Residents' Opinions on Apartment Living in Lahore, Pakistan

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Abstract

Vertical growth is viewed as the solution to the problem of urban housing. The present study aims to be multifocal in approaching the phenomenon of apartment living in Lahore, Pakistan. The primary focus of the research was to evaluate the satisfaction with and favorability of vertical living among the dwellers; however, the research was extended to include the in-depth experiences of adolescents regarding privacy because it was observed that this age group was being neglected severely in the distribution of privacy in apartments, as well as in research. The data was first collected from 150 respondents through a survey, and then interviews of 10 adolescents were conducted to explore notion of privacy. The findings highlight that, despite being satisfied with the infrastructural aspects of the building, the residents do not prefer vertical living over horizontal housing. The adolescents in apartments also prefer horizontal housing over vertical living to avoid the feeling of crowdedness that is associated with vertical growth due to shared space and proximity. The utilization of spaces within apartments is associated with certain elements of development of the personality during this age. The findings of the present study can be helpful for sustainable vertical housing policy development and implementation.

Keywords: apartments, privacy, inclusive policy, sustainable urban growth management, adolescents, Pakistan, residential satisfaction

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About one-third of the urban population of the global south lacks proper housing facilities, and the situation will only worsen with the increase of urban growth in the future (King et al., 2017). Pakistan, a developing country in South Asia has faced the highest rate of urbanization among countries in the region. Internal and external insurgencies forced many people towards cities for the sake of security. Other causes of the increasing urbanization in Pakistan include rural-urban migration for economic reasons and the high population growth rate of the country (Kugelman, 2013). According to the United Nations Population Division, 50% of the total population of the country will be urban by 2025 (UNDP, 2019) and more than 63% of the total population is expected to be below the age of 30 (Government of Pakistan, 2014). This rapid urbanization is not without consequences. A shortage of housing is one of the many challenges faced by the urban population of the country. The current backlog of needed housing units is estimated to be around 10 million (UNDP, 2019).

Due to growing population and pressure on urban land, the country envisions accelerating vertical growth of its cities as opposed to the horizontal growth that took place in the past (Government of Pakistan, 2014). Meeting the needs of housing with vertical growth is the aim of the current public housing schemes underway for the middle and low-income group. The Naya Pakistan Housing Authority and the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority are responsible for meeting the housing needs of lower and middle-income groups, and both authorities are keeping apartments central to their designs (Malik et al., 2020).

Ul Hussnain et al. (2020) have highlighted that lack of community/stakeholder's participation and ownership has been an important hurdle in the way of success of the urban plans in the past. The reason why stakeholder's participation is so crucial is that there cannot be social sustainability of the community without their inclusion (Kohon, 2018). Keeping in mind this finding, it is very important to understand that the key stakeholders in any urban plan are the intended citizens who will eventually be facing the issues of the planning on a daily basis, and their involvement in the planning process is pivotal for sustainable urban development (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker, 2014). In particular, young people do not have the decision-making power when it comes to choosing a residence, but their environment has profound influence on their socialization (Osborne et al., 2017). The debates about inclusion of children in urban

planning usually focus on physical activity (Santos et al., 2009), children's use of public spaces (Haider, 2007), or neighborhood design (Percy-Smith & Malone, 2001), but young children are not considered important stakeholders when the characteristics of the residential unit are considered. In considering apartment buildings for children, most emphasis is laid on green spaces or parks nearby (Carroll et al., 2011). On the contrary, when the characteristics of apartments are judged for adults, factors like privacy, noise distribution, and ventilation are brought to light. For example, a study conducted in the capital city of Pakistan highlighted that lack of privacy and building maintenance are some of the discouraging factors regarding apartments (Hassan et al., 2019). A study conducted in Lahore showed similar findings. A majority of the respondents did not prefer apartments as their residential choice due lack of privacy, open space and security (Hanif et al., 2015).

