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Preventing Various Addictions by Implementing the University Wellness Program: Design and Methods for Medicine and Health Sciences Students

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KEYWORDS Health Behaviour. Health Promotion. Mental Health. Social Support. Students Addiction. Medical College. Students. University Wellness Program. Well-being

ABSTRACT Addictions among university students are on the rise, encompassing drug, alcohol, tobacco, social media, gaming, and gambling dependency. Peer pressure, stress and mental illness typically cause addictions that impede academic and individual growth. The University Wellness Program was established to create and establish specific interventions for enhancing college students' overall growth and well-being. Targets include enhancing physical, mental, and social wellness and addiction prevention and treatment. Extracurricular student organisations at the University Wellness Club/Committee provide yoga, dance, martial arts, and media. Evaluation assesses student satisfaction, program effectiveness, and areas for improvement. Health sciences students are orientated, provided with workshops, awareness campaigns, and a wellness curriculum. The program employs supportive, promotional, and preventive strategies with new and existing institutional resources. The combined strategy increases student motivation, life skills, and social, mental, and physical well-being. Ongoing research-based feedback refines and updates the program. The University Wellness Program combats student addiction and encourages well-being through guided activities, peer support, and regular monitoring. It also demonstrates how much institutions need to nurture student development and well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Student addiction, as such, could be considerably problematic and is generally associated with alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or behavioural addiction, such as gaming, social media, or gambling. Among the most important factors attributed to student addiction are stress, pressure from peers, problems with mental health, and an attempt to escape from academic pressures or other personal issues. Drug dependence or addiction potential is defined as; "beliefs and attitudes towards drug use and perceptions of the associated consequences as either negative or positive (Nikmanesh et al. 2012). Adolescents and young people especially college students are more susceptible to mental health issues, in particular drug addiction (Muzammil et al. 2015).

80 percent of the students who participated in a pilot study found that stress management sessions were beneficial. The study focused on 200 students. Participants in the program reported significant improvements in their mental health, as well as high levels of participation in recreational clubs and training programs for life skills. In addition, they reported high levels of participation in the program (Pichamuthu et al. 2025). According to a study, adolescents who had good well-being in their youth were less likely to engage in risky health behaviours as adults. As such, it is critical to evaluate and promote wellness among college students (Baldwin et al. 2017). The program centrally organizes students and faculty wellness related activities like wellness orientation, mental health etc. (Drolet and Rodgers 2010).

The research data show that many students reported experiencing psychological distress, depression, and anxiety in college life, and this percentage has greatly increased over the past decade (Burris et al. 2009). The vast majority of medical students experience a poor quality of life, which begins during medical students' basic science years and then gets worse, as medical students begin to experience higher rates of anxiety and depression (Salana et al. 2020).

The percentage of college students who reported stress and sleep difficulties that negative-

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ly impacted their academic performance, such as lower grades or dropped courses, often participate in unhealthy activities and lead bad lifestyles, which puts them at risk of major health problems, shown later in a recent survey. According to a recent survey, a large number of college students consistently participate in harmful behaviours and make bad lifestyle choices, which puts them at risk of major health problems in the future (Turner and Shu 2004).

The well-being of college students in medicine and health sciences is influenced by academic pressures and stress within the university environment. Some research reveals a close association between physician well-being and compassionate care for patients (Thomas et al. 2007). The majority of medical college students have not been trained or actively involved in their own care. However, burnout and stress are significant problems because, as studies have shown, they cause a decrease in the quality of care, increased drug abuse, and even suicide (Mangus et al. 1998). All three aspects of well-being, physical wellness, emotional wellness, and morals and beliefs, need to be taken care of for people to live better lives and build healthy communities.

But encouraging wellness in academics lowers the incidence of illness and improves mental and physical health. Once students learn to control certain behaviours, holistic wellness may reduce problems with somatisation, psychoticism, and interpersonal sensitivity (Chandler et al. 2001).

This study will design and describe how to protect from various additions and promote the university wellness program among medicine and health sciences college students. Although a variety of strategies could be discussed in this context of students' wellness and campus wellness, the researchers concentrated on numerous aspects of wellness, including physical, emotional, social, occupational, and intellectual (Hettler 1984). The researchers believe that the University Wellness Program helps students succeed and that cultivating wellness is an important institutional value.

Wellness Concept

Wellness is described as "the perception that one is living in a way that allows for consistent, balanced growth in the physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social, and psychological dimensions of human existence" (Adams et al. 2000). The World Health Organisation (1948) describes health as "a physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity". However, wellness is not just a single domain, it is an inclusive domain with overlapping levels of wellness. For example, social well-being includes or means self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Degges-White et al. 2003). However, the literature describes well-being as falling under the umbrella of wellness (Baldwin et al. 2017). Traditionally, wellness has only considered the absence of negative elements, not a holistic perspective. However, over the years, positive elements have been recognised and the literature has defined wellbeing as falling under the umbrella of wellness. Wellness now considers individuals within a holistic perspective and consists of many dimensions. Human wellness encompasses various dimensions, including mind, body, spirit, and community interactions, all of which are interconnected (Miller and Foster 2010). After a few decades, wellness has been approached as a holistic way and has been conceptualised as a multidimensional model (Hettler 1984; Myers et al. 2000). This comprehensive approach encompasses six broad domains, including physical wellness, which encompasses diet, exercise, sleep, smoking, alcohol consumption, and personal hygiene, emotional wellness, which includes self-identity and self-esteem, spiritual wellness, which includes a sense of peace and connection with the universe, social wellness, which includes a sense of community and social support, occupational wellness, which includes job satisfaction, and intellectual wellness, which includes creative, stimulating mental activities (Miller and Foster 2010). However, wellness consciously incorporates a person's daily life, and it means a lifelong endeavour. Because it is a positive practice in a multidimensional way, it gives therapeutic benefits.

