

Integration of ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) Principles with SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) #3 Wellness - Sustainable Lifestyle Business Model

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Abstract

Emergence of business usually goes along with new demands of customers, for example, design of SDG#3 wellness related services were on the rise in the past few years. Design thinking, SERVQUAL model and UNSDGs are applied into the design and management of new demands of professional services under technological advancement in a society. In order to understand the factors leading to SDG#3 wellness model in halo salt therapy, twenty-two articles published from 2006 to 2025 were analysed. It is found that sustainable lifestyle in habit with rock salt, natural environment creation, safe complementary therapy, degree of improvement in quality of life are the key elements for sustainable wellness business. An interview has been conducted with an expert on halo salt therapy practitioner to validate the factors on the creation of the natural environment – touchless and non-invasive. This paper is of practical value in terms of understanding the key elements for sustainable wellness business through re-visiting the ways of educating the community on professional services on halo salt therapy, making use of advanced technology, and exploring the ways of measuring the business and social impacts generated from wellness business models. This brings insights to industry practitioners, investors, educators and policy makers on the importance of tracing the trend of emerging industry for sustainable development.

Keywords: Sustainable Lifestyle, Halo Salt Therapy, SDG#3 Wellness.

Introduction

From Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs)

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) guidelines of ISO 26000 highlight that a socially responsible organization needs to be aware of seven dimensions in their operations of business: labor practices, consumer issues, fair operating practices, human rights, organizational governance, community involvement and development and the environment. The priority of the seven dimensions is subject to the strategic planning of the management and the expectations of their stakeholders. For example, the management of a banking organization may need to understand the expectations of their customers when designing and launching different kinds of financial products and services, may need to identify not only their responsibility but also that of their business partners in the supply chain, may need to think about the environmental issues affecting their operations, their customers and their suppliers, and may need to consider ethical issues in their decision-making process so as to balance the economic, social and environmental impacts of sustainability; and the seven dimensions of CSR. The ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (WG SR) has a high level of consensus in considering the needs of stakeholders in the guidelines of ISO 26000 for the benefit of the community.

According to Cajazeira (2008), the major principles for ISO 26000 are: accountability, transparency, ethical behavior, consideration for the stakeholders, legality, international standards, and human rights. It is the responsibility of organizations to consider the needs of the stakeholders in these seven aspects when designing work processes or executing business-related activities. In fact, ISO standard 26000 conveys a message that non-economic inputs and soft side of outcomes are the trend of quality management system (QMS). Building quality into products and services for continuous improvement has been mentioned for scholars in total quality management in the past. Today, people started to explore integrating CSR and sustainability related elements into organizational strategy for sustainable business. Deep (2007) mentioned that there was a growing number proponents of the ‘stakeholder’ or ‘social responsibility’ model of corporate governance holding that business was accountable to a broader populace who have a direct or

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indirect stake in the enterprise's activities. Although there is a lack of comprehensive evidence that CSR and sustainability lead to improving financial performance, awareness to environmental and social concerns from different stakeholders is needed for the progress of organizations.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) were endorsed by world leaders in September 2015. The 17 UNSDGs, a continuation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, provide a holistic framework for countries to promote good governance with peace for social impact, to protect the land, water, air for environmental impact, and to promote inclusive, equitable and lifelong quality education for social, economic and environmental impacts. However, the applicability and feasibility of 17 UNSDGs have become a hot topic recently. Among the 17 SDGs, Goal 3 wellness, Goal 4 quality of education with target 4.4 on substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship and Goal 5 gender equality is hardly to achieve without a framework to follow. This paper is to explore the ways to make sustainable business models in relation to halo salt therapy.

