basti show a powerful pattern of children's everyday environments where children can be seen as "creative social agents who produce their own unique children's cultures while simultaneously contributing to the production of adult societies (Corsaro, 2005, 3)." Policy makers need to see that in spite of active structural neglect related to basic physical infrastructure and material resources, and despite substandard, tokenist, and often discriminatory provisions based on dominant cultural narratives, the children of Nizamuddin Basti or Sathyanagar, or Boca-Barracas, manage to thrive and be happy. This information will not correct every ill plaguing the community overnight, or in the near future, but may change the dominant cultural narrative as Harper and his colleagues (2002) suggested, by making people in power see children living in poverty as social actors who resiliently fight policy indifference and poverty through resources they have secured through their own efforts, and not as stereotypical passive recipients of government aid. And that will be the true starting point for creation of child friendly cities, where the political and social system understand the value of children's agency even when living in poverty. This is particularly important in low-income communities in developing countries where the experience of poverty is quite different from western countries. As Alan Sillitoe remarks, "When there is widespread poverty, people help each other in order to survive, but when poverty is patchy, uneven, and separated in its unevenness, they lose faith in unity, they acquire a sense of guilt, and this is worst of all because it is unnecessary, undeserved, and undermines even further their self-respect (quoted in Ward 1978, p. 17)." The findings of GUIC studies with children living in poverty across the world, suggest that children who were growing up in a low-income apartment housing in Oakland, California had the most alienating experience in the city because of their identities as poor immigrant children amidst relatively better-off neighborhoods. However, experiences of children from Argentina and India, who lived amidst more even conditions of poverty in their local area, registered community support, culturally rich lives, high self-esteem and resilience in stark contrast to the children growing up in an isolated poor housing project in the richest country in the world.

Poor children in the non-western world do not expect much from the city (as was clear from the Nizamuddin children's responses to the housing rights indicators). However, with a little help from the city, they may even find that all the promises that their governments had made at international conventions related to child rights are indeed met in their community and living environment. A little help from the city would not only imply provision of the obvious basic physical infrastructure related to housing—water, sanitation, electricity, but also more complicated legal ones such as secure tenure of houses, and decisions on vacant land within the

immediate living environment in favor of children and their communities including the decision of non-intervention in community vacant land.

In official eyes, small participatory projects with children such as the ones under GUIC are often amusing and not taken seriously in the business of design and planning of cities because they are one-off case studies in different countries. However, in the postmodern thoughts of Foucault (1972) any large-scale analysis that affects multitudes (in this case children in fast urbanizing cities) must be built from our understanding of the micropolitics of power at the local level. Childress (2000) studied adolescents in a California small town. On the issue of generalizability of findings from his single case study, Childress reminded the reader that even though the teenagers he studied lived in "unique and specific ways", the hidden agendas that shaped their town, school and homes were in fact instrumental in shaping similar places across the country.

14.3. Transferability of Study Findings

Where are child friendly places of the kind encountered in this study likely to be found, or influenced by the findings of this study? In choosing the setting for the study, I selected three physical variables—a) high-density, b) mixed-use, and c) more informal design, to ensure that I worked with children who lived under physical conditions as the majority of the city's population (70%). However, every one of those living environments, other than being urban and low-income, were likely to be as unique and specific as Nizamudin Basti due to reasons of culture, religion, and social values. These other settlements and neighborhoods were likely to be facing similar contestations over land and resources with city authorities as is evident from the continuous struggle of NGOs in South Asia to stop forced evictions from inner city slums and other low-income areas of locational interest to the city.

14.3.1. Transfering Findings to Other Urban Environments

The six empirical chapters on place friendship dimensions suggested that the interaction between high-density, mixed-use and informal design produced spaces within Nizamuddin Basti that easily allowed children to nurture all the dimensions of place friendship. It would be interesting to analyze how the pattern of child friendliness of places might change if any of these three variables was missing or replaced by its conceptual opposite while the other two were held constant. The following section will present just such an analysis of child friendliness of places under the influence of these three key variables.

14.3.1.1. Proposition #1: *Low Density*, Mixed-Use, and More Informal Design

A lower density neighborhood, even though it was a mixed use one with more informal design inputs than formal, by reducing the number of people, will also reduce social connectivity within the community. With fewer known people, the public places will not appear as safe as in a high-density neighborhood which typically will have more familiar faces and eyes on the streets and spaces overlooking houses. Mixed use will ensure different types of places, and informal design inputs will ensure that those places evolved according to the needs, and lifestyles dictated by cultural and religious practices of the people. But with lesser density, fewer such places will be developed thus offering much less choice of friendly places to children. Less number of places in addition to reduced perceived safety in those places will likely to deter spontaneous doing of children on an everyday basis in streets and open spaces in the neighborhood. These conditions are more likely to see a reduction in "places that children create through their action", though unfamiliarity of places might add to the repertoire of "secret places of children".

