

Sustainable Lifestyle: A Path towards Environmental Sustainability and Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

The idea of sustainable life is thought to have reached its usefulness limit. A sustainable lifestyle is a critical component of achieving environmental and economic sustainability. It entails a comprehensive approach to daily decisions and actions that reduce negative environmental impacts while improving individual and societal well-being. This paper delves into the essential components of a sustainable lifestyle, such as responsible consumption, reduced waste output, energy efficiency, water conservation and a shift toward environmentally conscious mobility. Adopting such a way of life not only saves natural resources, but it also promotes a healthier, more equal, and resilient society. Individuals can contribute to a harmonious cohabitation between humans and the environment by aligning personal beliefs with sustainable actions, paving the way for a more sustainable and prosperous future. This possibility is explored in this paper and tries to provide a path ahead for renewing our current knowledge and approach towards sustainable lifestyle.

Keywords: sustainable lifestyle, sustainable development, environmental sustainability

I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable lifestyles are critical for social and environmental transformation to sustainability (IPCC 2014; IGES 2019; Akenji and Chen 2016; Gilby et al. 2019; Bohme et al.2022). Sustainable ways of living refer to the likelihood that humans and other forms of life will continue to flourish on the earth indefinitely (Ehrenfeld 2008). However, because lifestyles are claimed to be hard to change, significant modifications are required to reach this goal. Furthermore, even among those who are willing to live sustainably, a lot of people do not implement the required modifications (Mont and Power 2010; Van Vliet et al. 2005; Bohme et al. 2022).

Sustainable development is the hot topic of this century. The term sustainable development emerged much earlier in the early 19th century. The widely accepted definition of sustainable development is: "Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987, P.27). Primarily, sustainable development is considered under three main dimensions: environmental, social and cultural.

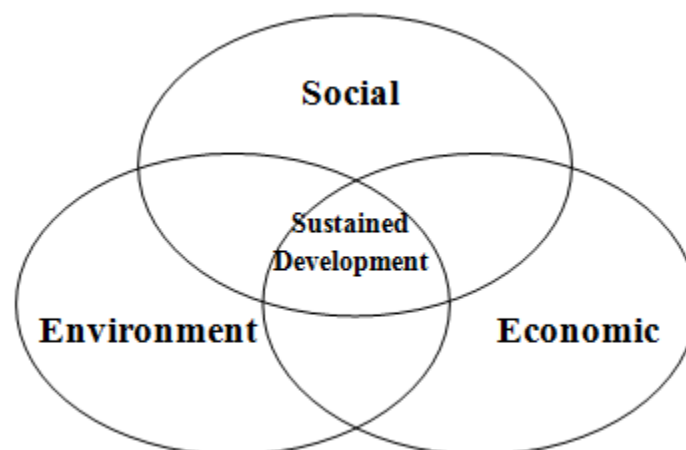


Figure 1: Key predictors of sustained development (Gennari P, 2007)

1. Economic

A sustainable economy increases output, provides better and more valuable services to the populace, and lessens economic imbalance.

2. Social

Justice, useful social services, gender equality, political stability, security, and cooperation are characteristics of a sustainable society.

3. Environment

A sustainable environment encourages the conservation of resources and the prevention of resource waste (Harris, 2001).

The more essential dimensions of sustainable development are environmental aspects. Whether it is a developed or under-developed country, every country faces severe environmental conditions such as climate change and global warming. The era of global warming has gone, and now this is the era of global burning. As the planet earth is burning daily, we need to adopt sustainable practices in our lifestyle. The 21st century has highlighted the pressing need for individuals and societies to adopt sustainable lifestyles to mitigate the increasing environmental challenges. These environmental challenges could lead to more severe environmental accidents such as climate change, global warming, carbon emissions, biodiversity loss, etc. The primary cause of the environmental degradation is the anthropogenic impact. The anthropogenic environmental effects refer to changes in the biophysical environment, ecosystem, biodiversity and natural resources. These environmental anthropogenic impacts are directly related to our daily lifestyle. So, to control the adverse effects, we must adopt a sustainable lifestyle and focus on achieving sustainable development goals, which the United Nations has identified.

The concept of sustainable lifestyle, a novel inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals, marks a pivotal moment. A sustainable lifestyle involves recognizing the influence of our daily lifestyle decisions on the global environment, striving for universal improvements with reduced burdens on the earth's planet, and achieving sustainable development goals.

To comprehend sustainable development, a clear description of lifestyle is required. Many definitions exist; a few of them are as follows:

- A person's life style is a collection of behaviours that they exhibit in various physical, psychological, social, and economic contexts.
- Life style refers to a person's, a family's, or a society's manner of living (Jensen, 2007).

