
Preventive Wellness Behaviors in Emerging Adults

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Abstract: Emerging adulthood (18–25 years) is a critical developmental stage during which lifelong health-related behaviors are established, making preventive wellness essential for promoting long-term physical, psychological, and social well-being. This study examined preventive wellness behaviors among emerging adults by assessing balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, stress management, preventive healthcare utilization, and personal hygiene, while also investigating their relationship with quality of life. A quantitative cross-sectional research design was employed using a structured questionnaire administered to 250 participants enrolled in higher educational institutions. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that participants demonstrated generally positive preventive wellness behaviors, although lower participation was observed in preventive healthcare utilization and stress management. Physical activity, balanced nutrition, and sleep quality emerged as the strongest predictors of overall wellness and life satisfaction. Significant positive associations were identified between preventive wellness behaviors and physical health, psychological well-being, academic productivity, and social functioning. The study concludes that preventive wellness should be promoted as an integrated lifestyle approach rather than isolated health practices. Strengthening wellness literacy, encouraging routine preventive healthcare, and implementing evidence-based health promotion programs within educational institutions can enhance sustainable healthy behaviors among emerging adults and improve their long-term quality of life.

Keywords: Preventive wellness, Emerging adults, Healthy lifestyle, Physical activity, Health promotion, Preventive healthcare, Wellness behavior, Quality of life

1. Introduction

Health promotion has increasingly shifted from a treatment-oriented approach toward disease prevention, recognizing that long-term health outcomes are largely determined by everyday lifestyle choices. Preventive wellness focuses on maintaining physical, psychological, and social well-being through healthy behaviors adopted before the onset of illness. It emphasizes balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, stress management, preventive healthcare, and personal hygiene as essential components of a healthy lifestyle. The growing prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, hypertension, anxiety, and depression has highlighted the importance of preventive wellness. Since many of these conditions originate from unhealthy habits established during adolescence and early adulthood, promoting preventive wellness has become a major public health priority for researchers, healthcare professionals, educational institutions, and policymakers.

Emerging adulthood, generally defined as the age group between 18 and 25 years, is a critical developmental period during which individuals establish lifelong health-related behaviors. During this stage, young adults experience increased independence while balancing higher education, employment, financial responsibilities, and social relationships. These transitions often influence dietary habits, physical activity, sleep quality, stress levels, and healthcare utilization. Although this phase offers opportunities to develop healthy routines, it also exposes individuals to lifestyle-related risks such as sedentary behavior, unhealthy food choices, excessive screen time, sleep deprivation, and chronic stress. The behavioral patterns formed during emerging adulthood frequently continue throughout later life, making this period particularly important for preventive health interventions.

Preventive wellness is a multidimensional concept that integrates several interconnected lifestyle behaviors contributing to long-term health and quality of life. Balanced nutrition supports normal body functioning, while regular physical activity improves cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, and emotional well-being. Adequate sleep enhances cognitive performance and physical recovery, whereas effective stress management promotes psychological resilience and mental health. Preventive healthcare practices, including routine medical checkups, vaccinations, and health screening, facilitate early disease detection and reduce future health risks. Educational institutions further strengthen preventive wellness by providing health education, counseling services, fitness programs, and wellness initiatives

that encourage students to adopt sustainable healthy behaviors and improve their academic and personal development.

Despite growing awareness of healthy lifestyles, several challenges continue to affect preventive wellness among emerging adults. Rapid urbanization, technological dependence, academic pressure, and changing social environments have contributed to declining physical activity, unhealthy dietary habits, and reduced use of preventive healthcare services. Previous studies have often examined nutrition, exercise, sleep, or mental health separately, with limited attention given to their combined influence on overall wellness and quality of life. Therefore, the present study adopts an integrated approach to examine preventive wellness behaviors among emerging adults by evaluating nutrition, physical activity, sleep quality, stress management, preventive healthcare utilization, and personal hygiene. The findings are expected to contribute to preventive health promotion literature and provide practical evidence for developing effective wellness programs that encourage lifelong healthy behaviors and improve the overall quality of life among young adults.