14.3.1.2. Proposition #2: High-Density, *Monofunctional-Use*, and More Informal Design

A monofunctional neighborhood, even though it had high density and more informal design inputs than formal, by banishing everyday small-scale commercial activities such as local grocery stores, restaurants, stationary shops, tailors and hairdressers, will remove the prerequisites of a thriving public life in the neighborhood. The choice of different types of places will reduce, and so will children's participation in the everyday happenings in these places. This will potentially reduce the chances of children learning from diverse everyday practices, and becoming competent as social actors through participation in those practices. The diversity of spatial characteristics that will inevitably be lost under conditions of a monofunctional neighborhood, are reduced opportunities for children to find places to a) support different interests and activities, b) create identifiable territories, and c) freely express themselves.

14.3.1.3. Proposition #3: High-Density, Mixed-Use, and *More Formal Design*

Conditions of high-density, mixed use and more formal design inputs, in the context of the well-recorded disconnect between design professionals' thinking about public spaces dictated by briefs that typically favor powerful interest groups as in the examples of the designed parks around Nizamuddin, will take away the possibility of children creating places through actions and injecting meaning in places through active use and appropriation. However as the behavior patterns of this study suggest, if children are allowed access in these formally designed spaces, they will learn to respect and care for these places in the ways envisaged by the acts of design.

There is also the possibility of learning from formally preserved places of historic and cultural significance. These conditions will favor places that children care for and learn from, at the expense of secret places, and places that children create through their actions.

The new peripherally planned low-income housing around Delhi, embodies all three conceptual opposites—low-density (at least initially when families are resettled here after their eviction from inner city area), mono-functional with no facility other than small plots often without water, sanitation and electricity, and formally planned by DDA to fit maximum plots of 12.5 to 25 square meters on a vacant piece of land. From the above analysis it would seem that these new planned low-income settlements would rob children of all the four child friendly place types.

14.3.2. Generalizing Findings to Childhood

Even if we find other low-income neighborhoods with similar conditions of high-density, mixed-use, and more informal design, children are unlikely to find places outdoors friendly, as children of Nizamuddin Basti did, unless those neighborhoods nurtured *childhoods* similar to those experienced by children in the Basti. Typically, the Basti children had childhoods that allowed them to be active in public life, be integrated with the adult world, and that provided them space to negotiate outdoor use when faced with constraints. These children were very visible in their local community, actively engaging with the public life of places in their neighborhood and its surroundings, and very much responsible for work in the domestic and sometimes the parochial arena for everyday survival needs of their families. The material poverty of the living environment in Nizamuddin Basti created housing conditions that often exposed children to elements that modern global ideals of childhood is shielded from by families. According to the conditions put forth by Qvortrup (2005) and discussed in chapter 2 under the literature review of childhoods, it would seem that Nizamuddin children *did not have a childhood*, similar to children in medieval societies. Most of the rights of the child according to the CRC would be considered lacking in this community because not all children in the Basti have access to education, adequate healthcare, and protection from adult business.

I would have accepted these arguments except for the fact that when children were asked during the social science workshops whether the child rights related to an adequate standard of living were met for them in the Basti, the majority acknowledged that most of those child rights were secured for them in the community. Based on my own ethnographic observations I found out that the community in fact had a good idea that children constituted a particular group with special needs, and worked toward realizing them. Even though these children did not wear any special clothing or had special toys, children's right to play in the community was recognized and

mischief tolerated because those were acts of children. Similarly, special arrangements for children's entertainment during the festivals through several different forms of joy rides, and snacks, indicate that children's recreational needs were indeed respected and catered for by the community. Moreover, children of Nizamuddin, except for new migrants, had extensive social networks that acted as support systems for poor families. Even the new migrants found it easier to be assimilated in this poor neighborhood and its social structure than elsewhere in the city.

In contrast the affluent children in Nizamuddin West most certainly enjoyed the compartmentalized, protected childhoods characteristic of democratic modern Western societies. They were not autonomously visible in public, nor did they participate in adult business. The findings of this study are *not* generalizable to the environments that nurture these ideal innocent childhoods, but rather the patterns of children's place friendships found in Nizamuddin Basti are likely to be found in neighborhoods around the world where children have no childhood. That is if we define childhood according to the dominant ideological discourses of romantic childhood.