Physical Wellness

Physical wellness is a dynamic aspect of overall health that involves maintaining a healthy body through regular exercise, proper nutrition, suffi-

cient sleep, and preventive healthcare. Physical wellness includes emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, environmental, and occupational wellness (Cohen 2010). Maintaining physical wellness requires a holistic approach and commitment to making healthy lifestyle choices. Physical wellness can help improve a person's overall quality of life and well-being (Zohair et al. 2020). According to a study, physical wellness serves as an indicator of physical health, incorporating health behaviours such as tobacco use, physical activity, nutrition, medication adherence, disease risk, and disease status. As a result, there is a relationship between personal autonomy and physical wellness or health outcomes (Williams et al. 2011).

Mental Wellness

Mental wellness is a condition of mental health that is favourable. It is not merely the absence of mental illness. Mental wellness refers to the state of having a well-organised and optimally functioning mind that operates in one's own best interests. A person can think, feel, and act in ways that create a positive impact on their physical and social well-being (Evans 1997). The World Health Organisation (WHO 1948) defines mental health as a state of well-being in which individuals are aware of their capabilities, can effectively manage the typical challenges of life, can achieve success and productivity in their job, and can make meaningful contributions to their community. Various ways may be used to enhance one's mental and emotional well-being, such as engaging in relaxation exercises, practicing meditation and yoga, and using techniques to foster meaningful relationships. To maintain spiritual well-being, it is important to have the belief that every individual deserves to be treated with decency and respect (Bezner 2015). Mental health is recognised as a significant aspect of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 3 of the SDG framework promotes mental health and wellbeing (Bodeker et al. 2020).

Social Wellness

Social wellness is about creating genuine connections with those around oneself and fostering good, loving, and supportive relationships. That means people must balance their social lives with their academic and professional lives. An important aspect of overall well-being, social well-being can have significant impacts on both mental and physical health (Keyes 1998). Social wellness improves mental health, enhances physical health, and promotes a higher quality of life (Hillier et al. 2005). Social wellness also includes recognising and valuing the diversity and interconnectedness of people, cultures, and environments (Miller and Foster 2010). A new World Health Organisation study emphasises the role of social and economic factors in analysing health inequities. According to the research, being a part of one's community is crucial for achieving material, psychological, and political empowerment, which supports social wellness and equitable health (Marmot et al. 2008). The social determinants of wellness include factors such as an individual's position in the social hierarchy, their access to economic, social, and cultural resources, and the expectations and goals imposed by their family, peers, and society as a whole. Although this is a normal experience for many college students, medicine is considered an esteemed profession that has high social prestige and offers opportunities for upward social mobility. As a result, there is an increased amount of pressure in terms of competition and performance. The complex interaction of several factors poses numerous difficulties for medical students as they manage through a variety of requirements - financial, intellectual, social, and cultural - inside an institution for an extended duration (Baru 2021).

University Wellness Program

University Wellness Program is a comprehensive wellness program (Drolet and Rodgers 2010). In its entirety, the University Wellness Program covers physical wellness, mental wellness, social wellness, and protection from various addictions. The University Wellness Program directly helps with personal and academic-related challenges and helps individuals overcome various addictions. The student wellness service aims to focus on the physical, psychological, emotional, and social well-being of students to ensure their campus wellness (Ewing et al. 2007). Strategies that are part of the University Wellness Program are designed to assist in the adoption of a healthy

lifestyle. These strategies include the promotion of physical fitness, the education of nutrition, the screening for illness, and the prevention of disease through improved awareness of safety and harm reduction tactics (Keeling 2002).

Significance of the Study

Increasing levels of college health often require thorough environmental management, efficient resource coordination, and institutional responsibility for addressing the adverse health effects of alcohol use disorder and substance abuse, as well as mental illnesses like depression and general anxiety disorders, sexual assault, and discrimination, among other issues (Zimmer et al. 2003). A lot of colleges and universities are known for having high-stress settings (Ribeiro et al. 2018). Students often have higher demands in their academic work and a greater degree of general responsibility throughout college or university, which may harm their well-being (Dyrbye et al. 2006).

This significant issue needs to be addressed and critical needs must be fulfilled to create a supportive and healthy environment (Slavin et al. 2014). The University Wellness Program is a multifaceted initiative designed to enhance physical health, mental health, and social connections across the community (World Health Organisation 1948, Constitution of the World Health Organisation. Geneva: World Health Organisation Basic Documents). The University wellness program includes health education and promotion, fitness and physical activity, mental health services, health screenings and check-ups, nutritional support, support for substance abuse, peer support programs, financial wellness, academic-life balance, access to healthcare services, and wellness events and campaigns. However, medical college students who engage in consistent wellness practices experience enhanced psychological well-being (Cohen 2010; Weiner et al. 2001).

