

## FROM “DIALECTIC TO SPATIAL JUSTICE”: UNDERSTANDING SOCIO-SPATIAL PROCESSES IN OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

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**Abstract:** Spatial Justice in the contemporary urbanism emerges from recognizing injustices that shape how cities are experienced and produced. Central to this discourse is the concept of Socio-Spatial Dialectic where social relations and spatial forms shape and reshape one another. Open Public Spaces function as critical interfaces through which the expression of justice within the city is made visible. Yet, despite their significance, the interplay between socio-spatial processes and its capacity to shape the distribution of justice remains insufficiently theorized and empirically examined. This study understands the socio-spatial processes in Open Public Spaces as generative forces which justice itself is unfolded. Drawing on theories of spatial justice, the study descriptively assesses the Socio-spatial dialectic through thematic analysis and a composite Spatial Justice Index developed by standardization and normative adjustments to illustrate how these dynamics manifest Justice. Galle Face Green in Colombo is the empirical site of inquiry; a contested civic landscape where public protest, civic identity intersect. Findings reveal a patterned gradient of spatial justice, increasing from the central mass towards the border spaces with the promenade exhibiting the highest justice. These insights advance a critical inquiry for practitioners to meaningfully engage with the pursuit of Spatial Justice.

**Keywords:** *Spatial Justice, Socio-Spatial Dialectic, Open Public Space*

### 1. Introduction

Contemporary urbanism is marked by persistent socio-spatial inequalities that shape how cities are produced, inhabited, and interpreted. As these injustices intensify, justice has re-emerged not merely as a moral imperative but as a spatial project tied to the urban condition itself. Building on Lefebvre’s (1991) proposition that space is socially produced and Harvey’s framing of the “right to the city,” contemporary scholarship argues that justice must be examined through the spatial arrangements that reproduce inequity. Yet, despite growing attention, the spatial dimension of justice remains comparatively under-theorized in relation to its social and political counterparts (Pereira et al., 2017; Soja, 2010). As Soja (2010) contends, engaging with spatial justice offers critical insight into the deeper structures through which urban injustice operates but this potential remains only partially realized in current research.

Open Public Spaces (OPS) occupy a central role in this discourse as everyday terrains where inclusion, exclusion, visibility, and civic life unfold. International frameworks, such as UN Habitat (2016), emphasize that open spaces must be inclusive, connected, safe, and accessible principles inherently linked to justice. However, scholarship continues to debate which attributes of public space meaningfully determine spatial justice (Sezer & Niksic, 2017). Carmona (2015) argues that spatial justice does not require uniformity but rather spatial diversity that enables different forms of social life to coexist. This situates the socio-spatial sphere the reciprocal shaping of spatial form and social behavior as a foundational determinant of justice within OPS.

Understanding spatial justice therefore requires a dialectical approach that recognizes space and society as mutually constitutive (Lefebvre, 1991; Madanipour, 1988). This study adopts such a lens through the examination of Galle Face Green in Colombo, Sri Lanka a highly symbolic civic landscape where leisure, political protest, and collective identity converge. Its spatial heterogeneity, defined by a central lawn mass, a longitudinal axis, and an oceanfront promenade, creates differentiated socio-spatial conditions that influence how justice is perceived and experienced. This research understands how the socio-spatial dialectic informs the spatiality of justice across this dynamic urban open space.

### 2. Spatiality of Justice in a Just City

The Right to the city raised by Lefebvre (1996) elaborates on Urban Justice emphasizing four aspects of spatial right; the right to be fairly involved in the process of urban space production, the right to access the advantages that the city produced, the right to avoid spatial segregation and the right to get access to basic public services. Fainstein’s (2010) “A Just city” is undeniably hinged in the concept of Justice. A just city refers to social equality and interrelated values in relation to Philosophical concept of justice. Furthermore, he demonstrates on urban theory of Justice and its relationship to Diversity,

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Equity and Democracy. Diversity refers to the presence of a variety of social layers with different socio-cultural values. Equity can be defined as the fair distribution of resources, wealth and the opportunities to use them within cities. Democracy in a just city refers to representation and public participation in the urban planning process.

Furthermore, Nickayin et al. (2023) emphasizes Spatial Justice as a component of a Just City. Theory of Spatial justice refers to the equal and fair distribution of resources and services and the opportunities to use them (Soja, 2010). This spatial dimension has drawn attention and given rise to the theoretical understanding of Spatial Justice and to the spatiality of democracy, and Lefebvre’s right to the city. Furthermore, Pereira et al. (2017) states spatial justice isn’t just about accessibility and fair distributions. According to Scott, & Sarah (2018) Spatial justice reveals distribution patterns of Injustice within a space (Figure 1).