Privacy is as crucial to adolescents as it is to adults. It helps an individual to develop their self-image, to critically analyze their activities, and to release the stress of the expectations of others and to be one's self (Margulis, 2003). The loss of privacy can lead to psychological stress, anxiety, and depression in children. The inability to provide adequate living space and privacy can be considered as a violation of children's rights (Gwandure, 2010). Therefore, the present study aims to highlight this indoor aspect of apartments which directly affects the well-being of adolescents but is rarely highlighted. Enhancing the capabilities of adolescents is crucial to the sustainable development agenda of the United Nations (Sheehan et al., 2017) and it is even more important for a country like Pakistan where the youth bulge is expected to dominate the demographics for another 30 years (Government of Pakistan, 2014). This youth is the prospective target market for the future urban housing. The perception of privacy by adolescents living in apartments today can guide the urban housing projects of the future so that their social sustainability can be enhanced. In this light, the present study will aim to:

1) Understand the overall satisfaction with and favorability of apartment living, and

2) Explore the notion of privacy as understood by the adolescents living in apartment buildings in Lahore, Pakistan.

Physical Characteristics of Apartment Living

Middle income apartment colonies in the present study are well-planned with proper boundary walls, parks, and parking. Instead of elevators, which were absent in all apartment buildings, staircases were the main shared space for the residents. Most often, the apartments included two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room, a kitchen, and a balcony. The renters, unlike the owners, did not have the luxury of converting balconies into a separate bedroom. Each apartment was approximately 1,125 square feet. The maximum number of floors in each building was 4 and the minimum was 3. A majority (n=129, 86%) of the apartments had 1-6 residents living in them; 21 apartments (14%) had 7-12 residents. In most households, one bedroom was occupied by the parents and one by the children. Some owners had made a separate bedroom out of the balcony to increase the number of bedrooms in the unit by one.

Design and Methods

In Pakistan, adolescents do not have decision-making power in the choice of residence; adults decide this matter. To highlight the favorability of apartments among adults, the present study surveyed the field sites from January 2019 to March 2019. A survey questionnaire was used to enquire about the satisfaction level of residents with certain factors of the apartment buildings as guided by the literature. This survey presented the overview of satisfaction and favorability of apartments among its residents. Later, the primary question of adolescents' notion of privacy was explored through in-depth interviews with 10 adolescents, five males and five females.

Procedure and Participants

There are different types of apartment dwellings in Lahore, single residential apartment buildings, mixed commercial and residential apartment buildings, and purely residential apartment colonies with multiple apartment blocks confined by a boundary. Since the government is focused on developing planned enclosed/gated residential buildings for middle class/income groups in the cities that offer security, the present study also focused on five such government or semi-government existing colonies catering to middle class families.

Major apartment colonies were identified in Lahore, and a sampling frame was formulated which included the following locations:

State Bank Colony

Wafaqi Colony

Askari 11

PHA Shabbir Town

LDA Flats, Allama Iqbal Town

A multistage cluster sampling was used due to the inability to form an exhaustive list of households in all of the above-mentioned colonies. In the first stage, three apartment colonies were randomly selected from the list above, namely State Bank Colony, PHA Shabbir Town, and LDA Flats, Allama Iqbal Town. There were a total of 1500 occupied apartments in these three colonies. At the second stage, proportionate sampling, based on the number of occupied apartments in each colony, was conducted, and a sample of 499 apartments was selected. The survey was conducted by the researchers with one respondent aged 18 years or older per household. There was a 30% response rate, and 150 responses were recorded. It is acknowledged that the response rate is not ideal, but since the study is among the very few research projects conducted on post-occupancy satisfaction and favorability of apartment living in Pakistan, the results provide significant insights on the topic. The questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed in the English language and was based on the existing literature on resident satisfaction in apartment living. The self-administered questionnaire was modified, and the language was simplified after exhaustive pilot testing; nonetheless two of the researchers carried out the survey in person to answer any queries of the respondents regarding the survey. The satisfaction of the residents regarding the space in the apartment, lighting in the corridors, security, location, ventilation, and sunlight exposure was measured on a five-point Likert scale. Aural privacy was measured on a 6-point scale, from never to very frequently being disturbed by unnecessary noise from other apartments. The respondents were also asked about their experience of living in horizontal housing and were asked to identify which housing type they preferred. This question was intended to highlight the favorability of the residence type. SPSS software was used for the analysis on quantitative

data. Descriptive statistics were used to identify the satisfaction level of the dwellers with certain features of the apartments. A Chi-square test of association was used to identify the association between satisfaction and demographic variables.

