

Abstract

Solid waste management (SWM) is one of the major urban services facilitated by the urban local bodies (ULBs). It comprises the entire process from waste collection to disposal. With neo-liberal urbanization and life style changes, the variety and volume of solid wastes have changed to alarming proportion. And yet, developing countries lack appropriate technologies and proper equipment to handle this situation. Within this context, Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) was introduced by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2009 where the significance of participatory involvements of multiple social stakeholders such as local community members, ULB officials, ragpickers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in managing solid wastes have been emphasized. The rag pickers also play crucial roles by collecting and selling (extra) wastes especially non-biodegradable waste materials from the households and other (community/public) premises to keep urban areas clean.

This study identifies and maps the roles of multiple social stakeholders involved in SWM practices in the three sub-divisional towns of the Hooghly district, West Bengal, India, namely Chandannagar, Hooghly-Chinsurah and Serampore by deploying Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) and Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) and complement them with ethnographic methods. Based on the research findings and analysis, the study also proposes a set of suitable recommendations that can advance environmental sustainability goals in the study area. We finally argue that this methodology can be applied across scales through which ULBs can design efficient and effective SWM mechanisms reliant upon capacitating local communities.

Keywords: Solid waste management; stakeholders; community; urban local bodies; Hooghly.