

YOUTHS' PERSPECTIVES ON USING A SMART FOOD WASTE ACCELERATOR FOR A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

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Abstract: As a part of the initiative called Youth Leadership for Climate Action (YLCA), which is carried out by Biodiversity Sri Lanka (BSL) and funded by the British Council to develop young people into community leaders in climate action. This community intervention for the fellowship is to address the burden issue of food waste management. A prototype which is AI-led smart food waste accelerator model was built. A baseline study in Dehiwala municipal council region was conducted by a qualitative sampling approach based on key informant interviews from youths by using structured questionnaires to identify their perspectives on food solid waste management. A total of 567 responses from youths aged between 18 to 29 were gathered. As a result, 91% of the study population is concerned about food waste management in their households. However, 89.45% of the study population stated that there is no specific proper way of disposal of food waste and more than 93% of them depended on local government authority's vehicles. This study showed that average of 0.67 kg of food waste accumulated in each household per day and most of them were the remaining meals. Furthermore, 89% of the study population was interested in buying AI-led innovative smart food accelerator for their households and 96% of them were interested to learn its functions and features if it is available in the market. There is a demand for implementing the AI-led smart food waste accelerator model among the youth in Colombo.

Keywords: Food waste management; Innovations; Smart food waste accelerator; Youth leadership for climate action