



Exploring the Primary Models and Their Efficacy of Health Education in Universities in the Zhanjiang Area During the Post-COVID-19 Era

Junchu He^{1,2*}, Zhuofei Jiang³, Yanyan Yang¹, Jiacheng Yuan¹, Daniel Wong Barrenechea²

¹ Guangdong Medical University, Zhanjiang City, Guangdong Province, China

^{2*} Center for International Education, Philippine Christian University, Manila, Metro Manila, Philippine

³ Dongguan Maternal and Child Health Care Hospital, Dongguan City, Guangdong Province, China

*Corresponding email: junchuhe@gdmu.edu.cn

Abstract: Objective Exploring the main models and educational effects of health education in undergraduate institutions in the post pandemic era in Zhanjiang region. **Methods** Randomly select second year students from two universities in Zhanjiang area to conduct a survey on health education models, and collect 2000 valid questionnaires; Randomly select 600 research subjects, divide them into three groups, and carry out training on three health education modes. Statistical analysis will be conducted on the awareness of infectious diseases (taking syphilis as an example) before and after the training. **Results** The three most popular models are "WeChat official account push", "set up stalls to distribute publicity materials" and "popular science lectures on infectious disease prevention and control". There was no statistically significant difference ($P>0.05$) in the number of syphilis awareness among colleges and gender groups. Prior to training, statistical knowledge was obtained, and there was no statistically significant difference ($P>0.05$), indicating that the three groups had the same level of knowledge; There were statistically significant differences ($P<0.05$) between the pre - and post training groups, indicating that all three educational models were effective. After training, there was a statistically significant difference between the groups ($P<0.05$), indicating that the three educational models had inconsistent effects; Compared with the other two groups, the "WeChat official account push" group had a statistically significant difference ($P<0.05$), indicating that the "WeChat official account push" model had the best effect; Compared with the other two groups, there was no statistically significant difference ($P>0.05$), indicating that the educational effects of the two modes were comparable. **Conclusion** In the post epidemic era in Zhanjiang, the most popular health education models include WeChat official account push, setting up booths to distribute publicity materials and popular science lectures on infectious disease prevention and control; The educational effect of WeChat official account push is the best, which is worth promoting vigorously; At the same time, we should also leverage the other two models to continuously carry out health education for college students and improve their level of infectious disease prevention and control.

Key words: zhanjiang area, the Post-COVID-19 Era, higher education institutions, health education

Introduction

As reported, the "COVID-19 pandemic" [1] (abbreviated as "the pandemic") emerged in December 2019 and subsequently evolved into a global outbreak, causing widespread devastation. Characterized by rapid transmission, frequent mutation, and high virulence, the SARS-CoV-2 virus has posed a serious threat to global public health and socioeconomic stability, generating significant (panic). Universities, characterized by high population density and concentrated living environments, attract considerable societal attention. Any outbreak of infectious disease within these settings can trigger public health emergencies with severe consequences [2]. In the post-COVID-19 era (hereinafter referred to as the "post-pandemic era"), We should attach great importance to health education on infectious diseases, adjust the methods and approaches of health education in a timely manner, and actively adopt efficient models of health education and training; Adopting a student-centered approach, identifying the most preferred health education modalities for infectious diseases, enhancing their co-ntemporary relevance and appeal, and delivering precise and efficient knowledge on infect-ion prevention are crucial strategies. These efforts aim to raise students' prevention aware-ness, improve their knowledge levels, fortify the first line of defense for health, and effectively safeguard their physical well-being and safety [3]. In the post pandemic era, universities in Zhanjiang have not yet conducted research on infectious disease health education models, and universities urgently need to carry out comprehensive health education and training work. Based on this, This study randomly selected second year undergraduate students in Zhanjiang area as research subjects, taking syphilis prevention and control education as an example. The three most popular health education models were used to train the research subjects, and their awareness was statistically analyzed. The training effects of the three health education models were analyzed. The research report is as follows.