Hence, it is possible to say that a person's life style consists of unique but obvious methods of living that are determined by their behaviours, conversations, and beliefs (Dariush & Farhud, 2017). Therefore, this paper explores the essential lifestyle changes that can contribute to environmental sustainability and foster sustainable development.

II. SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE: HARMONIZING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A sustainable way of life includes actions and decisions that minimize harm to the environment while fostering sustainable growth. It entails making deliberate attempts to lower carbon footprints through waste reduction, responsible consumption, and energy-efficient behaviours. While sustainable development aims to meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, fostering economic, social, and environmental well-being for all, environmental sustainability concentrates on protecting ecosystems, conserving resources, and reducing climate change. A sustainable lifestyle requires combining individual decisions with global sustainability objectives in order to build a peaceful and resilient planet for both the present and the future. However, by making conscious lifestyle changes as mentioned below, we can pave the way for a more sustainable future mentioned below:

1. Energy Conservation and Adoption of Renewable Resources

One of the most significant contributors to environmental degradation is our overreliance on fossil fuels for energy. So, adopting various energy conservation practices such as switching to LED lights, using energy-efficient electrical appliances, and using natural daylight during the daytime can significantly reduce energy consumption and electricity bills. Shifting to renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydropower is critical for lowering greenhouse gas emissions, which are the primary cause of air pollution.

2. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Reusing and recycling items is another aspect of sustainable living that individuals are encouraged to practice. We may lessen our waste and conserve resources by reusing materials rather than throwing them away. By adopting a zero-waste lifestyle/ 3 Rs policy, a person can significantly contribute to environmental preservation and waste reduction. This involves reducing single-use plastics, practising recycling, composting organic waste, using bio-degradable products and

buying products with minimal packaging. Supporting companies that prioritize sustainable packaging and enhancing the circular economy.

3. Sustainable Food Choices

The food industry substantially contributes to environmental degradation through deforestation, water pollution, and excessive carbon emissions. Food waste generation is one of the issues of modern society. Generally, there is more food waste in every home than its consumption. So, adopting a sustainable diet can help alleviate these issues. Consuming more plant-based foods, locally sourced and organic produce, and reducing meat and dairy consumption can significantly reduce the carbon footprint associated with food production. Moreover, supporting sustainable farming practices and reducing food waste are integral components of a sustainable food system.

4. Sustainable Transportation

The transportation sector is a significant contributor to air pollution and carbon emissions. Embracing sustainable mobility solutions such as walking, cycling, carpooling, and public transportation can drastically reduce personal carbon footprints. In urban planning, creating pedestrian-friendly spaces, investing in efficient public transportation networks, and promoting electric vehicles are vital steps toward sustainable transportation systems.

5. Water Conservation

Water scarcity is a growing concern in many regions due to over-extraction and pollution of freshwater sources. To address this, individuals can adopt water-efficient practices such as fixing leaks and using low-flow water faucets and toilets. Rainwater harvesting is also a good source of water and collecting rainwater for non-potable purposes such as gardening, car washing, floor mopping, etc.

6. Resource Conservation

Sustainable living encourages individuals to use resources like water and electricity more effectively to conserve them. We can lessen our influence on the environment and save money by cutting back on the use of these resources.

7. Education and Awareness

Spreading awareness about environmental issues and advocating for policy changes is crucial for sustainable development. Sustainable living can encourage one's family, friends, and neighbours to live more sustainably and to care for the environment. Future generations will benefit from knowing how to minimize their harmful environmental effects and actively participate in its preservation.

III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the benefits of sustainable living are too outstanding to ignore, and it is a vital component of our daily life. It contributes to environmental protection and can help to live a healthier lifestyle and save money. Sustainable living can significantly help reduce the carbon footprint and improve the quality of life. It is clear why everyone should place a high focus on sustainable living. Addressing environmental challenges demands a collective effort to adopt sustainable lifestyles and promote sustainable development. Each individual has the power to make a significant impact through simple yet impactful changes in daily habits. By transitioning to renewable energy, reducing waste, adopting sustainable diets, promoting eco-friendly transportation, conserving water, making ethical consumer choices, advocating for change, and embracing minimalism, we can collectively create a more harmonious relationship with the planet.

Therefore, by adopting a sustainable lifestyle and aligning it with the principles of sustainable development, we can contribute towards conserving and preserving our natural environment, thus reducing our carbon, social and ecological footprint. These lifestyle changes can pave the way for a harmonious future where ecological balance and human well-being coexist ensuring a sustainable and equitable world for generations to come.

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