

Kansas State University Libraries

New Prairie Press

Adult Education Research Conference

KanWork COVID-19 Vaccine Initiative

Mazanah Muhamad

Nor Aida Maskor

Asmah Ismail

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://newprairiepress.org/aerc>



Part of the [Adult and Continuing Education Administration Commons](#)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 License](#)

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences at New Prairie Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in Adult Education Research Conference by an authorized administrator of New Prairie Press. For more information, please contact cads@k-state.edu.

Author Information

Mazanah Muhamad, Nor Aida Maskor, Asmah Ismail, and Nik Hasnaa Nik Mahmood

KanWork COVID-19 Vaccine Initiative

Mazanah Muhamad
Nor Aida Maskor
Asmah Ismail
Nik Hasnaa Nik Mahmood

Asian Adult Education Annual Conference

The Asian Adult Education Annual Conference began in 2003. Its former name was the Asian Diaspora Adult Education Pre-conference in conjunction with Adult Education Research Conference (AERC). The steady development over the past 20 years has made it the leading pre-conference in the North American Adult Education Research Annual Conference, actively promoting and co-constructing the academic development of North American adult education.

The purpose of the Asian Adult Education Conference (AAE) is to provide a platform for academic exchange among researchers and scholars in adult and continuing education, as well as higher education, from the East, West, and Rest, especially those who are interested in conducting research related to Asian and Asian Diaspora adult education theory and practice. It seeks to promote mutual learning, enhance shared understanding, and stimulate academic viewpoints and dialogue from various perspectives from global educators. Selected presentation papers are published in peer-reviewed conference proceedings.

Chair, Steering Committee

Dr. Qi Sun

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA

Chair, Conference Promotion and Development Committee Dr. Bo Chang Ball State University, USA	Chair, Publications Committee Dr. Haijun Kang Kansas State University, USA	Chair, Review Committee Dr. Xi Lin East Carolina University, USA	Chair, Graduate Student Council Committee, Dr. Xiaoqiao Zhang, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China
Chair, Program Committee Dr. Yidan Zhu Texas State University, USA	Co-Chair, Social Media, Marketing & Communication & Event Planning Dr. Xiaoying Jiang, Penn State University, USA	Co-Chair, Social Media, Marketing & Communication & Event Planning Dr. Qianran Wang Hokkaido University, Japan	
Co-Chair, International Outreach Committee Dr. Suwithida Charungkattikul Chulalongkorn University, Thailand	Co-Chair, International Outreach Committee Dr. Qian (Sarah) Wang Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU), China	Co-Chair, International Outreach Committee Dr. Merih Uğurel Kamışlı TED University, Ankara Turkey	

KanWork COVID-19 Vaccine Initiative

Mazanah Muhamad¹, Nor Aida Maskor², Asmah Ismail¹, and Nik Hasnaa Nik Mahmood³

¹Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

²KanWork Cancer Society, Malaysia

³Faculty of Business and Accountancy, Universiti Selangor (Unisel), Malaysia

Abstract

COVID-19 triggered the need for vaccination. A mixed method inquiry revealed that KanWork Cancer Society's vaccination initiative was successful in educating members to make informed decision to vaccinate.

Keywords: Vaccine, Covid-19, Cancer survivor, Informed decision, Adult Education

COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide. The World Health Organization declared it as a global pandemic.

The COVID-19 outbreak in Malaysia was recorded on January 2020. As a developing country with limited resources, it was a mounting challenge for Malaysia to respond to the crisis (Hashim et al., 2021). The government put in place various measures to overcome COVID-19 including movement control order, and an aggressive vaccine program. Although 411,594 Malaysians were affected, only 1521 death were recorded (Ministry of Health, Malaysia – 1 May, 2021).

Vaccines is an effective way to reduce COVID-19 (Syed Alwi et al., 2021). The first COVID-19 vaccination in Malaysia started on 24 February 2021. Initially the vaccine was offered to frontline workers, followed by for seniors above 70 years, and later the rest of the population.

Cancer is one of the most important non-communicable diseases (NCDs) globally. The incidence is expected to increase. In Malaysia, cancer contributed to 12.18% of all deaths (Ministry of Health, 2019). Cancer survivors are among the comorbid who need to take the COVID-19 vaccine.

KanWork (www.kanwork.org) is a registered non-governmental organization that provides support for those affected by cancer since 2005. The 300 members comprise of survivors, caregivers, and volunteers. KanWork's tenet is to empower those affected by cancer towards making informed decision in their cancer management. Thus, the focus is on educational programs. They are normally planned in advance, guided by program planning models tested appropriate for KanWork.

The Problem

In May 2021, 905,683 people had received at least one dose vaccine (3% of Malaysia's population) (Ministry of Health, 2021). For higher uptake, The Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) scaled up the vaccine promotion, particularly through social and mass media (Mohamed et al., 2021).

Based on conversations on KanWork chat group, members (250, majority survivors) were hesitant to vaccinate. They were unclear with the vaccine importance. Also reported were various myths of vaccine side effects. Some were under treatment (active patients). They need their physician's advice and recommendation. To address the urgent COVID-19 issues, on 28th

May, 2021, KanWork took an initiative to promote members to vaccinate as recommended by the MOH.