This study aims to address various addictions and various aspects of wellness, including the physical, mental, emotional, social, and even financial well-being of medicine and health sciences college students. This study describes how to save students from various addictions by promoting the university wellness program among medicine and health sciences college students.

Objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Conduct a comprehensive initiative designed to protect against various addictions by promoting the University Wellness Program.
2. Promote the University Wellness Program for the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of students.

METHODOLOGY

Pedagogical Techniques

Curriculum

The wellness curriculum prepared by the University Wellness Program team is a value-added course or add-on course. This course includes theory, practical and outreach activities. The University Wellness Program should be oriented towards students and encourage them to participate to protect themselves from various addictions. The wellness concept is also encouraged, accepted and practiced by many colleges globally. This new paradigm aims to improve the mental, physical and social health of medicine and health sciences students. It describes an integrated, multifaceted, preclinical curriculum change program implemented through the curriculum at the Medicine and Health Sciences college. There is an association between course content, contact hours, class experiences, and the level of depression, anxiety, stress, and community cohesion among medicine and health sciences students (West et al. 2014). There are few studies that address formal wellness curricula. Evaluation of targeted wellness interventions is more prevalent, and discussion groups have been shown to have sustained positive effects on self-awareness, mindfulness, reflection, and community building (Dietz et al. 2023).

Research

To effectively promote wellness, research is conducted to investigate the satisfaction of students and their suggestions in hostels and on university campuses. Additionally, research is conducted to investigate the influence of univer-

sity wellness programs, their outcomes, suggestions for improving the program, and how they protect from various addictions. To determine the level of satisfaction and requirements of students, a mixed methodology based on qualitative and quantitative research is utilised. To determine in-depth aspects, instruments such as questionnaires, in-depth interviews, case studies, and focus group discussions are utilised.

Students Club Formation

Student clubs play a significant role in the academic and personal development of students and protect them from various addictions. Under the university wellness program, a variety of student clubs were established, such as those for yoga, dance, music, martial arts, Zumba, cycling, swimming, nutrition, fashion, journalism, drawing, reading, media, sports, and more. These clubs encourage students to engage in extracurricular activities, positively impacting their physical, mental, and social well-being. Participation in these recreational activities can enhance personal and professional coping skills and overall performance.

Programs and Activities

University wellness programs typically offer a comprehensive range of activities aimed at supporting the physical, mental and emotional well-being of students to protect them from various addictions. These programs include fitness classes such as yoga, Zumba and dance, as well as sports and recreational activities like intramural sports leagues, swimming, outdoor adventure programs, and martial arts. Exercise facilities often feature gyms, running tracks, and swimming pools. Wellness challenges, such as step and fitness challenges, encourage physical activity. Mental and emotional wellness is addressed through counselling services, mindfulness and meditation sessions, and workshops on time management and resilience (Mak et al. 2017). Social wellness is promoted through community events, mentorship programs, and student organisations. Nutritional wellness initiatives include nutrition counselling, healthy eating workshops, and on-campus dining options that offer nutritious food choices. Financial wellness is supported through financial education workshops and planning services. Occupational wellness activities encompass career services, professional development workshops, and networking events. Lastly, environmental wellness is fostered through sustainability initiatives and outdoor activities like gardening clubs and nature walks. These diverse activities aim to create a supportive environment that enhances overall wellness and promotes academic and personal attitude change.

Components of the University Wellness Program

Physical Health

This includes organising fitness facilities and initiatives such as providing advanced gym facilities, group exercise sessions, and individualised training sessions, providing nutritional support that provides healthy dining options on campus, nutritional workshops, and access to dietitians. Health screening and preventive care are also very important, including regular health fairs, flu vaccination clinics, and routine health screenings.

Mental Health

Counselling services are very important for overcoming various addictions. Mental health professionals or student-friendly counsellors are available for individual and group counselling. Workshops and seminar sessions are needed for stress management, mindfulness, and resilience training (Mak et al. 2017). Peer support networks, such as student-led support groups and peer mentoring programs, are also beneficial.

Social Well-being

Community-building activities help students' social networks. Organised events such as cultural festivals, sports leagues, and volunteer opportunities are examples of such activities. Inclusivity initiatives are also important components of social well-being. This program aims to support diversity and inclusion by creating safe spaces for underrepresented groups. Additionally, alumni engagement contributes to social well-being. Involving alumni in mentoring programs and networking events helps to build a strong network.

Program Implementation Process

The program implementation process includes needs assessment, program development, marketing and outreach, and resource allocation. Needs assessment can be done by conducting surveys and focus groups to identify the specific wellness needs and preferences of the university community, reviewing existing wellness resources, and identifying gaps in services. Program development should be an inclusive method, collaborating with health professionals, nutritionists, fitness experts, and mental health counselors to design evidence-based interventions. Ensuring the program is accessible to all members of the university community, including those with disabilities. The next step is to focus on marketing and outreach, specifically promoting the university wellness program and motivating stakeholders to participate in it. Utilising a multi-channel communication strategy to promote wellness activities, including social media, email newsletters, and campus posters. Engaging student organisations and faculty committees in program promotion and participation. Finally, resource allocation is one of the main processes in program implementation. Securing funding through university budgets, grants, and partnerships with local health organisations. Allocating resources efficiently to ensure the sustainability of the wellness program.

