

Health Education in Chinese Universities: Status Quo, Problems and Countermeasures

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ABSTRACT. Purpose: Investigate the development of health education in Chinese colleges and universities; analyze the factors that affect the development of the curriculum. Research methods: literature, questionnaire, qualitative interview and participation observation. The research group selected 30 universities in mainland China to investigate 1380 samples of college students and 30 college staff. Results: (1) fewer health education courses are offered in universities in mainland China. (2) There are very few health education teachers in Chinese universities. (3) Lack of channels for college students to acquire health knowledge. (4) Chinese universities do not attach importance to health education as a whole. (5) The country lacks an effective supervision mechanism to further restrict colleges and universities. Research Suggestions: (1) the state should formulate legislation on health education in colleges and universities as soon as possible. (2) Strengthen the health awareness of teachers and students in Chinese universities. (3) Strengthen the teacher training of college students' health education courses. (4) Build a health education curriculum system in colleges and universities. (5) Strengthen the construction of healthy campus culture.

KEYWORDS: Chinese Colleges and Universities, Health Education, Health Courses in Chinese university

1. Introduction

They often skipping classes, learning fatigue, getting up all day, playing games all night, drinking late at night, not having breakfast, exercising very little, having relationships with roommates, mentally naive, and feeling tired. This phenomenon is very common among college students in China [1]. Unhealthy lifestyles, such as lack of health consciousness, lack of health management ability, lack of daily exercise, irregular sleep and rest, and unreasonable diet, there are becoming a risk factor affecting the health of Chinese college students [2]. "China youth sports development report (2015)" display: China students' physical health problems are still prominent, overweight and obesity is serious, the incidence of myopia continues to increase, speed and strength quality growth tends to stagnate, endurance and flexibility to low scores, blood pressure regulation dysfunction is common [3]. According to the latest data released by the National Bureau of statistics and the Ministry of education, there are 2889 colleges and universities in mainland China by 2019, and the number of college students is about 38,330,000. The physical health problems of college students have not been improved for many years, and the unscientific life style of college students is outstanding. Health education can be through a variety of means, plan and purpose, organized to enable students to master the knowledge of health, is beneficial to develop personal, collective and social healthy lifestyle and behavior, and promote all-round development of students' physical and mental health and moral health and social adaptability [4]. This is an integral part of the overall quality education for college students. Health education is an important component of the quality education of college students. However, the study shows that the present elective course or the form of lecture is a common health education model in Chinese colleges and universities [5]. Most of the courses in some universities teach sports related theories rather than health education contents, failing to achieve the purpose of health education for college students.

2. The significance of setting up health education courses in Chinese colleges and Universities

Health is the sign of the quality of life. Health as the foundation of life and the foundation of life is of great significance and value for successfully completing academic work, achieving career, achieving life ambition and enjoying a good life. On July 9, 2019, the document "healthy China action (2019-2030)" issued by the "healthy

China action Promotion Committee" of the Chinese government pointed out that everyone is the first person responsible for their own health. The local government should bring the physical health of college students into the assessment and evaluation of colleges and universities. On September 29, 2019, the Ministry of education of the People's Republic of China issued the opinions on deepening the reform of undergraduate education and teaching and comprehensively improving the quality of personnel training. The document requires that colleges and universities should strengthen the assessment of students' physical education courses. If the score of physical health test is lower than 60 points, students will not be able to obtain the graduation certificate. The goal of the Chinese government is that by 2022 and 2030, the proportion of urban and rural residents who have reached the standard of national physical fitness measurement is not less than 90.86% and 92.17% respectively, and the proportion of people who regularly participate in physical exercises is 37% and more, and 40% and more.

With the Chinese government's strategic goal of building "first-class universities and first-class disciplines", it is the new mission of Chinese universities to train high-quality talents to adapt to the economic and social development in the new era and cultivate qualified talents. A healthy body and a scientific way of life are an important part of cultivating talents in universities and the main standard to measure the quality of talents. The core content of health education for college students is to impart health knowledge, establish health behavior and improve the environment. Carrying out health education in a planned, purposeful and evaluation way can enhance college students' health knowledge, help students consciously choose healthy behaviors and lifestyles, establish modern health awareness, and promote physical and mental health, and improve their quality of life [6]. In recent years, although colleges and universities in China have done some work in carrying out health education for college students and improving their health literacy, they have made some achievements, but in general, they are still in the exploratory stage. It is imperative for college students to grasp health knowledge and skills, enhance their health literacy and health management skills, and improve their quality of life [7].