1. Materials and Methods

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1.1 General Information A survey was conducted anonymously using Wenjuanxing software on the "Postepidemic Health Education Model Questionnaire" among second year students enrolled in two undergraduate colleges in Zhanjiang in the second half of 2023. A total of 2000 valid questionnaires were received (1014 from A University and 986 from B University). With informed consent, 300 second year students were randomly selected from each of A and B universities as the research subjects; There are 294 boys and 306 girls, totaling 600 people, with an average age of 19 ± 0.5 years. To ensure that there were no statistically significant differences in demographic factors among the research subjects, they were randomly divided into three groups of 200 students each, based on their university and gender. Inclusion criteria comprised: sophomore students who voluntarily agreed to participate in the survey, demonstrated the ability to complete questionnaires truthfully and conscientiously, and committed to full participation in the entire health education program. Exclusion criteria included: a history of sexually transmitted infections (e.g., syphilis), prior participation in similar health education research, refusal to complete the questionnaire, or inability to participate fully in the health education activities.

In order to reduce the interference of existing infectious disease prevention and control knowledge of the research subjects on the training effectiveness of the health education model, which leads to inaccurate statistical analysis, the training effectiveness of the health education model in this study adopts the sexually transmitted disease syphilis as an example. The three health education models discussed in this project all focus on core prevention knowledge of syphilis. The frequency of training for the three models is once every two weeks, and the duration of science popularization lectures and distribution of promotional materials at stalls is 1.5 hours per session.

1.2 Methods

The survey was conducted using a hybrid online and offline approach. The "Questionnaire on Health Education Models in the Post-Pandemic Era" contained 8 options as multiple-choice items (with respondents limited to selecting exactly 3), administered via the Questionnaire Star platform. The "Syphilis Prevention Knowledge Awareness Questionnaire" comprised 8 questions, with correct responses to at least 6 items defining adequate awareness; this questionnaire was administered offline. Both instruments collected data on the respondent's institution, gender, age, and academic year. All survey procedures and protocols were standardized to ensure data quality.

1.3 Observation Indicators

The number of participants selecting each health education modality; The awareness rate of syphilis among the study participants before and after the health education intervention.

1.4 Statistical Analysis

Data analysis was performed using SPSS 22.0. Continuous data were expressed as mean $\pm$ standard deviation ($\bar{x} \pm s$) and compared using the t-test. Categorical data were presented as rates (%) and analyzed by the chi-square (χ^2) test. A two-sided P-value of < 0.05 was considered statistically significant for all tests.

2 Results

2.1 Distribution of Participant Preferences for Health Education Modalities in the Post-Pandemic Era

Survey participants exhibited varying preferences for health education modalities. The most favored modality was "WeChat public account pushes," selected by 1,848 individuals, accounting for 92.40% of respondents. This was followed by "distribution of promotional materials at booth stations," chosen by 1,610 participants (80.50%), and "science popularization lectures on infectious disease prevention and control," selected by 1,590 individuals (79.50%), ranking third. Detailed data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Statistics on the Demand for Health Education Modalities in the Post-Pandemic Era (n=2000)

Preferred Modality	n	%
Television access; Radio access	628	31.40
Science Popularization	1590	79.50
WeChat public account messaging	1848	92.40
Thematic Class Session	1024	51.20
Distribution of promotional materials at designated booth stations	1610	80.50
Distribution of promotional materials at designated booth stations	860	43.00
On-campus clinic-based health education	820	41.00
Others	260	13.00

2.2 Syphilis Prevention Knowledge Awareness by Institution and Gender

The number and rate of syphilis awareness among participants from the two institutions were 187 (62.33%) and 191 (63.66%), respectively. Comparison between the two institutions showed no statistically significant difference ($P > 0.05$), indicating comparable levels of syphilis knowledge. Similarly, the awareness rates among male and female students were 190 (64.19%) and 192 (63.16%), respectively, with no statistically significant difference observed ($P > 0.05$), suggesting equivalent knowledge levels between genders. Detailed data are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Syphilis prevention knowledge awareness stratified by institution and gender [n (%)]

