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WELLNESS MOVEMENT IN GLOBALISED SOCIETY: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Wellness is the buzz word of modern society. The key tenets of wellness as both preventive and holistic can be traced back to ancient civilizations from the East (India, China) to the West (Greece, Rome). In 19th-century Europe and the United States, a variety of intellectual, religious and medical movements developed in parallel with conventional medicine. Wellness has evolved as a psychological construct with socio –economic and cultural changes all over the world. The previous century especially after second world war witnessed the concept of wellness vs. well-being in the perspective of quality of life being the aim of society as a result of modernization . It revolves around physical self, coping self , creative self , essential self and social self at individual level . The governmental efforts have incorporated this concept in health and family welfare programmes as well as in education system to evolve a physically and mentally healthy society in the globalized world.

Introduction:

The wellness movement had its roots in Greek civilization, with the word “Hygieia”- describes a condition of completeness and contentment. Wellness-focused and holistic modalities have gained more visibility since the 1960s/1970s under the writings and thought leadership of an informal network of US physicians and thinkers (such as Halbert Dunn, Jack Travis, Don Ardell, Bill Hettler, and others). It is said that healthy body is a well – balanced body – one that exists in harmony with cosmic laws and order. The term was first coined by Dunn (1961) that explains it ‘as a combined method of functioning which results in maximizing the potential of an individual to maintain a continuum of balance and purposeful direction within the environment where he is functioning’. Dunn (1961) developed the ‘high level wellness’ concept by combining ‘well-being with wholeness’ suggesting high standard of healthy lifestyle—the sum total of human body,



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soul and mind along with environmental factors. High-level wellness, therefore, involves: direction in progress forward and upward towards a higher potential of functioning; an open-ended and ever-expanding tomorrow with its challenge to live at a fuller potential; and the integration of the whole being of the total individual- his body, mind and spirit--in the functioning process. The basis for high level wellness in daily living lies in the nature of Man and there are five major factors in the nature of man which are to be taken into consideration i.e. his totality, his uniqueness, the organization of the energy, the inner and outer worlds in which he lives, and the interrelation of self- integration and energy use.

The term wellness is commonly used as “an act of practicing healthy habits on a daily basis to attain better physical and mental health, so that instead of just surviving one is thriving” in life. The life conditions may be broadly classified into seven dimensions – physical , intellectual , environmental , vocational , social , emotional and spiritual . And wellness has a continuum comprising of 12 dimensions : self – responsibility and love , breathing , eating , playing and working , communicating , sensing , feeling , thinking , moving , intimacy , finding , meaning and transcending .

MODELS OF WELLNESS

Various models of wellness has been incorporated in the field of wellness the description of which is given below:

- **Models of Wellness by Ardell**

Ardell (1977) was the first to develop s model of wellness which emphasized upon the self responsibility and stress management through five broad dimensions including (1) Self responsibility, (2) Nutritional awareness, (3) Stress awareness and management, (4) Physical fitness, (5) Environmental sensitivity.

In 1982, Ardell revised his model and named it as “The Revised and expanded wellness Model” which involved dimensions such as (1) Self responsibility, (2) Nutritional awareness and physical fitness, (3) Meaning and purpose, (4) Relationship dynamics, (5) Emotional intelligence. He further emphasized eight areas of behavioral change along with these



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dimensions. These areas included (1) Psychological and spiritual, (2) Physical fitness, (3) Job satisfaction, (4) Relationships, (5) Family life, (6) Nutrition, (7) Leisure time, (8) Stress management.

In 2001, he modified this model and explained three domains of management i.e. physical domain (exercise and fitness, nutrition, appearance, adaptation / challenges), mental domain (emotional intelligence, effective decisions, stress management, factual knowledge, and mental health), and meaning and purpose domain (meaning and purpose, relationships, humor, and play).

- **Hettler's Hexagon Model**

Hettler (1984) described a hexagon model which incorporated six dimensions of healthy functioning viz. social dimension which involves social interaction with family, friends and co-workers; and the type of environment in which individual lives; occupational dimension which includes past and present vocational experiences, satisfaction level, and salary level attained; spiritual dimension incorporates meaning and purpose in one's life, existence etc.; physical dimension refers to the factors which directly or indirectly affect human health including exercise, nutrition, stress levels, sexual activity, body esteem and amount of sleep; intellectual dimension involves formal and informal means to acquire knowledge; and lastly, emotional dimension includes the ability to express emotions in a healthy manner. This hexagon model is the basis for two assessment instruments:

- Testwell Inventory (National Wellness Institute, 1988).
- Lifestyle Assessment Questionnaire (LAQ) (National Wellness Institute, 1983).