Evaluation

Evaluating a program is a crucial step to ensure its effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance. A comprehensive evaluation typically involves several stages and methods, like data collection, outcome measures, and continuous improvement. Data collection including pre- and post-program surveys are conducted to assess changes in participants' health behaviours, stress levels, and overall well-being. Additionally, utilisation data from fitness facilities, counselling services, and participation rates in wellness activities are collected. Outcome measures include physical health indicators such as body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, and fitness levels. Mental health outcomes include anxiety, depression, and stress scores and social well-being measures such as a sense of belonging and social network strength. Continuous improvement can be made through regularly reviewing feedback from participants to refine and enhance program offerings, and adjusting strategies based on evaluation data to meet the evolving needs of the university community.

Elements and Strategies for a Comprehensive University Wellness Program

A comprehensive university wellness program design and method will help protect against various addictions and address the real needs of college students. This design and method have key elements and strategies. The first strategy is a holistic approach to physical, mental, emotional, and social wellness. Many colleges have developed wellness curricula, which include stress management, life skills training, resilience workshops, mental health programs, mindfulness classes, and yoga. These curricula are tailored to meet the unique challenges faced by medical college students. The second strategy is personalised and evidence-based care. This program is based on individual assessments and evidence-based practices, such as lifestyle changes like nutrition, exercise, and stress management. This approach ensures students' healthy lifestyles and enhances their overall wellness (Farrer et al. 2013). The third strategy is the integration of multiple disciplines. Various healthcare providers, such as yoga trainers, dieticians, nutritionists, mental health counsellors, fitness trainers, and physical therapists, are involved in effective wellness programs. This multidisciplinary approach can provide comprehensive support and foster a culture of wellness within the institution (Shetty and Bhat 2023). The fourth strategy for creating a supportive environment involves promoting a work-life balance and ensuring that students and faculty have access to wellness resources (Farrer et al. 2013). The fifth strategy is ongoing evaluation and regular assessment. Feedback mechanisms and regular evaluations can help refine and improve the program (Drolet and Rodgers 2010). The sixth strategy for community and peer support is to encourage peer support, community-building activities, and student club activities. These initiatives can greatly enhance the effectiveness of wellness programs. Peer-led initiatives and support groups can create a sense of community and shared experience, which is especially beneficial

in high-stress environments such as medical schools.

RESULTS

Initial Experience of the University Wellness Program

The School of Public Health department-initiated University Wellness Program for students' wellness was launched in 2019, and they introduced the University Wellness Program logo. The logo was designed by students from the School of Public Health department and the Visual Communication Department. They then conducted focus group discussions and key information interviews with students and faculty from different departments to identify their needs and gather suggestions for their wellness.

Collecting Suggestions from Direct Stakeholders to Develop the Program

Discussions were held with all college deans, department heads, the registrar, administrative officers, a few faculty members, and a few research scholars from the Medicine and Health Science College. Their discussions were meaningful and they provided many suggestions to develop the University Wellness Program.

Extended Counselling Service

Direct counselling services are available at the Medicine and Health Science College, but some students do not have time to meet the counsellor in person. As a result, they expect online counselling services. In response to this, the University Wellness Program has initiated an online counselling service that is student-friendly. This service began in February 2024. Two external counselling service agencies regularly provide online counselling to students. The student counselling centre is primarily associated with mental health treatment and assistance. Many therapy institutions are shifting their focus to prevention and providing opportunities for personal growth. Healthcare professionals and counsellors play important roles in helping students navigate unfamiliar environments.

The year 2024 saw 118 students availing themselves of counselling services, 38 of whom were male and 49 were female. The highest numbers were seen in January and March, with 18 and 14

