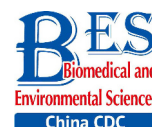


Original Article



Correlates of Condom-use Self-efficacy on the EPPM-based Integrated Model among Chinese College Students

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Abstract

Objective To explore the predictors of condom-use self-efficacy in Chinese college students according to the extended parallel process model (EPPM)-based integrated model.

Methods A total of 3,081 college students were anonymously surveyed through self-administered questionnaires in Guangzhou and Harbin, China. A structural equation model was applied to assess the integrated model.

Results Among the participants, 1,387 (46.7%) were male, 1,586 (53.3%) were female, and the average age was 18.6 years. The final integrated model was acceptable. Apart from the direct effect ($r = 0.23$), perceived severity had two indirect effects on condom-use self-efficacy through the attitude to HIV education ($r = 0.40$) and intention to engage in premarital sex ($r = -0.16$), respectively. However, the perceived susceptibility mediated through the intention to engage in premarital sex (intent-to-premarital-sex) had a poor indirect impact on condom-use self-efficacy (total effect was -0.06). Furthermore, attitude toward HIV health education ($r = 0.49$) and intent-to-premarital-sex ($r = -0.31$) had a strong direct effect on condom-use self-efficacy. In addition, male students perceived higher susceptibility, stronger intent-to-premarital-sex, and lower condom-use self-efficacy than female students.

Conclusion The integrated model may be used to assess the determinants of condom-use self-efficacy among Chinese college students. Future research should focus on raising the severity perception, HIV-risk-reduction motivation, and the premarital abstinence intention among college students. Furthermore, considering the gender differences observed in the present survey, single-sex HIV education is required in school-based HIV/sex intervention.

Key words: HIV infection; Condom-use self-efficacy; Chinese college students

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INTRODUCTION

According to the data from the Chinese HIV/AIDS case reporting system, there were 577,423 HIV/AIDS cases in China until the end of 2015, and approximately one-fifth were newly diagnosed^[1]. In recent years, young students account for 14%-15% of these new cases. The annual number of HIV-infected young students in 2014 was approximately five times greater than that of 2008^[2]. In the first half year of 2015, incidence of infections among young students jumped by 35%, which was higher the numbers observed in the previous years. Among them, 98% were sexually transmitted^[3]. There are over 2000 universities in China; thus, it is imperative to explore an effective intervention to control the HIV epidemic among young students.

Sexual Behavior and Condom Use among Chinese College Students

At present, using condoms in a proper manner during the entirety of sexual intercourse is an affordable and effective method for HIV prevention; therefore, this is the highly recommended strategy by the World Health Organization (WHO)^[4]. According to a serial cross-sectional study conducted between 2010 and 2015, the proportion of college students having sexual intercourse in China was 8.3%. Approximately 48.5% of these students had never used condoms during sexual inter course^[5]. Other studies have observed the same pattern, that the prevalence of condom use among Chinese young students was < 50%^[6-7]. These results indicate that there is a significant percentage of Chinese young students who have not used condoms during sexual intercourse, hence resulting in an increase in HIV vulnerability. School-based HIV education is an effective strategy primarily employed to promote condom use among Chinese college students. Numerous studies have confirmed that the frequency of condom-use behavior, or the intention of doing so, in the intervention groups were significantly higher than that in the control groups^[8-9]. However, the majority of these school-based HIV educational interventions in China lacked a theoretical basis^[10]. Accordingly, implementing a theory-based HIV educational approach is academically valuable and is a significant topic for future studies.

The Integrated Model

In recent years, the Chinese National Health and

Family Planning Commission has emphasized the need to improve the HIV-risk perception in college students to avoid the increased risk behaviors among them. A fear appeal as a persuading strategy, which is widely used in health promotion fields, may be applied to future school-based HIV education in China. The fear appeal acts by presenting the serious consequences of certain risk behaviors to audiences and arousing their fear so that the protective measures will be executed^[11]. The fear appeal is a commonly used strategy for HIV prevention^[12-14] and numerous studies have proved its efficacy in the condom promotion among college students. However, no such study was conducted in China^[15-17]. Therefore, it is critical to verify the correlation between risk perception and condom use before the implementation of the fear appeal strategy in Chinese college students.

The extended parallel process model (EPPM) proposed by White in 1992 is the most recent model of fear appeal^[18]. According to EPPM, two appraisals-threat and efficacy appraisals-were gradually initiated in the process of fear appeal^[19]. Individuals evaluated the threat information through the perceived severity and susceptibility of a negative consequence. The efficacy appraisal included response efficacy and self-efficacy, which respectively meant the belief in and the executive ability of the preventive measure^[20]. As a result, individuals with strong risk perception and self-efficacy are inclined to execute the protective behaviors.

Numerous health behavior models have confirmed that self-efficacy had a decisive effect on behaviors^[21-22], such like the information-motivation-behavioral skills model (IMB)^[23], the health belief model (HBM)^[24] and the theory of reasoned action (TRA)^[25]. These models have demonstrated great abilities to predict condom-use self-efficacy. Previous studies have confirmed the effectiveness of the IMB model, particularly among Chinese college students^[26-27]. Furthermore, these theories share the same idea that the HIV-risk-reduction motivation results from the perceived threat and the desire to avoid the potential negative outcome, and it had a direct effect on condom-use self-efficacy. According to these models, motivation was defined as one's attitude toward precautions against HIV infections [henceforth referred to as 'HIV precaution(s)'] and relevant subjective norms associated with these precautions^[28]. That is, the attitude toward HIV

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