



Challenges and Difficulties for Youth Participation in Climate Change in Sri Lanka

A. L. W. M. Perera, D. M. M. G. J. M. Disanayaka
manoriperera95@gmail.com

Abstract

Climate change has increased levels of uncertainty about our future therefore younger generation needs to play an important role in meeting the climate challenge. But due to several challenges and difficulties, there has been a significant gap in youth participation in climate action in developing countries. This is also common in Sri Lanka. With that background, this study aimed to investigate the challenges and difficulties of youth participation in climate change in Sri Lanka. The study was mainly based on primary data and a convenient sampling technique was used to collect data through an online survey. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze 100 valid responses through descriptive statistics. The majority of respondents, as indicated by the study's demographic statistics, are between the ages of 15 and 24 (53%) and 25 and 34 (41%). In addition, 27% of responders were men, compared to 73% women. In terms of their educational background, the majority of respondents were undergraduates (63%) and graduates (26%), respectively. In addition, results of the study revealed that challenges and difficulties to greater youth participation include less or no access to knowledge, resources, and technology; less or no proper educational institutions; the insufficient role of media in awareness of climate change and related impacts; insufficient youth engagement opportunities offered by the government, private, NGOs and other non-profit organizations; and insufficient youth engagement opportunities offered at the community level to engage in climate actions in Sri Lanka. In conclusion, youth are the major group for effective engagement in the formulation and implementation of the decision on climate change. Therefore, youth need space and a chance to show their maximum potential while addressing the existing challenges and difficulties that they are facing. With that, this study recommends initiatives should be implemented at every comparable level such as national and local levels to enhance the youth activists in combating climate challenges in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Climate action, Climate change, Challenges and difficulties, Youth activists, Youth participation

