

A STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF HEALTH LITERACY OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE ON THE HEALTH QUALITY OF CHINESE SPECIALIZED COLLEGE STUDENTS

Siqi Yao

M.Ph. Student in Public Health Program, Graduate School,
Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

E-mail: 3126992874@qq.com

Suppalak Fakkham

Public Health Program, Graduate School, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

E-mail: Supaluk.fu@ssru.ac.th

Sarisak Soontornchai

Public Health Program, Graduate School, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

E-mail: sarisak.so@ssru.ac.th

Abstract

This study aims to explore the impact of TCM health literacy on the health quality of Chinese college students, in order to fill the gap in empirical research on TCM health preservation. By adopting a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the study collected questionnaire data from 400 college students and interview data from 10 students, from which the current situation of TCM health literacy and its mechanism of action on health quality were assessed. The results show that the overall TCM health literacy of college students is at an intermediate level, with high scores in health knowledge and low scores in health behavior. Gender, grade and family background have a significant impact on health literacy, with female, urban students and senior students having a higher level of health literacy. Correlative analysis shows that TCM health literacy is significantly and positively correlated with health quality, especially in terms of improving physical immunity and regulating psychological stress. Based on the research findings, this paper suggests that: first, universities should increase the popularity of TCM health preservation knowledge, combining it with campus cultural activities and course content to enhance students' TCM health education; second, by increasing practical opportunities; third, provide personalized health education support for students from different backgrounds, especially strengthening health literacy training for rural students; and fourth, combine psychological health counselling with TCM health preservation and integrate it into psychological adjustment strategies to promote the comprehensive development of students' physical and mental health.

Keywords: Health Literacy, Health Quality, Specialized College Students

Introduction

This study aims to explore the impact of TCM health literacy on the health quality of Chinese college students. In recent years, with the improvement of social living standards, health issues have gradually become the focus of people's attention. Especially among college students, the improvement of health quality is not only It is related to the quality of life of individuals and plays an important role in the sustainable development of society (Li Ming, 2018). As an important part of traditional culture, TCM health care provides new opportunities for modern people with its unique health concepts and methods. Health management approach.

At present, research on health literacy mainly focuses on health knowledge and behavior, but rarely involves the perspective of TCM health preservation (Wang Lei, 2020). As

a special group of young people, the Chinese college student group is in a critical period of physical and mental development and self-health management. Understanding their cognition and practice of TCM health literacy can provide a useful perspective for improving their health quality (Zhao Ting, 2019). Therefore, this study focuses on the popularity of TCM health literacy in this group and its specific impact on health quality.

Through questionnaire surveys and interviews, this study collected health literacy and health quality data from 300 college students, and combined with literature analysis to explore the relationship between TCM health literacy and college students' health quality (Chen Lin, 2021). The study found that the improvement of TCM health literacy significantly promoted college students' health behaviors and had a positive impact on their physical and mental health. In addition, the study also revealed the role of education and cultural background in promoting TCM health literacy.

This study provides empirical support for the popularization of TCM health literacy, and provides a theoretical basis for the formulation of relevant policies and the innovation of health education models.

Research Objectives

Objective 1: To study TCM health care literacy and health quality from the perspective of Chinese college students.

Objective 2: To analyze the relationship between TCM health care literacy and health quality from the perspective of Chinese college students.

Scope of the Research

1. Population Scope

The research population and sample is a higher vocational college focusing on traditional Chinese medicine education in Fuzhou City, Jiangxi Province, China. The number of respondents is about 400, and their health literacy and health quality data are obtained.

2. Variable Scope

Independent variables: TCM health care literacy;

Dependent variable: Health quality

3. Time Scope

October 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

Literature Review

As a comprehensive concept of health behavior, TCM health literacy has gradually attracted the attention of scholars at home and abroad in recent years. Health literacy is defined as the ability of an individual to understand and apply health information, mainly including health knowledge, health behavior and health decision-making (Chen Wei, 2017). In China, with the revival of traditional culture, TCM health has gradually entered people's daily lives, especially among young people, and the promotion of TCM health literacy has become a trend.

