

AN INITIATIVE TOWARDS WASTE MANAGEMENT THE MIDWAY JOURNEY

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ABSTRACT

Waste management is collection, transportation and disposal of garbage, sewage, and other waste products. Waste management is the process that deals with different kinds of waste and furnishes a numerous number of techniques to recycle things that do not belong to waste materials. Waste management mainly aims to reduce the adverse effect of trash on the nature and human health. The three R's of waste management consists of reduce, reuse, and recycle which plays a key role for proper waste management.

Our Research paper aims on waste management by the NGOs with reference to The Midway Journey of Guwahati, Assam. It highlights the work done by The Midway Journey on the fields of waste management, their contributions towards the welfare of society and the awareness spread by them among the citizens and netizens.

The study implements the use of descriptive study methods, the study is based on interviewed data collected through schedule and the sampling technique used is convenience sampling technique.

The findings indicate that the waste management initiatives done by The Midway Journey an NGO of Guwahati, Assam and the various contributions they made and are making towards the welfare of our surrounding by organizing various waste management awareness programs in the schools, villages, etc, providing workshops and conducting more than 200 workshops and also initiated zero waste cleanup drives cum citizen training in waste management.

With reference to the findings above, it can be stated that The Midway Journey is doing excellent work for the environment and citizens. And they are taking various steps for betterment of nature and global warming.

Keywords: Waste Management, Recycling, Environment, NGO.

INTRODUCTION

Trash Management is the process which includes collecting, processing, transporting, recycling or disposal of scrap and other waste products. It deals with how trash and other wasteful products can be used as a valuable resource.

The main purpose of trash management is to avoid the adverse effects of waste on nature and healthiness and to reduce the amount of scrap products that go to the landfills, instead the wastes that could be recycled should be viewed as valuable resources. Effective waste management is important for upholding eco-friendly and liveable places, but it pops up as a big interrogation for a lot of developing nations and territories. The way in which waste management is done can lead to a great impact on the nature and on the well-being of the entire population.

To have an effective trash management, waste hierarchy is very crucial. The waste hierarchy consists of three R's. The three R's signify Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. The main goal of the waste hierarchy is the optimum utilisation of the products and to produce minimum end waste. But in today's world, ill treatment of waste can be seen in our surroundings. This leads to the root

cause of various pollutions like soil pollution, water pollution, etc which in the end plays a major role in global warming.

Government should take major steps to follow various strategies and policies to ensure proper processing of waste. Moreover, it is our responsibility to take steps towards proper management of waste to make our surroundings, society and country clean and pollution free. This would improve the health of our environment as well as beneficial for our health too.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Joshua Reno, 2015 in his article, "Waste and Waste Management" highlights the importance of considering waste as a complex issue that involves social, economic, and environmental dimensions. It also emphasizes the need to move beyond anthropocentric views of waste management and to recognize the agency of waste itself in shaping planetary processes^[5].

Pietzsch et. al, 2017 in their study, "Benefits, Challenges and Critical Factors of Success for Zero Waste: A Systematic Literature Review" reviews the concept of Zero Waste (ZW) and its implementation, highlighting the importance of technological and design practices, user behavior, and policy makers' involvement in reducing waste generation and increasing recycling and composting^[6].

Amasuomo et. al, 2016 in their study, "The Concept of Waste and Waste Management" examines the concept of waste and its management, with a focus on determining what constitutes waste, its classification, and management^[2].

Elsaid et. al, 2015 in their study, "A Framework for Sustainable Waste Management: Challenges and Opportunities" proposes a proper framework for sustainable waste management in rapidly growing urban areas, focusing on executing a sustainable waste management system that considers sustainability, opportunities, and challenges, material re-use and recycling, composting, incineration, and energy production, and land-filling^[4].

Agarwal et. al, 2015 in their paper, "Waste Management Initiatives in India for Human Well Being" discusses the need for effective solid waste management in India, highlighting the importance of a well-defined strategic

plan, community participation, and individual responsibility to achieve socio-economic and environmental goals^[1].

Ayhan Demirbas, 2010 in his text, "Waste Management, Waste Resource Facilities and Waste Conversion Processes" discusses the importance of waste management, highlighting the various pathways of pyruvate metabolism under anaerobic conditions and the need for effective waste management practices to give strength to the environmental, economic, and social development principles^[3].

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study and understand how The Midway Journey an NGO of Guwahati, Assam does their day-to-day work of treating waste products and their initiatives towards waste management through which they are providing various boons to the environment as well as people.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is divided into three parts: -

- i) The Purpose
- ii) The Contribution
- iii) The Impact.

It aims to appreciate the purpose of NGO i.e. treatment of trash and trash management, the contributions made by the NGO i.e. day to day treatment of wastes, treating tons of wastes daily which contributes to effective waste management and well-being of a society as well as human race and third is the impact made by the NGO i.e. step towards cleaner societies, pollution free environment, better health conditions of people and many more.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is done in Guwahati, Assam and for a time span of two months i.e. between August and September.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:** The research design of the study is descriptive in nature.

- **Types of Data used:**
 - **Primary Data:** It refers to the interviewed data collected through schedule.
 - **Secondary Data:** Here, it speaks about the data that is collected mostly from various websites, social media handles and PPTs.

DATA ANALYSIS

Research Question 1. Can you tell about the mission and vision of Midway Journey?