During this first stage of quantitative data collection, ten households with adolescents were identified where the guardians allowed in-depth interviews with the adolescents to be conducted. A semi-structured interview guide (Appendix B) was formulated to explore in detail the notion of privacy of adolescents in these apartments. The interviews were conducted in a bilingual manner, using both English and Urdu languages and were later transcribed by one of the authors in English before the analysis. A thematic analysis of this qualitative data was then conducted manually to identify multiple themes in the responses of the adolescents.

Written consent was obtained from all the participants of the survey who were above 18 years of age. The situation for consent is unique in the case of adolescents, as both the parents and the adolescents are required to give permission (Brooks-Gunn & Rotheram-Borus, 1994). The researcher followed a strict code of ethics, especially when conducting research with adolescents. Informed consent and confidentiality of all the respondents was ensured.

Results and Discussions

Overview of the Prevailing Perception Regarding Apartments

Demographic Information

As shown in Table 1, of the 150 respondents, 58 respondents (38.7%) were male and the remaining 92 (61.3%) were female. A majority of the respondents (74%) were between the ages of 18 and 40 years old, and 26% of the respondents were above the age of 40. Population density per dwelling unit was 6 or fewer people per apartment for the majority of respondents. Respondents were most likely to live on the second floor (36%). Only 4.7% lived on the fourth floor. Residents living in privately owned apartments comprised 50% of the respondents, while residents of rental apartments made up 36.7% of the respondents; 13.3% lived in government owned apartments whose minimal rent is

deducted from their salary. A majority (89.3%) of the respondents had experience of living in both vertical and horizontal living.

Table 1

Respondent Demographics

Variable	*n*	%
Age		
18-20 years	13	8.7
21-30 years	65	43.3
31-40 years	33	22.0
41–50 years	24	16.0
Over 50 years	15	10.0
Gender		
Male	58	38.7
Female	92	61.3
Floor number		
Ground floor	16	10.7
First floor	45	30.0
Second floor	54	36.0
Third floor	28	18.7
Fourth floor	7	4.7
Type of Housing		
Rented	55	36.7
Owned	75	50.0
Government	20	13.3
Previous Experience of Living in Houses (Horizontal Living)		
Yes	134	89.3
No	16	10.7

Favorability

When asked about which type of dwelling (horizontal or vertical) is preferred by the respondents, more than half of the respondents (*n*=103; 68.7%) preferred to live in houses, while 31.3% (*n*=47) prefer to live in apartments. This shows that, given a choice, a majority of the respondents currently living in the apartment setting would not choose

this form of housing, and the ownership of the apartment has little or no effect on choice, as 68% of people who owned their apartments selected houses as better places whereas the remainder of the owners (32%) selected apartment living (see Table 2).

Table 2

Housing Preference and Ownership Status

Housing Preference	***n***	**%**
Rented		
Apartment (Vertical Living)	17	30.9
House (Horizontal Living)	38	69.1
Owned		
Apartment (Vertical Living)	24	32
House (Horizontal Living)	51	68
Government		
Apartment (Vertical Living)	6	30
House (Horizontal Living)	14	70

Aural Privacy

As shown in Table 3, the majority of respondents reported not being disturbed frequently by unnecessary noise. These results show that aural privacy was not a significant concern for the residents.