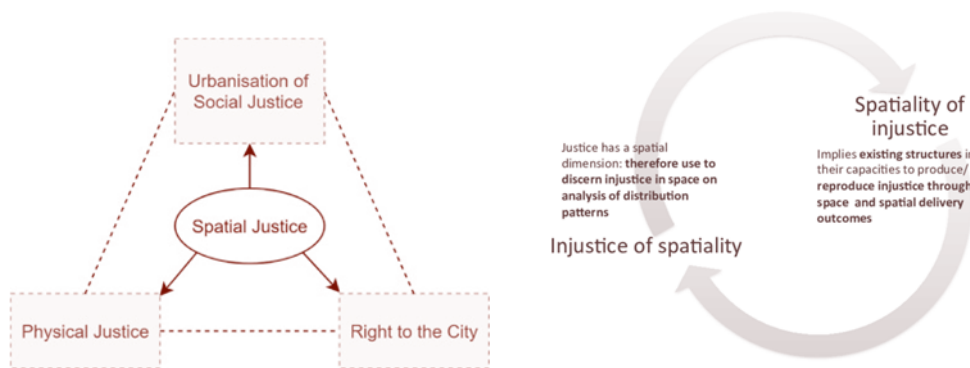


Figure 1, Spatiality of Justice (Source: Scott, & Sarah, 2018)

### 2.1. SPATIAL JUSTICE IN OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

An Open Public Space provides ‘openness’ in terms of access to the public. Sezer & Niksic (2017) demonstrates Open Public space as a physical space that should provide accessibility and inclusivity within socio-temporal dynamics. The (2016) UN Habitat Conference III, The New Urban Agenda, revealed Open Public spaces should provide ‘inclusive, connected, safe and accessible’ spaces, which are principles of urban justice (UN Habitat, 2016). Nevertheless, The British newspaper The Guardian’s web blog ‘Cities’ presented a series of articles, demonstrating causes of ‘unjust’ conditions in public space mentioning privatization, exclusion of social groups, lack of accessibility and distribution of amenities (Sezer & Niksic, 2017). According to Low & Iveson (2016) Open Public spaces are highly valued because people have an equal universal right to use these despite of any social inequalities. Open Public Spaces are one of the indicators of democracy. If an Open Public space facilitates democracy it may often adopts to facilitate the changing needs of the society. In the global phenomenon Open Public Spaces often transforms as places for civic performance. Seoul Plaza is one such Open Public Space located at Seoul, South Korea (Kim & Min, 2019). The Plaza hold events for the citizens of Seoul and diverse civic expressions has been performed (Figure 2).



The funeral of an Emperor, 1919      Red Devils’ street cheering, 2002.      A music concert with 80,000 spectators, 2012.

Figure 2: Real world phenomenon of Spatial Justice (Source: Kim & Min, 2019)

### 2.2 SOCIO-SPATIAL DIALECTIC OF SPATIAL JUSTICE

Madanipour, 1988 defines urban space as a socio-spatial entity, at the intersection of space production and everyday life. Furthermore, frames seeing space as a social product, the concept of space-time should allow dynamism to be extended into socio-spatial relationships. The author emphasizes this argument to conceptualize space with time. Madanipour, 1988 clearly states understanding the process, evolution and change of urban space and seeing space as a contributor to everyday practices will help us to introduce fourth-dimension into the space. Social space is “the spatial implications of social institutions.” Soja, 2010 further articulates this interplay in his theory of the *socio-spatial dialectic*, emphasizing that **social structures are embedded in and reinforced by spatial arrangements**, just as spatial practices are shaped by social, political, and economic forces. This dialectical understanding is central to critical urban studies and spatial justice discourse, where the design, control, and accessibility of space reflect broader power dynamics and socio-economic inequalities.

### 2.3 SOCIO-SPATIAL DIALECTIC OF SPATIAL JUSTICE IN OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

In the context of Open Public Spaces, the spatial-social dialectic helps explain how public environments can either foster inclusion and equity or reinforce exclusion and marginalization, depending on how space is planned, governed, and used. Cabrera-Barona & Merschdorf (2018) focuses on Physical and Social sphere of Spatial Justice (Table 1). Accordingly, the socio-spatial sphere reflects the realization of the concept of spatial justice in an Open Public space. Similarly, Izzy et al., (2020) elaborates on Spatial Justice emphasizing the Spatial and Social aspects. The Spatial Sphere of Spatial Justice refers to the urban structure and spatial patterns of the dynamic processes in the landscape. Then the fair distribution resources and access to services refers to the equal distribution and equal opportunity to use them. On the other hand, the Social Sphere consider the Sense of Place and a place for a person can be a non-place for another. Social equality refers to the inclusivity of the space. The space should cater for all despite age, gender or any other disparities. Social behavior is a representation of social glue.

Table 1, Spatial-Social factors of Spatial Justice  
(Source: Compiled by Author; Cabrera-Barona, P., & Merschdorf, H., 2018)

	Key Factors of Spatial Justice	Definition
Spatial Sphere	Urban structure	The spatial arrangement within the space
	Spatial patterns	Time-dynamic representation of multiple places that are produced by diverse spatiality
	Fair distribution of resources	The presence of resources at approachable locations for the use of people
	Access to services	Equal opportunity to use the services despite any disparities
Social Sphere	Sense of Place	The presence of valued meanings and Diversity of experience, at different spaces, hierarchical categorization of spaces
	Place and Non-places	The presence of people at one place and the absence from another place
	Social Equality	The presence of men and women of all ages
	Social Behaviour	Diversity in behavioural patterns within the space The variety of social relations with relatives, friends and even strangers