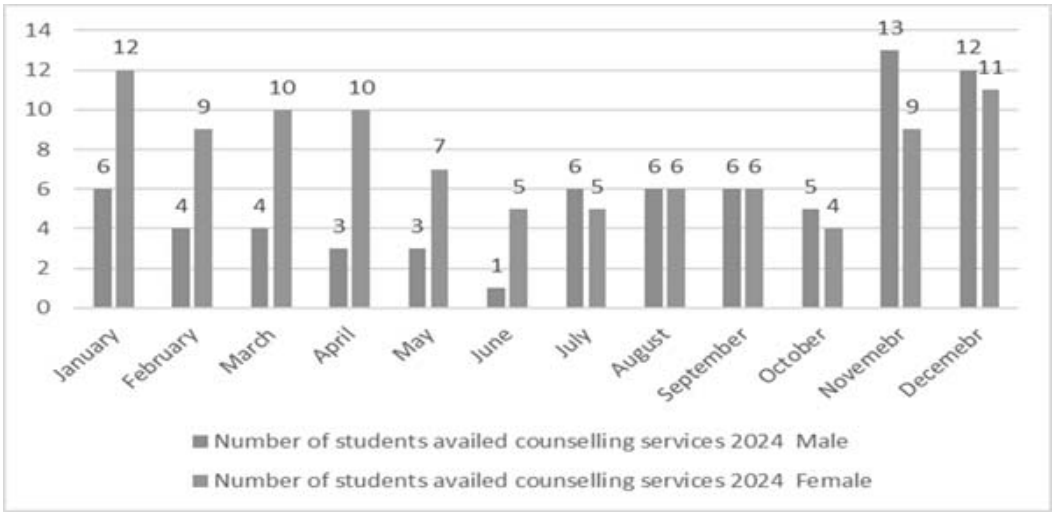

Fig.1. Students availed counselling services 2024

students, respectively, seeking support, while June witnessed the least use at just 6 students. The gender trends feel, in most months, as if there was a stronger presence of females than males having counselling needs, possibly suggesting females are either more prone to mental health issues or very willing to seek help for it (Fig.1).

Information System Developed for Counselling Service

Counselling service is available to Medicine and Health Sciences students. The Department of Clinical Psychology and the Department of Psychiatry provides counselling and psychiatric treatment. Many students are utilising the service, although a significant number of students are not aware of its availability. So, the University Wellness Program has created an information system for students to access information about services and conduct. A Student Counselling Services Poster has been placed in all Medical and Health Sciences Colleges. In collaboration with department deans and hostel wardens, strategic locations across the Medicine and Health Sciences were identified for placing posters about student counselling services. The posters display contact details for the counsellor's phone number, timing, and offline and online counselling services.

UWP (University Wellness Program) Club

Starting a Fine Arts Club and student forum can be an excellent way to bring together students who share a passion for various art forms and social events. The first steps were taken to establish a yoga club, dance club, Zumba club, martial arts club, music club, and media club for Medicine and Health Science students.

The chart representation shows the trend of student participation in wellness activities at the University Wellness Program Club over the time span of ten months. Dance was the most popular

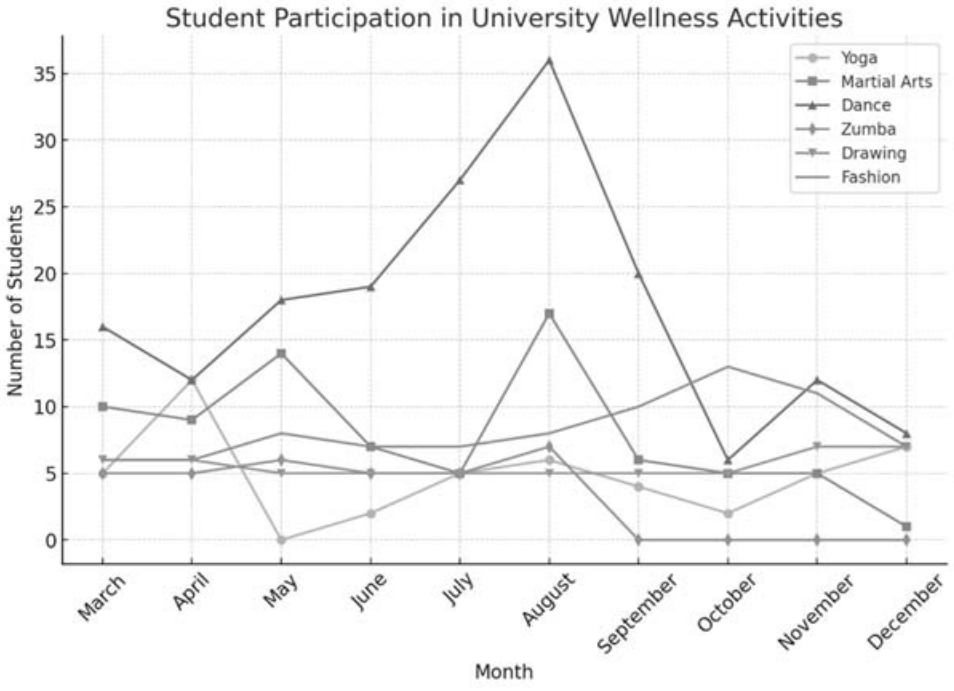

Fig. 2. Students participation in university wellness activities

wellness activity, recording participation highs of 36 students in August, then slowly declining afterwards. Martial Arts had mild fluctuance, rising slightly in May (14) and in August (17), with generally stable participation beyond what was mentioned. Yoga had a steady yet low participation, peaking slightly in April (12) and trailing down to 7 by December.

Zumba experienced a significant decline, with participation dropping to zero after August, suggesting a loss of interest or program discontinuation. Drawing and Fashion had relatively stable participation, with Fashion seeing the highest attendance in October with 13. The overall trend indicates greater participation observed in August, and consequently, a decline towards the year's end, possibly due to semester scheduling or promotional efforts. These insights indicate that some activities, like Dance and Martial Arts, stood out as favourites among students, while Zumba would require reworking or better promotion to retain interest (Fig. 2).

