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**A study of performance of different types of solid waste managers in six selected provinces of Sri Lanka**

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Solid waste management is presently handled by different officials in different local authorities as there is no recognized cadre for the task. Thus the study was focused to relate the designations, backgrounds and modes of gaining knowledge to better performance in solid waste management.

A questionnaire-based survey was carried out among 206 local government authorities in the Central, Sabaragamuwa, Southern, Uva, Wayamba and Western provinces practicing solid waste management, during October to December 2009. The return rate was 77%. Solid waste managers of non-technical designations (Community Development Officers, Development Assistants, Environmental Officers, Project Assistants, Local Government Officers, Management Assistants and Secretaries.) dominated the solid waste management sector with a percentage of 69%. Personnel of technical designations (Public Health Inspectors, Technical Officers, Work Superintendents, Work Supervisors and Engineers) constituted 31%. Out of solid waste managers of technical designations 66% performed well while only 37% of non-technical solid waste managers were successful.

There was no significant difference between the modes of knowledge acquisition by successful solid waste managers and unsuccessful solid waste managers. Both successful and unsuccessful solid waste managers found workshops more useful for knowledge acquisition with scores of 29 % and 31 % , respectively. In addition, peers and experts were more popular among the successful solid waste managers with percentage scores of 22% and 13% while own experience (23%) and printed media (15%) were popular among unsuccessful solid waste managers.