Table 3

Noise Disturbance

Noise Disturbance	n	%
Never	31	20.7
Very Rarely	30	20.0
Rarely	28	18.7
Occasionally	33	22.0
Frequently	18	12.0
Very Frequently	10	6.7
Total	150	100.0

Satisfaction of the Residents with Apartment Living

The respondents were asked to rank their level of satisfaction regarding lighting in the corridor, space in the apartment, entrance security of the community, location of the

community, ventilation, and sunlight. The cumulative score of satisfaction shows that out of 150 respondents, a majority (*n*=118; 78.7%) are satisfied, while a minority of respondents (*n*=32; 21.3%) are dissatisfied with the infrastructure of their building. Table 4 shows the details of satisfaction level of the residents with each aspect of the apartment building**.**

Table 4

Satisfaction with Aspects of Apartment Building (%)

Statement	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Total
Lighting in the corridors	6.5	14.0	25.8	45.2	8.6	100[a]
Space in the apartment	4.0	8.7	27.3	46.7	13.3	100
Entrance security of the community	14.7	18.0	19.3	35.3	12.7	100
Location of the community	1.3	2.7	12.7	56.0	27.3	100
Ventilation	2.0	6.7	10.0	46.0	35.3	100
Sunlight	3.3	10.7	15.3	36.7	34.0	100

Note. N=150.

[a]Of the 150 respondents, only the 93 who live in buildings with corridors answered this item.

These results show a stark contrast in the opinion of the apartment dwellers. Despite the high satisfaction levels with their dwelling type, the residents would still not choose it as the most desirable form of housing. The literature suggests that limitation of space is usually dealt with by the dwellers of horizontal housing by adding another unit to their house, but apartment dwellers do not have this luxury, as the overall structure of the apartment building is fixed (Solaún & Vélez, 1976), but the chart above shows that many respondents (48%) are satisfied even with the space in their apartment. Table 5 shows that even those respondents who are satisfied with the features of apartment living are not likely to consider it as the most favorable form of housing.

Table 5

Housing Type Preference and Apartment Satisfaction

Housing Preference	*n*	%
Satisfied Residents		
Apartment	35	29.7
House	83	70.3
Dissatisfied Residents		
Apartment	12	37.5
House	20	62.5

The association between housing type and satisfaction was found to be highly significant, having a Pearson chi-square value of .000. Most (89.3%) of those respondents who own their apartments were satisfied. Even though ownership affects the satisfaction level of the residents, the preference for horizontal housing is visible. Aural privacy was an important factor according to literature (Kennedy et al., 2015), but the present study shows that less than half of the respondents reported being disturbed by the noise coming from other apartments. This finding highlights that neither ownership nor satisfaction contributes to the less favorable opinion of the respondents regarding vertical living.

Qualitative Findings

Notion of Privacy of Adolescent Residents in Apartment Living

This section examines the perceptions, experiences, and practices related to the privacy of adolescents in apartment buildings in Lahore. The findings of this study show that adolescent residents of apartment buildings find that privacy is an unequally distributed and accessed resource as a result of the residents' age, gender, social class, and location of their apartment in the building complex.

The literature highlights that privacy is a context specific phenomenon which has different meanings (Margulis, 2003). Autonomy (Laufer & Wolfe, 1977; Mokrosinska, 2018), access (Anthony et al., 2017), information management (Morr Serewicz et al., 2007), and protection of the intangible, social good, or individual good (Kasper, 2007) are some of the meanings attached to privacy. These a priori codes, as

guided by the literature, were evident in the responses of the adolescents. However, the coding was not limited to a priori codes, and the data were analyzed attentively by in vivo codes that appeared in the transcripts (Elliott, 2018).

It is important to note here that some of the meanings are overlapping. Therefore, the opinions of these adolescents can fall into more than one category. For example, limiting or allowing access is a form of control that adolescents exercise. Similarly, autonomy is a form of individual good as opposed to a social good (see Table 6).