Summary of Students Participation University Wellness Program

The results show the counselling peak in January (18 students) and lowest in July (6), likely related to academic cycles. The Dance Club was at its peak in August (36 participants) with no participation thereafter, whereas Martial Arts saw regular participation. Orientation saw the largest attendance in Allied Health Sciences (912 students) with the lowest in Dental College (68 students), indicating variations in student outreach in departments, along with student intake (Fig. 3).

Orientation on the University Wellness Program for all Medical and Health Science Students

The University Wellness Program Coordinator and Program Associate gave an orientation to Medicine and Health Sciences students to help them understand the concept of the University Wellness Program. They also explained how students can participate and the benefits they can expect to receive. From the Medicine and Health Sciences, various college students received orientation in departments such as the School of Public Health, College of Nursing, College of Occupational Therapy, College of Physiotherapy, College of Dental, College of Pharmacy, College of Allied Health Science, Department of Clinical Psychology, Department of Optometry, Department of Pathology, Department of Audiology, and

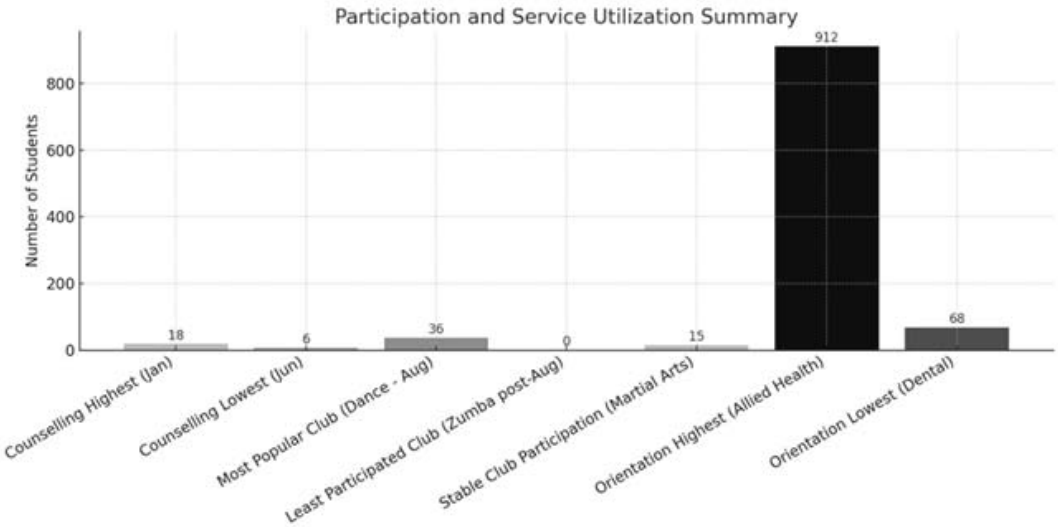

Fig. 3. Summary of Students participation in university wellness program

Department of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

The chart depicts student participation in the University Wellness Program Orientation of 2024 across the various colleges of SRM University. Allied Health Science had the highest attendance (912), followed by Nursing (651), while SRM Dental College had the lowest (68). Other colleges like Physiotherapy (533), Pharmacy (532), and MBBS (500) exhibited moderate engagement. Variation may indicate that some programs have a stronger integration of wellness while low participation in certain colleges may suggest a need for further outreach (Fig. 4).

The graph Figure 5 depicts the Allied Health Science University Wellness Program students' engagement. Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology have given way to 226 students, Pathology to 183, and Optometry to 179, possibly because of the incorporation of health and communication themes in their curriculum. On the other hand, Critical Care and Renal Dialysis Technology had the lowest number of students participating, with only 23 and 32 respectively, owing probably to difficult courses. Other professions, like Anaesthesia and Medical Laboratory Technology, had medium participation rates with 57 and 46 students individually. The organisers are encouraged to promote flexibility, to be aware of targeted campaigns, and wellness initiatives in field specific groups in order to improve participation.

Seminar on Physical and Mental Health

A session was organised on physical and mental health at the Hospital Seminar Hall on 19 February. The program title was "Matter Over Mind – Let's Talk Youth Wellness". This was