Table 1. Key Dimensions of Preventive Wellness Behaviors in Emerging Adults

Dimension	Description	Expected Health Outcome
Balanced Nutrition	Consumption of a healthy and balanced diet containing essential nutrients.	Improved physical health, stronger immunity, and better energy levels.
Physical Activity	Regular participation in exercise and active lifestyle practices.	Enhanced cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, and weight management.
Adequate Sleep	Maintaining sufficient sleep duration and good sleep quality.	Better cognitive function, emotional stability, and physical recovery.
Stress Management	Adoption of healthy coping strategies such as relaxation, meditation, and time management.	Reduced psychological stress and improved mental well-being.
Preventive Healthcare	Routine health checkups, vaccinations, and early disease screening.	Early detection of health problems and reduced disease risk.
Personal Hygiene	Regular hygiene practices,	Lower risk of infections and

	including handwashing, oral care, and personal cleanliness.	improved overall health.
Quality of Life	Overall perception of physical, psychological, and social well-being.	Increased life satisfaction, productivity, and long-term wellness.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Preventive Wellness Behaviors

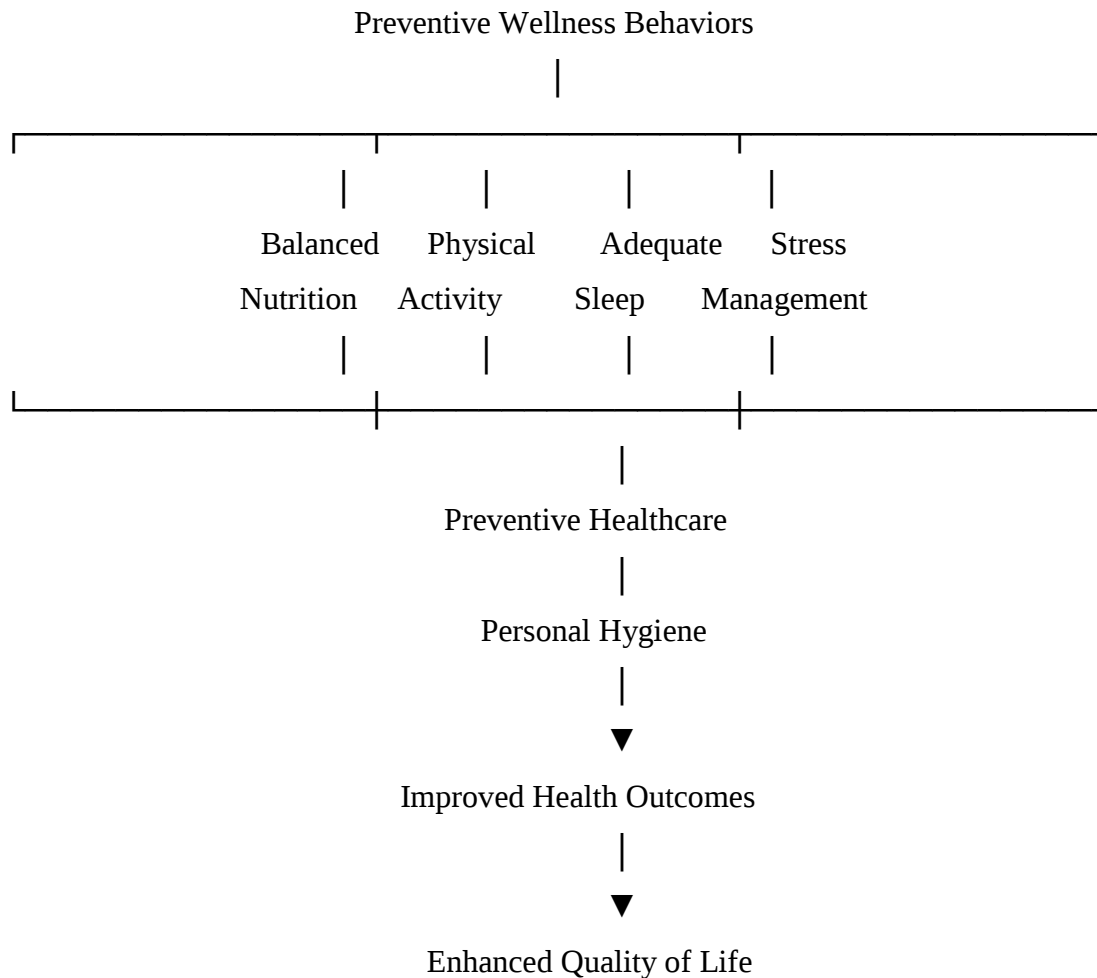


Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N = 250)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	118	47.2
	Female	132	52.8
Age	18–20 years	76	30.4
	21–23 years	98	39.2
	24–25 years	76	30.4

Educational Level	Undergraduate	156	62.4
	Postgraduate	94	37.6
Residence	Urban	148	59.2
	Rural	102	40.8

2. Literature Review

Preventive Wellness and Health Promotion

Preventive wellness emphasizes maintaining health through proactive lifestyle practices rather than treating diseases after they occur. It includes healthy eating, regular physical activity, sufficient sleep, stress management, and routine health checkups. Previous studies indicate that preventive wellness behaviors reduce the risk of chronic diseases, improve immune function, and enhance overall quality of life. Health promotion programs focusing on preventive behaviors encourage individuals to adopt sustainable habits that support long-term physical and psychological well-being.

Emerging Adulthood and Lifestyle Behaviors