COVID-19 was a critical, unprecedented pandemic. Similarly, the vaccination initiative undertaken by KanWork. Thus, there is a need to gain understanding of the case for future improvement. The inquiry was guided by the following questions:

1. How the COVID-19 vaccine initiative was implemented?
2. How effective was the program and why?
3. What else contribute to the effectiveness?

Literature Review

Adequate information on vaccination is critical for decision making. Limited availability of information may lead to hesitancy to vaccinate (Syed Alwi et al., 2021). One of the many “vaccine hesitancy” comes from the lack of knowledge and evidence on the vaccine’s success, and the misinformation received from social medias (Naeem et al., 2021).

According to Hwang et al., (2021), having patients go through vaccination process was a priority, as COVID-19 could also be an unnecessary interference to patients’ regular treatments, screenings, diagnosis, and follow-ups. Overall, the vaccine is safe to be taken as the benefits outweigh the side effects of COVID-19 (Hwang et al., 2021).

Based on a study involving Polish cancer patients, Brodziak et al., (2021) reported that patients receiving vaccine were more likely to trust their physicians’ opinions, suggestions, and information regarding their medical needs. As to sources of information, the most preferred are medical professional (Tomaka et al., 2006), and individuals such as family and friends (Carlson, 2009). A study on breast cancer survivors in Malaysia shows that doctors and family assist in making decisions but the women themselves make the final one (Omar & Muhamad, 2010).

In planning educational programs for adult, the learners’ needs and expectations and how they learn should be considered to ensure the program effectiveness. Educational programs should be learner-centered. Program planning for adult learners should be continual, flexible, and comprehensive (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013 & Shi, 2017).

“It is what a learner does that leads to learning. Therefore, for an adult educator the challenge is to select and design appropriate activities that a learner can engage and reflect upon those that have the potential of helping him learn.” (Muhamad & Carter, 2002 page 62). The selection is further challenging when the educator has to design the program quickly in a critical situation.

According to Abdullah (1996), a common culture among Malaysians is the notion of collectivism, whereby identity is determined by the group that one belongs to instead of individual characteristics. Yu et al., (2021) reported that individualism creates higher resistance against vaccinations.

Malaysians are also relationship oriented where their lives are embedded in a complex web of ties to family, friends, country, village, or social group (Abdullah, 1996). KanWork is a social group where member support each other for mutual interest, surviving cancer. During COVID-19, the interest includes surviving the pandemic too.

Malaysians also tends to observe compliance culture (Abdullah & Koh, 2009). It guides people to adhere to certain policies, procedures and behaviors.

Methodology

This is a case study that utilized a mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) research design. These methods provide in-depth evidence towards a more adequate understanding for the case (Creswell & Plano Clarke, 2018).

A qualitative case study is an intensive holistic description of a bounded phenomenon such as a program (Merriam, 1998). In this case it was KanWork’s COVID-19 vaccination program. It seeks to understand it from the participants perspective. This was captured from members conversations on the subject at KanWork’s members chat group. Other data are documents from KanWork file (office record) and members data base.

The inquiry also employed a quantitative approach (survey) in determining members feedback on two education programs planned for the purpose. Three hundred participated in the forums.

Findings and Discussion

How the COVID-19 vaccine initiative was implemented?

Educational forums and effectiveness

Noting members conversations on the chat group about their concern about the pandemic and vaccination (recommended by the government), KanWork organized two educational forums on line via Zoom, Facebook live and YouTube.

The forums sought to enhance participants knowledge on COVID-19 vaccine and address questions raised by members. The common were vaccine’s efficacy and side effect. The sessions were facilitated by a panel of experts. Participants actively engage in the forums. At the sessions end, they were given a survey form for feedback on the forums’ effectiveness.

A total of 169 out the 300 participants (56.3%) returned the survey. High majority (97.5%) agree the speakers were well versed in the topics presented. High majority (99.5%) too reported that language (Malay) is appropriate and easy to understand. Almost all (99%) found the topics appropriate to their needs. Similarly, almost all (98.5%) agreed that the forums were beneficial to them (Table 1).

Table 1: Forum COVID-19 and Cancer Evaluation.

No	Items	Forum 1 % Agree	Forum 2 % Agree	Average
1.	Speakers well versed in topics presented	97	98	97.5
2.	Language appropriate and easy-to-understand	100	99	99.5
3.	The topics discussed are appropriate to my needs	99	99	99
4.	The talk is beneficial to me	98	99	98.5

In the survey open ended feedback, the participants reported the following:

1. More knowledge and clear facts about vaccines and cancer patients.
2. Acquired knowledge of vaccines and implication to patients current treatments; chemotherapy, radiotherapy targeted therapy, hormonal therapy, surgery as well as imaging.
3. Knowledge (information) presented by the speakers is easy to understand and useful.
4. Understand the importance of taking the vaccine even though in the high risk category.
5. Confident to receive COVID-19 vaccination.
6. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions directly to the doctors (forum speakers).

