Individual Reflective Summary

Working on this project has changed the way I understand problem-solving in real environments. At the start, I assumed that waste on campus was mainly a cleanliness issue that depended on how hard housekeeping staff worked. As we moved deeper into the project, I realized the problem was much wider and rooted in behaviour, systems, and daily habits. What looked like a simple issue actually had layers of causes, hidden assumptions, and behavioural patterns that I had never paid attention to before.

The tools we were required to use shaped my thinking in a practical way. The Fishbone Diagram forced me to categorize causes instead of blaming one group. It helped me see how students, staff, vendors, infrastructure, and policies all contribute to the waste problem. The 5 Whys technique was another eye-opener because it kept pushing us past surface explanations and revealed that the real issue at KRMU is the absence of a structured waste-management system. Before this, I never understood how powerful it can be to simply keep asking "why."

The Six Thinking Hats method made me appreciate multiple perspectives. The white hat helped us stay factual, the black hat forced us to think about risks, and the green hat allowed me to be creative without overthinking feasibility. I realized that real solutions come from mixing logic with creativity, not choosing one over the other.

This project also improved my teamwork skills. Each member contributed different strengths, and I learned how valuable it is to communicate ideas clearly and listen actively. I also became more aware of my own biases—especially normalcy bias. I used to ignore waste issues because I had accepted them as part of campus life. Now I notice them immediately and understand how dangerous it is to normalize problems.

Overall, this project helped me grow both academically and personally. It taught me that critical thinking is not a theory—it is a tool for real change. I now feel more confident in analysing problems deeply, questioning assumptions, and designing solutions that match real human behaviour. Most importantly, it made me more responsible toward the environment and my campus community.

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