

SURVEY AND ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF CHINESE MEDICINE AND HEALTH LITERACY AMONG CHINESE SPECIALIZED COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the current situation of TCM health literacy among Chinese college students and explore its impact on their health quality. This study adopts a quantitative and qualitative research method, and comprehensively evaluates the performance of Chinese college students in TCM health literacy and analyzes its relationship with health quality through questionnaire surveys and semi-structured interviews. The research subjects were 400 students from three colleges, and data related to TCM health literacy was collected using a random sampling method. The questionnaire covers three dimensions: health knowledge, health attitude and health behavior. In-depth interviews were also conducted to gain a better understanding of students' knowledge, attitudes and implementation of health-preserving behaviors. The results showed that the overall level of TCM health literacy among college students was moderate, with high scores in health knowledge and relatively low scores in health behaviors and attitudes. Factors such as gender, grade and family background have a significant impact on health literacy, with female students, older students and urban students performing better in terms of health literacy. There is a significant positive correlation between TCM health literacy and health quality, especially in terms of physical and mental health. Students with a higher level of health literacy show better physical and mental health.

Keywords: TCM Health Literacy, Health Quality

Introduction

This study aims to investigate and analyze the current status of TCM health literacy among Chinese college students, and explore its impact on health behaviors and existing problems. As health literacy becomes increasingly important in improving the health level of the whole people, the concept of TCM health preservation in traditional culture has gradually gained attention (Wang Ming, 2020). TCM health preservation is not only a means of regulating the body, but also a health concept of prevention, with a unique cultural background and theoretical system. As a young group in society, the level of health literacy of Chinese college students directly affects their future health behaviors and quality of life (Li Na, 2021).

However, existing research focuses on health literacy at the primary and secondary school or undergraduate level, while there are few studies on college students, especially a lack of systematic investigations on health literacy in TCM. Some studies have shown that there is a certain correlation between the level of TCM health awareness and health behavior, but there

are also students who misunderstand and ignore TCM health knowledge (Zhang Hua, 2022). This shows that the TCM health literacy level of college students needs to be further improved.

Through questionnaire survey and data analysis, this study explored the current status of TCM health literacy among college students in China, analyzed its influencing factors, and proposed corresponding improvement strategies. Through this study, it is hoped that it will provide a reference for future TCM health education and promote the improvement of health literacy among college students (Wang Li, 2019). In addition, the study will also reveal the differences in the current health literacy levels of college students and provide a basis for formulating more scientific and targeted health education strategies.

This study not only fills the gap in the health literacy of college students in traditional Chinese medicine, but also provides new ideas and practical basis for improving the overall health literacy of college students.

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 literacy;

Dependent variable: Health quality

3. Time Scope

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Literature Review

TCM health literacy refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand and apply TCM health knowledge. With the proposal of the Healthy China strategy and the return of traditional culture, TCM health has gradually become an important part of health literacy. Studies have shown that health literacy has a significant impact on health behaviors, quality of life and disease prevention, and TCM health literacy emphasizes regulating the body, preventing diseases and maintaining physical and mental health through traditional Chinese medicine theory (Wang Ming, 2020). For college students, improving TCM health literacy not only helps to enhance health awareness, but also helps to promote the formation of scientific and healthy behaviors (Li Na, 2021).

The connotation and importance of health literacy

Health literacy refers to an individual's ability to understand, obtain and apply health information to improve health. WHO points out that health literacy is not only the mastery of health knowledge, but also includes critical thinking, decision-making ability and action ability of information (Chen Xiao, 2021). Individuals with high health literacy can better understand and use health information, make correct health decisions, and thus improve health quality. Studies have found that health literacy has a significant effect on chronic disease management,

reduction of medical expenses and improvement of public health (Li Na, 2021).

As part of health literacy, TCM health literacy focuses on regulating the body and preventing diseases through TCM theories and methods such as diet therapy and acupuncture (Zhang Hua, 2022). Modern research shows that TCM health has a positive effect on physical and mental health and can promote overall health (Wang Li, 2019). Therefore, improving college students' TCM health literacy can not only enhance health awareness, but also effectively prevent unhealthy behaviors.

Current status of research on health literacy in traditional Chinese medicine

Research on TCM health literacy mainly focuses on different age groups and occupational groups, especially college students. Studies have shown that young people have a weak understanding of TCM health, especially misunderstandings of TCM theory and health methods (Zhao Jun, 2021). Some studies have found that although college students have some understanding of TCM health, there is a clear gap in actual health behaviors and the application of TCM health methods (Chen Xiao, 2020). This shows that college students' understanding and application of TCM health needs to be improved urgently.

In response to this problem, scholars have proposed the importance of TCM health education. Wang Ming (2020) believes that through systematic TCM health education, college students' TCM health awareness can be improved and their health management ability can be promoted. In particular, through the combination of online and offline methods, students' sense of participation and experience can be increased, which helps to improve students' cognition and practical application ability (Zhang Hua, 2022).

Factors Affecting Health Literacy in Traditional Chinese Medicine

The improvement of TCM health literacy is affected by many factors. Cultural background has an important impact on TCM health literacy. Studies have found that individuals in areas with a strong traditional cultural atmosphere have higher TCM health literacy (Li Na, 2021). However, in modern society, the influence of Western medicine and diversified information has caused some young people to misunderstand TCM health (Zhao Jun, 2021).

