

EXAMINING THE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SOLID WASTE, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO KERALA

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ABSTRACT

Kerala produces tonnes of solid garbage per day from residential, business, and healthcare facilities as well as from streets and open areas. These waste materials, which include both organic and inorganic components, are generated mostly by residences and commercial buildings (67%) followed by markets (10%), hospitals (10%), and hotels and restaurants (10%). In the city, very little industrial trash is produced. Environmental contamination results from a rise in trash creation each year due to population growth, rising consumption, and an increase in the prevalence of non-degradable materials in waste streams. As a result, waste-related environmental contamination poses a serious threat to human health. Additionally, untreated waste causes pollution of the air, clogs sewers and drains, contaminates water distribution networks, serves as a breeding ground for several illnesses, attracts wildlife such as birds, insects, and rats, ruins sanitation, and degrades the aesthetics of neighbourhoods. Due to the lack of well-managed treatment facilities, urban life is now more susceptible to the outbreak of epidemics like gastroenteritis, cholera, chikunkunya, etc. Throughout the whole waste value chain, women play an important role, beginning as consumers and disposers and continuing as formal garbage collectors, street sweepers, recycling collectors, waste bank operators, junk shop owners or employees, and manufacturing workers. Each region has a different amount of involvement and type of activities. Women in Kerala have a strong connection to their local environment through their work as farmers, water and firewood collectors, and collectors of firewood. They frequently experience environmental issues most directly. As a result, women have worked as farmers, water resource managers, dependable housekeepers, health planners, forest managers, etc. Thus, it is important to note the role of women in waste management. This study is an attempt to understand women participation in waste management.

KEY WORDS: *Solid waste management, women, Kerala*

Received: Oct 15, 2022; **Accepted:** Nov 05, 2022; **Published:** Nov 21, 2022; **Paper Id.:** IJEEFUSDEC20223