Emerging adulthood is a critical developmental stage during which lifelong health habits are established. Increased independence, academic responsibilities, employment demands, and changing social environments often influence dietary choices, exercise routines, and sleep patterns. Research suggests that positive lifestyle behaviors adopted during this period significantly improve future health outcomes, whereas unhealthy habits increase the likelihood of obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and mental health disorders.

Nutrition and Physical Activity

Balanced nutrition and regular physical activity are recognized as fundamental components of preventive wellness. Adequate intake of nutrients supports normal body functioning, while regular exercise improves cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, and mental health. Previous research consistently reports that individuals maintaining healthy dietary habits and engaging in routine physical activity experience higher energy levels, better academic performance, and improved emotional well-being compared with physically inactive individuals.

Sleep and Stress Management

Quality sleep and effective stress management contribute significantly to physical recovery, cognitive performance, and emotional stability. Sleep deprivation negatively affects concentration, immunity, and mental health, whereas chronic stress increases the risk of

anxiety and depression. Studies demonstrate that healthy sleep routines and stress reduction practices such as meditation, relaxation techniques, and time management improve psychological resilience and overall wellness among emerging adults.

Preventive Healthcare and Personal Hygiene

Preventive healthcare practices, including regular medical examinations, vaccination, dental care, and personal hygiene, play a vital role in maintaining long-term health. Routine health screening facilitates early disease detection and reduces future healthcare costs. Research indicates that individuals who actively participate in preventive healthcare services and maintain proper hygiene practices experience lower disease prevalence and better health outcomes than those with poor preventive health behaviors.

Research Objectives

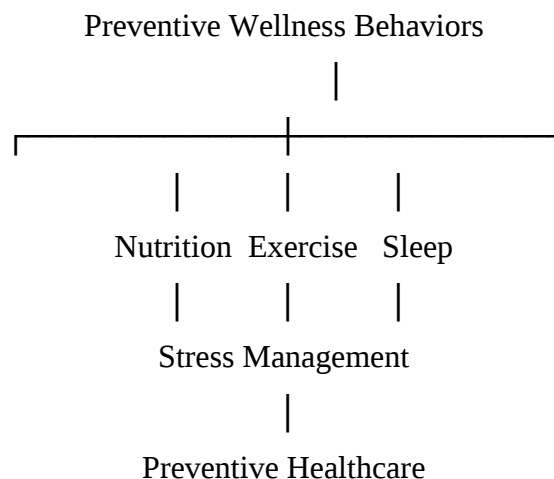
1. To assess preventive wellness behaviors among emerging adults.
2. To evaluate the relationship between preventive wellness behaviors and quality of life.
3. To identify the major wellness behaviors influencing overall health.
4. To recommend strategies for improving preventive wellness practices.