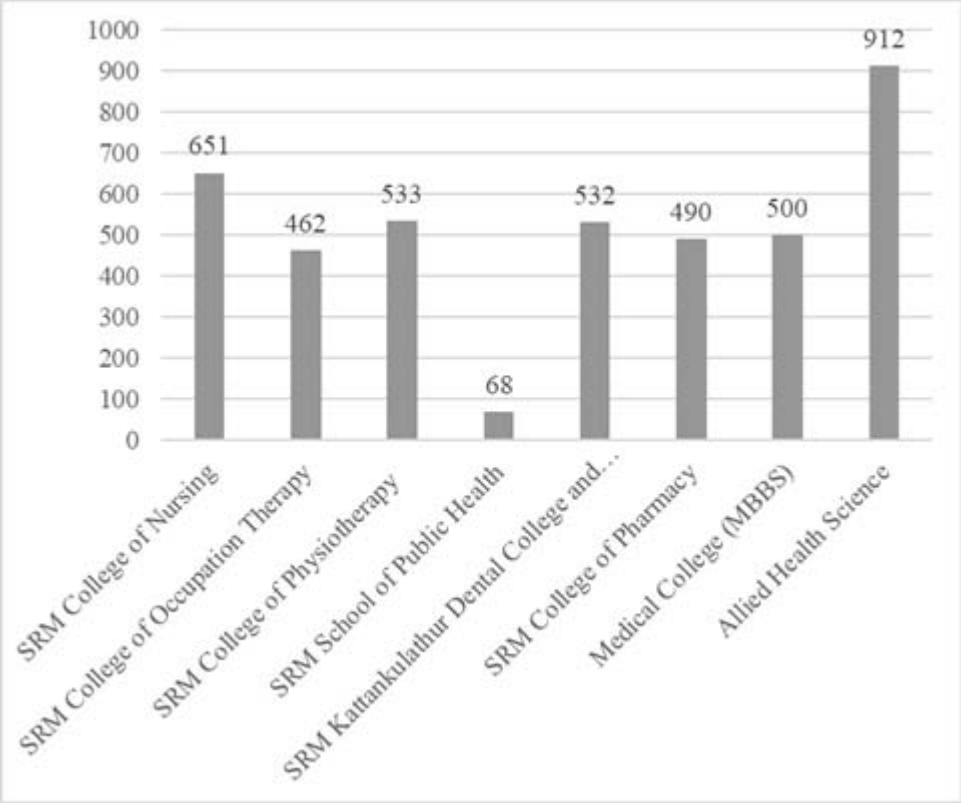

Fig. 4. Student participation in university Wellness Program Orientation in 2024

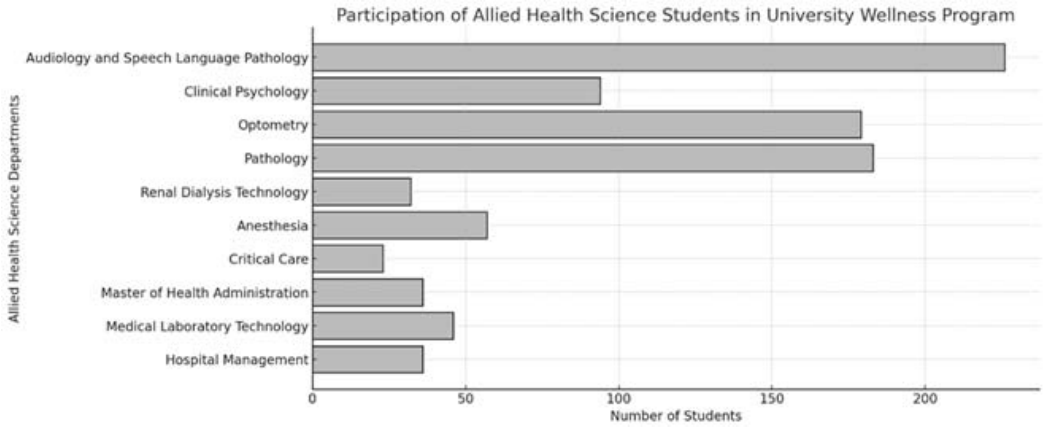

Fig. 5. Students participation of Allied Health Science Students in University Wellness Program Orientation in 2024

conducted by a fitness Ms. Sripriya Indramohan, Founder and Master Trainer of Sri's School of Yoga. Around 300 students from Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Audiology, Speech Language Therapy, and Public Health participated. Many students interacted and asked questions.

Flash Mob to Promote University Wellness Program

As part of University Wellness Programs, students from various colleges of Medicine and Health Science organised a 'flash mob' to raise awareness of the prevention of drunk driving and promote University Wellness Program Club activities such as Zumba, dance, karate, Silambam, and music clubs. The flash mob was organised on April 23, 2024, at the Medical College building entrance. Nearly 60 students and 3 faculty performed different arts. The following were performed, including, a Kathak dance performance by UWP Kathak Club, singing by UWP Music Club, martial arts performance by the Silambam trainers, classical dance by UWP Dance Club, skit on "Prevent Drunk Driving" played by UWP Campaign Club, and Western dance performance by UWP Dance Club.

All the programs were trained and the performance was given by students. The full video coverage and photography were done by UWP Media Club, which is driven by students. Before the program, the event flyer was sent to all the faculties and students across the University for visibility and reach. By using the University Wellness Program's Instagram link, the event flyer was posted. More than 500 students, along with faculty members, enthusiastically watched the flash mob, showing significant interest. The audience's reaction was notably impressive, with all students remaining engaged throughout the event, resulting in a highly positive atmosphere. The students expressed extreme happiness, reflecting the success and impact of the flash mob. However, many students were aware of the University Wellness Program and showed their interest in participating in it.

Awareness Program Against Substance Abuse Among Youth

A continuous awareness program on substance abuse among youth was conducted for all department students. Each time, different resource persons made awareness against substance abuse among youth and developed an attitude of "Say No to Drugs".

DISCUSSION

Recent literature indicates the increasing efficacy of structured wellness programs to reduce addiction risk behaviors and improve student engagement. For instance, Demezier (2023) found that medical students participating in structured

weekly wellness workshops such as fitness and expressive arts activities, social activities, reported a 42 percent reduction in self-reported substance use, and significant changes in self-regulation and academic focus over a 3-month period. These outcomes correspond well with the aims of University Wellness Program (UWP), which offers co-curricular engagement as a means of developing healthier lifestyle behaviours and reducing students' reliance on maladaptive coping behaviours (Worobetz et al. 2020). The study also emphasized that wellness activities are more participatory and sustainable behavioural change occurs when students lead the wellness activities as peers.