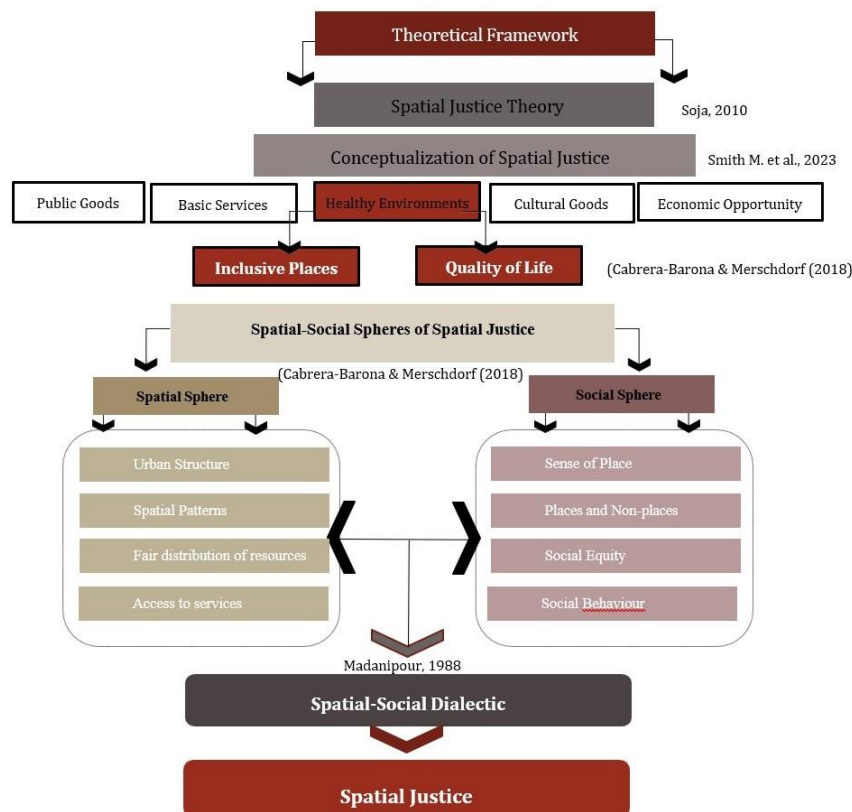


Figure 3, Theoretical Framework  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

### 3. Methodology

This study investigates socio-spatial processes in open public spaces to understand how spatial justice is produced, experienced, and contested within urban environments. Using a dialectical approach, the methodology integrates qualitative and quantitative methods to capture the complex interactions between spatial form, social behavior, and perceptions of justice.

- **Data Collection:** A multi-method data collection strategy was used to capture the physical characteristics of public spaces and the social dynamics within them.
- **Analytical Framework:** The study combines spatial justice theory with dialectical socio-spatial analysis to examine the reciprocal relationship between spatial form and social processes.
  - a) **Spatial Justice Index (SJI):** Quantitative analysis was conducted using the SJI, which aggregates the 8 spatial and social indicators into a standardized index. The SJI provides an objective measure of spatial justice across different zones within the public spaces studied.
  - b) **Qualitative Thematic Analysis:** Interview transcripts and field notes were subjected to qualitative coding to identify justice themes.
- **Interpretation and Synthesis:** The combined quantitative and qualitative analyses enable a dialectical understanding of how open public spaces are both shaped by spatial and social processes and thereby, inform favourable factors of justice.

#### 3.1 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION - SPATIAL AND SOCIAL PROCESSES (SUBJECTIVE)

Table 2, Data collection Methods  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Data Collection		Spatial Factor	Analysis	Discussion
Systematic field observations	Spatial Factor	<b>Urban structure</b>	Morphological Interpretation	Understanding how spatial form influences behaviour
Accesiblity Mapping		<b>Spatial patterns</b>	Spatial Pattern Analysis	Identification of activity clusters and underutilised areas
Photogrpahic documentation		<b>Fair distribution of resources</b>	Resource Distribtuion Analysis	Assessment of spatial equity in amenities
Observation sketches		<b>Access to services</b>	Accesiblity Analysis	Evaluation of pedestrian movement, connectivity, spatial permeability
Observation sketches	Social Factors	<b>Sense of Place</b>	Sense-of-Place Interpretation	Themes of belonging, safety, exclusion, comfort, equity
Open-ended Interviews		<b>Place and Non-places</b>	Perception Mapping	Identification of place/non-place zones
Non-participant Observation		<b>Social Equality</b>	Qualitative Coding	Identify areas perceived as inclusive, exclusive, unsafe, or meaningful
Behavioural Mapping		<b>Social Behaviour</b>	Behavioural Analysis	Classification of user groups, activity types, temporal use

#### 3.2 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS – SOCIO-SPATIAL DALECTIC AND JUSTICE (SUBJECTIVE)

A multi-step analytical process inspired by perception-based spatial justice indicators (Cabrera-Barona et al., 2016; 2018) and index construction techniques used in normative spatial justice modelling (Malega & Stallings, 2016).

