Primary Research

Interview Insights



Pari Gajera 21 years

"Being from a place like India where this trash disposal system is not followed, I have never gotten educated about this. Moreover, in most of the places, it's based on colors with no signs whatsoever. This can be confusing since in India green color is used for recycling."



Yagya Gulati 24 years

"I throw most of my trash in landfill."

There is a lack of teaching and education when it comes to sustainable waste disposal. People are not taught about it. There is no platform they are aware of to gain this knowledge.

People used the word "safe" in terms of where they throw their trash. This shows that this is something they care about that is why they go for the safest option.

People have their associations with the trash bins. One major one being the color but these associations are not entirely reliable since they mean different things in different places.

People get lazy when it comes to finding out about what to throw where. Often they don't have the time for it and go with their intuition.

This is a problem that not only international students but also the local students face.

Interview Insights:-



Yagya Gulati, Indian, Graphic Design Major, 23 years

1. What comes to your mind when you think of sustainable waste disposal?

- Putting the right stuff in the right bin like how are the colors associated with trash.
- How to educate people about the waste disposal policy since we are never taught about it.
- A way of doing something for the environment by preventing pollution and reducing waste.

2. Is sustainable waste disposal something you care about?

- Yes,it is important to dispose of it in the right way because how matter dies and is disposed matters a lot.
- If something is not disposed properly it can lead to air,water,land and noise pollution making the environment even more hazardous to live in.

3. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your understanding towards what trash goes where(landfill, compost, recycle)? Why did you give yourself this number?

• 3, I just know the basics. Being from a place like India where this system is not followed I have never gotten educated about this. Moreover in most of the places it's color based with no signs whatsoever. I know green is for compost but I don't understand the difference between grey and blue-I don't even know if these are the 3 colors I think there is a red color bin too. Clearly I am not sure.

- 4. Is there anything you refer to before disposing of trash or is that based on your intuition or pre-knowledge? Where does your understanding of waste disposal come from?
 - Complete Intuition
 - My knowledge is based on colors. I associate green with earth and that's how I
 throw compost stuff in the green trash bin but also I associate recycle with green
 color too. It is all very confusing. I am completely unaware of the Grey/Red bin.
- 5. What comes to your mind when I say a)Compost b)Recycle c)Landfill?
 - Compost is something that can be buried in the earth
 - Recycle is reusing the material but changing its form
 - Landfill is um I don't know what that is
- 6. Which bin (compost, recycle, landfill) do you find yourself throwing most of your trash in?
 - Recycle.When I don't know where something goes I throw it in recycle.It's intuitive for me to throw stuff in recycle.
- 7. Have you ever been confused about where to throw your trash? If yes, what do you do in such a scenario.
 - Yes,I intuitively throw it in recycle.



Pari Gajera, Indian, Interior Design Major, 21 years

1. What comes to your mind when you think of sustainable waste disposal?

 Sustainable waste disposal is a way of disposing waste in a way that is good for the environment by 1) finding ways to reuse it thus reducing the overall waste one produces 2)making people aware of environmental-related efforts by not giving them the choice of throwing all the trash in one bin but enabling them to think actively about "what can be reused", "what is a complete waste."

2. Is sustainable waste disposal something you care about?

I was far from caring about sustainability but just these tiny things like disposal of trash, seeing posters that tell me to use the smaller flush so that less water can be used, the protests that have been taking place throughout the world about this made me read about and thus made me aware of it. It is a major concern in today's world and I feel stupid for being that unaware of it.

3. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your understanding towards what trash goes where(landfill, compost, recycle)? Why did you give yourself this number?

• Okay, so I'll give myself a 5. Yes, I care about the environment but I have not been told about this concept. It's all too new for me. Along with this, I keep going back so it is hard going back and forth between throwing trash in one bin and separating trash. I have a basic understanding of what compost, recycle and landfill bins are supposed to have but I don't know exactly what goes in what like glass? Is that recyclable or waste? Also plastic? There is recyclable plastic and one that's not. It is all very confusing. I have asked my friends who are from the USA for help but they seem confused too.