14.4. Possible Policy Directions for CFC Initiatives

Research being a relatively new phenomenon in this discipline, there is an unsaid expectation that the product of research will influence design decision-making as after all design is an applied field. This tacit expectation is the clear message from Kaplan and Kaplan (1982) quoted above. And the way to bridge this gap between environment-behavior and design research, and the practice of designing environments for people is through creating design guidelines (Cooper-Marcus 1985). However, as discussed above, given my discomfort with the stereotyped dominant cultural narratives about the Basti, I see no value in providing a set of design guidelines that will enhance the quality of child friendly places within the Basti by selecting and improving the aspects of the physical environment that supported place friendship. I do not suggest that this is not a worthwhile exercise, but I fear that given the larger social and economic context of the Basti, improved design will only be a tool in the hands of the powerful city organizations to further marginalize the children from the few places that were special to them.

However, the wealth of data on child friendly places generated from children who actively used a variety of public places in the understudied context of an Indian city, offer a great opportunity for creating new useful design knowledge based on children's behavior and meaning construction in certain types of places. I had included a detail discussion on the characteristics of child friendly places under each of the four dimensions in the last chapter to address this valid point. The attributes of child friendly places I had outlined are not to be read as design guidelines. They at best begin to tie down behavior and needs with supportive physical environment without

specifying how. In order to make these tentative ideas more action-oriented, a set of " 'Possible Design Responses,' or suggested ways in which a particular issue might be met (Cooper-Marcus 1987)" would be needed. That level of specificity is beyond the scope and purpose of this dissertation. I will, however, discuss broad policy directions for CFC initiatives to improve children's physical environments in low-income communities based on the key findings of this study.

14.4.1. Propositions to Improve Children's Physical Environments in Low-Income Communities

I understand that one study is not enough to develop a new construct or suggest ideas for implementing child friendly physical environments through design in a country context. This study is an invitation for engagement with this new construct of place friendship that theoretically underpins environmental child friendliness of children's everyday environments in cities, and simultaneously in expanding on its conceptual and empirical possibilities in other global contexts. However, there is no harm in recommending possible policy directions for CFC initiatives to improve living environments for children living in poverty. The empirical study in Nizamuddin Basti in New Delhi did produce useful new information about children's physical environments in a low-income community, and without sharing this new knowledge, decisions will be made for similar environments for marginalized children in large parts India and other developing countries in the non-western world without benefiting from the insights that this study has to offer.

14.4.1.1. Develop Different Types of Accessible Open Spaces in Residential Areas as a Citywide Strategy

Formally designed open spaces in the local area have a global appeal as suggested by the preferences for parks and playgrounds in the local area more than any other kind of place type by both poor children living in Nizamuddin Basti as well as children in three different kinds of neighborhoods in England (Moore 1986). City governments should in fact focus on developing a diverse range (varying in scale and scope) of accessible open spaces in urban neighborhoods as part of child friendly city initiatives to improve quality of the physical environments in cities. Particularly in the case of low-income communities, this will enrich environmental resources for poor children outside the severe material limitations of the home environment for fulfilling a diverse range of functional and psychological needs.

14.4.1.2. Create Well-Cared for Shared Parks That Encourage Different Forms of Activities

The highest ranked place in the top friendly place category of *formal open space local* is the DDA Park in the periphery of the Basti. This park was considered friendly on several accounts—as a place that children respected and cared for, as a place that children could actively engage with, and hence create identifiable territories, and as a place in which children could freely express themselves. This park through its physical environment communicated signs of care, and hence invited respect and caring of children within the socially constructed notion of care in the community, which was to abide by the rules of the place and maintain the order of the existing. This park was a shared community space with nested settings that allowed different age groups, genders, locals as well as strangers to engage in common enjoyment of the park as a whole. However as the nature of the different settings varied in nature and scale, from passive well-maintained large central green areas, to active rough grounds in the peripheries, the park environment could support diverse uses and activities by different users. In order to create successful shared landscapes (as Ward 1978; and Matthews 1992, had suggested), it is important for the place to offer several different activity nodes that differ in sizes and shapes but are nested within larger spaces. This will allow dominant (typically adults, men, locals, adolescents) as well as less dominant groups (typically children, women, outside users, and younger children) to claim different parts of the same landscape by using its multiple affordances.

14.4.1.3. Promote Mixed Uses Within Low-Income Neighborhoods in Relation to the Scale of the Settlement

Typically low-income settlements in cities around the world are high-density living environments. But they may or may not be mixed use or informally produced. The lack of these other physical characteristics, not only rob neighborhoods of rich socio-physical settings where the community meet and interact with each other and where most of the daily needs of life are met, but also deny adequate standard of living to the community by creating considerable physical distance between the local area and schools, healthcare, and employment opportunities. A mixed use neighborhood where different uses that go with the scale of the neighborhood such as vegetable vendors, stationers, tailors, butchers, cobblers, hair dressers, doctors, lawyers, plumbers, mechanics, electricians, carpenters and masons, instead of large centralized facilities such as privatized department stores, create opportunities for children to participate in, and learn from these different communities of practice and gain competence through such practical experiences.