Table 3, Data Analysis Methods – SJI & Thematic Analysis  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Data Collection Method	Method of Analysis	Process of Analysis
Index scoring	Spatial Justice Index (SJI)	Data standardization
		Normative adjustments (directional correction)

		<b>Index scoring</b>
		<b>Zone classification</b>
		Interpretation
<b>Semi-structured Interviews</b>	Qualitative Thematic Analysis	Thematic coding

3.3 INTERPRETATION & SYNTHESIS OF SJI

Table 4, Data Intepretation & synthesis - SJI  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

SPATIAL FACTORS OF JUSTICE		
<b>90-100% (SJI)</b>	<b>70-89% (SJI)</b>	<b>&lt; 70% (SJI)</b>
<b>High spatial justice</b>	<b>Adequate but improvable justice</b>	<b>Risk of spatial injustice</b>
<b>Favourable Zone</b>	Moderately Favourable	Unfavourable Zone
<b>90-100%</b>	<b>70-89%</b>	<b>&lt; 70%</b>
SOCIAL FACTORS OF JUSTICE		

3.4 CASE STUDY SELECTION

Galle Face Green (GFG) is such Open Public Space located in the Central heart of Colombo, Sri Lanka (refer Figure 4). This extends over a mile along the coastline of the city extending from east to west. It is one of “the single most real Open Public Space in the City” (Rajapakse & Dayaratne, 2016, p. 25). It is a large open plain bordered to a densely built up space. The space combines the water, the large expanse and the sky. Thus, Studies have revealed that it is also one of the most recalled Open Public Spaces in Sri Lanka. The scale and proportion, level differences, visual hierarchy, the dramatizing reflections of water and sky uphold the spatiality of GFG. The functional dynamism shapes the socio-spatial dialectic over time. Moreover, the nucleus of activities, temporal dynamics ties the social glue emphasizing sociality of the space which transforms through the sociality within the space.

Furthermore, “In this landscape, the person becomes secondary. It is a place where people reach out to the natural aesthetic element.”(Rajapakse & Dayaratne, 2016, p. 28). Its natural creation is enriched by its natural elements over the manmade structures. Indeed, the promenade edged by the Indian Ocean, the lawn mass at the Center and the Main Axis forms its creation. According to Rajapakse & Dayaratne, 2016 GFG has a meaningful structure that hinges very simple functions to more valued symbolic expressions. This space more often adopts to the changing needs of the society transforming the space for civic expressions reflecting diverse socio-cultural civic events from past to present overtime.

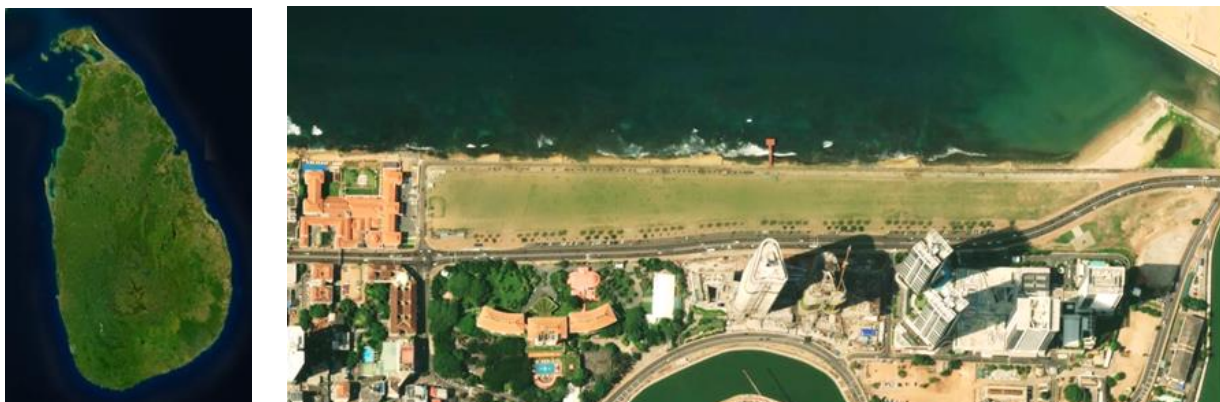
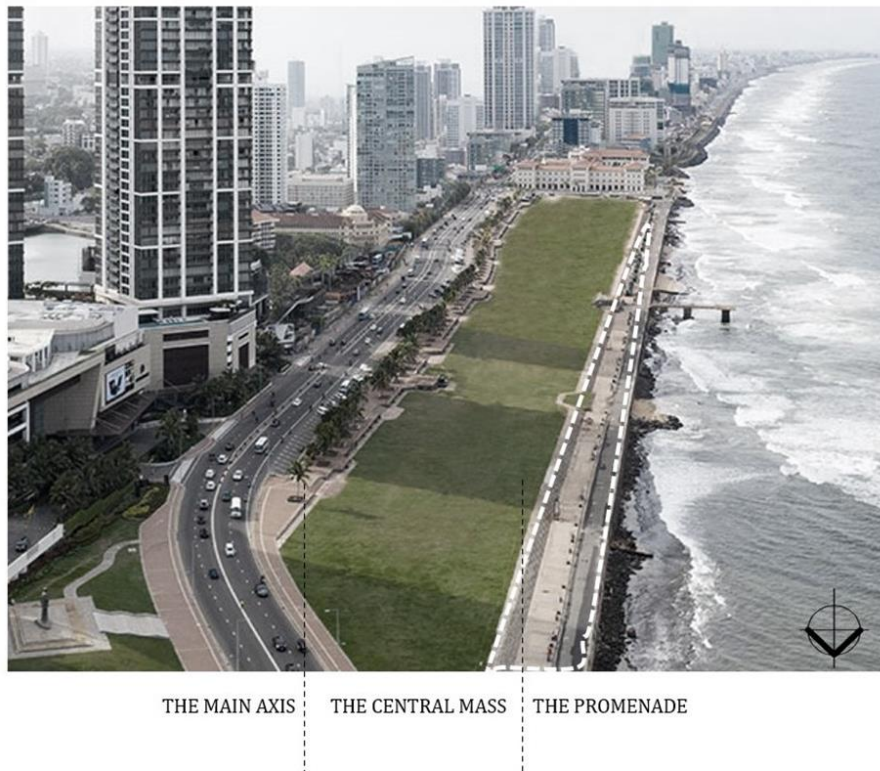


