

Executive Summary
of
Minor Research Project

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-A CASE STUDY OF ERNAKULAM DISTRICT

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Solid Waste Management in modern economies are mainly based on sustainable development, precaution and environment. Solid waste refers to all the waste materials which are not in liquid or gas form. Solid waste can thus be referred as unusable materials originating from the activities of human beings and animals. Industrialisation and modernisation are having a major role in polluting the environment as a result of creating tonnes of garbage every day. The importance of solid waste management and an emphasis on solid waste management studies are very well important. The present study focuses on analysing the urban solid waste management system in the district of Ernakulam, Kerala. Being the industrially advanced district of Kerala, the Ernakulam district has peculiar characteristics in comparison with other districts of Kerala. Industrialisation and modernisation are having a major role in polluting the environment as a result of creating tonnes of garbage every day! It is far from the natural assimilative capacity of earth to degrade this waste. Population pressure is also having an adverse impact on the problem of waste management. The study found that volume of biodegradable wastes among the solid wastes is comparatively higher. It is found that about 80 percent of the wastes generated by the households are biodegradable in nature. Out of which 40 percent of the households are utilising these wastes as resources and converting the wastes into productive organic manures and as a source of energy for cooking. Out of the total wastes generated in the area, volume of plastic wastes composed of 8percent. Regarding plastic wastes 60 percent of the households are disposing plastic wastes through collecting agents provided by either the respective local bodies or residence associations directly or by some non-governmental agencies working in the area.

Major problems of waste management in the study area are mainly associated with lack of support from local self-government institutions and other community organisations like residence organisation. It is well evident that the general public is very interested in maintaining a better waste management system. However, a strong positive reinforcement is needed. Most of the residents are having the opinion that a well-managed system is very well needed where all the stakeholders must be confident in the viability of the system. A good number of households are very positive towards better waste disposal mechanisms. About 40 percent households are utilising these wastes as resources and converting the wastes into productive organic manures and as a source of energy for cooking. 30 percent are disposing waste through some collection agents. However, another 30 percent of the households are merely dumping these wastes in open/public places. The study found that a significant proportion of the households in the study area are well aware of the problems of solid waste management and they are more positive towards following a better waste management system. The study strongly recommends the need for having a systematic and scientific approach towards waste management. In such a system the role of governments including local self-government institutions, residence associations, non-governmental organisations and the public are equally important.