
Public Health Awareness and Healthy Living Practices in Young Adults

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Abstract: Public health awareness has become increasingly important in promoting healthy living practices among young adults, particularly in response to the growing prevalence of lifestyle-related diseases and mental health concerns. Young adulthood represents a critical developmental stage during which lifelong health behaviors are established. Adequate knowledge regarding disease prevention, nutrition, physical activity, personal hygiene, mental well-being, and preventive healthcare contributes significantly to improving overall health outcomes. The present study explores the relationship between public health awareness and healthy living practices among young adults by examining their understanding of preventive health measures and the extent to which awareness influences everyday health behaviors. A quantitative descriptive research design was adopted using structured questionnaires administered to university students and young professionals. The findings indicate that individuals possessing higher levels of public health awareness demonstrate healthier dietary habits, increased physical activity, improved hygiene practices, greater utilization of preventive healthcare services, and stronger mental health management behaviors. Furthermore, awareness regarding communicable and non-communicable diseases encourages responsible health decision-making and supports sustainable lifestyle choices. The study emphasizes the necessity of strengthening community-based health education initiatives, digital health literacy programs, and institutional health promotion strategies to enhance healthy living practices among young adults. The results contribute to the growing body of public health literature by highlighting awareness as a fundamental determinant of long-term health promotion and disease prevention.

Keywords: Public health awareness, healthy living, young adults, preventive healthcare, health promotion, lifestyle behavior, health education.

Introduction

Public health awareness has emerged as a fundamental component of health promotion strategies worldwide, particularly among young adults who represent a significant proportion of the global population. Rapid urbanization, technological advancement, changing dietary patterns, sedentary lifestyles, and increasing psychological stress have substantially influenced health behaviors during early adulthood. Consequently, promoting awareness regarding healthy living practices has become an essential priority for governments, educational institutions, healthcare organizations, and international public health agencies.

Healthy living extends beyond the absence of disease and encompasses balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, stress management, personal hygiene, avoidance of harmful substances, preventive healthcare utilization, and positive mental well-being. These behaviors collectively contribute to improved physical health, enhanced psychological resilience, increased productivity, and better quality of life. However, many young adults continue to experience challenges in maintaining healthy lifestyles due to limited health literacy, misinformation, unhealthy social environments, academic pressures, and insufficient access to credible health information.

Public health awareness equips individuals with knowledge regarding disease prevention, vaccination, nutrition, environmental sanitation, reproductive health, mental health management, and early disease detection. Individuals who possess greater awareness are generally more likely to adopt preventive behaviors, participate in health promotion activities, and make informed healthcare decisions. Educational institutions serve as particularly influential settings for cultivating health-conscious behaviors through structured awareness campaigns, wellness programs, and evidence-based health education initiatives.

The increasing availability of digital health resources and social media platforms has expanded opportunities for disseminating public health information. Nevertheless, the widespread circulation of inaccurate or misleading health information highlights the need for evidence-based public health communication strategies that encourage critical evaluation of health-related information.

The present study investigates how public health awareness influences healthy living practices among young adults. By examining various dimensions of awareness and health-related behaviors, the research seeks to provide valuable insights that may support policymakers, educators, and healthcare professionals in designing effective health promotion interventions for this population.

Review of Literature

Existing literature consistently demonstrates that public health awareness positively influences health-related behaviors among young adults. Studies have reported that individuals possessing higher levels of health literacy exhibit healthier dietary habits, greater physical activity participation, improved personal hygiene, and increased utilization of preventive healthcare services. Research further indicates that awareness campaigns significantly enhance knowledge regarding communicable diseases, vaccination, and mental health management.

Several investigations have emphasized the role of universities in promoting healthy lifestyles through structured health education programs, wellness initiatives, and digital awareness campaigns. Evidence also suggests that improved access to reliable health information contributes to informed decision-making and encourages sustainable behavioral change. Moreover, community participation and family support have been identified as important factors influencing healthy living practices.

Despite considerable progress in health education, previous studies identify persistent challenges related to misinformation, inadequate health literacy, socioeconomic disparities, and unequal access to healthcare resources. These limitations indicate the continuing need for comprehensive public health awareness programs specifically designed for young adults.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the level of public health awareness among young adults.
2. To evaluate healthy living practices adopted by young adults.
3. To analyze the relationship between public health awareness and healthy living practices.

Research Methodology

The study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to investigate the association between public health awareness and healthy living practices among young adults. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire containing items related to health awareness, nutrition, physical activity, hygiene, preventive healthcare, and mental well-being. The study population comprised university students and young professionals aged between 18 and 30 years. A simple random sampling technique was adopted, and responses from 250 participants were analyzed. Descriptive statistics, percentage analysis, mean scores, and

correlation analysis were utilized to interpret the data and examine the relationship between awareness and healthy lifestyle behaviors.