Circular Economy and Innovations

Based on the sharing of Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010) on design, it is an important but difficult element to measure. They mentioned that a product may stand out because of superior design and it is a critical part in value proposition. (p. 24). Beside design, the use of art and message expression are also part of value proposition for brand creation. "Accessibility – Making products and services are available to customers who previously lacked access to them is another way to create value. This can result from business model innovation, new technologies, or a combination of both." (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010, p. 25)

Under circular economy, we need to develop a new mindset of integrating design, art, message expression and accessibility via the use of technology for creating a brand. As an educator, author Yeung believes that art or content creation plays a crucial role in fostering self exploration, creativity, critical thinking, and empathy. By engaging with art and culture, materials and technology, we can develop a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world. Sala et. Al (2021) mentioned that "Circular economy (CE) describes a sustainable alternative approach to the current linear economy system". They also highlighted that "innovation is a crucial aspect for implementing CE business models". During the 9th Entrepreneurial Education Meeting that I attended, UNESCO Bangkok, October, 2023, Hangzhou, China, the key takeaways of the meeting are innovations in entrepreneurial education system with disruptions in pedagogy, including partnership and financing entrepreneurial activities of students, and curriculum design with attention to policy-makers and educators to narrow down the global unemployment of young people. Through the creation of the author's published papers on SDG#3 wellness, for example, Chinese calligraphy paintings, NFT collections on nature, co-creation, transformations, art Culture impact coalition, and environmental paintings with products to implement the project of "Diversity and Women Empowerment for Cultural Values, Social Inclusion, and Environmental Actions for SDG Acceleration", this paper is further to explore factors leading to sustainable business model of halo salt therapy.

Embedding Quality, Process Management, ISO 10015 into UNSDGs

"Quality" and "Continual improvement" have been discussed in different kinds of industries, especially for value-added industries as supply chain management. Among the four main functions of management – planning, organising, motivating and controlling, each process of management is supposed to add value in the supply chain to fulfil and excel customer needs. Lo et al. (2005) brought forward the concept of customer-perceived values that integrates customer expectations into the designing of supply chain strategies. They mentioned that value of customer perceptions has to be considered carefully during the development stage of supply chain strategies. The insightful contributions of them are to simplify the complex internal operations system into seven categories. They are: strategic planning process (often referred to as the plan supply chain), three operational planning processes (also often referred to as plan source, plan make, and plan deliver) and three operational processes of source, make and deliver. The importance of perceived customer values is clearly demonstrated in the management strategic process; and embedded into operational performance.

The systematic concept of “Plan, Do, Check, Act” of ISO 9000 standards can help organizations to make improvement. ISO standards are stepping stone for reaching the ultimate aim of UNSDG 4 quality of education in skill development. When applying the concepts of ISO in training design, vision, mission and strategic goals of an organization are very important for delivering quality training services and improving skill development of staff members. ISO 10015:1999 training guidelines can be considered as a holistic framework to cover all the core activities – availability of training materials, training aid and equipment, knowledgeable and accountable trainers, innovative training strategy and a user-friendly and caring training environment for students. As the quality management training guidelines ISO 10015 was born in 1999, the DLDDC (Yeung, 2014) was used to provide a new perspective to ensure training relevancy to achieve UNSDG4.4 with the consideration of the context of the case centre in this paper.

SDG#3 Wellness and Faith to Act – Development of Responsible/ Sustainable Leadership

Based on the research findings of Singso and Metta (2020), the influence of contemporary art from the West has played an important role in the cultural context of the Northeast, which is reflected in the work of Northeastern artists. Artists, such as Chokchai Takpho and Somyod Traiseni, employ the concepts of Buddhism and localism to create contemporary art works. “They mentioned that there are four common buddhist themes, which are the history of the Buddha, Buddhist doctrine, buddhist philosophy and Buddhist lifestyle.” (p. 1, Singso and Metta, 2020). Under the ecological crises and social innovations, the teachings of buddhism may provide a framework for transformative sustainable leadership development for young people who may act as a change agent with sustainable practices. For the sustainable lifestyle with transformative sustainable leadership, this is an interesting research area that this chapter is going to explore via implementation of SDG#3 wellness, SDG#4 quality of education, SDG#5 gender equality, and #9 innovations with creation of a sustainable lifestyle business model on halo salt therapy – touchless and non-invasive in a natural environment:

What are the factors leading to sustainable lifestyle business model of halo salt therapy services?