14.4.1.4. Integrate Places of Symbolic Value with the Life of the Community

If a community is fortunate to have places of historic significance and symbolic value in its midst, such places instead of being preserved as passive islands of antiquity, need to be integrated with the life of the community as accessible public places. Stories about such places enrich narratives about the local community, but when the community is kept out of these places, new stories are created about such places and their possible purpose other than the actual ones. This denies children the opportunity to learn about their local history and culture, even though the new possible stories themselves may have creative value. If on the other hand, children and their communities have access to these places on an everyday basis and are engaged in caring for the place, the creative potential of factually enhanced stories (by making children aware of historic and cultural facts) can be used to promote the symbolic value of the place by using children and youth as tour guides. This will enhance learning of not only children in the local area but the entire city.

14.4.1.5. Promote Streets in Front of Houses as Active Living Places

In low-income neighborhoods, due to limited space within houses, and large family sizes the street beyond the threshold is actively used for extending the living space. In settlements such as Nizamuddin Basti, this is very easily possible because of the narrow street widths that prevented cars from entering the streets, or at least from speeding through the streets. As a direct consequence, the community claims the street space for a variety of uses. Streets in front of home was the top ranked friendly place for children in the Basti not only because of its traffic safety but also because of the multiple features in the streets, a legacy of informal design, that allowed children to fulfill several of their place friendship needs such as meaningfully engaging with streets settings through several different activities including freely expressing themselves through their actions. Streets within the neighborhood but away from home were chosen for preserving anonymity of children while engaging in secret activities. The lesson for planning new low-income settlements is to consider the street in front of houses as an active living space, and not only as convenient circulation corridor.

14.4.1.6. Take Decisions About Local Vacant Lots in Favor of the Community and Not the Remote City

The contestations over vacant land in low-income communities often allow these places to be claimed and owned by children as their special territories. However, as Bowman and Pagano (2004) point out cities typically take decisions about vacant lands in keeping with the maximum-

return from land policy as a first priority. If that is not possible due to the low-development potential of the land parcel, cities then strategically use the vacant land as a barrier between unseemly impoverished neighborhoods and more desirable higher-income neighborhoods to preserve real estate values of more developable land. This strategy of hiding a slum from the view of the city was used by the city of New Delhi in creation of the peripheral parks and planned open spaces around the low-income Basti. However, if child friendly city initiatives have to promote a new urban development paradigm in favor of children, the very first policy step would be to take decisions about vacant land in favor of the local community and the best interests of its children who use that land as a valuable environmental resource, rather than in favor of the remote city. Such a decision may include non-intervention particularly in case of small parcels of vacant land in the heart of the community.

14.4.1.7. Create New Identity for Poor Neighborhoods as Thriving Human Settlements Through Participatory Planning and Design

Nizamuddin Basti embodied all the physical qualities of a settlement that had been recommended for improving children's environments in industrialized western cities—high-density, mixed use and more informally produced places. However, despite recording several different child friendly places at the micro- and mesosystemic levels, the Basti will not be considered a child friendly place at the exosystemic level where the government and policy actors make structural decisions about living environments. The official stereotypes about poor Muslims and their homogeneous living base in the Basti, bias governmental action, and impacts life on the ground, as was evident by the nature of DDA provisions including creation of strict rules for use of public place. A more positive community identity of the Basti in the eyes of the city can be created through improved design of visible facilities and public places, and by proper maintenance and care of the public infrastructure including streets and basic services. However, in order for this positive identity to influence the dominant cultural narrative about the community, just improved design is not enough. As discussed earlier we need new stories about the lives, struggles, successes and competencies of people who live in the Basti. One way to create empowering community narratives is to engage the people including children and youth in participatory research and design. The process itself will construct new narratives about the community, and enhance awareness about the Basti, its way of life; and the social, cultural, physical, and psychological needs of the community. Children and youth may come up with ideas about vacant land to inform city initiatives. Such a process would indeed give voice and agency to children in keeping with the principles of the CRC, Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda.

14.5. Directions for Future Research

Future research needs to validate the framework of place friendship proposed by this research to see if it holds true in other cultures, geographic contexts, and for children from different socio-economic backgrounds. The socially constructed nature of each of the constructs in the six dimensions are likely to vary in different cultural contexts, and research needs to elaborate on the current framework of place friendship and definition of child friendly places by understanding these new contextual meanings.