Results and Discussion

Public Health Awareness among Young Adults

The first objective of the study was to examine the level of public health awareness among young adults. Public health awareness was assessed by evaluating participants' knowledge regarding disease prevention, vaccination, personal hygiene, nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and preventive healthcare services. The findings indicate that the majority of respondents possessed moderate to high levels of awareness concerning essential public health concepts. Educational institutions, healthcare professionals, government campaigns, and digital media were identified as major contributors to improving health-related knowledge. However, awareness regarding preventive health screening, mental health counseling, and long-term disease prevention remained comparatively lower than awareness of general health practices.

Table 1. Level of Public Health Awareness among Young Adults

Awareness Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very High	55	22.0
High	95	38.0
Moderate	65	26.0
Low	25	10.0
Very Low	10	4.0
Total	250	100

The results indicate that 60% of respondents demonstrated either high or very high public health awareness, suggesting that young adults generally possess satisfactory knowledge regarding preventive health practices. Approximately 26% exhibited a moderate level of awareness, while only 14% reported low or very low awareness. These findings suggest that although health awareness initiatives have positively influenced young adults, continuous educational interventions remain necessary to improve knowledge related to preventive healthcare, mental health management, and chronic disease prevention.

Healthy Living Practices Adopted by Young Adults

The second objective examined healthy living practices adopted by young adults. Various lifestyle behaviors, including balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, personal hygiene, mental well-being, preventive healthcare utilization, and avoidance of harmful substances, were evaluated using a five-point rating scale.

Table 2. Healthy Living Practices among Young Adults

Healthy Living Practice	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Personal Hygiene	4.51	0.48
Balanced Nutrition	4.28	0.56
Physical Activity	4.05	0.63
Adequate Sleep	3.94	0.71
Mental Well-being Practices	3.87	0.68
Preventive Health Check-ups	3.74	0.76
Avoidance of Harmful Substances	4.39	0.52

The findings reveal that respondents generally practiced healthy lifestyle behaviors, with personal hygiene obtaining the highest mean score (4.51), followed by avoidance of harmful substances (4.39) and balanced nutrition (4.28). Preventive health check-ups recorded the lowest mean score (3.74), indicating that many young adults continue to seek healthcare primarily after illness rather than through routine preventive services. These results suggest that while awareness positively influences daily health behaviors, greater emphasis should be placed on encouraging preventive healthcare utilization.

Relationship between Public Health Awareness and Healthy Living Practices

The third objective investigated the relationship between public health awareness and healthy living practices. Pearson correlation analysis was performed to determine whether greater awareness was associated with healthier lifestyle behaviors among young adults.

Table 3. Correlation between Public Health Awareness and Healthy Living Practices

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	Significance (p-value)
Public Health Awareness & Healthy Living Practices	0.781	< 0.001

The analysis revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.781$, $p < 0.001$) between public health awareness and healthy living practices. This indicates that young adults possessing

higher levels of public health awareness are more likely to adopt healthier behaviors, including balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, proper hygiene, mental health management, and preventive healthcare utilization. The statistically significant relationship confirms that increasing public health awareness contributes positively to the development of sustainable healthy lifestyle practices.

Discussion

The findings of the present study demonstrate that public health awareness plays a significant role in shaping healthy living practices among young adults. Most participants exhibited satisfactory levels of awareness regarding disease prevention, hygiene, nutrition, and physical activity, reflecting the positive impact of educational institutions, healthcare services, and digital health communication. Participants with higher awareness consistently reported healthier dietary habits, greater engagement in physical exercise, better personal hygiene, and more responsible preventive healthcare behaviors.

Despite these encouraging findings, preventive health check-ups and mental health support received comparatively lower participation, suggesting that knowledge alone may not always translate into consistent health-related action. Practical barriers such as limited accessibility, financial constraints, lack of motivation, and perceived invulnerability among young adults may influence preventive healthcare utilization. These findings emphasize the need for integrated health promotion strategies combining awareness campaigns with accessible healthcare services and supportive institutional policies.

The results support the view that strengthening public health awareness can significantly improve healthy living practices among young adults and contribute to long-term disease prevention, enhanced well-being, and sustainable public health development.

Practical Implications

The findings of the present study provide several practical implications for educational institutions, healthcare organizations, policymakers, and community stakeholders seeking to improve public health outcomes among young adults. Since public health awareness demonstrated a positive relationship with healthy living practices, institutions should prioritize comprehensive health education programs that encourage lifelong preventive health behaviors.

Universities and colleges should integrate health literacy into academic curricula by providing evidence-based education on nutrition, physical activity, disease prevention, mental

health, environmental health, and responsible healthcare utilization. Campus wellness centers may organize regular health awareness campaigns, preventive screening programs, vaccination drives, and lifestyle counseling sessions to encourage active student participation in health promotion activities.