Table 6

Adolescents' Notion of Privacy

Privacy	Definition	Indicative Comments
Autonomy	Behavioral and emotional self – regulation (López-Pérez et al., 2016)	*Privacy is like you need that moment and time alone like in a day where you just either like stay or rest or dance or whatever. You just need to have those four walls to yourself.*
		A separate room in which we can do anything of our choice, like if I want to sleep or study…if you study in someone else's room or do any work in someone else's room then you obviously get disturbed because the other person also has to come in their room and do their own work.
Control	Control over audience of their activities, time usage, space (James, 2001)	*You get that thing that everything in here belongs to me, and nobody can just come in and take whatever they want. I keep things in a certain way, and then other people come in and do whatever they want and then they leave the room either in a mess or the way they want. Like, that is annoying.*
Access	Approach to information or self, what is to be concealed or revealed (Anthony et al., 2017)	*So, in my opinion, I would understand privacy as having a certain space to myself and not just physical space but emotional boundaries as well, like some distance to myself where I can be whatever I choose and can express myself however I want, and I could control who I let into that space and whom I want to keep away from it.*

Table 6

Adolescents' Notion of Privacy (Contd.)

Privacy	Definition	Indicative Comments
Protection of the intangible	Privacy of thoughts (Kasper, 2005)	*Privacy is something personal, and nobody else can actually think about it other than you. It is your own thoughts and feelings.*
Information management	Ownership and control of information (Morr Serewicz et al., 2007)	*An individual's privacy is like you are using your laptop and you're doing something other than your office or your work thing (maybe you are chatting with someone). You would feel that if my father is sitting next to me, he should not look at the screen. If you are talking to someone you can use for language in that he might be a friend, or she might be a girlfriend. So, privacy is that your parents don't look at it. You have any image there obviously and you have a relationship of respect with them, but you don't have the same relationship with your friends. So you can use any sort of language with them.*
Individual good	That an individual enjoys or can be deprived of (Kasper, 2007)	*In my opinion privacy is the basic right to ensure that you are in control of what information about yourself you wish to reveal to people. It is a basic right that everyone is granted because we have individual thinking capacity that we can choose whether or not to share. So, I think it is the basic right of just determining what information you wish to project into the world.*

Perception of Adolescent Residents Regarding Privacy in Apartments

The present study began with the assumption, supported by literature, that apartments offer less privacy due to their sharing characteristics (Kennedy et al., 2015). To examine whether adolescents living in apartments attribute privacy to their living structure, the researcher asked the respondents to highlight which residential structure (horizontal or vertical) they considered as less private.

Eight out of ten adolescents regarded apartments as less private. Shared space and the feeling of crowdedness that apartments cause are two main reasons for the

preference for horizontal housing. The feeling of crowdedness does not necessarily have to be objective. Lack of aural privacy and noise disturbance can create this feeling even if the space inside the apartment is sufficient for its residents. Lack of visual privacy also contributes significantly to this feeling. This indicates that providing more space within the apartment is not sufficient to improve the image of vertical living. The infrastructure or building design that prevents or reduces the invasion of visual and aural privacy can contribute more towards the likeability of this structure. Table 7 presents the statements of the adolescents that are indicative of these findings.

Table 7

Statements Related to Various Characteristics of Apartment

Characteristic of apartments	Violation of different meanings of privacy	Indicative comments
Shared space	Control	*Apartment setting is less private because you have to share the parking space as well and if you have to come on a higher floor you have to climb the stairs and you meet a lot of people in the way.*
Feeling of crowded ness	Autonomy	*Vertical housing is less private because generally you are living in a building with more people. There is a lot going on even outside, even if your apartment is completely isolated, there are people who are going up and down the stairs. There is a chance of running into people. There is the sense of living with multiple people.*
Aural privacy	Information Management	*If I am chatting in this room and I am fighting with someone (maybe I am fighting with my girlfriend on the phone) so, if I scream just a bit loud, you have seen how small these rooms are, the noise will get out, and then someone will come and ask what is wrong and why are you talking so loudly?*
Visual privacy	Access	*If there are more than two apartments on the same floor, then when you open the door, someone else's apartment is right in front of yours and that is also the violation of your privacy. If you want to go on the roof, then you have to climb a lot of stairs to go up because of which you have to pass a lot of people's doors.*

As mentioned above, the meanings of privacy are overlapping, and therefore one single characteristic can violate more than one aspect of privacy for adolescents. For example, shared space violates not just autonomy, but control and access as well. Highlighting aural privacy as an important factor of the feeling of lack of privacy is also unique to adolescents, because as mentioned above, the respondents over the age of 18 did not mention noise disturbance as a significant factor. This can be a result of the acceptance that older adults develop of their residence over time, due to which general residential satisfaction is usually higher in older adults as compared to younger adults (Mridha, 2020).