Figure 4, Galle Face Green  
(Source: <https://mapcarta.com/>)

The case of GFG is studied based on its three spaces (refer Figure 5):

The Main Axis, the central mass and the promenade. “There are three main aspects contributing to the sense of place in Galle Face Green. The High speed journey: The Galle Road, The Stroll walk: higher elevation at the edge of sea and the settled and paused being in: central mass.” (Rajapakse & Dayaratne, 2016 p.28



THE MAIN AXIS    THE CENTRAL MASS    THE PROMENADE

Figure 5, Three Spaces at GFG

(Source: <https://www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green>; Modified by Author)

#### 4. Case Study Analysis & Discussion

##### 4.1. THE MAIN AXIS

##### 4.1.1. Socio-Spatial Processes in relation to Open Public Spaces

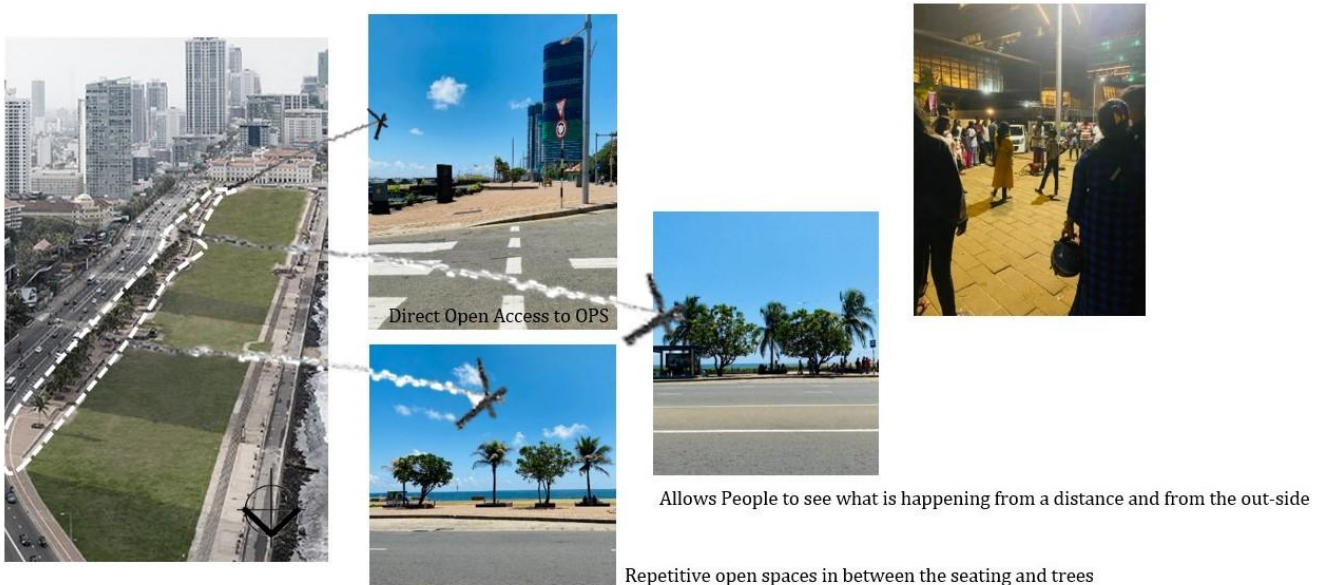


Figure 6, The Main Axis

(Source: map - [www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green](http://www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green); Modified by Author, photographs by author)

##### 4.1.2. Spatial Justice Index in relation to user perception of Socio-Spatial factors

The space has **access to services** giving equal opportunity for **“the people to enter into the space without any obstacle”**. The **spatial patterns** within the space indeed **“encourages them to enter into the place”**. Nevertheless, the majority (87%) of the spatial justice factors has facilitated the user’s needs. The favorable factors of justice at the main axis reflect

Equal Access at the main entrance of GFG. Spatial Patterns are favored to enhance the attractive Image of the place. The less favorable factors has been caused by the compact spatial arrangement and less approachable re- sources and services within the space (Table 5).

Table 5, Spatial Sphere of the Main Axis  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Indicator	Spatial Justice Index (SJI)	Zones
Access to Services	92%	Favourable Zone
Spatial Patterns	91%	Favourable Zone
Urban Structure	90%	Favourable Zone
Fair Distribution of Resources	75%	Moderately Favourable Zone
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>Moderately Favourable</b>

The favorable factors of justice at the main axis reflect that the *sense of place “ties users to experience the space”*. *Social equality* is a reason for them to *“use the space frequently without a sense of social segregation at the main entrance GFG”*. The presence of Sense of place and Social Equality are the more facilitated factors of justice. People don’t find diverse spaces and rather monotonous spaces at the main axis. Thus, Social behavior and places and non-places are less favorable for them. Nevertheless, the majority (89%) of the spatial justice factors has facilitated the user’s needs. (Table 6).