Healthcare professionals should expand community outreach initiatives that improve access to reliable health information while addressing misconceptions regarding preventive healthcare. Digital technologies, including mobile health applications and social media platforms, may be strategically utilized to disseminate scientifically accurate health information and improve digital health literacy among young adults.

Government agencies should continue strengthening national public health campaigns through collaborative partnerships with educational institutions, healthcare providers, and community organizations. Policies supporting affordable preventive healthcare services, routine health screening, and accessible mental health resources can substantially improve population health outcomes.

The study further suggests that creating supportive environments encouraging healthy dietary habits, regular physical activity, stress management, and preventive healthcare participation can facilitate sustainable behavioral changes during early adulthood.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

1. Educational institutions should incorporate structured public health education into undergraduate and postgraduate academic programs.
2. Universities should establish comprehensive student wellness centers providing preventive healthcare counseling, mental health services, nutrition education, and lifestyle guidance.
3. Government agencies should strengthen nationwide health literacy campaigns targeting young adults through digital and community-based platforms.
4. Public healthcare systems should promote affordable preventive health check-ups and encourage routine medical examinations among young adults.
5. Digital health communication strategies should emphasize evidence-based information while actively addressing health misinformation circulating through online media.
6. Community organizations should organize regular awareness programs promoting healthy nutrition, physical fitness, hygiene, vaccination, and disease prevention.

7. Collaboration between educational institutions and healthcare providers should be strengthened to facilitate continuous health promotion activities.
8. National public health policies should prioritize preventive healthcare investments as a long-term strategy for reducing chronic disease burden and healthcare expenditures.

Limitations of the Study

Although the present study provides valuable insights into the relationship between public health awareness and healthy living practices among young adults, certain limitations should be acknowledged.

The study employed a cross-sectional research design that captures participant responses at a single point in time. Consequently, causal relationships between awareness and health behaviors cannot be established with complete certainty. Longitudinal investigations would provide a more comprehensive understanding of behavioral changes over time.

Data collection relied primarily on self-reported responses, making the findings susceptible to social desirability bias and respondent subjectivity. Participants may have overestimated positive health behaviors while underreporting unhealthy practices.

The study population primarily consisted of university students and young professionals within a limited geographical context. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all young adult populations, particularly individuals residing in rural communities or socioeconomically disadvantaged regions.

Additionally, several external determinants—including cultural influences, family environment, healthcare accessibility, economic status, educational background, and governmental policies—were not examined comprehensively and may influence healthy living behaviors.

Future investigations should address these limitations through larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal methodologies, mixed-method research designs, and comparative international studies.

Future Research Directions

Future studies may further expand the understanding of public health awareness and healthy living practices by exploring multiple emerging research areas.

Researchers may investigate longitudinal changes in health awareness following structured health education interventions to determine the long-term sustainability of behavioral

improvements. Comparative studies involving different educational institutions, geographical regions, and socioeconomic groups would provide broader insights into population-specific health promotion strategies.

Future research may also evaluate the effectiveness of digital health technologies, artificial intelligence-assisted health education systems, wearable health monitoring devices, and mobile health applications in improving healthy lifestyle adoption among young adults.

Additional studies should investigate psychological determinants including health motivation, self-efficacy, behavioral intention, social influence, and perceived health risk to better understand factors influencing preventive healthcare behaviors.

International comparative research examining public health awareness across different cultural settings would further contribute to the development of globally applicable health promotion frameworks.

Conclusion

Public health awareness represents one of the most influential determinants of healthy living practices among young adults. The present study demonstrates that increased awareness regarding disease prevention, nutrition, physical activity, hygiene, mental well-being, and preventive healthcare positively influences everyday health behaviors and supports healthier lifestyle choices. Participants possessing greater health literacy consistently exhibited stronger engagement in preventive healthcare practices, balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, personal hygiene, and mental wellness activities.

Despite encouraging levels of general health awareness, important gaps remain regarding preventive medical examinations, specialized health knowledge, mental health services, and long-term lifestyle management. These findings emphasize the continuing need for comprehensive health education programs that combine scientific knowledge with practical behavioral interventions.

Educational institutions, healthcare organizations, policymakers, and community stakeholders share collective responsibility for promoting sustainable health behaviors among young adults. Evidence-based public health communication, strengthened digital health literacy, accessible preventive healthcare services, and supportive institutional environments can substantially improve individual and community health outcomes.

As societies continue confronting emerging public health challenges, investment in health awareness and preventive education remains essential for reducing disease burden, improving

quality of life, and supporting sustainable public health development. The findings of this study reinforce the importance of integrating public health awareness into broader health promotion strategies that empower young adults to make informed, responsible, and lifelong health decisions.

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