- **Lifespan Development Model**

Lifespan Development Model (LDM) was created by Sweeney and Witmer in 1991, which demonstrates the correlation between the traits of a healthy individual (Witmer and Sweeney, 1992). They utilised Adlerian life tasks (i.e., self, love, work, friendship, and spirituality) in development of the Lifespan Development Model and gave a holistic aspect of



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Wellness. They incorporated different theoretical concepts from psychology, sociology, education, anthropology, and religion in Lifespan Development Model (Witmer and Sweeney, 1992). The authors also insisted on the role of life forces like education, religion, and media and global events like hunger, poverty, etc. in maintaining and achieving holistic wellness. Fundamentally, the Lifespan Development Model was created as a human development model that incorporated a holistic aspect of human potential and wellbeing within the contexts of a person's environment. The authors used learning from the Lifespan Development Model to develop the Wheel of Wellness (Witmer and Sweeney, 1992).

• Wheel of Wellness Model

Wheel of Wellness model was created by Witmer and Sweeney in 1992 to align with Individual Psychology tenets. It contained factors associated with healthy life, longevity, and quality of life (Myers and Sweeney, 2005). The healthy living factors included elements like physical, nutritional, social, occupational, and spiritual. It also included the impacts of society and other external factors on total wellness. The model is based on Adlerian life tasks and the correlation of life tasks with one another and with other life forces in development of overall wellness (Sweeney and Witmer, 1992). The wellness wheel spokes are (a) spirituality, (b) self-direction, (c) work and leisure, (d) friendship, and (e) love given by Myers et al. (2000):

- ❖ **Spirituality:** A link one feels to the transcendent--something greater than oneself; involves positive thoughts and optimism which are associated with one's ability to cope under stress and includes more positive cognitions, understanding others emotions, lessening of negative events, and effectively reducing stress.
- ❖ **Self-Direction:** The individual's ability to self-regulate, self-discipline, and direct his or her own actions in day to day activities ; involves concepts like self-worth, self-esteem and self-concept, facing new challenges in life and failures without suffering loss of one's self in the process, a greater sense of control and taking of decisions (higher internal locus of control). People who have high sense of control maintain an exercise, eat healthy food and also make healthy lifestyle choices and also have higher self-efficacy in themselves.



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- ❖ **Work and Leisure:** It includes both challenge and achievement that includes the worker; providing financial contribution to the person and society. Pleasurable mental activity is disappeared in too stressful workplace situations, or if the individual feels that he or she cannot complete the tasks at hand.
- ❖ **Friendship:** Having a positive social network and positive relationships with others; allows an individual to have the support necessary to face challenges of life in an effective manner; encapsulates leisure and stress management activities.
- ❖ **Love:** Having healthy and romantic relationships with other individuals; also fosters flexibility. Hendrick and Hendrick (2002) stated that love is an important factor to have happiness as it provides emotional intimacy and support as well as a safety network. Happiness, as defined in World Happiness Report (2013), is the aspiration of every human being and is also the measure of social progress.

- **Indivisible Self Model**

The Wellness Wheel Model revised by Myers et al. (2000) was tested by Hattie, Myers, and Sweeney (2004) through an exploratory factor analysis and rechristened it as indivisible self model. The indivisible self is the term used for the whole person, the global functioning individual and it is comprised of the integrated components of factors (specific wellness domains).

WELLNESS VS. WELL-BEING

Wellness is different from wellbeing in the sense that wellness is considered as a personal choice that affects wellbeing of an individual. Wellness is a dynamic process while wellbeing is less than dynamic state. Grammatical difference between 'Good' and 'Well' can be applied to well-being and wellness. If one feels good only then he can do well. If we see the language difference, in Chinese typically, wellness is translated as – Healthy or nurturing life whereas wellbeing indicates Happiness/sense of blessedness.