Demographic Characteristic	Total Number (Percentage)	Awareness Raten (%)	χ^2	P
Institution A University	300 (50)	187 (62.33)	0.114	0.735
B University	300 (50)	191 (63.66)		
Gender Male	296 (49.33)	190 (64.19)	0.069	0.793
Female	304 (51)	192 (63.16)		

2.3 Syphilis Awareness Under Three Primary Health Education Modalities Prior to Intervention

A comparison of syphilis prevention knowledge awareness among the three participant groups before the training intervention showed no statistically significant difference ($P > 0.05$). This indicates equivalent baseline awareness levels across all groups prior to the implementation of the health education programs. Detailed results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Pre-intervention Awareness Among Study Participants [n (%)]

Group	n	Awareness n (%)	χ^2	P
WeChat Public Account Push	200	125 (62.50)	0.300	0.861
Lectures on Infectious Disease Prevention and Control	200	129 (64.50)		
Distribution of promotional materials at designated booth stations	200	124 (62.00)		

2.4 Syphilis Awareness Before and After Implementation of the Three Primary Health Education Modalities

At the conclusion of the study period, a unified survey on syphilis prevention knowledge awareness was conducted. The awareness rates were 190 (95.00%) in the "WeChat Public Account Push" group, 171 (85.50%) in the "Science Popularization Lectures on Infectious Disease Prevention and Control" group, and 177 (88.50%) in the "Distribution of Promotional Materials at Booth Stations" group. Intra-group comparisons of awareness levels before and after the health education intervention revealed statistically significant improvements in all three groups ($P < 0.05$), demonstrating the effectiveness of each primary health education modality. Detailed data are presented in Table 4.

Table4. Intra-Group Awareness Before and After Health Education Intervention [n (%)]

Group	n	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention	χ^2	P
WeChat Public Account Push	200	125 (62.50)	190 (96.50)	63.119	0.000
Lectures on Infectious Disease Prevention and Control	200	129 (64.50)	171 (85.50)	23.520	0.000
Distribution of promotional materials at designated booth stations	200	124 (62.00)	177 (88.50)	37.706	0.000

2.5 Comparison of Awareness Levels Following Implementation of the Three Primary Health Education Modalities

Following the training intervention, awareness data from the three groups were collected via questionnaire. Statistical analysis revealed a statistically significant difference in overall awareness among the three groups ($P < 0.05$), suggesting differential efficacy of the health education modalities. Pairwise comparisons demonstrated that the "WeChat Public Account Push" group showed statistically significant differences compared to each of the other two groups (vs. Science Popularization Lectures: $\chi^2 = 10.256$, $P = 0.001$; vs. Distribution of Promotional Materials at Booth Stations: $\chi^2 = 5.582$, $P = 0.018$), confirming the superior educational efficacy of the "WeChat Public Account Push" modality. In contrast, no statistically significant difference was observed between the "Science Popularization Lectures on Infectious Disease Prevention and Control" group and the "Distribution of Promotional Materials at Booth Stations" group ($\chi^2 = 0.796$, $P = 0.372$), indicating comparable educational effectiveness between these two modalities. Detailed results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Post-Intervention Awareness Under the Three Primary Health Education Modalities [n (%)]

Group	n	Post-Intervention	χ^2	P
WeChat Public Account Push	200	190 (96.50)		
Lectures on Infectious Disease Prevention and Control	200	171 (85.50)	10.181	0.006
Distribution of promotional materials at designated booth stations	200	177 (88.50)		