A quantitative study could develop a scale based on the dimensions of place friendship, and ask a larger sample of children to recommend not more than one or two places under each dimension to convert each dimension into a dichotomous categorical variable instead of the polytomous categorical form the dimensions assumed in this study due to multiple responses from children under each dimension. The data then could be statistically analyzed to confirm the relationship within the dimensions using factor analysis. This will either revise or validate the patterns found in this study that suggested explaining the construct through four variables instead of six. Moreover, larger citywide surveys can be designed with this framework to elicit responses from children about their child friendly places in the city. Such a survey will have direct policy implications for promoting the physical living environment of children through child friendly city initiatives within a city.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Semi-Structured Interview Guide Exploring Six Dimensions of Place Friendship

Identification

Name:

Age:

Address:

I will ask you some questions about your life in this basti. There are no right or wrong answers. Whatever you tell me will be confidential; no one will get to know about it, you have nothing to worry. I want to learn about your neighborhood from you. I don't know this place. You will be my teacher.

But first, How long have you lived here? Were you born here?
Do you have siblings?

1. **(Care and Respect for Places)**

   Do you have a place that you love and respect, and want to take care of this place?

   - Where is this place?
   - Can you walk to this place?
   - Describe this place.
   - What do you do in this place?
   - Do you clean up this place before you leave?
   - Do you take care of this place in any other way?
   - Why is this place special to you?

2. **(Meaningful Exchange with Places)**

   Do you have a place where you can do a lot of activities by yourself and with your friends?

   - Where is this place?
   - Can you walk to this place?
   - Describe this place.
   - What do you do in this place?
   - What do you like to do most in this place, and can you do it easily here?
   - Do you consider this place to be special to you in any way? Why?

3. **(Learning and Competence Through Place Experience)**
   Do you have a place that you learn new things from every time you visit?
   - Where is this place?
   - Can you walk to this place?
   - Describe this place.
   - What do you learn in this place?
   - Does this place allow you to do new things when you visit it?
   - Do you discover new things about this place when you are in it?

4. **(Creating and Controlling Territories)**
   Do you have a place that you had been going to for a long time, and that you know can be yours when you go there?
   - Where is this place?
   - Can you walk to this place?
   - Describe this place.
   - What do you do in this place?
   - Do you feel that this place belongs to you at any time during the day, or when you are playing in it?

5. **(Having Secret Places)**
   Do you have a special place that only you and a few others know about?
   - Where is this place?
   - Can you walk to this place?
   - Describe this place.
   - What do you do in this place?
   - Do you feel happy when you go to this place?
   - Do you take others to this place?

6. **(Freedom of Expression in Places)**
   Do you have a place that you can explore by yourself whenever you like, and do anything you like when you are in it?
   - Where is this place?
   - Can you walk to this place?
   - Describe this place.

- What do you do in this place?
- What do you like to do *most* in this place when you know no will scold you or stop you from doing it?

7. How many friends do you have? Why do consider them to be your friends? What do you understand by Friendship?

Appendix 2

Semi-Structured Interview Guide to Explore Perceptions about the Community and Local Area

A. Social integration

1. Do you feel welcome throughout the community?
2. Do you interact with older people and participate in their activities?
3. Do you have a sense of being valued in the community?

B. Gathering places and activity settings

1. Are there a variety of places for young people to meet friends, talk, play sports, or informal games, shop, be alone, or just hang out?

C. Safety and freedom of movement

2. Is there a general sense of safety?
3. Are you familiar with the local area?
4. Are you able to move around the community freely on your own, without fear or concerns about your safety?

D. Access to nature

1. Do you have access to natural settings?
2. Are there trees to climb?
3. Are there fields for organized sports?
4. Are there developed parks and play areas?
5. Are there wild areas that you can explore on your own?

E. Community image and identity

1. Do you have a positive opinion about where you live?
2. Are you aware of the history of the area?
3. Do you participate in community activities and cultural life?

F. Land tenure

1. Do you own the place where you live?
2. Are there any threats of relocation or displacement?

G. Basic goods and services

1. Does your family have secure access to water and sanitation?

H. Local power and control

2. Do you have a sense of control over your future?
3. Does your family feel they have a say in political outcomes and influencing local decision-making?
4. Are young people involved in local decision-making process?
5. Do you have hope about your future?