Similarly, Sharma et al. (2025) explored the value of health literacy and harm-reduction education as part of undergraduate wellness education, as presented within the co-curricular domain. Their research found that undergraduate wellness programs with culturally relevant, trauma-informed content and involvement of faculty and student ambassadors resulted in students who were more likely to seek counselling and coped better, thus advocating for the importance of contextual relevance when developing programs (Edmonds et al. 2002; Pahl et al. 2019; Pipas et al. 2020). particularly in South Asian education contexts where stigma and limited mental health infrastructure often leads to delayed access to supports. Including a cultural approach was used to deliver peer intervention (Kurup and Kumar 2024).

The integration of life skills training, mindfulness sessions, and recreational activities within the University Wellness Program (UWP) has demonstrated significant potential in reducing stress and preventing addictive behaviors among health sciences students (Alagappan and Rajendran 2025; Mak et al. 2017). Recent research on online personalised feedback programs (PFP) for college students found that 81 percent of the participants said they loved the program and that their intentions to use campus resources and cut their drug and alcohol intake had risen. Notable is the fact that 39 percent of students said they planned to drink less and 41 percent said they planned to get drunk less regularly following the program's end. This suggests that tailored, individualised interventions can enhance conventional preventive programs and inspire good behaviour among university students by means of risk targets (Choi et al. 2024).

These interventions address both psychological and social factors contributing to addiction risk. The comprehensive wellness program is designed to protect against various addictions and is expected to lead to improved physical health and fitness among students, enhanced mental health, and reduced stress levels (Drolet and Rodgers 2010). Few studies results showing that among students through promoting extracurricular activities and participating is a self-paced method to promote balance of mind, body, and spirit. Students enrolled in this selective experience a range of activities that support health and balance in life (Salana et al. 2020). Stronger social connections and a greater sense of community within the university, increased awareness and utilisation of wellness resources, and a sustainable university wellness program and student-centred program within a university community. These initiatives have many internal and external benefits for students. They improve academic performance because students who are healthy and well-adjusted are more likely to succeed academically. Its enhanced retention rates and increased overall well-being mean comprehensive wellness programs contribute to the overall health and happiness of the university community. However, their focus on wellness fosters a supportive and positive campus environment and positive culture. Training in resilience, mindfulness, and empathy, as well as coping skills and mindful communication, has all been linked to decreased levels of stress (Christianson et al. 2018; Krasner et al. 2009; Mak et al. 2017). Several studies have shown that students have recognised the need to enhance the accessibility of nutritious food choices, provide instruction on health-related subjects, promote honest marketing practices, establish student groups dedicated to health, and upgrade recreational facilities on college campuses. Barriers to student health include the expense of nutritious food choices, the prevalence of poor food alternatives, the dissemination of inaccurate health information, and the presence of stress. Students have recognised the need for a college wellness program to improve their communication regarding the health-related services and facilities available to students. Additionally, they suggest implementing support systems for students to help them overcome various addictions, increasing health education, organising health

events that accommodate students' schedules, and hosting attention-grabbing events centred around health (Ewing et al. 2007) The comprehensive wellness program has shown promise in addressing the unique needs of students in medicine and health sciences. The multi-faceted approach, tailored to the specific challenges faced by these students, has been crucial in promoting overall well-being (Williams et al. 2011).

CONCLUSION

A comprehensive university wellness program in medicine and health sciences helps protect against various addictions. It is holistic, personalised, student-centred, multidisciplinary, supportive, and adaptable. By addressing the physical, mental, and social wellness needs of students, such programs can help create healthy communities in society. Medical students should be taught stress and time management methods as part of their core curriculum to assist them in dealing with the stress and responsibilities of practicing medicine. Implementing a university wellness program can significantly impact the university stakeholders or community and promote a culture of health and well-being that extends beyond the campus. University wellness programs must provide additional opportunities and services focused on student health while restricting access to the obstacles that impede overall student health.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Students' preferences for health and well-being must be addressed via an effective support network that uses attention-grabbing tactics to convey the different health-related services and facilities accessible to them. However, a comprehensive wellness program is essential for protecting from various addictions and supporting the well-being of medicine and health sciences students. By addressing physical, mental, emotional, and social wellness, such programs can significantly enhance students' ability to cope with academic pressures and improve their overall quality of life.

LIMITATIONS

One major limitation of this report is that it entirely depends on stakeholder feedback, which may not be representative of all the students. The online counselling services have not yet been fully tested for effectiveness. The absence of longitudinal data limits the ability to attribute lasting programmatic impacts. Lastly, it should be noted that equal benefits cannot be automatically expected from club participation for all students, as some may have more interest while others may have easier access.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should measure the long-term effects of wellness programs on student health outcomes. Such research should aim to identify which one is more effective by comparing face-to-face counselling services and online counselling services. Finally, additional research could focus on finding ways to improve participation among diverse groups of students and exploring the role of cultural influence in wellness program participation.

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