On this question being asked, the respondent said that The Midway Journey is a community-led waste awareness and resource management organization. The Midway Journey was formed in the year 2018 and it was registered in 2021 under the Registration of Societies Act, 1860. It has a team of seven core members. The main function or aim of The Midway Journey is to spread awareness, do research and provide services. There are various key components to their awareness activities, and they are storytelling, localizing the message, harsh reality of wealth crisis, impact of individual action, impact of community led action, sense of ownership, save environment save yourself. Their awareness activities include performing workshops with educational institutions, residential communities, corporates etc.

Research Question 2. What motivated the founding of the Midway Journey and how has the organization evolved since its inception in 2018?

On this question being asked, the respondent said that to spread awareness towards waste management among the people, providing them best knowledge about waste management motivated the founding of Midway Journey.

Research Question 3. What have been the most impactful outcomes from the 200+ workshops you have held and the 100+ cleanup drives?

On this question being asked, the respondent said that from 2018 till date, they have conducted more than 200 workshops and more than 4000 people participated in them, which led to growth in the knowledge of the participants regarding trash management. They have also initiated zero waste cleanup drives cum citizen's training in waste management. Till date they have

conducted more than 100 drives in which wastes of more than 15 tons have been collected, more than 6 tons wastes have been processed and more than 500 citizens trained in source segregation and composting.

Research Question 4. Can you explain the role of research in your work and how it contributes to your waste management initiatives?

On this question being asked, the respondent said that the core areas of research interests are primary data collection, monitoring policy implementations, better understanding of issue related to informal sector, creating local resource for zero waste or low waste practitioners. The Research projects done by them, Informal sector Socio – Economic study- a study in Boragaon dumpsite in collaboration with Kudrat NGO, Study on SUP Ban Implementation- completed in 2022 in collaboration with AEC and TISS Guwahati, City level waste characterization and SUP inventorization study – completed a study in Guwahati and Jorhat as part of CPCB’s project in 2022, City/Rural Level Baseline study – completed baseline studies in Pasighat, Manas and Raimona National Park. They provided various services for better waste management. Zero waste event management – managed wastes in three mass public events in Assam ensuring waste reduction, Ban on SUP etc.

Research Question 5. Can you tell us more about the "Power Loop" project and how it empowers citizens in Guwahati to manage their segregated wastes?

On this question being asked, the respondent said that the “Power Loop” project that empowers citizens of Guwahati to ensure that their segregated waste does not reach the landfill. Power loop is a citizen driven project in which our community efficiently segregates waste. We guarantee that all clean and dry wastes are properly managed or recycled enhancing the importance of source segregation across Guwahati.

Research Question 6. What are some of the ongoing projects you are excited about?

On this question being asked, the respondent said that there are various ongoing projects that The Midway Journey is working on such as “Power Loop” project that empowers citizens of Guwahati to ensure that their segregated waste does not reach the landfill. “Green Curriculum” project

whereby they are preparing a unique curriculum for the curious kids focused on nature and biodiversity for a private school in Guwahati.

Research Question 7. How do you envision the future of waste management and environment conservation in Guwahati and beyond, and what role will the Midway Journey play?

On this question being asked, the respondent said that The Midway Journey has emerged as a pioneering organization in community-driven waste management in Guwahati. Through its holistic approach, combining education, awareness campaigns, citizen engagement, and research, it has significantly contributed to waste reduction and environmental protection. By empowering citizens to take responsibility for their waste and promoting sustainable practices in institutions and communities, The Midway Journey has laid the foundation for long-term environmental stewardship. Through their various works The Midway Journey as an organization is becoming a role model and we should follow in their steps and contribute towards our environment, our nature and make our surroundings a better, cleaner and pollution free place to live in.

SUGGESTIONS

Strengthening Government Policies

It would be beneficial for the government to consider introducing stricter waste management policies and supporting zero-waste initiatives to enhance sustainability.

Encouraging Community Involvement

Encouraging more people to participate in waste segregation and recycling activities could greatly improve environmental outcomes.

Expanding Education and Awareness

Expanding environmental education programs and public awareness campaigns might help foster better waste disposal habits among citizens.

Promoting Sustainable Practices

It may be helpful to promote more sustainable practices, such as zero-waste events and community-led recycling initiatives, to reduce waste and single-use plastics.

Enhancing Collaboration

Strengthening collaboration between NGOs, private sectors, and local authorities could create a more robust and effective waste management system.

CONCLUSION

This report emphasizes the developing importance of waste management in addressing environmental and public health challenges. It highlights how improper waste disposal leads to pollution, contributing significantly to global issues like climate change. By focusing on the efforts of The Midway Journey, an NGO in Guwahati, the study demonstrates the effectiveness of grassroots organizations in promoting sustainable waste management practices. The Midway Journey's initiatives, such as zero-waste events, community training, and research projects, have positively impacted waste segregation, recycling, and public awareness.

Their work shows that a well-coordinated local effort can have far-reaching effects on reducing waste and promoting environmental stewardship. Moreover, the study emphasizes that for successful waste management, there needs to be collaboration between government, private sectors, and civil society. Increased public awareness, backed by stronger governmental policies, can further drive these efforts. Educational initiatives are particularly crucial in instilling the values of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling from a young age. This approach can serve as a model for other regions, demonstrating the benefits of integrating local action with broader policy frameworks.

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