Appendix 3

Interview Schedule for Initial Individual Semi-Structured Interviews

Interview Schedule Girls =16, Boys=15			
1.	March 1st	11years	Girl 1
2.	March 1st	11 years	Girl 2
3.	March 1st	11 years	Boy 1
4.	March 2nd	12 years	Girl 3
5.	March 2nd	12 years	Girl 4
6.	March 2nd	11 years	Girl 5
7.	March 2nd	12 years	Girl 6
8.	March 3rd	11 years	Girl 7
9.	March 3rd	11 years	Girl 8
10.	March 3rd	12 years	Girl 9
11.	March 4th	12 years	Boy 2
12.	March 4th	12 years	Boy 3
13.	March 4th	11 years	Boy 4
14.	March 5th	12 years	Girl 10
15.	March 5th	12 years	Boy 5
16.	March 9th	12 years	Boy 6
17.	March 9th	12 years	Girl 11
18.	March 9th	12 years	Boy 7
19.	March 11th	11 years	Boy 8
20.	March 11th	12 years	Girl 12
21.	March 13th	12 years	Boy 9
22.	March 13th	12 years	Boy 10
23.	March 13th	12 years	Boy 11
24.	March 14th	12 years	Boy 12
25.	March14th	12 years	Girl 13
26.	March14th	12 years	Girl 14
27.	March 16th	11 years	Boy 13
28.	March 16th	11 years	Boy 14
29.	March 16th	12 years	Boy 15
30.	March 17th	12 years	Girl 15
31.	March 17th	11 years	Girl 16

Appendix 4

Discussion on Children's Housing Rights based on CRC in Focus Groups

Table A4. Summary of responses on housing rights

Housing Rights	Children's Response (n= 70) girls 9-16 years
1. We will have proper houses with light and ventilation, privacy and space for play.	9 children said they did not have this right 13% No, 87% Yes
2. We will have access to good health care and safe drinking water in our homes and in our communities.	6 children said they did not have this right 9% No, 91% Yes
3. We will have nutritious food for our proper growth and development.	All children except 5 hostellers agreed that they have this right. The hostellers complained of lack of meat in their meals. Teachers, Tasneem and Jamila, stepped in to say that soya and pulses were good substitutes for protein, and if they get that they should not complain.
4. We will have good waste disposal systems in our communities so our streets will not stink.	39 children said they did not have this right. 56% No, 44% Yes
5. We should have access to good learning facilities near our homes.	Children agreed that they had adequate facilities till class 5, after that class schools are located at a distance, which is why most girls drop out of school. Often for them the Hope non-formal school is the only alternative beyond primary education.
6. We will enjoy equal opportunities and rights as boys and girls.	28 girls said they enjoyed this right. Only one girl said that she and her sisters enjoyed better opportunities than their brothers. 60% No, 40% Yes
7. We can live, learn and play at home and on the streets with out being harassed or harmed.	24 girls said they enjoyed this right. 66% No, 34% Yes
8. We will have safe and sanitary bathrooms in our homes where we can enjoy basic privacy.	7 girls said they did not have this right. 10% No, 90% Yes
9. We will have access to good playgrounds and parks and other forms	18 girls said no access at all. The girls, who said yes, described different forms of negotiated access and

of recreation even if we are physically challenged.	rebellion. 26% No, 74% Yes
10. We will be able to pray to our gods in peace and harmony and respect each other's religions.	The only right which everyone agreed that they enjoyed, though this was a homogeneous group of Sunni Muslim girls. Needs to be checked with a more mixed group.
11. We will not be evicted from our homes. If unavoidable, we should be notified, consulted and given complete resettlement.	14 girls said they did not enjoy this right. All these were children living in squatter camps who had suffered at least one eviction in their lives. 20% No, 80% Yes
12. As refugee children, our housing rights and right to return home must be respected.	19 girls said they did not enjoy this right. 27% No, 73% Yes While discussing this point with the individual groups, I realized that most girls were not familiar with the realities of refugees. One refugee girl spoke up in her group when the other girls wanted to vote in favor of the right. Refugee girls and children familiar with the struggles of refugees were the ones who voted no. This then is not a representative voting of the reality of refugee children's rights violation as will be evident from the narrative of the refugee child who spoke up in her group.
13. Our parents will go to work near our homes and hence will have more time and energy for us.	14 girls said they did not enjoy this right. 20% No, 80% Yes

Appendix 5

Bangladeshi child's experience of being a refugee in Nizamuddin Basti

In one group, when I asked children if they felt refugee children had the same opportunities as they did in the neighborhood, the oldest girl in the group said yes and proceeded to tackle the next question. But, with me sitting in the group, the youngest girl, spoke up and addressed me directly. She said, "Didi I don't think I get any respect in this community because I am considered a "bangali refugee". My family migrated from Bangladesh. My father and brothers work as rag pickers. We live inside the scrap godown. My mother works as a domestic maid in Nizamuddin West. We had gone back to Bangladesh once and bought some land near Dhaka. But there was no work for any of us over there and we had no money to build a home. So we came back to Nizamuddin. We are asked to leave every year by the Indians. Even last summer, we were threatened when the vans came to pick up refugees from this Basti. The locals call these vans "bangali capturing van". Bengali speaking people are picked up in this van and released at the Bangladesh border. Many of our neighbors flee to Kashmir every year when news of the vans gets around. We were saved last year by pretending to be Hindustanis. We have to constantly lie to everyone."