Table 6, Social Sphere of the Main Axis  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Indicator	Spatial Justice Index (SJI)	Zones
Sense of Place	95%	Favourable Zone
Social Equality	92%	Favourable Zone
Social Behaviour	91%	Favourable Zone
Places and Non- places	78%	Moderately Favourable Zone
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>Moderately Favourable</b>

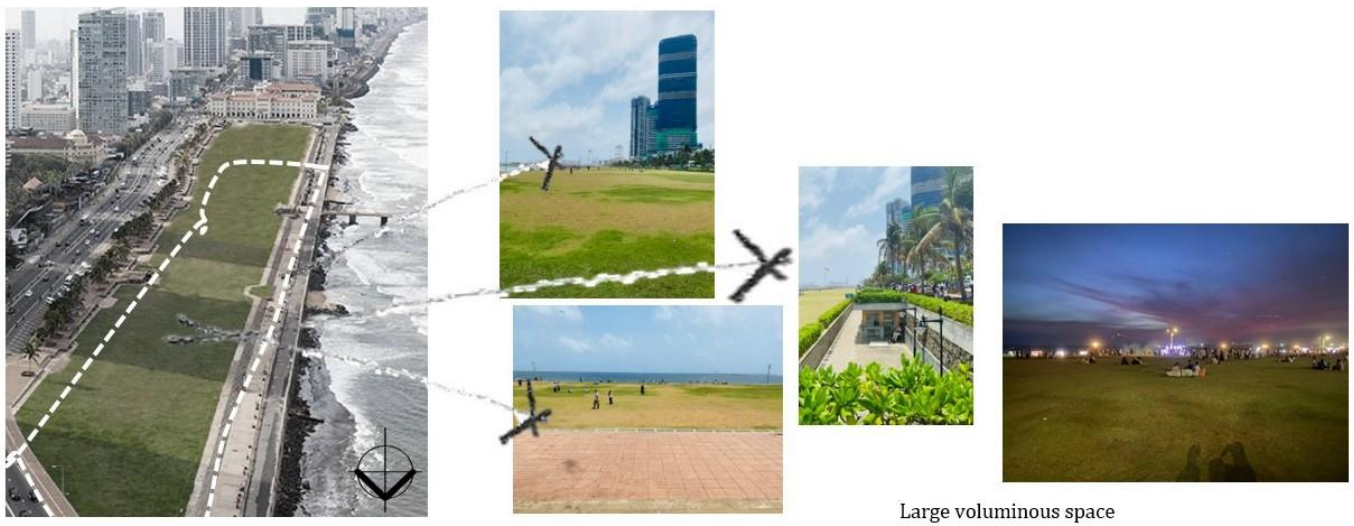
4.1.3. Thematic coding of Socio-Spatial Dialectic in relation to favorable factors of Spatial Justice

Table 7, Thematic coding at the Main Axis  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Spatial Indicator	Socio-Spatial Dialectic	Social Indicator
Access to Services	The space is edged to the main Galle Road <i>providing multiple physical access</i> to the place from the surrounding areas by <i>different transportation modes</i> . The space is bordered by the <i>parking spaces</i> . The longitudinal main axis has <i>free entry</i> without any obstacles. The Main Axis is mostly used for passing through, entering to the central mass and for people watching in the shade.	Social Equality
Spatial Patterns	The <i>repetitive open spaces in between the seating and trees</i> provide visual access <i>encouraging people to enter into the space</i> and allows <i>People to see what is happening from a distance and from the outside</i> . The axis is also used for various entertainment activities during the night.	Sense of Place
Urban Structure	This axis has <i>commercial containers</i> that <i>encourage social connectivity</i> . <i>Crowds in front of different containers</i> can be observed from the <i>evening to night</i> . Crowds can be viewed from a distance due to the orientation of the containers with gaps in between.	Social Behaviour
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>Favourable factors of Spatial Justice</b>	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>

4.2. THE CENTRAL MASS

4.2.1. Socio-Spatial Processes in relation to Open Public Spaces



Large voluminous space

Figure 7, The Central Mass

(Source: map - [www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green](http://www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green); Modified by Author, photographs by author)

4.2.2. Spatial Justice Index in relation to user perception of Socio-Spatial factors

The space has **spatial patterns** in the landscape enriches **“the user experience and attracts people into the space”**. Thus, **“the large voluminous space”** provides a large space creating a pause at the center of GFG. This, has resulted in higher Access to services. **Spatial patterns** are favored to **“attract people to use the inner space.”** The less favorable factors has been caused by the large voluminous spatial arrangement and thereby, location of resources and services within the space are less approachable (Table 8).

Table 8, Spatial Sphere of the Central Mass  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Indicator	Spatial Justice Index (SJI)	Zones
Spatial Patterns	90%	Favourable Zone
Access to Services	90%	Favourable Zone
Urban Structure	75%	Moderately Favourable Zone
Fair Distribution of Resources	60%	Less Favourable Zone
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>Moderately Favourable</b>

The favorable factors of justice at the Central mass reflect that **sense of place “ties the entire space together”** and **social equality** is a reason for them to **“use the space at the night”**. The presence of Sense of place and Social Equality are the more facilitated factors of justice. The social sphere of the place provides equal opportunity for all. Less activities and diversity within the space has resulted in less favour of Justice (Table 9). **“People find the space dead mostly during the day time”**. Thus, Social behavior and places and non-places are less favorable for them.