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In its dictionary meaning, The Oxford dictionary defines wellbeing as “the state of being or doing well in life; happy, healthy, or prosperous condition; moral or physical welfare (of a person or community)” and wellness as “the state of being well or in good health”. Clearly in this definition the use of wellbeing implies something more encompassing than just good health. Merriam Webster Dictionary defines well-being as “the state of being happy, healthy or successful whereas wellness implies the quality or state of being healthy”.

WELLNESS AND QUALITY OF LIFE

The youth population in higher education institutions is in a process that is a mixing of “exploration” and “commitment”. The magnitude of two aspects in human behavior determines success in academic endeavors and life plans. The abundance of both is a step towards “Identity” -- we say “Wajood” (Nee identity), whereas the absence is crises of existence. In such a crises, an individual is unable to look ahead with a clear vision of his / her academic and career path to be pursued. To explain it in philosophical terminology, the question of acquiring knowledge coupled with the goals of life (being decided by one self or guided by family, friends or others) is the path towards success -- both in social and economic aspects -- thus enabling youth to contribute to the community in a positive manner. Thus wellness is a precursor or pre-condition for well-being; the process of learning about and engaging in behaviors that are likely to result in optimal health grounded in mental, physical and emotional *health*. The wellness wheel spokes are: spirituality, self-direction, work and leisure, friendship, and love as suggested by Myers et al. (2000). The wellness wheel model was tested by Hattie et al. (2004) through an exploratory factor analysis and rechristened it as ‘indivisible self model’.

WELLNESS: FACTORS AND THRUST AREAS

S.No.	Factors	Thrust Areas
1.	Physical Self	Exercise & Nutrition
2.	Social Self	Love & Friends
3.	Creative Self	Intelligence, Control, Emotion, Humor, and Work
4.	Coping Self	Leisure, Stress, Worth, Beliefs
5.	Essential Self	Culture Identity, Gender Identity, Self Care, Essence



Source : Global Wellness Institute

A brief account of these factors and thrust areas is given hereunder:

- (i) **Physical Self:** The biological and physiological processes that contain the physical aspects of our development and functioning related with exercise and nutrition. Nutrition consists of having a balanced food and maintaining a healthy body mass.
- (ii) **Social Self:** The support through associations with others in our friendships and cherished relationships. Positive social connections--whether they are intimate and romantic, family ties, or mutual friendships include feelings of acceptance, respect, reciprocity, and seeking to know and to be known within the context of the relationship ;related to forgiveness and gratitude etc.
- (iii) **Creative Self:** is the combination of attributes that each of us forms to make a unique place among others in our social interactions and to positively interpret our world including intelligence, control, emotion, humor, and work and helps the person to have better mental health.
- (iv) **Coping Self:** The combination of elements that regulate our responses to life events and provide a means for transcending their negative effects containing leisure, stress, worth, and beliefs. Those who have high coping capacities have better control over disturbing thoughts and are better able to reduce negative thoughts by positively managing and regulating them.
- (v) **Essential Self:** To have a real self; a firm identity encompassing many aspects like culture, ethnicity, gender, religion, core values, and how an individual perceives the events of his or her life.

It may be said “wellness is a scientific pathway to success, happiness and well –being”. Thus identification of wellness becomes more important for its nurturance in educational system, especially among the youth -- popularly known as demographic dividend -- of our nation.

It may be mentioned that global wellness summit organized a conference in 2020 to address to multitrillion wellness economy and delegates and virtual participants gathered pledged to be a part of charting the way forward “Resetting the world with wellness”. The forthcoming global



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wellness summit (2021) being held at Tel Aviv on the theme – The stunning shift to telehealth and telewellness. It is noteworthy that in wellness (2030) , the main focus is primarily on the relationship and interdependency between health and well-being as an important prerequisite to happiness, and an in-depth look at today’s happiness providers, the wellness industry.

The wellness movement in India -- as its global purpose of ‘promotion of healthy and enriching quality of life’ among communities-- has found place in Government of India, Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs). It is in tune with goal 3 of Sustainable Development Goals (2015- 30): “To ensure healthy lives and promote well – being for all at all ages”. Good health is essential in sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda. Considering the global pandemic of COVID-19 -- now fear of entering into third phase after a devastating impact on human life during 2020- 21 – there is a need to give significant attention towards the realization of good health and well – being on a global scale.

SUGGESTED READINGS

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