It is also important to note here that two adolescents were able to disassociate privacy from the physical structure of the apartments and highlighted the size of accommodation or availability or personal space as the indicators of privacy.

> *"…It all depends if you get your own space in which you can do anything. If you get that in horizontal housing, then that is better, and if you get that in apartments, apartments are better. Privacy basically means that you want a space to yourself. Like here, even if I don't get it, there are certain times when I get my privacy, like when I come back from college,[2] no one is at home so it is easier for me that way in that sense I can do whatever I want…"*

> *"…I don't think it is about the type of living. I think it is about the size of accommodation. You could have a small horizontal house, and it would not be better private. You can have a large apartment and it would be very private. So, I think it is more about the size of the accommodation rather than the type of the living…"*

Placing Privacy in the Spatial Context

Regardless of the form of human privacy, some physical settings and their physical properties will be more consistent with it than others. However, a group's presence or absence may increase or decrease a physical setting's fit for privacy. Furthermore, space is more than a matter of structure or ecology. A physical space achieves its character of privacy through design, activity, and meanings of those who

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[2] *College, in this case, refers to the final two years of secondary school.*

occupy it. The residents learn to accept, identify, and indeed feel privacy in some spaces over others through socialization into wider cultural and residential norms (Laufer & Wolfe, 1977). Therefore, a single apartment space can provide multiple, varied, and often overlapping places where privacy is practiced, contested, and accomplished by the residents based on their gender, age, and role in the family.

To understand the meanings and practices of privacy within specific spatial context of the apartment building, this section examines the places associated with privacy by adolescent residents of the apartment buildings. Three indoor places in the apartments were identified as critical to the practice and accomplishment of privacy by both male and female adolescent residents: the bathroom, bedroom, and living room, while outdoor spaces were characterized as public and less available for practicing privacy. These included the balcony, parking area, and stairway.

The Bathroom. The bathrooms in the apartment buildings range between 25 to 28 square feet on average. The two bathrooms, attached to a bedroom in some apartments and separate in others, are mostly shared by all family members. In addition, these bathrooms often act as multipurpose rooms for the purpose of doing laundry or for storage. Despite these "less private" uses of the bathrooms, they essentially are private spaces designed for one individual to use at one time. Moral and cultural norms protect these spaces momentarily from undue external interference and maintain them as key private spaces in the apartments.

For adolescent residents of this study, bathrooms were key spaces that provided temporary spaces for practicing privacy by allowing momentary escape from community/family surveillance and accountability, while providing opportunity for isolation and social distancing. In this way, bathrooms allowed adolescent residents to exercise autonomy and control over their own bodies.

A majority of the respondents identified the bathroom as the most private space in their apartment. A male respondent of age 15 responded saying:

> *"...Above all, is, I think, the most private space is the toilet*
> *[laughs] and it is private for obvious reasons..."*

However, female respondents expressed a marked discrepancy in availability of

privacy within bathrooms between male and female members of the family. Female adolescent residents described more interferences during their bathroom use, display of suspicion by family members if they took longer and feelings of discomfort if male residents were present outside. A 15-year-old female resident who had two brothers expressed that:

> *"…My elder brother usually asks me that why I have been in the washroom for so long. Most of the times I know when I have to spend longer time in the washroom. And I just decide that when my brother will go out for a longer period then I will go for long time in washroom. My mother also says that, and I don't go to the washroom for a longer period when my brother is at home…"*

This also highlights the gendered use of apartment space and disparity in availability of space to residents of the same apartment with respect to exercise of privacy. The sex of the adolescent guides the norms according to which space is distributed within an apartment.

