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Attitudes towards rain water harvesting: A valuable factor to consider in resolving issues of water supply in Sri Lanka

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Along with the introduction of modern facilities together with technologies, many people tend to abandon the valuable resource of roof rainwater collection for day to day uses. The attitudinal issues are important in developing motivation and popularizing the utilization of rainwater (RW) as an alternative sources of water supply among rural as well as some urban communities in Sri Lanka.

This study was therefore carried out to find out attitudes and perceptions of the people in relation to harvested rainwater (RWH) in different parts of the country. The selected sites are Kekirawa in Anuradhapura District, Yatigamma and Thismada in Kandy District and Colombo Municipal area and suburban towns of the Colombo city in Sri Lanka. There were 150 families involved in this face to face interview process respectively from each of the above sites.

According to the results of this study there were 80 - 95% (both urban and rural) respondents who have indicated about their agreement and preference towards RWH. This analysis was based on logistic regression model to find out whether their response values on attitude has negative or positive coefficient. Their answers for general issues such as importance of RW showed that, rainwater is equally valuable with the other sources of waters. It is revealed that island wide extension programme for RWH, RW harvesters be rewarded, express concerned about authorities interventions needed to motivate people for rainwater harvesting are justifiable and has significant coefficient in accordance with the results of the "Chi-square" in the logistic regression model.

The majority of the respondents in both urban and rural sample expressed their support for the integrated economic approach proposed in this study for managing rainwater as freely available natural resource. Another important factors surfaced through this study are labour time saving, improvement of sanitation and health condition, time saving for the children for studies especially for rural groups, money saving in many ways due to improvement of water quality as non contaminated rainwater free of chemicals and fluorides are available for both urban and rural communities.

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