The Role of Faith in Leadership

In a buddhist context, faith (or *saddha*) is a belief in a higher power with trust in the potential for change and growth. This concept challenges leaders to cultivate faith in their vision and actions under transformations under post COVID-19 with economic downturn. The concepts of interconnectedness, mindfulness, compassion of Buddhism? Based on a published article of University of Virginia on Buddhism and Sustainability, “buddhism is great for constructing a community's sustainability framework as it already influences people's mindsets, moral principles, and day-to-day economic activity. Theravada Buddhism, the primary school practiced in Thailand, can contribute to developing a sustainability framework. One of the key philosophies in Theravada buddhism is that no entity is free from others and that all individuals are interconnected and interdependent. The idea of interconnectedness has helped lay the foundation for the recognition of linkages between the economy, society, and the environment.

Influenced by the idea of interconnectedness, system thinking is inherent in buddhism and therefore Thailand's sustainability framework. Thai society has a distinct worldview with three main elements undergirding its sustainability framework: moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity.” This chapter is focused on “Self -immunity”. The actions one commits can influence even invisible entities and cyclically return to that individual over time. This cyclical thinking is often referred to as Karma. In other words, one's overindulgence can lead to others' suffering and the suffering of oneself through a cyclical mechanism.” Based on the ISO audit system and audit thinking experiences in the past 20 years of author Yeung, the integration of system thinking and design thinking of transformations is possible for developing sustainable lifestyle business models, striving excellence in business organizations.

Methodology and Key Findings

The use of content analysis is a robust methodological approach in exploring the intricate relationships among business communication with textual and/ or non-verbal information, organizational behavior, and management. Communication serves as the foundational mechanism through which textual messages—both verbal and non-verbal—are exchanged to coordinate, integrate, control, and persuade. This dynamic interplay of messages is crucial, as the messages served as instruments to influence the minds of message

receivers and shape their perceptions of ideas. Understanding these processes, message encoding and decoding, organizational behavior can be understood, interpreted and directed towards achieving management goals.

In this research, content analysis is used as a means to systematically examine textual data, which can encompass a variety of materials such as textbooks, essays, and articles from newspapers. This analytical technique is especially valuable within the framework of grounded theory, allowing for the derivation of concepts that can lead to generalizations and predictions regarding future behaviors and trends.

The utility of content analysis lies in its capacity to facilitate an indirect examination of human behavior. By analyzing written content, researchers can glean insights into several dimensions of social interaction and organizational dynamics, including:

- Inferring underlying attitudes, values, and cultural paradigms that vary across different countries or organizations as published research papers may be analysed using scientific n’vivo softwre; and
- Identifying emerging trends in practices, policies, and communication strategies within an organization and/ or between an identified organization and stakeholder.

Thus, content analysis serves as a vital tool for uncovering the complexities of human interactions and organizational structures, ultimately contributing to a more profound understanding of the interconnected domains of business communication, organizational behavior, and management. By deploying this objective and scientific qualitative research method, researchers can make informed contributions to the existing body of knowledge, facilitating more effective organizational strategies and practices.

Step 1 – Qualitative Analysis

A research was performed to analyze factors possibly related to Halo Salt Therapy SDG#3 Wellness. Twenty-two articles published from 2006 to 2025 were discovered. By thoroughly delving into the articles, various relatable factors are identified to the topic, including SDG#3 Wellness Model in Halo Salt Therapy, Sustainable lifestyle in habit with rock salt, Natural Environment Creation, Safe complementary therapy, Degree of Improvement in Quality of Life, Humidity Control, Toxic removal, Integration of Technology for Engagement, and Sufficient education.