3. The historical background of health education in Chinese colleges and Universities

3.1 Relevant documents issued by the Chinese government

The Chinese government has been very concerned about the health of young people. Since the founding of new China in 1949, the Chinese government has issued a series of physical exercise documents, the purpose of which is to carry out health intervention to students through school education. These documents and regulations are as follows:

·In 1952, Chinese learning the Soviet model, setting up China version of the "Regulations on the national sports system of labor and defense".

·In 1958, the State Council China officially announced and implemented the "Regulations on the national sports system of labor and defense".

·In 1964, the government will Chinese "Regulations on the national sports system of labor and defense" was renamed "Youth sports training standards".

·In 1975, The National Sports Commission has published the "National standard for physical exercise". The documents were amended in 1982 and 1990.

·In 2007, the Chinese Ministry of Education and the State General Administration of Physical Education formally implemented the "National standard for physical exercise health of students".

·In 2004, the Ministry of education of China established the China National Student Health & Fitness Database (CNSHFD).

·In 2014, the Chinese Ministry of Education issued the "National standard for physical exercise health of students" (revised in 2014).

·In August 15, 2015, the "China Youth Sports Development Report (2015)" was published.

·In July 11, 2017, the Ministry of Education of China issued "the Guidelines for the Guidance of Health Education in Colleges and Universities".

·On July 9, 2019, the health China action Promotion Committee issued "The Health China Action (2019-2030)"

·On August 10, 2019, the general office of the State Council of China issue "Outline of Building Strong Sports Country".

The main motivation of the above series of legal documents issued by the competent authorities of the Chinese government is to require colleges and universities to pay attention to the physical and mental health of college students in the form of laws. Especially since Xi Jinping came to power, the state has attached more importance to the health problems of young students. In the "Outline of the building of a strong sports country", the grand goal of sports is to establish "sports can become a landmark cause for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation." This is the first time in official documents of the Chinese government.

3.2 Analysis of health education documents in colleges and universities

Over the years, China's Ministry of education has set up a sports and health course in middle schools and primary schools, and has opened a public sports compulsory course in Colleges and universities, aiming at strengthening the physical health of Chinese teenagers. The study found that the health status of Chinese college students is very poor, and many health indicators are lower than those in western developed countries [8]. On July 11, 2017, the Ministry of Education of China issued the "Guidance Outline on Health Education for Chinese Universities", which states: the content of health education in colleges and universities mainly includes healthy life style, disease prevention, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, safety emergency and hedging Five aspects (as show Figure 1).

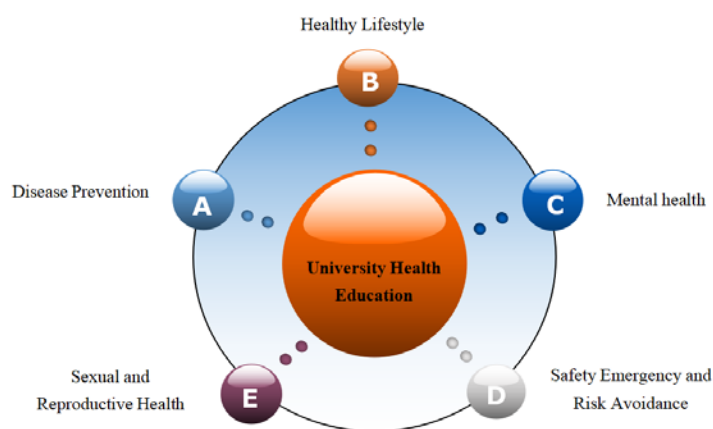


Figure. 1 Chinese colleges and universities to open health education content framework map