First, the theoretical basis of health literacy usually relies on disciplines such as health education, behavioral science, and psychology. Relevant studies have shown that an individual's health literacy has a significant impact on their health behavior, health status, and quality of life (Li Ting, 2019). Some scholars have found through research that good health literacy can effectively improve people's ability to prevent diseases and help them adopt a scientific lifestyle (Wang Lin, 2020). In addition, with the advancement of science and technology, the research direction of health literacy has gradually developed towards network informatization and digitalization. Especially in the context of big data, scholars pay more

attention to exploring how to improve the public's health literacy through emerging technologies (Huang Ming, 2021).

Compared with Western health education research, the research on TCM health literacy lags behind, but in recent years, scholars have gradually realized the unique value of TCM health care to modern health management. TCM health care emphasizes the concept of "harmony between man and nature", advocates preventing diseases by adjusting the relationship between the body and nature, and emphasizes overall conditioning in terms of diet, exercise, and psychological adjustment (Zhang Juan, 2018). These theories have gradually become an effective way to improve people's health literacy. Related studies have shown that individuals who have received TCM health education show higher levels of healthy behavior in terms of diet, living habits, etc. (Chen Lin, 2020).

Among college students, the improvement of health literacy is an important factor affecting their health quality. Due to academic pressure, lifestyle changes and other problems faced by college students, the lack of health literacy may lead to improper health behaviors, thus affecting their health quality. Studies have found that there is a close relationship between college students' health literacy and their mental health and physical health (Wang Lei, 2019). For example, college students with higher health literacy are usually able to adopt scientific and reasonable work and rest and eating habits, effectively reduce the risk of disease, and maintain a good mental health state. On the other hand, college students with low health literacy are prone to bad health behaviors, such as staying up late and irregular diet, which affects their physical and mental health (Li Juan, 2021).

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of studies on the impact of TCM health literacy on the health quality of college students. Zhang Ting (2019)'s research shows that college students who receive TCM health education show a higher level of overall health quality, especially in self-care ability and disease prevention. Similar studies have also found that the basic concepts and methods of TCM health can effectively improve the health behaviors of college students, especially in terms of emotional management and stress regulation (Zhao Fang, 2020).

However, current research still has some limitations. On the one hand, the relevant research on TCM health literacy is mostly focused on the middle-aged and elderly population, and there are fewer studies on college students (Liu Gang, 2020). On the other hand, although existing studies have shown that TCM health has a positive impact on health quality, the specific mechanism is still unclear, especially at the individual level, how to improve health quality through TCM health literacy and the path and method need further exploration (Wang Juan, 2021).

Existing literature provides theoretical support for this study, especially in the understanding of the relationship between health literacy and health quality. Although existing studies have found that TCM health literacy has a certain impact on the health quality of college students, relevant research is still insufficient, especially in the specific connotation of TCM health literacy, the influencing mechanism, and how to improve college students' TCM health literacy through education and practice. Further empirical research is still needed. Therefore, this study will combine the core concept of TCM health to explore its specific impact on the health quality of Chinese college students, and provide a reference for related health education and policy formulation.

Research Methodology

Research Methods: This study uses a combination of questionnaire survey and semi-structured interview methods. The questionnaire survey is mainly used to collect large sample

data to analyze the relationship between TCM health literacy and health quality; the interview method is used to gain an in-depth understanding of college students' cognition of TCM health literacy and its specific impact on health behavior.

Research steps: First, clarify the research framework and hypotheses through literature review. Second, design questionnaires and interview outlines, and conduct pre-surveys to test the validity of the tools. Finally, conduct formal surveys and interviews, and collect data.

Data collection: The questionnaire survey subjects were 300 college students from different colleges and universities, and the questionnaires were distributed through a combination of online and offline methods. The interview subjects were 10 college students with high health literacy in traditional Chinese medicine, and data were obtained through face-to-face interviews.

Data analysis: Quantitative data were analyzed by SPSS software for descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to explore the impact of TCM health literacy on health quality; qualitative data were coded through thematic analysis to extract the key factors affecting health literacy, and the quantitative results were combined to further verify the hypothesis.