The Bedroom. The respondents who had their own room regarded it as a space providing the most privacy to them. A separate room was available to those respondents who were either the only child or had just one sibling. In this context, for those who shared a room, during the time when the other sibling would be away, the bedroom would be considered to be the most private space. A 16-year-old boy mentioned this in his response:

> *"…There are times when she is asleep or she has gone somewhere so there times when she is not in the room. Then it is somewhat private…"*

A 17-year-old female adolescent who lived with one of her parents mentioned that she had a complete room to herself as her other sibling had gone abroad:

> *"…Even though in my family there are only three people now, two because my sister has left. So now it is very different, because now we are only two people, and I generally have a lot more space to be by myself. So, I would consider my room the most private place because usually I can just close the doors and be by myself and have the*

entire place to myself without letting anyone in. It is a comfortable space because I can choose to decorate it however, I want and fill it with things that I like, and I can act however I want it…"

Two respondents mentioned the bedroom as the least private place, as there was only one bedroom in the apartment, and all the residents shared it. These responses stand in stark comparison to those respondents who had their own bedroom.

The bedroom is used as a space for performing self-talk. Erving Goffman in his book, *Forms of Talk* (Watson, 1984) uses the term self-talk to explain the process by which people speak out loud to review their activities, rehearse or revive interactions, evaluate, encourage, or chastise themselves for what they do or have done. Self-talking, says Goffman, is an important preparation for interaction with others, as well as serving a "self-guidance role." Although we are more likely to see children exhibiting this conduct, adults frequently engage in self-talking as a means of guiding themselves through challenging assignments and preparing for social interactions on a continuing basis. However, this is not socially acceptable conduct for adults. If self-talking is caught, one will most probably stop, or risk being perceived as eccentric or insane instantly. It is usually recognized that, if confined to the boundaries of loneliness, speaking to oneself is an acceptable practice. For the self-talk activity then, the only permissible site is in private (Kasper, 2014).

As adolescence is a transitional phase during childhood and adulthood, self-talk also is understood, by adolescents, as an activity to be performed in private.

Similar to Goffman, a few of the respondents in the present study also highlighted the function of self-talk as a means to encourage and console themselves. One male respondent expressed:

"…I utilize my private time mostly talking to myself and consoling myself that whatever had to happen has happened. Just chill now…"

A female respondent highlighted the importance of self-talk for clarity of thought.

> *"...When I am in my room, I just close the door and I start talking to myself very loudly, because it helps to hear what you are saying sometimes because sometimes you can feel very stuck in your own head, and whenever I feel that, I have not had the opportunity to talk to myself..."*

The Living Room. For the least private place within their apartments, a majority of the respondents referred to the living room or the TV lounge, because it is occupied all the time. Most of the respondents expressed that the living room or TV lounge is a place connected to the rest of the rooms and is usually occupied by more than one person. A few responses in this regard differed from the rest and are important to mention here. One respondent did not refer to any particular room and said that any room where all the members are sitting is less private because in her apartment there were two rooms altogether.

One respondent went on to say that the entire house is the least private. She expressed:

> *"...The entire house, because we open the windows, we open the doors in the front, everything can be viewed from everywhere, but when you close everything, it is so suffocating inside, so you need to open it. So, whenever I want my privacy, I have to close the window, close the curtain, and I cannot open it. So, unless I do something about it, it's not very private..."*

Within the spatial context, as recognized by Laufer and Wolfe (1977), different adolescents regarded different places as the most or least private but one point of significance here is that almost all the respondents regarded those places as the least private in which they are surrounded by their family members all the time. Be it the bathroom or the bedroom, the most private place has one characteristic, i.e., the ability to be alone or, in other words, the ability to limit or completely cut off interaction. Also, in analyzing this most and least private divide, the researcher is able to highlight the fact that there is no one physical structure that can be objectively identified as private.

However, in expressing their desire to stay in the least private place identified by them, most of the respondents replied in a negation. But a few of them expressed that to feel an open space or to feel connected, sometimes they do like spending time

there. This means they use the interplay of both spaces to satisfy their need of privacy and connection at different times.