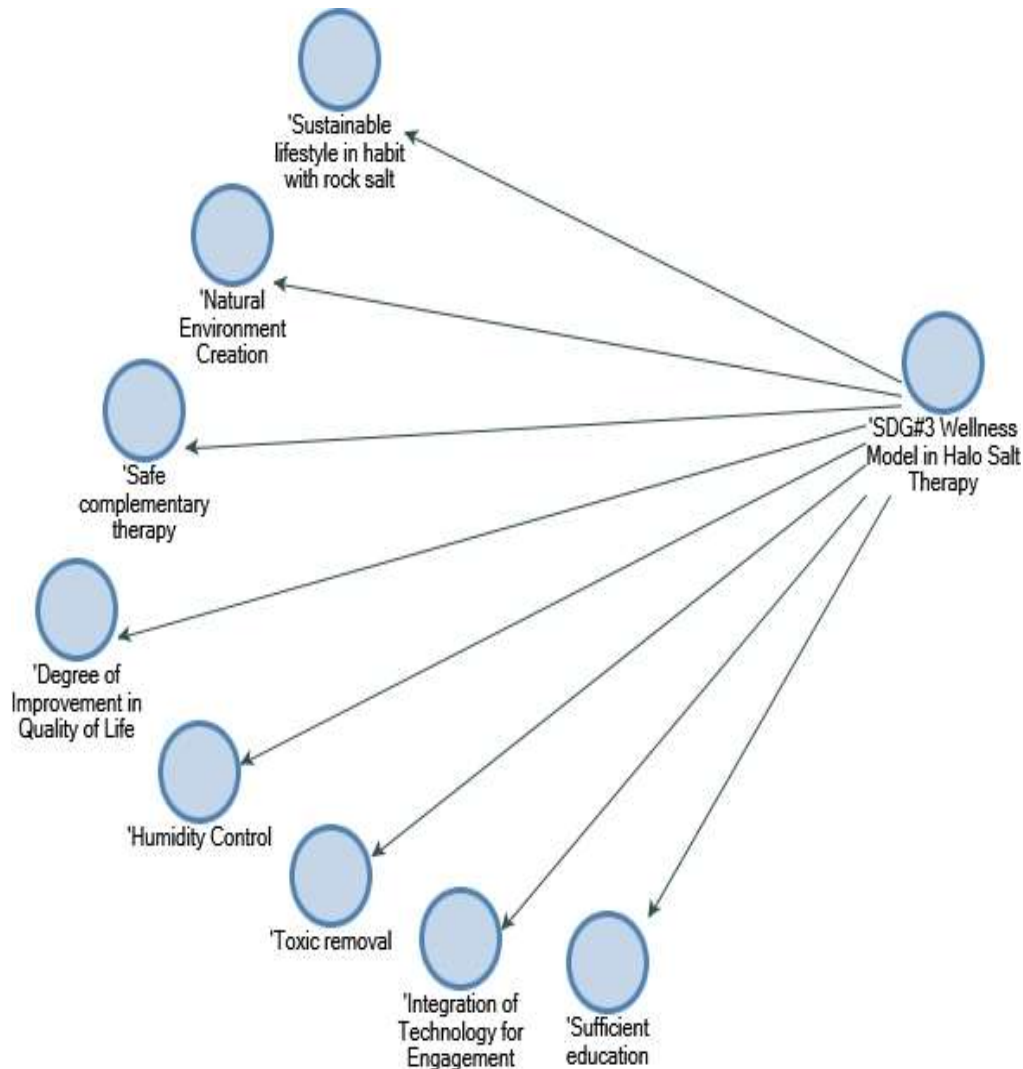
To further determine their relationship to the topic, by using Nvivo, a text search was performed for the mentioned keywords. The search result showed that a few of the factors such as SDG#3 Wellness Model in Halo Salt Therapy, Sustainable lifestyle in habit with rock salt, Natural Environment Creation, Safe complementary therapy, and Degree of Improvement in Quality of Life were cited relatively more frequently with 4766, 2599, 2073, 1824 and 1596 times correspondingly, while the rest were cited less frequently. (Table 1).