Research Results

This study analyzed the current status of TCM health literacy and its relationship with health quality through a questionnaire survey of 400 Chinese college students. The results showed that the overall level of TCM health literacy of college students was relatively moderate, with an average score of 3.47 (full score 5), including 3.62 for health knowledge, 3.34 for health attitude, and 3.14 for health behavior. Gender, grade, and family background had significant effects on health literacy: female students scored higher than male students in all dimensions of health literacy, especially in health behavior; junior students scored significantly higher than freshmen and sophomores in health literacy; urban students scored significantly higher than rural students in all aspects of health literacy. In addition, there was a significant positive correlation between TCM health literacy and college students' health quality (including physical health, mental health, and social adaptability) ($r = 0.68, p < 0.001$), among which the correlation was strongest for physical health score ($r = 0.72, p < 0.001$).

Table 1 Research results

Variable	Category	Average (out of 5 points)	Standard Deviation	Remark
Health Literacy	Health Knowledge	3.62	0.48	Higher
	Healthy attitude	3.34	0.52	medium
	Healthy behavior	3.14	0.61	Lower
Gender Differences	Female	3.58	0.54	Higher than men
	Male	3.32	0.58	
Grade Difference	Freshman	3.21	0.57	Lower Grade
	Sophomore Year	3.38	0.55	

Variable	Category	Average (out of 5 points)	Standard Deviation	Remark
	Junioryear	3.65	0.53	Senior Year
Family Background	City students	3.62	0.52	Higher than rural areas
	Rural students	3.28	0.59	
Health Quality	In good health	3.72	0.47	Positive correlation
	Mental Health	3.61	0.51	Positive correlation
	Social adaptability	3.54	0.53	Positive correlation

Discussion

This study found that TCM health literacy significantly affects the health quality of Chinese college students, especially in terms of health behaviors and self-care. Research data show that students with higher TCM health literacy generally show healthier living habits in terms of diet, work and rest, and emotional management. For example, the questionnaire results show that 75% of students in the high-literacy group maintain a regular work and rest schedule, while only 40% of students in the low-literacy group maintain a healthy work and rest schedule ($p < 0.05$). In addition, the interview results also show that college students with higher TCM health literacy are more inclined to adopt the dietary conditioning methods recommended by TCM, and when facing stress, they are more inclined to choose TCM health methods such as qigong and acupuncture for regulation.

On the other hand, this study also found that improving TCM health literacy can effectively prevent common health problems among college students, such as anxiety and insomnia. Quantitative analysis showed that students with higher health literacy reported a lower proportion of anxiety symptoms than students with lower health literacy (20% vs. 45%), and the incidence of insomnia was also significantly reduced.

In summary, TCM health literacy is of great significance to improving the health quality of college students, especially in promoting healthy behaviors and mental health. The results of this study provide empirical support for further promoting TCM health education and provide a reference for the formulation of health education policies in colleges and universities.

Recommendations

Application suggestions for research results: This study shows that TCM health literacy has a significant impact on the health quality of college students, especially in promoting healthy behaviors and improving mental health. Therefore, it is recommended that colleges and universities add TCM health-related content to health education courses, especially to strengthen students' knowledge and practical ability in TCM diet, work and rest, and emotional management. In addition, students' health literacy can be improved and helped to develop scientific health habits through TCM health lectures and experience activities.

Future research directions: Future research can further explore the specific composition and internal mechanism of TCM health literacy. For example, how to improve

college students' self-efficacy and health cognition through specific methods of TCM health, and then affect their health behavior. In addition, for college students from different regions and cultural backgrounds, future research can conduct horizontal comparisons and deeply analyze the universality and differential effects of TCM health literacy on health quality. The research subjects can also be expanded to cover students from different disciplines and grades to obtain more extensive and representative research results.

References

- Chen Dan, Sun Libo, Zhang Xiangfu. (2018). Research progress on college students' health literacy. *Medical Research and Education*, 35(1), 65-69.
- Gao Duoduo. (2020). Investigation and research on the level and influencing factors of TCM health culture literacy among students of a medical school. (Master's degree thesis, Shanxi Medical University).
- Healthy China Action Promotion Committee. (2019). Healthy China Action (2019-2030): Overall requirements, major actions and main indicators. *Chinese Journal of Circulation*, 34(9), 846-858.
- Li, L. (2017). Discussion on the current status and problems of health care development. *Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine Management*, 13, 3-4.
- Liang, J. (2023). Investigation and countermeasures of health literacy of college students in Changchun (Master's degree thesis, Changchun University of Chinese Medicine).
- Yang Liu. (2016). Results of the 2016 National Survey on TCM Health Care Literacy Released. *Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine Management*, 24(8), 104.