The "Guideline for Health Education in Colleges and Universities" requires "strengthening the health education in colleges and universities to improve the health literacy and physical health of college students". "Colleges and universities should follow the principles and contents set forth in the outline to formulate health education and teaching plans and set up health education Elective public education courses, arrange the necessary class hours, determine the appropriate credits". The opening of health education courses in colleges and universities is a mandatory requirement for Chinese universities from the government level. All colleges and universities in the country should deploy and arrange them as required. Correspondingly, the education departments of all provinces have also formulated the documents and issued them to the universities in the province. All colleges and universities are required to set up health education electives. Teaching forms are optional elective courses for all students. The document requires that the internal departments of the university, such as the Academic Affairs Office, the School Hospital, the Security Department, the Physical Education Department, the Psychological Education Center and the Communist Youth League of the University, cooperate actively to complete the course of health education (as show Figure 2).

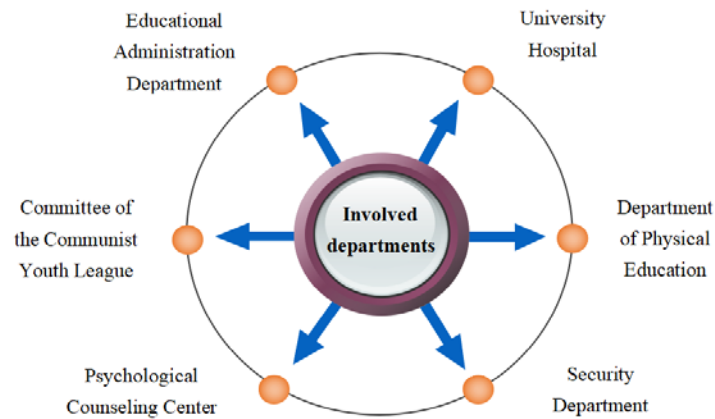


Figure. 2 Chinese colleges and universities set up health education management structure involved

3.3 Interpretation of Health Education Curriculum Contents

What is "healthy"? In 1948 the World Health Organization (WHO) pointed out in the charter: Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health was redefined in 1989 as "Mental health, good health, good moral health and social well-being". What is "health education"? Health education encourages people to consciously adopt healthy behaviors and lifestyles through planned, organized and systematic social and educational activities, eliminate or mitigate the risk factors that affect health, prevent diseases, promote health, and improve the quality of life.

"Guidance Outline for Health Education in Colleges and Universities of China" requires that health education offered at colleges and universities be merely an instructional outline and not a complete syllabus. It requires the health education of college students in five aspects. Health education is a marginal interdisciplinary discipline that has arisen in recent years. It relates to subject knowledge related to medicine, pedagogy, psychology, behavioral science, nutrition and outdoor survival. Through planned, organized and systematic education activities, students are encouraged to establish a healthy awareness, acquire the necessary knowledge on health and disease prevention, and enhance their self-care ability and basic skills in risk prevention and disaster prevention. Specific description is as Table 1:

Table 1 Chinese colleges and universities health education curriculum content

classification	content
prevent disease	Students have the knowledge of prevention of infectious diseases, learn preventive measures. According to the Chinese law, PRD is classified into A, B and C according to the reported disease types, for a total of 38 species.
Healthy lifestyle	Scientific system of work and rest, reasonable nutrition diet, regular physical exercise, non-smoking do not drink, maintain peace of mind, pay attention to personal hygiene, and family friends and pleasant exchanges.
Mental health	Efficient and satisfied, sustained mental state. Positive and optimistic, open-minded, inclusive, good with others, positive energy, integrity, values and so on.
Sexual and reproductive health	Physical health, sexual mental health, the correct concept of sex, noble sexual and healthy sexual behavior, the correct concept of love, prevention and screening of basic diseases and so on.
Safety emergency and hedging	Food poisoning, natural disaster prevention, abduction fraud prevention and self-help, outdoor sports safety and first aid, avoidance and rescue of dangerous situations, safe and self-defense when attacked, and necessary disaster relief equipment use.