Table 1. Findings of the keywords search

Factors	Sources	References
'SDG#3 Wellness Model in Halo Salt Therapy	21	4766
'Sustainable lifestyle in habit with rock salt	21	2599
'Natural Environment Creation	21	2073
'Safe complementary therapy	21	1824
'Degree of Improvement in Quality of Life	21	1596
'Humidity Control	21	668
'Toxic removal	12	447
'Integration of Technology for Engagement	19	418
'Sufficient education	14	102

Looking deeper into the relationship among the factors, it was apparent that all the factors contribute to the topic of Halo Salt Therapy SDG#3 Wellness and SDG#3 Wellness Model in Halo Salt Therapy is the cause among the factors. Based on such findings, a graphical model was generated with the data. (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Model on the factors



Step 2 – Interview Results

In 2019, Shah mentioned that salt therapy is a form of complementary therapy, helping to absorb bacteria and other impurities responsible for many skin conditions. “Salt therapy helps in combating respiratory, lungs and skin related ailments....Apart from that, salt therapy gives indirect benefits, i.e. detoxifying body, promoting relaxation, mental and emotional calming and rejuvenation, balancing hormones and increasing energy levels, better sleep, reducing joint pain and muscle cramps” (p. 32) (Shah, P., 2019, A review of salt Therapy as a Complementary Treatment for Enhancing Respiratory Wellness and Skin Ailment, The Indian Practitioner, Vol. 72, No.5, May) This has also been mentioned by an article published in the SCMP on 16th Feb., 2025 that “Salt therapy, or halotherapy, is a wellness trend claimed to have many breathing benefits. Doctors weigh in on the scientific evidence “ 16th Feb. 2025 (<https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/health-wellness/article/3298530/how-salt-therapy-could-help-you-breathe-better-recover-coughs-and-relax>).

As the global landscape shifts towards sustainable lifestyle and social equity, responsible businesses need to adopt innovative models with elements of ESG and SDGs in the core business. On 23rd April, Syeeda Khatija, founder of Halo Therapy Concepts, shared her professionalism in halo therapy and halal audits, highlighting the importance of environmental elements in a sustainable business model with social values and transparency to foster a new business model that champions gender equality and innovation. The following information is shared by the interviewee, Syeeda Khatija, on the Halo therapy: Touchless and Non-Invasive Therapy.

Halotherapy is also known as salt therapy, is a holistic wellness practice that involves breathing in microscopic salt particles in a controlled environment. It is highly regarded for its therapeutic benefits and is completely **touchless** and **non-invasive**, making it a safe and relaxing option for people seeking natural health solutions.

How Halotherapy Works

Halotherapy sessions typically occur in a "salt room" or "salt cave," where finely ground pharmaceutical-grade salt is dispersed into the air using a specialized halogenerator. The salt particles are inhaled into the respiratory system, while some settle on the skin, offering dual therapeutic effects.

Benefits of Halotherapy

Respiratory Health

Salt particles have natural anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties, which can help alleviate symptoms of asthma, bronchitis, sinusitis, and allergies.

Halotherapy may also improve lung function and reduce mucus buildup, making it easier to breathe.

Skin Health

The salt's natural antibacterial effects can benefit individuals with skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis, and acne.

It helps to cleanse and detoxify the skin, promoting a healthier appearance.

Stress Reduction

The calming environment of a salt room—often designed with soothing lights and peaceful ambiance—can help reduce stress and promote relaxation.

Breathing in salt particles is believed to improve mood and mental clarity.

Non-Invasive and Touchless

Unlike other therapies, halotherapy requires no physical contact or invasive procedures.