Table 9, Social Sphere of the Central Mass  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Indicator	Spatial Justice Index (SJI)	Zones
Sense of Place	90%	Favourable Zone
Social Equality	79%	Moderately Favourable Zone
Social Behaviour	77%	Moderately Favourable Zone
Places and Non-places	66%	Less Favourable Zone
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>Moderately Favourable</b>

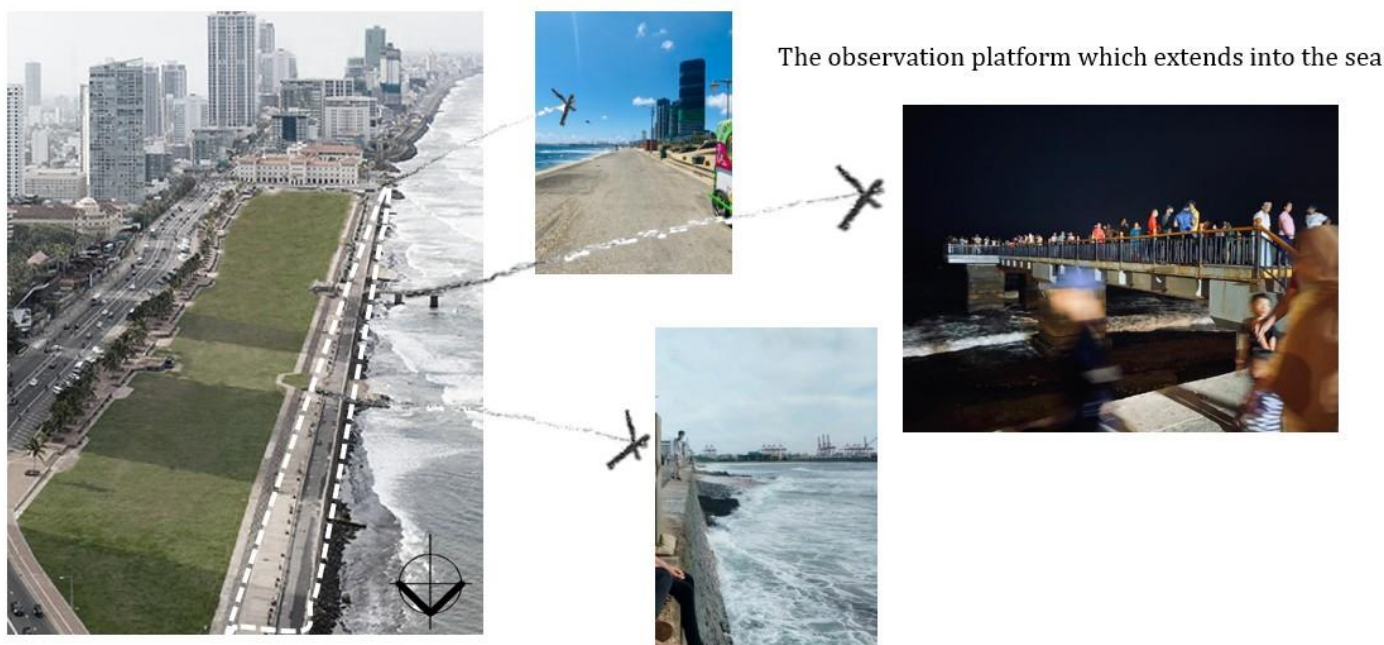
4.2.3. Thematic coding of Socio-Spatial Dialectic in relation to favorable factors of Spatial Justice

Table 10, Thematic coding at the Central Mass  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Spatial Indicator	Socio-Spatial Dialectic	Social Indicator
Spatial Patterns	The larger space provides <b>clear views and vistas to both other spaces and ties the entire space</b> . Identity of the place is unique due to its calm <b>settling image</b> . The central mass attracts users mostly during the evening and night. Mostly this space is used for <b>'being in' within the entire place</b> .	Sense of Place
Access to Services	There's <b>clear access</b> from the main axis to the central mass given through a <b>walkable series of steps</b> . The space is comfortable where people sit in groups and interact with friends and even with strangers. There are <b>linkages from ground level to underground food stalls</b> .	Social Equality
Urban Structure	The green lawn at the central mass provides a pause within the place. The presence of activities are comparatively less. Nevertheless, this allowed people to use the space according to their desired needs. The lawn area is mostly used as a crossover during the daytime. The space appears large in scale due to its monotony. The presence of shaded spaces are less within the space.	Social Behaviour
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>Favourable factors of Spatial Justice</b>	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>

4.3. THE PROMENADE

4.3.1. Socio-Spatial Processes in relation to Open Public Spaces



The observation platform which extends into the sea

Figure 8, The Promenade  
(Source: map - [www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green](http://www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green); Modified by Author, photographs by author)

4.3.2 Spatial Justice Index in relation to user perception of Socio-Spatial factors

The **spatial patterns** within the space indeed **"encourages them to enter into the place"**. Thus, the presence of sky and water enhances the Urban Structure within GFG. This longitudinal axis provides a dramatic edge to the GFG. On the other hand, the **"spatial arrangement with a higher elevation and the observation platform has attracted users"**. The less favorable factors has been caused by the large crowdedness of the location causing less Access to services within the space (Table 11).