Research Hypotheses

H1: Preventive wellness behaviors have a significant positive effect on quality of life among emerging adults.

H2: Physical activity, balanced nutrition, and adequate sleep significantly predict overall wellness.

Figure 2. Preventive Wellness Behavior Model



Research Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional research design to assess preventive wellness behaviors among emerging adults. This design enabled the collection of data at a single point in time and facilitated the analysis of relationships between preventive wellness practices and quality of life indicators.

Study Population and Sample

The target population comprised emerging adults aged 18–25 years enrolled in higher educational institutions. A total of 250 participants were selected using a simple random sampling technique, ensuring adequate representation of both male and female respondents.

Data Collection Instrument

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of two sections. The first section gathered demographic information, while the second assessed preventive wellness behaviors, including nutrition, physical activity, sleep quality, stress management, preventive healthcare, and personal hygiene using a five-point Likert scale.

Variables of the Study

Variable Type	Variables
Independent Variables	Nutrition, Physical Activity, Sleep, Stress Management, Preventive Healthcare, Personal Hygiene
Dependent Variable	Overall Quality of Life

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed both online and offline after obtaining informed consent from the participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study, and participation was entirely voluntary.

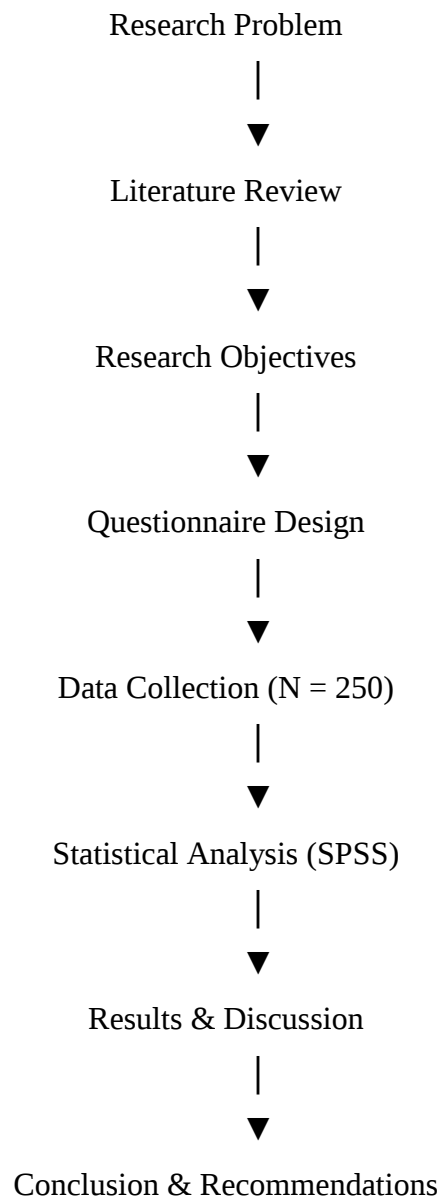
Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were used to summarize the data, while Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis were performed to examine the relationships between preventive wellness behaviors and quality of life. Statistical significance was determined at $p < 0.05$.

Table 3. Reliability Analysis of the Study Variables

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Balanced Nutrition	5	0.86
Physical Activity	5	0.88
Adequate Sleep	4	0.84
Stress Management	5	0.87
Preventive Healthcare	4	0.82
Personal Hygiene	4	0.85
Overall Questionnaire	27	0.89

Figure 3. Research Methodology Framework



Results and Discussion

Assessment of Preventive Wellness Behaviors Among Emerging Adults

(Objective 1: To assess preventive wellness behaviors among emerging adults.)

