

WELLNESS AND SUSTAINABILITY AMONG YOUTH

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Abstract:

Youth is the future of the country. If the youth lives a healthy and sustainable life, then the nation gets benefited out of it. This paper studies the relationship between wellness as well as sustainability in shaping the lifestyle of youth. It explores how different dimensions of well-being like physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual—are closely linked with sustainable practices that contribute to environmental protection and responsible living. The study highlights key behavioural pathways such as healthy food choices, physical activity, nature connectedness, mindful consumption, and community participation as essential components of a sustainable lifestyle. It also critically identifies challenges faced by youth, including sedentary behaviour, digital addiction, stress, and consumerism.

Further, the paper analyses the role of educational institutions in promoting wellness and sustainability through health education, yoga, sports, green initiatives, counselling, and community engagement. The study concludes that integrating wellness with sustainability fosters holistic development among youth while contributing to long-term environmental and social well-being.

Keywords- Wellness, Sustainability, Holistic Well-being, Lifestyle Behaviour, Mindful Consumption, Youth Development, Environmental Responsibility

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Introduction:

In the present world, wellness, health, and sustainable living have emerged as essential components for holistic development of youth. Modernization and changing lifestyles have resulted in challenges such as stress, unhealthy dietary habits, reduced physical activity, and increasing environmental concerns.

Wellness refers to a holistic state of well-being that includes physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions. It is not merely the absence of illness but an active and conscious process of making healthy lifestyle choices. According to the World Health Organization, health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being. A sustainable lifestyle involves meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It includes responsible use of resources, waste reduction, and environmental protection. Thus, wellness and sustainability are interdependent and together contribute to balanced and responsible living.

Objectives of the paper:

- To examine the concept of wellness among youth with reference to physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual .
- To examine the relationship between wellness and sustainable lifestyle practices.

- To identify the major challenges faced by youth in maintaining wellness and sustainability.
- To study the role of educational institutions in promoting wellness and sustainable practices.

Aspects of Wellness:

What is Wellness?

Wellness means it reflect healthy in body, mind, and overall life. It is not just the absence of illness, but a conscious and active process of making choices that determine to a healthy and fulfilling life. According to the World Health Organization, health includes physical, mental, and social well-being, which forms the basis of wellness.

Aspects of Wellness:

**Physical
Wellness**

**Mental and
Emotional
Wellness**

**Social
Wellness**

**Spiritual
wellness**

**Digital
Wellness**

• **Physical Wellness**

Physical wellness means proper functioning and care of the body. It involves regular exercise, balanced nutrition, sufficient sleep, and avoidance of harmful habits. Several activities like walking, running, yoga, and sports enhances cardiovascular health, strengthen muscles, and increase flexibility. Exercise on daily basis can help reduce stress. Regular medical check-ups, avoiding unhealthy habits like smoking and eating junk food are important aspects of physical wellness.

• **Mental and Emotional Wellness**

Mental wellness refers to a person's ability to think clearly, make decisions, solve problems, develop logical thinking and deal with stress effectively. Emotional wellness involves understanding and managing emotions, maintaining a positive mind sets, staying focused, and being self-aware. It includes stress management, emotional stability, and developing resilience in challenging situations.

• **Social Wellness**

Social wellness means to the ability to build and maintain healthy, positive, relationship with others. It involves effective communication, mental respect and sense of connection with family, friends and society. An important thing of social wellness is communication. Another key element is building relationships maintaining close connection with family friends, classmates or colleagues provide emotional support. Healthy relationship contributes to happiness and reduce feelings of loneliness. Social activities such as group work community service, or cultural events also enhances social wellness. It helps individuals develop teamwork skill and a sense of responsibility towards others. Social wellness is a important part of overall well-being. By developing Good communication skills, healthy relationship showing respect and empathy towards others and balance life.

- **Spiritual wellness**

Spiritual wellness is an important aspect of overall wellness, especially for young who are shaping their identities and lifestyles. It helps youth connect their personal values with their actions and decisions in daily life. Spiritual wellness doesn't necessarily mean following a specific religion; rather, it includes self-awareness, personal values, and ethical living, follow ethical values in their life.

When young individuals understand what is important to them—such as honesty, kindness, respect, and responsibility—they are better able to make positive and meaningful choices. Spiritual wellness plays a important role in promoting a healthy lifestyle. It helps reduce stress, strong mindset, and builds a positivity and balance emotions.

Practices such as meditation, mindfulness, prayer, and spending time in nature can strengthen spiritual wellness. These practices help individuals feel calm, focused, and connected to themselves with universe . Spiritual wellness is closely linked to a sustainable lifestyle. Spiritually aware youth often feel a deeper connection with nature and society. Spiritual wellness promotes compassion and social responsibility, which are essential for young people, as it guides them towards meaningful, healthy, and sustainable lifestyles.

- **Digital Wellness**

Digital wellness refers to the balanced and responsible use of technology, especially among young people. In today's digital age, youth are highly connected through smartphones, social media, and the internet. While technology offers many benefits, its excess use can affect physical health, mental well-being, and lifestyle habits.