So, privacy in its whole includes the spatial and functional definitions, and together they contribute towards a holistic understanding of the concept.

Conclusions

The increasing, haphazard urbanization in Pakistan requires a sustainable solution. Vertical growth is the one point agenda of the Pakistani government for urban growth, but lack of involvement of all stakeholders in policies and plans for urban growth management have caused the failure of these mega plans previously (Perveen et al., 2017). The present study aimed to highlight the perception of one of the stakeholders in any urban plan, the urban dwellers (Zhuang et al., 2017). The residents of the current multi-story apartment buildings in Lahore expressed satisfaction with the infrastructural aspects of the building; however, this satisfaction did not favor vertical living as a residence type. A great majority preferred horizontal housing over vertical living. Ownership of the apartment did influence the satisfaction level of the residents, but both ownership and satisfaction together could not raise the favorability of the apartments over horizontal housing.

As the initial survey was quantitative in nature, in-depth understanding of this discrepancy between the satisfaction level and the favorability of the residents could not be studied, as it was out of the prospects of the present research. In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 adolescents regarding one of the most highlighted issues of apartment living according to literature and observation, which is privacy. The adolescents had concrete ideas regarding their privacy and they considered apartment living as less private than horizontal housing due to lack of both aural and visual privacy. Privacy is utilized by the adolescents to express themselves freely and to perform self-talk to organize their thoughts and ideas.

It is important to study in-depth the factors that affect the cultural image of apartment living in Lahore, and also, future research should highlight how different segments of the population, for example, the elderly or the disabled, view these vertical

buildings, because it was observed that none of the three sites had an elevator or a ramp to support the elderly or the disabled. Similarly, apartment colonies selected for this research had open spaces for play, but in most areas where vertical growth is unplanned, this aspect is missing. Therefore, it is recommended that the needs of different segments of the population are given due consideration during the planning phase. Additionally, based on the limitation of the response rate, a study of similar nature is recommended on a greater scale, which, due to time and financial constraints, could not be achieved in the present study. A comprehensive analysis of satisfaction with and favorability of apartments among different segments of residents can contribute towards the sustainability of vertical growth in Lahore.

Construction of 135,000 apartments requires a great amount of resources. A developing country like Pakistan, cannot afford to make the mistake that the USA did in the 1950s with the Pruitt Igoe project, which was dynamited within two decades of its construction. Theoretically, the project was expected to transform the urban growth management for the future in the US, but unintended adverse consequences led to it becoming a case study of failure (Nescolarde-Selva et al., 2019). To avoid proposing unsustainable solutions to the problem of a housing shortage in Pakistan, inclusive stakeholder analysis should be conducted, and the well-being of all residents should be kept in mind. The present study aimed to inform the housing policy makers in this regard.

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Appendix A

Survey

Name (optional) _____

Age _____

Gender (Male / Female / other)

Floor Number

Nature of housing: (   ) Rented: (   ) Owned Any Other_____

Do you have experience of living in houses (horizontal living)? (Yes / No)

If yes, then which one is better (living in the apartment setting/living in houses)?

Indicate on the scale how satisfied you are with the following:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Lighting in the corridors	1	2	3	4	5
Space of the apartment	1	2	3	4	5
Entrance security of the community	1	2	3	4	5
Location of the community	1	2	3	4	5
Ventilation	1	2	3	4	5
Sunlight	1	2	3	4	5

How often does the sound coming from other apartments disturb you?

1.Never   2.Very Rarely   3. Rarely   4. Occasionally   5. Frequently   6.Very Frequently

Appendix B

Interview Guide

In your opinion, what is privacy?/How do you understand privacy?

Which one of these, in your opinion, is more private: apartments or horizontal housing?

What place in your house would you consider private? Why?

Which place in your house would you consider least private? Why? Do you like staying there?

Do you think privacy is beneficial or functional for you? What function does privacy serve for you?

Do you ever feel the need to talk loudly to yourself? Why? Can you do it?

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