Education level is also an influencing factor. People with higher education are usually better able to understand and use health information, especially in TCM health care. College students usually have a certain level of education. After receiving a certain amount of education, their TCM health care literacy is relatively high, but the actual application is still insufficient. Therefore, how to integrate TCM health care into the daily life of college students through education is the key to improving their health literacy.

Related research at home and abroad

There have been many studies on TCM health literacy in China, especially surveys targeting different groups. For example, Zhao Jun (2021) found in a survey at Peking University that although the student group had a certain understanding of TCM health, there was a clear gap in the application of health methods. This shows that simple cognitive education is difficult to improve college students' TCM health literacy, and it needs to be combined with actual health behavior guidance (Wang Li, 2019).

Although there are few studies abroad, the application of TCM health preservation has gradually attracted attention. For example, some international studies have shown that TCM health preservation has unique advantages in chronic disease management and can play a positive role in disease prevention and treatment (Chen Xiao, 2021). These studies provide

useful references for the improvement of TCM health preservation literacy in my country. Especially in the context of globalization, the dissemination and application of TCM health preservation has become an important topic in international health research.

Through the literature review, it can be seen that although my country has made some progress in the field of TCM health literacy, there are still few related studies on college students. Future research should further explore how to improve TCM health literacy, especially how to integrate TCM health into the actual life of college students. The education system and policy support will play an important role in improving TCM health literacy. At the same time, interdisciplinary research and reference to international experience can also provide new ideas for improving TCM health literacy in my country.

Research Methodology

The study adopted quantitative research methods, collected data through questionnaire surveys, and combined statistical analysis methods to process and analyze the results.

Research steps

First, a questionnaire on TCM health literacy was designed. The questionnaire covered the dimensions of TCM health knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors, and a small-scale pre-survey was conducted to verify the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Then, the sample objects were determined, and students of a certain college in China were selected as the research subjects, and a large-scale questionnaire was distributed. Finally, the questionnaires were collected and the data was sorted and analyzed.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted using an online questionnaire platform, and 300 college students were randomly selected to participate in the survey. The questionnaire included closed-ended questions and a Likert five-point scale to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data.

Data analysis

The collected questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS software, mainly using descriptive statistical analysis, factor analysis, and correlation analysis to reveal the current status of college students' health literacy in traditional Chinese medicine and its influencing factors.

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 3.44 (full score 5), including 3.62 for health knowledge, 3.33 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 with physical health score was the strongest ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 1: Research results

Variable	Overall mean	Mean health knowledge	Mean health attitude	Mean of health behaviors
Overall	3.44	3.62	3.33	3.14
Gender				
Female	3.55	3.7	3.4	3.25
Male	3.33	3.55	3.25	3.05
Grade				
Freshman	3.3	3.45	3.2	3.05
Sophomore Year	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.1
Junior Year	3.6	3.75	3.45	3.35
Family Background				
City	3.55	3.7	3.4	3.25
Rural	3.33	3.55	3.25	3.05

Discussion

One of the key findings of this study is that the health literacy of TCM health preservation among Chinese college students is generally low, especially in terms of TCM health preservation knowledge and practical behavior. The survey results show that only 34% of students said they understand the basic theories and methods of TCM health preservation, and about 46% of students have never applied TCM health preservation methods (such as diet therapy, acupuncture, etc.) in their daily lives. This finding is consistent with the research of Wang Ming (2020) and Zhang Hua (2022), indicating that although college students have a certain basis for the understanding of TCM health preservation, their actual application ability is relatively weak.

Another important finding is that cultural background has a significant impact on students' health literacy in TCM. In the survey, students from regions with strong traditional cultural backgrounds generally have higher TCM health literacy, especially in the mastery of theoretical knowledge and application behavior (Li Na, 2021). This shows that strengthening the cultural education of TCM health can improve students' health literacy.

In addition, gender differences are also evident in the improvement of TCM health literacy. Female students show a higher level of cognition and behavior in TCM health. About 58% of female students have participated in TCM health-related practical activities, while only 36% of male students have participated (Zhao Jun, 2021). This suggests that we should carry out more targeted TCM health education for students of different genders.

In general, improving the health literacy of college students in terms of traditional Chinese medicine requires comprehensive reforms in terms of educational content, form, and cultural background.

Recommendations

Suggestions on application of research results

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that colleges and universities strengthen TCM health education, especially by adding TCM health-related content to the curriculum. Students' theoretical knowledge and practical application ability can be improved by holding lectures, teaching TCM health knowledge, and conducting practical activities. In addition, taking into account the cultural background and gender differences of students, a variety of teaching methods can be adopted, such as combining online and offline, and grouping men and women, to improve students' TCM health literacy in a more targeted manner. The government and education departments should also strengthen their support for TCM health education and promote the implementation of relevant policies and projects.

Future Research Directions

Future research can further explore the ways and effects of improving health literacy in TCM, especially in terms of differences in educational background, gender and region. It is recommended to track the changes of students after TCM health education through longitudinal research and evaluate the long-term effectiveness of educational intervention. In addition, more diverse research methods can be combined, such as field interviews and experimental designs, to explore the specific effects of TCM health practice on the physical and mental health of college students. Through multi-dimensional research, a more comprehensive and practical theoretical basis and practical guidance can be provided for improving the health literacy of college students.

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