4. Health Education in Colleges and Universities in China

4.1 Colleges and universities open health education courses

In order to understand the situation of health education courses offered by Chinese universities, the researchers investigated the staff of education administrations in 30 universities. AS a result of the survey, one university has established a compulsory course for college students' health education (that is, all undergraduates in their university should undertake coursework). Five colleges and universities have set up undergraduate health education elective (that is, all university students can choose to study the course). Six universities mainly spread health knowledge through health talks. There are 18 colleges and universities that have never set up health education courses, accounting for 60% of the total number of surveys(as shown in Table 2). Survey results show that most Chinese colleges and universities did not normally open health education courses, from the national standards have a larger gap.

Table 2 Survey of Health Education Courses in Chinese Universities (M = 30)

Option	Number of people	Percentage
Opened compulsory course	1	3.33
Opened elective courses	5	16.67
Opened health talks	6	20.0
No courses offered	18	60.0
Total	30	100

4.2 Restrictions on the Opening of Health Education Courses in Colleges and Universities

The above survey data shows that most Chinese universities do not have health education courses, what is the reason that led to the failure to open the course? According to the descending order of respondents' choice, the constraints of offering health education courses in colleges and universities are as follows: Lack of professional teachers. College students' health awareness is not strong. Ministry of Education has no mandatory requirements. University leaders don't pay enough attention to health education. The University lacks the hardware conditions related to health education, and the evaluation of health curriculum is difficult. Cross-sectoral collaboration difficulties(as shown in Table 3). Because the college health education curriculum involves five areas of expertise, it means that teachers should cover the above five aspects. In fact, Chinese colleges and universities usually practice college students' professional knowledge education, teachers can only teach a specialized course. Therefore, the first choice for the results is the lack of professional teachers. Health education courses require multiple university management functions to complete the cooperation. Under the existing management system, cross-departmental cooperation is a big problem. In addition, the emphasis of the Ministry of Education and the principals of colleges and universities directly affects the opening of this course. In the opinion of some school leaders, health education classes can be placed inside the physical education class. At present, the public awareness of health education in China, the health awareness of college students is weak, but also an important reason.

Table 3 Constraints of Health Education Courses in Chinese Universities (M = 30)

Option	Number of people	Percentage	Order
Ministry of Education has no mandatory requirements	20	66.67	3
University leaders do not pay attention	19	63.34	4
Lack of professional teachers	25	83.33	1
Lack of hardware conditions	18	60.0	5
Students health awareness is not strong	21	70.0%	2
University cross-departmental collaboration difficulties	11	36.67	7
Curriculum evaluation difficult	14	46.67	6

4.3 The way of college students receiving health education

The paper through the issuance of questionnaires for college students, understand their acceptance of health education. The question: "Your access to health education during your university?" The answer as follows: 608 respondents chose "no health education during their schooling", accounting for 44.06% of the total. In the second place, there are 289 college students who choose to study health knowledge through elective courses, accounting for 20.94%. In the third place, health knowledge was acquired through occasional lectures, accounting for 19.14% of the respondents. The number of informants who obtained health knowledge through the school's compulsory course in health education was 31, accounting for 2.24% of the respondents(as shown in Table 4).The data show that the health education curriculum in colleges and universities in China is not ideal, and the channels for obtaining health knowledge are narrow.

Table 4 Chinese college students access to health knowledge survey (N = 1380)

Option	Number of people	Percentage
Health education compulsory courses	31	2.24
Health Education elective courses	289	20.94
Frequent health talks	188	13.62
Occasionally health talks	264	19.14
Never accepted	608	44.06
Total	1380	100

4.4 Chinese college students want to get what health-related knowledge

In the survey "Chinese students want to get what health-related knowledge" (the title is multiple choice), the survey results of 1,380 undergraduates selected. 1040 people have chosen to obtain mental health knowledge, accounting for 75.36%. This data shows that the current Chinese college students' mental health problems are more prominent, the urgent need to strengthen education and intervention. The second-best option is "Scientific Physical Exercise," accounting for 56.96% of the surveyed population. The data shows that physical education at university level in China did not bring much help to students' scientific exercise and should carry out management reform [9]. The top 3 choices are: Healthy Lifestyle, 55.94% of respondents chose this option(as shown in Table 5). According to the author's participation in the observation, the findings of this survey more truly reflect the living conditions of Chinese college students: university lifestyles are not healthy. The next options, ranked high to low are: Disease Prevention Knowledge, Sexual and Reproductive Health Knowledge, Safety Emergency and Hazard Knowledge, Health and Environment, Nutrition and Health. What needs to be pointed out here is that Chinese college students need further education on environmental protection and environmental protection concepts, which is conducive to building a grand blueprint for "beautiful China."