Table 11, Spatial Sphere of the Promenade  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Indicator	Spatial Justice Index (SJI)	Zones
Spatial Patterns	94%	Favourable Zone
Urban Structure	92%	Favourable Zone
Access to Services	91%	Favourable Zone
Fair Distribution of Resources	90%	Favourable Zone
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>Favourable</b>

The presence of Sense of place and Social Equality are the more facilitated factors of justice. The *natural elements and diverse patterns* enhance the *sense of place*. Moreover, *“the hierarchical behavior within the space from the gradual steps to the climax point of observation platform at the center has uphold the Sense of Place”*. Social Equality is a reason for them to *“use the space frequently without a sense of Social Segregation at the edge of GFG”* (Table 12).

Table 12, Social Sphere of the Promenade  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Indicator	Spatial Justice Index (SJI)	Zones
Sense of Place	98%	Favourable Zone
Social Equality	94%	Favourable Zone
Places and Non-places	96%	Favourable Zone
Social Behaviour	92%	Favourable Zone
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>Favourable</b>

4.3.3. Thematic coding of Socio-Spatial Dialectic in relation to favorable factors of Spatial Justice

Table 13, Thematic coding at the Promenade  
(Source: Compiled by Author)

Spatial Indicator	Socio-Spatial Dialectic	Social Indicator
Spatial Patterns	The observation platform extends into the sea providing people an opportunity to closely <i>experience the sea</i> . The <i>combination of Sea, Sky and Ground</i> are prominent natural elements of the space. These three elements form a Juxtaposition within the space.	Sense of Place
Access to Services	<i>Direct access</i> is given from the central mass to the promenade with <i>a series of gradual steps</i> and also from a direct pathway from the South (Figure 39). The <i>presence of seats in between these steps</i> are used for people watching. The longitudinal promenade encourage walking. People even sit on the edge platform to experience the sea.	Social Equality
Urban Structure	The <i>observation platform</i> which <i>extends into the sea</i> is one of the <i>most favored places by users within the entire space</i> (Figure 40). This place is also one of the <i>most photogenic</i> places within GFG. Most common activities observed within the promenade was the watching of the sea and watching people. The dominant activity within the space is street food. These have increased other clustered activities and social connectivity.	Social Behaviour
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>Favourable factors of Spatial Justice</b>	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>

4.4. FROM SOCIO-SPATIAL DIALECTIC TO SPATIAL JUSTICE IN OPEN PUBLIC SPACES

The presence of Spatial Patterns and Urban structure” has scored high in all three spaces within the Spatial Sphere resulting in high scores for “Sense of Place” in the Social Sphere. Users find the spatial patterns welcoming and in result enhance the diverse experience within the Main Axis and the promenade. The presence of “Access to Service” has scored moderate in all three spaces confirming the high scores of “Social Equality” in the Social Sphere. Conversely, social practices actively shape and transform urban structures and spatial patterns over time.

The main axis and the promenade, which the border spaces are influenced by Spatial Justice caused by more favourable socio-spatial factors of Justice, but in the central mass it did not. Thus, the difference between the border spaces and the central mass is the presence of more diverse Spatial-social dialectic, so that in border spaces Spatial justice is much higher

than the central mass. Thus, the overall findings reveal that **Distribution of Spatial justice in Galle Face Green increase from the central mass towards the border spaces, the highest Spatial Justice being in the promenade edged by the sea (refer figure 9).**



Figure 9, From Dialectic to Spatial Justice at GFG  
(Source: map - [www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green](http://www.berjayahotel.com/content/galle-face-green); Modified by Author)

## 5. Conclusion

According to Soja, 2010 despite the multifold approaches, Justice brought by a spatial dimension has not received enough attention. Majority of studies on Justice are conducted based on "Accessibility" indicator. In this sense, merging Spatial-Social Dialectic which has more to the quality than accessibility has led to a holistic understanding on the concept of Spatial Justice. Moreover, The Open Public Spaces are contributors of Justice within a city. These spaces may serve as platforms for realizing social change. Through this research, it has been established that the more favourable factors of Spatial-Social Sphere, promote more favourable Justice within an Open Public Space, reflecting a Spatial-Social Dialectic as a driver of Spatial Justice in Open Public Spaces. The analysis of the theoretical framework of Spatial Justice suggest ways for landscape architects and other practitioners to understand and advocate for the relationship between Open Public Space and the ideals of Spatial Justice within a Just city.

Conducting this research on Similar Open Public Spaces will provide more insights on Spatial Justice. What would our cities look like without these large civic Open Public spaces? Aside from offering Just Open Public spaces, are there specific landscape architectural design elements that's can en-hance the impact of a large-scale peaceful gathering? How does the dimension of proprietorship (public or private) impact a society's democratic ideals? Is the privatization of public space an unavoidable trend?

Ultimately, advancing spatial justice requires not only thoughtful design and planning but also active community engagement and political will. As cities continue to evolve amid pressures of privatization and social fragmentation, reclaiming and revitalizing open public spaces as truly inclusive, equitable, and democratic arenas is imperative. Only through this integrated effort can the promise of the "right to the city" be realized for all inhabitants.

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