Appendix 6

Actualized Affordances in Most Friendly Places under Dimension 2

Table A5. Actualized affordances in places where children shared most activities and interests

Environmental attributes that support certain affordances	Afforded Activity	Places of Actualization			
		SNH	OSNH	DDA Park	Umbrella Park
Flat, relatively smooth surfaces that afford	cycling	1	1	1	0
	running	1	1	1	1
	skipping	1	1	1	1
	playing hopscotch	1	1	1	0
	Playing ball games*	1	1	1	0
	drawing on**	1	1	0	0
	playing marbles***	1	1		
Smooth slopes that afford	coasting down	1	1	0	0
Graspable detached objects that afford	throwing	1	1	1	1
	digging	1	1	0	0
	building of structures	0	1	0	0
	playing with animals	1	1	1	0
	plants in play	0	1	1	1
Attached objects that afford	jumping over	1	1	1	1
	jumping down from	1	1	1	1
Non-rigid attached object that afford	swinging on	0	1	0	0
	hanging from	0	1	0	0
Climbable feature that affords	climbing	1	1	1	1
	looking out from	1	1	1	1
Shelter that affords	hiding	1	1	1	1
	peace and quiet	0	1	1	1
	secret places	1	1	0	0
Mouldable/building material that affords	moulding	1	1		
	building out of debris***	1	1		

Water affords	swimming	0	1	0	0
	fishing for things	1	1	0	0
	playing with water	1	1	1	0
Total actualized activity affordance		21	27	15	11
* substituted for "affords playing football, ice-hockey, tennis, or badminton" ** substituted for “skating” *** substituted for "affords skiing" ****substituted for " affords building of snow structures"					
Environmental opportunities for sociality					
	role-playing	1	1	1	1
	playing rule games	1	1	1	1
	playing house	0	1	1	0
	playing war	1	1	1	1
	being noisy	1	1	1	1
	following/sharing adult's business	1	1	1	1
Total actualized sociality affordance		5	6	6	5

Appendix 7

Detailed list of recommended places under all six dimensions

Table A7a. Fifteen unique places recommended under Dimension 1: Care and Respect for Places.

Place Names	Number of recommendations
1. Umbrella Park	11
2. DDA Park	7
3. India Gate area	4
4. Streets near home	3
5. Park in Pant nagar	2
6. Open space near MCD school	2
7. Open space near home	2
8. Open space near Hope Project	2
9. Humayun's Tomb	2
10. Long park next to sewer	1
11. Park near Black Mosque	1
12. Graveyard	1
13. One open space next to sewer	1
14. Bhogal (name of another neighborhood)	1
15. My precinct	1

Table A7b. Sixteen unique places recommended under Dimension 2: Meaningful Exchange with Places.

Place Names	Number of recommendations
1. Streets near home	8
2. Open space near home	6
3. DDA Park	5
4. My precinct	3
5. Umbrella Park	3
6. Friend's house	1
7. Our terrace	1
8. Streets near market	1
9. Open space near Hope Project	1
10. Elephant Park	1
11. One open space next to sewer	1
12. Park near Black Mosque	1
13. India Gate area	1
14. Park in Pant Nagar	1
15. Park under flyover	1
16. Long park next to sewer	1

Table A7c. Sixteen unique places recommended under Dimension 3: Learning and Competence Through Place Experience.

	Place Names	Number of recommendations
1.	Dargah	8
2.	India Gate area	4
3.	Umbrella Park	3
4.	Open space near home	2
5.	Park in Pant nagar	1
6.	Raju park	1
7.	Nehru Stadium	1
8.	DDA Park	1
9.	One open space next to sewer	1
10.	Humayun's Tomb	1
11.	Markaz	1
12.	Hotels in the basti	1
13.	Neighborhood around school	1
14.	Narela (other neighborhood)	1
15.	Grandmother's Place	1
16.	School in Pant Nagar	1

Table A7d. Seventeen unique places recommended under Dimension 4: Creating and Controlling Territories

