

**A STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF ‘CONTESTED
SPACE’ IN THE CONTEXT OF STREET VENDING
IN SRI LANKA: A CASE STUDY**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

The research discussed the concept of contested space in the context of street vending in urban areas of Sri Lanka. Urban public space is contested by different local actors. The street vender is one of the local actors that contested over the urban public space. Street vending is contested activity because of they use certain urban public space for their business purpose. The contestation arises due to different meanings and perceptions have been given for urban public space by different actors. The contestation arises between the professional in planning authority's one side and street venders and other local actors in other side. The professionals in planning agencies are responsible for designing and defining of urban public space. The professional place making practice is basically depending on the concepts and theories of urban planning. There is critic that these concepts and theories were produced base on western countries by the western universities. There is an opinion that applying of this knowledge in different socio, economic, cultural and political environment made contested space within urban area. The literature revealed that professionals are more responsible for creating conceive space. In contrast to conceive space the local peoples creating every day space within urban space. To understand the contested terrain and ongoing confrontation between planning agencies and local legitimate actors the research will analysis the different perceptions of professionals in Kurunegala Municipal Council and Urban Development Authority, street venders and pedestrians. And also it will analysis the ways of contest over the conceive space by street venders. It is clear that there is big gap in knowledge between local actors and professionals. So there should be need radical participatory method in planning process to harvest local knowledge and wisdom to minimize contested nature of the urban area.

Key worlds: contested space, local practice, street vending

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration of the candidate & Supervisor	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgment	iii
Table of contents	iv
List of figures	vii
List of table viii	
List of abbreviations	ix
1 . Introduction	01
1.1 Problem definition	02
1.2 Important of study	02
1.3 objectives of study	04
2 . Literature review	05
2.1 Introduction	05
2.2 Modernist and post modernist view of space	05
2.3 Theoretical explanation of place	05
2.4 The social production of space	06
2.5 Urban public space	09
2.6 Abstract space social space and function of public space	10
2.7 Contested space	10
2.8 The nature of the contested space	11
2.9 Lived space and local practice	13
2.10 Street vending as contested function in urban public space	15

2.11	Conclusion	16
3.	Research design	20
3.1	Introductions	20
3.2	Study methodology	20
3.3	Data collection	23
3.4	Study area	23
3.4.1	Social, Cultural and Economic diversity of the area	23
3.4.2	Street vending activities in the Urban Public space	23
3.5	Kurunegala Development Plan.	24
4.	Case study and analysis	25
4.1	Introduction	25
4.2	Existing situation	25
4.3	Contested nature of urban public space in kurunegala town.	25
4.3.1	introduction	25
4.3.2	Professional's perception regarding use of urban public space by street vendors	27
4.3.3	Street vender's perception	29
4.3.4	Pedestrian/ buyer's perception regarding the use of urban public	31
4.4.	The ways of contest over the conceived space by street vendors	33
4.4.1	Introduction	33
4.4.2	Subverting of conceived space	33
4.4.3	Adaptation to perceive space	34

4.4.4	Appropriating the space	35
4.4.5	Personalization/ domination/ familiarization the space	36
4.5	Conclusion	37
5.	Conclusion and Recommendation.	39
6.	Reference List	41
7.	Appendices	43

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page	
Figure2. 1	Trialectics of being	7
Figure 2.2	Trialectics of spatiality	7
Figure 4.1	Street vendors encroach walk way while pedestrian encroach road side	26
Figure 4.2	Street vending Fulfill the aspiration of economic hardship groups	30
Figure 4.3	Big concrete block standing on the road to disturb to vehicle	34
Figure 4.4	Adjacent residential users convert their front space for vending	34
Figure 4.5	Storefront hotel owners convert their front space for vending	35
Figure 4.6	Lake surrounding area/ resting place. Activity and booth also suit to the area	35
Figure 4.7	Surrounding area of public fair. Temporary setup suitable for the area	35
Figure 4.8	Semi permanent material has used for the booth to dominate his legibility	36
Figure 4.9	Vendors dominate the pavements while pedestrians dominate the carriage way	37

LIST OF TABLE

	Page
Table 2.1: Differentiation of thee forms of space.	7

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

KMC	Krunegala Municipal Council
NPPD	National physical Planning Department
RDA	Road Development Authority
UDA	Urban Development Authority

