



PROMINENCE OF UPCOUNTRY HOME GARDEN A STUDY BASED ON THE BOGAWANTALAWA SOUTH

M. Krishnasoban*

Department of Geography, University of Colombo

INTRODUCTION

Home garden refers to the cultivation of a small portion of land which is around the household or within walking distance from the family home (Maroyi,2009). Home garden has been an integral part of local food systems in developing countries. Furthermore, the synonyms are, mixed garden, compound farm, kitchen garden, household home garden, home garden agro forestry system. The basic structures of the home garden varied from place to place, based on their geological, socio- economic and cultural factors (Ginigaddara). Home garden can be used to achieve the target of nutritional security of people suffering from malnutrition and under nutrition through growing and consumption of fruits and vegetables in the garden (Taiwo et al, 2010). Home gardens in Sri Lanka are dynamic sustainable food production systems, and presumably the oldest land use activity, next to shifting cultivation (Pushpakumara et al, 2012). Home gardening has been a long-standing practice among the rural and urban households in Sri Lanka for centuries.

OBJECTIVE

Main objective

The main objective of the study is to analysis the prominence of the upcountry home gardens in Bogawantalawa South.

Sub objective

To identify the Socio-economic and environmental and prominence of upcountry home garden.

To find the major challenges facing by the upcountry home garden in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

The data was obtained from the primary & secondary sources. The questionnaire survey was designed to collect primary data from thirty households according to simple random sampling techniques. Field observation was conducted to identify the core dimensions of prominence of upcountry home garden. Data have been analyzed through an Excel spreadsheet. And summarized the data using descriptive and quantitative analysis methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prominence of upcountry home garden in Bogawantalawa south

Conserving biodiversity and conservation of diverse plants.

According to the findings 89 % of households have a rich composition of plants such as vegetable, leaves, medicinal plants, tree, flowers and animal species (Table 01). Home garden continually conserves the biodiversity in the study area. Further these home gardens are particularly interesting for *in situ* conservation of diverse organisms.

Table 1: Species diversity in home gardens in Bogawantalawa south

Plant products	Mostly seen species
Vegetables	Chayote, Carrot, Lettuce, Green Bean, Leek, Tomato, Beetroot, Green Chili, Radish, Sweet Potato
leaves	Spinach,

Medicinal plants	Basil, Ginger, Peppermint, Patel.
Fruit /Tree	Avocado, Guava, Banana, Papaya, Mango, Jackfruit, Lime
Flowers	Rose, Jasmine, Hibiscus,
Other organisms	Squirrel, Butterfly, Dragonfly, Frog, Ant, Worm, Crow, Sparrow, hens, cows, goats, snails

Source: Information derived from the household through questionnaire survey,2022

Preventing the environment from chemical

The majority of the households (89%) applying natural pest and disease control methods and using natural fertilizers to their home garden. Plant and tree materials are used as fodder for the animals and animal manure is incorporated into the compost to fertilize plants, hence reducing the need for chemical fertilizer. Livestock and poultry manure can add a significant amount of organic soil matter, nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorus into the soil (Powell & Williams,1993).

Figure 1: Natural pest and disease control methods



Source: Information derived from the direct observation

Habitats for animals and other beneficial organisms

According to direct observation a high density of plants within the home garden provides the habitats such as birds, small mammals, and insects. Home garden animals are mostly seen trees, organic layer of soil.

Figure 2: Habitats for animals



Source: Information derived from the direct observation,2022

Generation of employment opportunities and income

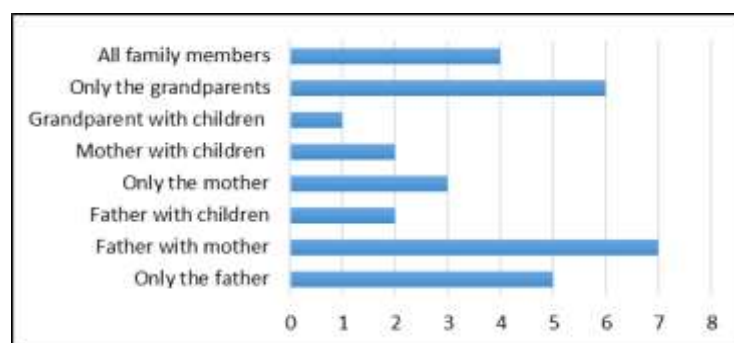
Home gardens provide a considerable amount of household income. The study has revealed that 54% of the farmers have increased their income by engaging in home gardening. Per month they averagely earn Rs. 6,000.00 to Rs. 15,000.00 from the vegetable such as carrot, bean, leek, beetroot, green chili and radish. During the Covid 19 pandemic most of the households used home garden's products for their meals. Further production was sold to neighbor families.



Created a relaxing environment among the family members

According to the respondent’s opinion, a garden is a relaxing environment that slows one down and provides a way of reducing stress and anxiety in life. Most of the household member spend leisure time with their home garden. It creates the unity, happiness among family members. Table 2 shows that many households (24%) are working with parents (father and mother) only. Further, children spend their leisure time with smart phones and other digital devices therefore children’s contribution have been decreased in the home gardens. (father with children - 7%, mother with children - 7%, grandfather with children - 4%).

Table 2: Uses of family labor in the home gardens



Source: Information derived from the household through questionnaire survey,2022

Food and nutrient security of families

The most fundamental social benefit of upcountry home gardens stems from its direct contributions to household food security by increasing availability, accessibility and utilization of food products. Approximately 74% household get nutrient food their home garden. such as fruits, (avocado, guava, banana, papaya, mango, jackfruit) vegetable, (carrot, lettuce, green bean, leek, tomato, beetroot) milk, egg and meat from the home raised animals Home gardens are maintained for easy access to fresh plant and animal food sources in both rural and town locales. Food items from home gardens add substantially to the family energy and nutritive requirements on a continuous basis.

Challenges faced in upcountry home gardens

Lack of fertilizer is first ranked among challenges confronting the households as indicated by 26% of the respondents. Because the government has ban importing chemical fertilizers to turn the nation’s agriculture sector to 100% organic. Heavy rain fall, food and drought are adverse weather conditions (22%) which closely Constraints faced in home gardens. Other problems are - lack of water, insect pests and diseases, land fragmentation, decreased traditional farming practices. (Table 4 lists) important challenges in the study area.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution and Ranking of Challenges faced in home gardens

Challenges	Percentage	Rank
Lack of fertilizer	26%	1
Adverse weather conditions	22%	2
Lack water	17%	3
Insect pests and diseases	13%	4
Land fragmentation	12%	5
Decreased the traditional farming practices	10%	6
Total percentage	100%	



Source: Information derived from the household through questionnaire survey, 2022

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

The prime aim of the study was to discuss the prominence and Challenges of the upcountry home garden and Bogawantalawa south GND was selected for the study area. Finally, this study conveys appropriate recommendations to construct sustainability in the upcountry home garden.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase awareness about importance of growing upcountry home gardens in Bogawantalawa south.
- The continuous need for monitoring to maintain the quality of the home garden.
- Government should help to give species in the upcountry home garden. (Seeds, plant)
- Quantitative research and exploratory research are necessary to identify the environmental importance of upcountry home garden.

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