


Chapter 8

Kerala's Haritha Karma Sena Model of Waste Management: A Critical Analysis Through the Lens of Sustainability

Jipson Joseph

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-1795-5051>

Christ University, India

Ananya Pandey

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2419-6314>

Christ University, India

ABSTRACT

Urbanization had a glacial pace in India for a good period of time. It became active only in the 21st century. However, compared to national average, Kerala's percentage of urban population was very high during the 1980-1990s. But along with urbanization, Kerala also faces many challenges like environmental degradation caused mainly through unsystematic waste management system. With the support of the Clean India Mission and in response to the Supreme Court verdicts, Kerala initiated the Suchitva Mission and Haritha Keralam Mission with the tagline of 'Clean Kerala' by effectively managing the waste. This mission functioned with the field work of Haritha Karma Sena (Green Task Force), mostly employed by uneducated women. They have provided awareness among the public and systematically managed waste with their committed work. However, it also has many drawbacks and failures with regard to its implementation. In line of above, this chapter tries to critically analyze the Haritha Karma Sena model of waste management in order

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-5278-7.ch008

to examine whether it is a suitable model of waste management.

1 INTRODUCTION

The globe has experienced a significant evolution and growth in the post-Industrial Revolution period. One of the prime changes is in the nature of society, from agrarian to industrial. This also shifted the society from rural to urban (Co-chran & O’Kane, 1977). Realizing the potential of urban society for educational, economic, and social benefits, many people from rural areas moved to urban areas. This became intense during the post-Second World War period. The second half of the 20th century further witnessed a huge shift of rural population into the urban areas. It started in the Global North but towards the end of the 20th century, with the support of globalization, liberalization, and open economy this move became global in nature. Besides, technically improved transport and communication facilities facilitated domestic and external migration for economic advantages and employment opportunities. Slowly, the number of cities and urban areas grew enormously in size and demography. That is, the world population became more urbanized than ever (UNDESA, 2018).

Along with industrialization and urbanization, many vital concerns like unemployment, housing facilities, education, healthcare, sanitation, water supply, and waste management became the center of the discussions on policy-making and socioeconomic development. All these required more coordinated action from the State agencies. Among all these complexities, the issue of waste management became the most prioritized concern of both urban local bodies (ULBs) and the people living in urban areas (Benny, 2022). It is more complex in urban areas compared to rural sector. Inappropriate waste management systems cause severe health hazards and environmental issues. It even affects the satisfaction of basic rights of people. The sustainable development paradigm demands that the development should be oriented to build up a sustainable society, sustainable economy, and sustainable environment (WCED, 1987). But in the absence of proper waste management system, this objective becomes meaningless.

Urbanization and waste generation are serious concerns of the most populated country, India (Dutta & Jinsart, 2020). Throughout the world, many waste management systems can be seen. India also has a variety of waste management systems. The city of Indore, the cleanest city in India, has its own very effective and efficient waste management system (Pradhan et al., 2025). But this chapter focuses on Haritha Karma Sena (HKS), a waste management system designed by the government of Kerala, India. The State of Kerala is acclaimed for its 100% literacy and effective measures on healthcare. Together with these achievements, it also has a strong plan

26 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/keralas-haritha-karma-sena-model-of-waste-management/383476

Related Content

Challenges and Prospects for E-Planning in Lusophone African Countries: Evidence from the UN E-Government Survey 2012

Carlos Nunes Silva (2013). *International Journal of E-Planning Research* (pp. 60-69). www.irma-international.org/article/challenges-and-prospects-for-e-planning-in-lusophone-african-countries/78892

Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development

Abdeen Mustafa Omer (2012). *Regional Development: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 414-453). www.irma-international.org/chapter/renewable-energy-sustainable-development/66130

Ethical E-Participation: Reasons for Introducing a 'Qualitative Turn' for PPGIS

Marco Picone and Francesco Lo Piccolo (2014). *International Journal of E-Planning Research* (pp. 57-78). www.irma-international.org/article/ethical-e-participation/122428

Innovative Technology Leadership and Program Management: Driving AI-Powered Solutions for Blue-Green Infrastructure

Sonal Pathak, Sonia Duggaland Neerja Negi (2025). *Integrating Blue-Green Infrastructure Into Urban Development* (pp. 327-346). www.irma-international.org/chapter/innovative-technology-leadership-and-program-management/364204

Intelligent Transportation Systems and Other Technologies for Congestion Reduction in Urban Areas Using Vanet: Role of VANET and ITS for Congestion Reduction in Urban Areas

K. Lakshmi Narayanan and N. Gopinath (2025). *Urban Mobility and Challenges of Intelligent Transportation Systems* (pp. 37-50). www.irma-international.org/chapter/intelligent-transportation-systems-and-other-technologies-for-congestion-reduction-in-urban-areas-using-vanet/375287