Table 5 Survey of Chinese college students wishing to acquire health knowledge (N = 1380)

Option	Number of people	Percentage	Order
prevent disease	602	43.62	4
Healthy lifestyle	772	55.94	3
Mental health	1040	75.36	1
Sexual and reproductive health	430	31.16	5
Safety emergency and hedging	237	17.17	6
Scientific body exercises	786	56.96	2
Nutrition and health care	159	11.52	8
Health and environmental protection	178	12.90	7

4.5 Impact of Information Age on Health Education

In the research, this article devised a question: the impact of information age on the health education in colleges and universities. This problem is mainly investigated through an open interview. The survey is divided into: the college education management staff and college students. Staffs of higher education administration think that the world has entered the information age, bringing opportunities and challenges to the traditional

teaching of courses. The opportunity is to enrich the teaching content with the help of massive network information. The challenge is that the undergraduates as a whole present a "Smartphone addicts" phenomenon, which greatly affects the students' attention to the traditional classroom. Health education in colleges and universities should make use of various APP to provide students with integrated teaching information both inside and outside the classroom and to encourage students to learn by themselves.

College students think: Net omitted health knowledge provided far more than teachers in the classroom to teach more and more innovative. However, the virtual nature of the Internet makes learners only stay in visual senses. Traditional classroom teaching, teachers can be based on the needs and characteristics of students, targeted to start teaching. Teachers can also provide practical opportunities for college students, such as: safety emergency and safe-haven knowledge, scientific sports methods.

5. Problems in Health Education in Chinese Colleges and Universities

5.1 Government policies and regulations are not implemented

Over the years, the Chinese government attaches great importance to the health of college students, promulgated a number of legal documents to be protected, but the effect is not satisfactory [10]. Although China has formed a relatively complete system of national education, but the scientific and reasonable curriculum knowledge system is not perfect, the lack of college health education courses is a good proof. The Ministry of Education promulgated the "Guidance Outline," which is not a legal document but merely a document under the guidance that does not have mandatory attributes. As the survey shows, universities are likely to implement issues that may or may not be implemented.

5.2 University principals pay insufficient attention

In the promotion of "double first-class" construction in colleges and universities by the Chinese government, they proposed the slogan of training qualified personnel and encouraging technological innovation. All colleges and universities actively corresponding to this strategy have put forward construction plans. According to the author's survey, there is no clear definition of the standards for training qualified personnel in colleges and universities. A frail, mentally unhealthy college students, is not qualified personnel? For this question, it seems that the headmaster of higher education should answer the question clearly or not. What are healthy people? People's point of view is that as long as they are not sick, they can run healthily without jeopardizing public safety. University presidents are generally experts in a subject area, not an educator. As a result, great attention has been paid to the development of undergraduates 'professional fields in college personnel training, neglecting students' physical and mental health problems. Under the management system of universities and colleges in China, principals do not pay attention to certain things and are often hard to enforce.

5.3 College health education curriculum teachers lacking

Through field survey and web-based literature search, the researchers found that there are basically no professional teachers for health education in the 30 universities surveyed. There are very few colleges and universities nationwide that have special education for health education. The reason for this survey result is that, in addition to the above-mentioned lack of supervision and neglect of principals, the more direct reason is that there is no health education major in the system of teacher education in higher education institutions in China. As previously analyzed, the university health education curriculum requires multiple interdisciplinary supports; the average teacher cannot meet this requirement. In addition, this course will spend a lot of preparation time, many teachers are reluctant to invest too much, and the entire lack of teachers is not difficult to understand.