Participants simply sit, relax, and breathe naturally, making it suitable for people of all ages and physical conditions.

The interviewee has mentioned that Halotherapy can be applied in the following ways for sustainable lifestyle and UNSDG#3 wellness:

- 1) Wellness Centers: Popular in spas and wellness facilities for stress relief and relaxation.
- 2) Respiratory Clinics: Used as a complementary therapy for respiratory conditions.
- 3) Skin Clinics: Beneficial for individuals seeking natural solutions for skin-related concerns.

The interviewee further pointed out that halotherapy is one of the options for individuals, seeking a natural, drug-free, and comfortable way to improve their respiratory health, skin condition, or overall well-being. "Its **touchless** and **non-invasive** nature makes it particularly appealing in today's world, where minimizing physical contact is often a priority," said Syeeda Khatija.

New Sustainable Lifestyle Business Model Framework

In fact, the interviewee, Syeeda has integrated ESG principles with SDG 5 gender equality in her wellness businesses with salt therapy concepts to support gender equality. This can be implemented through:

1. Gender-Responsive Policies: Establish internal policies that promote gender equality in the workplace and community outreach programs.
2. Community Engagement: Partner with local organizations to promote awareness of women's health and wellness issues, enabling access to services like halo therapy.
3. Innovation in Services: Introduce nine innovations, such as:
 - Online therapy platforms specifically designed for women.
 - Mentorship programs for female practitioners in the wellness sector.
 - Tailored wellness packages that address specific concerns (e.g., maternity, mental health).
 - Workshops on self-care and mental well-being.
 - Community support groups for women, fostering connection and support.
 - Developing partnerships with women-led businesses for service offerings.
 - Offering mobile services that bring treatment to underserved areas.
 - Leveraging technology for increased access to therapy and wellness services.

Conclusion, Recommendation and Discussion

Application of Design Thinking and SERVQUAL into Sustainable Lifestyle related Business

Design thinking is a human-centered approach to innovation that focuses on understanding users' needs, redefining problems, and creating innovative solutions. It comprises five stages: Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test.

Design Thinking with ESG and SDGs

- Empathize: Understanding the challenges faced by women in accessing therapeutic and wellness services can help businesses tailor their offerings to be more inclusive. For instance, through interviews and focus groups, insights can be gathered regarding barriers to access of halo salt therapy professional services, such as develop a pool of subject expertise for delivery the services for the needy.
- Define: Clearly articulate the problem — for instance, emotion and skin related issues after COVID-19 may be a research area for halo salt therapy in a wellness service centre.
- Ideate: Brainstorm innovative solutions with blockchain for traceability with membership for Wellness Centers, Respiratory Clinics, and Skin Clinics.
- Prototype: Develop low-cost, testable versions of new services via the use of AI of standardised procedures.
- Test: Gather feedback from users to refine the service and enhance its value of hal salt therapy services to meet specific needs and expectations.

SERVQUAL with Service Quality Management

The SERVQUAL model measures service quality across five dimensions: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy. This framework is essential for understanding customer perceptions and enhancing service delivery.

Enhancing Gender Equality through SERVQUAL

- Tangibles: Design a relevant salt room with salt related materials in halo therapy

- Reliability: Maintain consistency in the delivery of salt therapy tailor-made services, ensuring clients' needs are addressing.
- Responsiveness: Address the concerns of clients in a timely manner with humanistic care and flexibility in the therapy process support.
- Assurance: Build trust with clients to ensure the salt therapy concepts are applied in a supportive environment.
- Empathy: Develop a culture that prioritizes understanding and addressing the unique needs of clients on wellness services.

In a rapidly changing world, the need for businesses to adopt innovative models that embrace gender equality is crucial. By leveraging design thinking and the SERVQUAL model, organizations can create services that not only meet the needs of women but also drive sustainability and social change. By aligning with ESG principles and SDG 5, businesses can ensure that their innovations foster a more equitable society while also thriving economically.

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