3. Discussion

Infectious diseases constitute a significant public health challenge with profound implications for human health, lifespan, and socioeconomic development [4]. The prevention of these diseases is, therefore, a concern demanding universal attention. China boasts a massive population of university students, the majority of whom have not received systematic education in infectious disease knowledge, leading to insufficient awareness. Effectively enhancing the awareness level of this demographic is a priority for health education efforts within higher education institutions. This study selected a sexually transmitted disease (syphilis) as the target condition for training evaluation. The survey revealed a syphilis core knowledge awareness rate of merely 63% among the participants, As shown in Table 2, which falls considerably short of the targets outlined in the *National Plan for Syphilis Prevention and Control in China (2010-2020)* [5, 6]. Despite ongoing prevention education campaigns conducted by medical institutions, disease control departments, and educational agencies at all levels, which have indeed contributed to raised awareness among university students [7], the current awareness rate remains suboptimal. Consequently, there is a substantial journey ahead in improving the awareness of syphilis prevention knowledge [8], underscoring the critical need to explore efficient and precise health education models for syphilis.

According to the data in Table 1, the most preferred health education modality among students in the post-pandemic era was "WeChat Public Account Push," selected by 92.40% of respondents, a finding largely consistent with reports by domestic scholars such as Chen Liying [9, 10]. Four primary reasons may explain this preference: First, influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, students exhibit a reluctance for interpersonal communication and a subconscious avoidance of crowded places. The second is the comprehensive popularization of electronic products represented by smartphones, which promotes the deep participation of student groups in the internet; Thirdly, today's society is in an era of advanced networks, where new things and information are transmitted and disseminated through the internet; Fourth, based on the accessibility of WeChat official account, young students can easily and quickly obtain relevant information, and individuals can carry out self health education anytime and anywhere. Despite the impact of the pandemic, the two more traditional modalities—"Distribution of Promotional Materials at Booth Stations" and "Science Popularization Lectures on Infectious Disease Prevention and Control"—were also recognized by approximately 80% of students, aligning with findings reported by other domestic scholars [11]. Students who preferred the booth distribution method may value the ability to read and retain physical materials, annotate them for note-taking, and revisit them for reinforced learning, thereby avoiding issues like poor internet connectivity that can hinder access to digital content. Conversely, those who chose the science popularization lectures likely appreciate structured training schedules within a defined health education program and value interactive engagement with instructors. Therefore, practical implementation should leverage the strengths of these two modalities to conduct health education initiatives.

Table 4 statistics show that the comparisons of syphilis awareness rates before and after the implementation of each of the three health education modalities were all statistically significant, indicating that all three models are effective. Consequently, they should all be considered for inclusion and application in the practical development of infectious disease health education programs. However, by analyzing the data in Table 5, statistical analysis of the awareness levels achieved after the intervention revealed that the "WeChat Public Account Push" modality yielded superior outcomes compared to the other two models. This finding suggests that health educators in universities should strategically focus on identifying and mastering the most impactful health education modalities. It underscores the need for institutional-level coordination to consolidate health education resources, foster multi-departmental collaboration, continuously advance IT-enabled services, and promote dedicated health education WeChat public accounts. These accounts should disseminate visually engaging and easily comprehensible informational materials on infectious disease prevention. Finally, this study has certain limitations. It did not incorporate AI-powered health education modalities [12], nor did it explore pairwise combinations of a broader range of models to investigate whether such combined approaches might yield effects surpassing those of the currently identified top three student-preferred methods. Future research should therefore examine whether such combined modalities produce a synergistic effect where the combined outcome exceeds the sum of their individual effects.

In summary, in the post-pandemic era in Zhanjiang, the three most preferred health education models among students are "official account push notifications," "on-site stall distribution of promotional materials," and "epidemic prevention scienc

e lectures." All three models are effective, with "official account push notifications" yielding the best results. It is essential to fully leverage these three models, particularly "official account push notifications," to carry out standardized, efficient, and targeted health education efforts on infectious diseases. This will effectively enhance college students' awareness of disease prevention, improve their knowledge of preventive measures, and comprehensively curb the spread of infectious diseases on university campuses.

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