

“HOLISTIC HEALTH AND ECOLOGICAL HARMONY: “THE ROLE OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”

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ABSTRACT

The Indian Knowledge System aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals through its emphasis on holistic health, environmental stewardship, and sustainable living principles found in practices like Ayurveda, Vastu shastra and traditional agriculture. IKS promotes well-being by focusing on balance in health, fosters environmental protection through harmonious living and resource management and contributes to sustainable communities by integrating ancient wisdom with modern science. Traditional Indian knowledge is built on the principle of living in harmony with nature and viewing the "whole world as one family" (*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*). This worldview emphasizes.

KEYWORDS: Health , Ayurveda, environment, SDG etc.

HEALTH

Health has a variety of definitions, which have been used for

different purposes over time. In general, it refers to physical and emotional well-being, especially that associated with normal functioning of the human body, absent of disease, pain (including mental pain), or injury. Health can be promoted by encouraging

healthful activities, such as regular physical exercise and adequate sleep and by reducing or avoiding unhealthy activities or situations, such as smoking or excessive stress. Some factors affecting health are due to individual choices, such as whether to engage in a high-risk behavior, while others are due to structural causes, such as whether the society is arranged in a way that makes it easier or harder for people to get necessary healthcare services. Still, other factors are beyond both individual and group choices, such as genetic disorders.

- 1. Interconnectedness:** The recognition that human health, social well-being, and the natural environment are deeply intertwined.
- 2. Holistic perspective:** An approach that addresses the root causes of issues, not just the symptoms, in all aspects of life.
- 3. Ethical stewardship:** The moral and ethical responsibility (*Dharma*) to use resources judiciously and respect all living beings (*Ahimsa*).

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- 1. Ayurveda:** Emphasizes a holistic approach to health by maintaining the balance of the body's energies, contributing to SDG (Good Health and Well-being).
- 2. Preventive healthcare:** The focus on balance and harmony in Ayurveda is inherently preventive, reducing the need for extensive post-illness treatment.
- 3. Integrated medicine:** IKS encourages blending traditional medicine with modern scientific developments to create comprehensive health solutions.
- 4. Contributions to sustainable health:-** Ayurveda, yoga, and other traditional health systems offer a preventive, personalized, and holistic approach to wellness that is inherently sustainable.
- 5. Preventive care:** Practices like daily routines (*Dinacharya*), seasonal cleansing (*Ritucharya*), and mindful eating reduce reliance on pharmaceuticals and focus on long-term well-being.

6. **Natural and personalized remedies:** Ayurveda uses locally and sustainably sourced herbal medicines, such as turmeric and neem, which have a lower environmental impact than conventional drug manufacturing.
7. **Mental and physical well-being:** Yoga and meditation are internationally recognized for their positive impact on mental and physical health, contributing to a balanced lifestyle with minimal resource consumption.
8. **Indigenous food systems:** Traditional diets and farming practices emphasize dietary diversity and local food production, which combat malnutrition and reduce food transport emissions.

ENVIRONMENT

Environment means what surrounds us. It may be living or non-living things. It includes physical, chemical and other natural forces. Living things live in their environment. They constantly interact with it and adapt themselves to conditions in their environment. In the environment there are different interactions between animals, plants, soil, water, and other living and non-living things. The word *environment* is used to talk about many things. For example, trees, rivers, and oceans are a part of the environment. People in different fields of knowledge use the word environment differently. Electromagnetic environment is radio waves and other electromagnetic radiation and magnetic fields. The environment of a galaxy may mean the interstellar medium, or it may mean other nearby galaxies. In psychology and medicine, a person's environment is the people, physical things and places that the person lives with. The environment affects the growth and development of the person. It may affect the person's body and mind. The conditions of living organisms in an environment are affected by the weather and climate changes in the environment. They are also greatly affected by other living things.

Other physical and cultural environments

1. Ecology, the study of the relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings.
2. Environment (systems), the surroundings of a physical system that may interact with the system by exchanging mass, energy, or other properties.
3. Built environment, constructed surroundings that provide the settings for human activity, ranging from the large-scale civic surroundings to the personal places.

4. Social environment, the culture that an individual lives in, and the people and institutions with whom they interact.
5. Market environment, business term.

A. **Harmony with nature:** IKS views humanity as a participant in a cosmic ecology, not just a resource user, promoting a respectful relationship with the environment.

B. **Sustainable practices:** Traditional agriculture, agroforestry, and the use of biofertilizers are key IKS practices that improve soil health and water retention.

C. **Conservation:** IKS includes principles of conserving nature, respecting all living beings, and managing resources sustainably, which are directly relevant to Climate Action.

D. **Vastu Shastra:** This ancient system of architecture and design promotes harmony between buildings and their environment, contributing to sustainable communities.

Contributions to environmental sustainability

IKS provides time-tested solutions for resource management and ecological conservation that align with key environmental SDG.

- **Sustainable agriculture:** Practices such as crop rotation, organic farming with natural fertilizers (e.g., cow dung), and agroforestry are integrated into the IKS. The state of Sikkim has adopted these practices on a large scale, becoming the world's first fully organic state.
- **Water conservation:** Ancient water harvesting techniques like stepwells (*baolis*), tanks (*tankas*), and earthen dams (*johads*) demonstrate advanced hydrological knowledge and efficient water use.
- **Forest and biodiversity conservation:** The tradition of protecting sacred groves (*Devrai*) preserved forest patches as ecological sanctuaries and showcases community-led conservation. The Bishnoi community is a well-known example of this dedication to protecting wildlife and forests.
- **Circular economy:** Traditional lifestyles treated waste as a resource. Organic waste was used for compost, and cow dung for fuel and fertilizer, representing an early form of a circular economy.
- **Energy-efficient architecture:** *Vastu Shastra* and vernacular architecture incorporate natural ventilation, light, and local, sustainable materials like mud and stone. This minimizes the need for artificial energy and reduces the carbon footprint of buildings.

Sustainable Development Goals

1. **Interconnectedness:** The core Indian philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* ("the world is one family") resonates with the interconnected nature of the SDG.
2. **Holistic development:** IKS prioritizes societal well-being over individual gain, with the belief that prosperity will follow collective societal development and responsible behavior.
3. **Integration:** The goal is to integrate IKS with modern science and technology to create context-specific solutions for challenges like poverty, hunger and inequality.
4. **Innovation:** IKS provides a rich foundation for innovation by blending traditional practices with modern techniques to achieve goals such as affordable and clean energy and sustainable cities and communities.

Integration and future prospects

To fully realize the potential of IKS, modern approaches must integrate traditional knowledge with contemporary science and policy.

1. **Synergistic integration:** Combining the holistic, eco-conscious principles of IKS with modern technology can create more resilient and culturally anchored solutions.
2. **Policy framework:** Government initiatives, such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the Ministry of AYUSH, promote the integration of IKS into mainstream education, health, and policy-making.
3. **Capacity building:** Promoting research, documentation, and training on IKS can help ensure the longevity and relevance of these traditional practices.
4. **Global relevance:** As a global leader in sustainability, India can offer its rich heritage of IKS to address worldwide challenges, especially in developing economies

CONCLUSION

The futuristic work of human beings to promote good health and global environmental change of whole world. The development of environmental and ecological effect of whole living things and organism. The moral and ethical responsibility to use resources judiciously and respect all living beings. Yoga and meditation are internationally recognized for their positive impact on mental and physical health, contributing to a balanced lifestyle with minimal resource consumption. This study of ecological and well-being of environmentally friendly.

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