Digital wellness means managing screen time effectively. Excessive use of devices can lead to eye strain, poor sleep, lack of physical activity, and reduced concentration. Digital wellness also supports mental and emotional health. Constant exposure to social media can sometimes create stress, anxiety, or unhealthy comparisons.

A digitally sustainable lifestyle it means young people use technology in a smart way, which balance healthy, and responsible lifestyle.

Concept of Sustainability:

Sustainability means using resources wisely so that present needs are meet without harming the ability of future generations needs to live healthy and secure lives. For young people, it is closely connected to living a balanced and responsible lifestyle that supports both personal well-being and the environmental sustainability.

Relationship Between Wellness and Sustainability:

Wellness and sustainability are deeply connected and support each other. A healthy lifestyle not only improves individual wellness but also supports environmental protection. The following points explain this relationship:

Healthy Food Choices

Physical Activity

Nature and Mental Health

Mindful Consumption

Active Participation in Community

• **Healthy Food Choices:**

Choosing healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and plant-based meals improves physical health. At the same time, consuming locally grown and seasonal food reduces transportation pollution and supports farmers. Avoiding processed and packaged food this will reduce waste and promotes sustainability.

• **Physical Activity:**

Physical activities such as walking, cycling, and outdoor exercise improve fitness and reduce stress. When these activities replace the use of vehicles, they also help in reducing carbon emissions in the environment. Using green mobility options like cycling, walking, and public transport benefits both personal health and the environmental conditions. It helps in environmental sustainability.

• **Nature and Mental Health:**

Spending time in nature helps reduce anxiety, depression, and stress. Clean and green environments improve mental well-being. Protecting natural resources ensures that future generations can also live a healthy life.

• **Mindful Consumption**

Mindful consumption means using only what is needed and avoiding waste. Buying fewer but better-quality products improves financial and mental well-being while reducing environmental harm. Practices like reduce, reuse, and recycle promote a sustainable lifestyle and help protect the environment.

• **Active Participation in Community**

Active participation in community activities such as clean-up drives, tree plantation, and awareness campaigns strengthens social connections. It also promotes collective responsibility towards the environment, improving both social wellness and sustainability. Active participation in campaigns such as “Save Trees, Save Life” helps create awareness and encourages positive action.

Challenges Faced by Youth:

Youth today face several challenges that affect wellness and sustainability, such as:

- Peer pressure and unhealthy lifestyle trends
- Lack of awareness about sustainability
- Addiction or over dependence on technology.
- Limited access to resources and guidance.
- Sedentary lifestyle- Many young people spend long hours sitting, using mobile phones, or watching screens. This lack of physical activity leads to health problems such as obesity, poor posture, and low

energy levels. It also reduces opportunities to engage in outdoor activities, weakening the connection with nature and sustainable living practices.

- Digital addiction means - Excessive use of technology like smartphones, social media, and online gaming has become a major concern. Digital addiction affects mental health by causing stress, anxiety, sleep disturbances, and reduced concentration. It also decreases real-life social interactions and reduces awareness about environmental and social duty and responsibility.
- Consumerism- Modern youth are heavily influenced by advertisements, trends, and social media, leading to excessive buying habits. This culture of consumerism results in increased waste generation, overuse of resources, it's cause environmental damage. It may also encourage unhealthy comparisons and mental state which effects on environment.

Educational implications:

Role of Educational Institutions in Promoting Wellness and Sustainability:

Educational institutions play a important l role in changing the habits, values, and lifestyles of youth. Schools and colleges can create awareness and provide opportunities that promote wellness and sustainability among students.

- **Health Education**

Educational institutions can include health education in the curriculum to teach students about nutrition, hygiene, mental health, and disease prevention. This helps youth make decisions about their healthy lifestyle and wellness.

- **Yoga and Mindfulness**

Practices like yoga and meditation improve focus, reduce stress, anxiety and enhance emotional balance. Regular mindfulness activities help students develop mental resilience and inner peace. It builds confidence and competency among youths.

- **Sports and Fitness**

Encouraging participation in sports and physical activities promotes physical fitness, teamwork, and discipline, sincerity in work, hardworking personality It helps reduce sedentary behavior and builds a healthy lifestyle among youth.

- **Green Campus Initiatives**

Schools and colleges all educational institutions spread awareness about adopt eco-friendly practices such as tree plantation, waste management, water conservation, and the use of renewable energy reduced plastic uses, recycling These initiatives help students understand the importance of environmental responsibility and sustainable lifestyle..

- **Counselling Services**

Providing counselling services helps students cope with stress, anxiety, and personal issues. Professional guidance or counselling supports mental wellness and encourages a balanced and healthy lifestyle. By counseling services youths determine their ability and build confidence.

- **Community Services**

Involving students in community service activities such as clean-up drives, save tree awareness campaigns, and social work helps build a sense of responsibility. It strengthens social connections and promotes sustainable and ethical behaviour among society specially youths.

Conclusion:

Wellness and sustainability are closely linked to each other and essential for a healthy life. By adopting good habits such as healthy eating, physical activity, and mindful consumption, youth can improve their well-being while protecting the environmental sustainability.

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