5.4 The lack of hardware required for the course opening

"Guidance Outline for Health Education in Colleges and Universities of China" requires that the main contents of health education in colleges and universities include five aspects: healthy lifestyle, disease prevention, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, safety emergency and risk avoidance. The teaching of this course is not only to teach theoretical knowledge, but also to equip with necessary hardware. Such as the assessment of the health level of the test apparatus, the model of the display of human anatomy, the equipment used in outdoors first aid, and so on. In the course of teaching, the necessary equipment and equipment are seriously deficient,

which directly affects the normal development of the teaching work. In recent years, China's investment in the construction of colleges and universities is increasing, and colleges and universities are also doing their best to develop the ability of scientific and technological innovation. With the input of a "public elective course", most colleges and universities decision-makers will not agree with the hardware input.

6. Suggestions on health education in Chinese colleges and Universities

6.1 Need policy support and legal supervision

The Chinese government should take the form of legislation and require colleges and universities to set up a health education course for college students. Every graduate's health index system must conform to the basic standards, otherwise they will not graduate. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, has promoted "healthy China" into a national strategy. For many years, the state has always attached great importance to the health education of college students.

In October 25, 2016, China's State Council issued the "Health China 2030 plan", calling for "strengthening health education" and increasing school health education. Health education is incorporated into the national education system and health education is regarded as an important content of quality education at all stages of education. The government should cultivate the teachers of health education and bring health education into the preservice education and post vocational training of PE teachers.

6.2 University recruitment of professional teachers and hardware equipment

Teachers are aiming at the reality of the lack of health education teachers in China's universities. The State supports the establishment of "health education" undergraduate and master's degree, and alleviates the shortage of teachers in Colleges and universities. Under the coordination of the educational administration department, the colleges and universities encourage the cooperation between the physical education teachers and the doctors in the school hospitals and jointly undertake the curriculum of health education. Universities should recruit teachers in the field of health education in society, or cooperate with "third party" social institutions.

6.3 Construction of health education curriculum system

The health education is carried out in the university which is a special time range for university students, through publicity and education, to teach students about the life of health knowledge and skills, shaping up healthy natural environment and harmonious humanistic environment, to cultivate the students' consciousness of health, good health, health behavior and mentality habits, to enable students to achieve all physical and mental health and overall development of a purposeful, organized educational process.

According to "Guidance Outline for Health Education in Colleges and Universities of China", the main contents of health education in colleges and universities include five aspects: healthy lifestyle, disease prevention, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, safety emergency and risk avoidance. These aspects should not be a simple piecing together. It should be proved through professional demonstration to form a complete set of health education curriculum system. The Ministry of education of the Chinese government should also set up a unified curriculum standard as soon as possible, and the universities should strictly implement it.

6.4 University should guide college students to pay attention to health education

Health education can enable college students to set up a comprehensive view of health and establish a consciousness of prevention and self-health. The core of health education is to make individuals or groups change their unhealthy behavior and lifestyle, especially the change of organizational behavior. Of course, changing behavior and lifestyle is an arduous and complicated process. A lot of bad behavior isn't personal responsibility, nor does it have a personal desire to change. Because many bad behaviors or lifestyles are influenced by social customs, cultural backgrounds, economic conditions, health services and so on.

6.5 Strengthening the construction of college campus health culture

We should strengthen the construction of campus culture, create and optimize the environment of University's environment and mental health education, and create a good psychological and social environment for the healthy growth of college students. The healthy growth of college students cannot be separated from a healthy psychosocial environment, and the cultivation of College Students' psychological quality cannot be separated from a good campus cultural atmosphere. The school style is an important part of the construction of campus culture, and it is also an important condition for the development of students' mental health. A good school spirit will imperceptibly optimize the psychological quality of students, help people maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships, facilitate communication and help each other, and form a relaxed and orderly amateur living environment. The colorful campus cultural activities help to cultivate the students' optimistic attitude of life and the emotional characteristics of health and pleasure.

The cultivation of College Students' health awareness is related to the students' personal physical quality, the fundamental purpose of college education and the big problems of the future of the Chinese nation. Health education can make students obtain the necessary health science knowledge, establish the correct health value, develop good learning and life style, and change the unhealthy environment, so as to achieve the prevention and treatment of diseases, enhance physical fitness, promote all-round development, major initiatives to lay the foundation for lifelong health.

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