



ARE COLOMBO GREEN WALLS ACTUALLY GREEN? THE SINCERITY OF VEGETATED BUILDING FACADES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

De Silva W.B.C.¹, Denipitiya N.^{1*} and Perera N.²

¹Department of Architecture, University of West England, England

²City School of Architecture, Sri Lanka Institute of Architects, Sri Lanka
buddhichathuranjelidesilva@gmail.com

Abstract

The Number of people who are affected by urbanization has radically increased. However, the economic boom over the past decades has escalated potential environmental catastrophe. Among other solutions, environmentalists proposed vertical greening as a response. Vertical greening refers to a structure that allows vegetation to spread on the vertical surface of a building. With other sustainability-oriented strategies, vertical greening is thought to help fight current environmental issues, and current health issues prevent the cities from being unbearable during locked downs, which impacts human's mental health due to social distancing measures. A Green wall is an option for cities for people to engage with nature. Known for their pleasing to the senses and earthy qualities, boosting human health and improving air quality, plants thrive on walls, making it a popular trend globally and welcomes antidotes to stress and isolation. Plants that contain anti-germ characters could incorporate with green walls and a growing day-to-day supply of nutrition. However, more knowledge is needed to reap the potential benefits from it. With the demand for sustainability, the green wall is increasingly appearing on clients' requirements list but mostly as a visual and aesthetic representation of sustainability. This sensibility of clients, what architects provide, and what is eventually built, questions whether the true representation of vertical garden delivers the intended benefits. Are these walls really environmentally-friendly or just a trend that takes advantage of the environment's concern and human fondness to nature? Employing the understandings that have been brought to bear in academic work and precedence, through literature review, this research investigates whether there is a gap between what is actually proposed and what is practiced in Colombo. Observations, interviews, specific measurements were used to assess selected cases for the above opening. The study identified the gaps and what each individual needs to improve to curtail the shortcomings.

Keywords: Environmental Sustainability, vegetated façade; green wall; plant scraping