	Place Names	Number of recommendations
1.	DDA Park	6
2.	Open space near home	6
3.	Streets near home	4
4.	Umbrella Park	3
5.	India Gate area	2
6.	One open space next to nalah	2
7.	Park near Kali Masjid	1
8.	Long park next to nalah	1
9.	Open space near MCD school	1
10.	Bara Khamba (monument and park)	1
11.	Open space near Hope Project	1
12.	Elephant Park	1
13.	Dargah	1
14.	Humayun's Tomb	1
15.	Whole Neighborhood	1
16.	My precinct	1
17.	School in Pant Nagar	1

Table A7e. Twenty unique places recommended under Dimension 5: Having Secret Places

	Place Names	Number of recommendations
1.	Street other than my own	2
2.	Graveyard	2
3.	Park in Pant nagar	2
4.	Streets near home	1
5.	Behind parked vehicles in lanes	1
6.	Grandmother's Place	1
7.	Behind front doors of houses	1
8.	Shops in the lanes	1
9.	Lotus temple (monument for Bah'ai faith)	1
10.	Open space near home	1
11.	One open space next to sewer	1
12.	Elephant Park	1
13.	Open space behind domed building	1
14.	Behind a house in Nizam nagar	1
15.	Open space close to Basti	1
16.	Park under flyover	1
17.	Long park next to sewer	1
18.	Open space next to petrol pump	1
19.	Open space near MCD school	1
20.	Raju park	1

Table A7f. Eighteen unique places recommended under Dimension 6: Freedom of Expression in Place

	Place Names	Number of recommendations
1.	DDA Park	6
2.	Streets near home	4
3.	My precinct	4
4.	Whole Neighborhood	3
5.	Umbrella Park	3
6.	School in Pant Nagar	2
7.	Park under flyover	2
8.	Park in Pant nagar	2
9.	Streets near market	1
10.	Friend's house	1
11.	Whole Neighborhood except Khusroo Nagar	1
12.	Whole Neighborhood except park near MCD school	1
13.	Dargah	1
14.	Humayun's Tomb	1
15.	Open space near home	1
16.	One open space next to nalah	1
17.	Park near Kali Masjid	1
18.	Open space near MCD school	1

Appendix 8

Child Friendly Place Typology in the Basti

Table A8: List of places under the twelve-dimensional typology of friendly places in the Basti

Named places across dimensions	Dim 1	Dim 2	Dim 3	Dim 4	Dim 5	Dim 6	All dims
Nehru Stadium	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Raju park	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Park in Pant nagar	2	1	1	0	2	2	8
India Gate area	4	1	4	2	0	0	11
Formal open space city level	6	2	7	2	3	2	22
Open space next to petrol pump	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Park near Black Mosque	1	1	0	1	0	1	4
Park under flyover	0	1	0	0	1	2	4
Long park next to sewer	1	1	0	1	1	0	4
Open space near MCD school	2	0	0	1	1	1	5
Umbrella Park	11	3	3	3	0	3	23
DDA Park	7	5	1	6	0	6	25
Twelve Pillars Park (historic monument and precincts)	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Formal open space local	21	11	4	13	4	13	67
Open space behind domed building	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Behind a house in Nizam nagar	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Open space close to Basti				0	1	0	1
Elephant Park	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
Graveyard	1	0	0	0	2	0	3
Open space near Hope Project	2	1	0	1	0	0	4
One open space next to sewer	1	1	1	2	1	1	7
Open space near home	2	6	2	6	1	1	18
Informal open space local	6	9	3	10	8	2	38
Lotus temple (new formally designed monument for Bah'ai faith)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Markaz (new religious headquarters for the Tablighi movement)	0	0	1	0	0		1
Humayun's Tomb	2	0	1	1	0	1	5
Dargah	0	0	8	1	0	1	10
Monuments	2	0	10	2	1	2	17
Our terrace	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
My house	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Whole Neighborhood except Khusroo Nagar	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Whole Neighborhood except open space near MCD school	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Whole Neighborhood	0	0	0	1	0	3	4
My neighborhood	0	0	0	1	0	5	6
Shops in the lanes	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Hotels in the basti	0	0	1	0	0	0	1

Neighborhood retail	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Neighborhood around school	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Narela (other neighborhood)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bhogal	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Neighborhood other than my own	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
My precinct	1	3	0	1	0	4	9
My precinct	1	3	0	1	0	4	9
Behind front doors of houses	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Friend's house	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Grandmother's Place	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Private residences	0	1	1	0	2	1	5
School in Pant Nagar	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
Hope School	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
School	0	0	1	1	0	2	4
Behind parked vehicles in lanes	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Streets near market	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Street other than my own	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Streets near home	3	8	0	4	1	4	20
Streets in local area	3	9	0	4	4	5	25