- 4. Is there anything you refer to before disposing of trash or is that based on your intuition or pre-knowledge? Where does your understanding of waste disposal come from?
 - When I first came here I'd google what to throw where but that was too
 time-consuming so now I either look at the signs and what they say. When those
 aren't there I ask a friend but to be honest I mostly go ahead with my intuition like
 "hey this feels recyclable let's throw it in the blue bin" I am often wrong. This one
 time I threw glass in recycle and a friend of mine told me how it goes in the
 landfill.
 - This embarrasses me a lot sometimes like when people tell me that I am throwing trash in the wrong bin. So I sneakily do it anyway when no-one is around.
- 5. What comes to your mind when I say a)Compost b)Recycle c)Landfill?
 - Compost is for all the food related things, Recycle for paper and plastic and landfill is for the rest of the things.
- 6. Which bin (compost, recycle, landfill) do you find yourself throwing most of your trash in?
 - Landfill because most of the time I don't know where to throw my trash so I throw it in the safest option that is landfill. I actually barely use compost and recycle trash bins now that I am thinking about this.
- 7. Have you ever been confused about where to throw your trash? If yes, what do you do in such a scenario.
 - Yes, In such a scenario I throw my trash in landfill.

Problem:

The problem I am exploring is waste disposal. Much of the trash humans currently produce is being thrown into landfills, including many items that could be recyclable or compostable. One way we can cut down on waste in our region is to make sure we properly sort out our trash. When people aren't sure which trash can their waste goes into, they often choose the safest option which is landfill. This leads to an increase in waste and is extremely bad for the environment.

User Experience Research:-

Central Question:

COMPOST, RECYCLING, OR TRASH? DO YOU KNOW WHAT GOES WHERE? There are a lot of college students (especially international students) who still aren't quite sure about whether something is compost safe, recyclable or meant to go in the trash.

Test Plan:

I, Sarah Zaheer conducted an interview with 3 participants and asked them 6 questions to understand college student's understanding of waste disposal and whether it is a problem that people face in the real world or not.

Participant Information:Name and Age

Questions:-

- 1. What comes to your mind when you think of sustainable waste disposal?
- 2. Is sustainable waste disposal something you care about?
- 3. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your understanding towards what trash goes where(landfill, compost, recycle)? Why did you give yourself this number?
- 4. Is there anything you refer to before disposing of trash or is that based on your intuition or pre-knowledge?Where does your understanding of waste disposal come from?
- 5. What comes to your mind when I say a)Compost b)Recycle c)Landfill?
- 6. Which bin (compost, recycle, landfill) do you find yourself throwing most of your trash in?
- 7. Have you ever been confused about where to throw your trash? If yes, what do you do in such a scenario?

Screener

- 1. International Student? Yes
- 2. College Student? Yes

Synthesize

There is a lack of teaching and education when it comes to sustainable waste disposal. People are not taught about it. There is no platform they are aware of to gain this knowledge.

People associate several emotions in throwing trash like guilt, embarrassment.curiosity, care, love, and accountability.

Often people do not understand the point of throwing trash in different trash bins. They have a basic understanding of it but don't know how it's impactful. This unawareness makes them negligent towards how they dispose of their waste.

People used the word "safe" in terms of where they throw their trash. This shows that this is something they care about that is why they go for the safest option.

People have their associations with the trash bins. One major one being the color but these associations are not entirely reliable since they mean different things in different places.

People get lazy when it comes to finding out about what to throw where. Often they don't have the time for it and go with their intuition.

This is a problem that not only international students but also the local students face.

How might we? Make sure people throw their trash in the right bins and can find a way to care more about the environment through their waste disposal.

Primary Research

Survey

Understand participants' profile and habit

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/ 1FAlpQLSeEJGpy9WlqOs34Sv0XgzTznnkegxan3lHZDpvigSklQO-brQ/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1



On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your understanding of waste sorting? (landfill, compost, recycle).

36 responses

10.0

7.5

5.0

4 (11.1%)

3 (8.3%)

What stops you from getting your trash disposal right?

13.9% 61.1%



On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate yourself in terms of being environmentally conscious?

20 15 10 5 1 (2.8%) 1 (2.8%) 1 (2.8%) 1 (2.8%) 1 (2.8%)

Do you have problems sorting your trash?

36 responses

83.3%

Is right waste disposal something you care about?

36 responses

36 responses