Table 4. Preventive Wellness Behavior Scores (N = 250)

Wellness Behavior	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Balanced Nutrition	4.18	0.61	High
Physical Activity	3.95	0.72	High
Adequate Sleep	3.89	0.68	Moderate
Stress Management	3.76	0.74	Moderate
Preventive Healthcare	3.52	0.83	Moderate
Personal Hygiene	4.41	0.49	Very High

Figure: Preventive wellness behavior scores(represent a graph according to given data)

Behavior	Mean
Personal Hygiene	4.41
Balanced Nutrition	4.18
Physical Activity	3.95
Adequate Sleep	3.89
Stress Management	3.76
Preventive Healthcare	3.52

The findings indicate that personal hygiene (Mean = 4.41) was the most frequently practiced preventive wellness behavior, followed by balanced nutrition (Mean = 4.18) and physical activity (Mean = 3.95). Preventive healthcare utilization recorded the lowest mean score (3.52), suggesting that participants were less likely to undergo routine health checkups despite maintaining healthy daily lifestyle practices.

Relationship Between Preventive Wellness Behaviors and Quality of Life

(Objective 2: To evaluate the relationship between preventive wellness behaviors and quality of life.)

Table 5. Correlation Between Preventive Wellness Behaviors and Quality of Life

Variable	Correlation (r)	p-value
Balanced Nutrition	0.684	<0.001

Physical Activity	0.718	<0.001
Adequate Sleep	0.652	<0.001
Stress Management	0.631	<0.001
Preventive Healthcare	0.557	<0.001
Personal Hygiene	0.478	<0.001

Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated significant positive relationships between all preventive wellness behaviors and quality of life ($p < 0.001$). Physical activity exhibited the strongest association ($r = 0.718$), indicating that individuals with healthier lifestyles generally reported better physical, psychological, and social well-being.

4.3 Major Wellness Behaviors Influencing Overall Health

(Objective 3: To identify the major wellness behaviors influencing overall health.)

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis

Predictor	β	t-value	p-value
Physical Activity	0.337	8.81	<0.001
Balanced Nutrition	0.284	6.92	<0.001
Adequate Sleep	0.223	5.19	<0.001
Stress Management	0.176	3.87	<0.001
Preventive Healthcare	0.141	3.21	0.002

Model Summary

R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	p-value
0.712	0.704	121.84	<0.001

The regression model explained 71.2% of the variation in overall health and quality of life. Physical activity emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by balanced nutrition and adequate sleep. These findings indicate that healthy lifestyle behaviors have a substantial influence on overall wellness among emerging adults.

4.4 Strategies for Improving Preventive Wellness Practices

(Objective 4: To recommend strategies for improving preventive wellness practices.)

Table 7. Participants' Preferred Wellness Improvement Strategies

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Health Education Programs	71	28.4
Regular Fitness Activities	63	25.2
Mental Health Counseling	48	19.2
Routine Health Checkups	39	15.6
Nutrition Awareness Campaigns	29	11.6

Health education programs (28.4%) were identified as the most preferred strategy for improving preventive wellness practices, followed by regular fitness activities (25.2%). Participants also emphasized the importance of mental health counseling and routine health checkups. These findings suggest that integrated wellness initiatives combining health education, physical activity promotion, and preventive healthcare services may effectively enhance wellness behaviors among emerging adults.

Overall Findings

The results indicate that emerging adults generally demonstrate positive preventive wellness behaviors, particularly in personal hygiene, balanced nutrition, and physical activity. Significant positive relationships were observed between preventive wellness behaviors and quality of life, while regression analysis identified physical activity, balanced nutrition, and adequate sleep as the strongest determinants of overall health. Participants further emphasized health education, fitness promotion, and mental health support as the most effective strategies for strengthening preventive wellness practices. These findings support the need for comprehensive wellness programs within educational institutions and community health settings.

Conclusion

The present study examined preventive wellness behaviors among emerging adults by assessing key lifestyle dimensions, including balanced nutrition, physical activity, adequate sleep, stress management, preventive healthcare, and personal hygiene. The findings indicate that participants generally demonstrated positive wellness behaviors, with particularly high scores in personal hygiene and healthy nutrition. However, preventive healthcare utilization and stress management were comparatively weaker, suggesting areas requiring greater

attention. Statistical analyses further revealed that preventive wellness behaviors significantly contribute to quality of life, with physical activity and balanced nutrition emerging as the strongest predictors. Overall, the study highlights that adopting preventive wellness practices during emerging adulthood promotes long-term physical, psychological, and social well-being while reducing future health risks.

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