Overall, the educational forums addressed the participants information needs and enhanced the learners’ knowledge on COVID-19 vaccine. This includes vaccine efficacy and

side effects. Participants were confident with the information coming from experts in the field, supporting Brodziak, et al., (2021).

On-line vaccination campaign and effectiveness

Daily then, the hot topic among members in their chat group was COVID-19 and vaccination. KanWork administrators (secretariat) post links to information on COVID-19 and vaccinations from reliable sources. They helped with the online booking slots for members interested to vaccinate. They also updated @MySejahtera Apps (application that manage COVID-19 outbreak in Malaysia. It also allowed users to perform a self-health assessment, monitor health status, and share the information with MOH throughout the COVID-19).

Members who successfully vaccinated shared their vaccine experience on the chat group. For eg. Ms. A reported "Just a minimal impact (for me). A day of some fever. Then it was OK". Mr. A did his first dose and had a slight fever too. Ms. B explained why she is yet to vaccinate "I am still under doctor's monitoring. He won't let me take the vaccine yet." Others like Ms. C utilized the group chat to seek opinion, "Today's my routine appointment at hospital. The doctor re-ordered the 3rd vaccine dose. I said I will think about it first. Any suggestion friends?"

The sharing also includes their challenges and how they overcome them. Report Ms. D, "Thank God. After 4 hours queue, I got my 1st vaccine. Thank you KanWork". Fear of side effects is also a common theme.

Members vaccine experience is also documented in 'Our Story' (a compilation of KanWork members' narratives on their experiences during the pandemic (<https://www.facebook.com/kanwork.official/photos/a.520125738434772/1224783487968990/>)).

We noted that generally members sharing on their positive vaccination experience promoted others to follow suit. Group influence facilitates change, supporting Terry & Hogg, (2001). The collective good in decreasing the effect of individualism shows that group campaign promotes vaccination.

The on-line chat provided space for conversations under the pandemic lock down (Movement Control Order). The findings support Kacar's (2021) contention that due to the lockdown and social distancing requirement during pandemic, the Internet and social media have gained significance in social interaction and communication modes.

What else contribute towards the initiative effectiveness?

The chat group conversations showed that many members who became interested to vaccinate had to wait long for an appointment due to drug limitation. Another issue was active patients (those on treatment) have to get their physician clearance and vaccine type recommendation. Getting access to the physician was a challenge under the lockdown. The same with drug limitation.

As a cancer advocacy group, KanWork joined hands with other related institutions requesting for vaccination access to active patients. KanWork even wrote to COVID-19 Immunization Task Force (to ensure the smooth running of the National COVID-19 Immunization) for the vaccination opportunity. Finally, KanWork successful collaborate with seven public and private health institutions.

At the end of five months KanWork's COVID-19 vaccination campaign (September, 2021), 85% KanWork members were vaccinated (71% cancer survivors).

In Retrospective

A problematic situation (eg COVID-19) triggers and motivates adult to learn. The appropriate timing of educational intervention was crucial. It was their teachable moment (Havighurst, 1952). The COVID-19 pandemic provides profound learning needs and readiness to learn (Hoffman, 2020)

The educational strategies where learners are engaged such as the forums were appropriate (Muhamad & Carter, 2002). We noted significant increase in the vaccine uptake after the two educational forums. Members campaign members by sharing experiences on the chat group and ‘Our Story’ was also helpful.

The strategies observed local Malaysian cultures; collective, relationship, (Abdullah, 1996) and compliance (Abdullah & Koh, 2009). Adult learning is context bound.

Government health policy & resources on vaccination also facilitated the uptake. Behavioral change takes concerted effort.

In a critical situation, a quick appropriate response to the learners’ issues and needs is essential. Engaging adult learners in conversations, listening to their voices, and planning appropriate flexible educational intervention (Caffarella & Daffron, 2003) where they are active participants are essential too. Similarly understanding and observing the learner’s culture and learning context.

REFERENCES

- Abdullah, A. (1996). *Going global: Cultural dimensions in Malaysian management*. Malaysian Institute of Management.
- Abdullah, A., & Koh, S. L. (2009). *Culture Matters in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur.
- Brodziak, A., Sigorski, D., Osmola, M., Wilk, M., Gawlik-Urban, A., Kiszka, J., Machulska-Ciuraj, K., & Sobczuk, P. (2021). Attitudes of Patients with Cancer towards Vaccinations—Results of Online Survey with Special Focus on the Vaccination against COVID-19. *Vaccines*, 9(5), 411. <https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines9050411>
- Caffarella, R. S., & Daffron, S. R. (2013). *Planning programs for adult learners: A practical guide*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Carlson, E. N., & Furr, R. M. (2009). Evidence of differential meta-accuracy: People understand the different impressions they make. *Psychological Science*, 20(8), 1033-1039.
- Charrier, L., Garlasco, J., Thomas, R., Gardois, P., Bo, M., & Zotti, C. M. (2022). An Overview of Strategies to Improve Vaccination Compliance before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(17). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191711044>
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, (3rd ed). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Hashim, J. H., Adman, M. A., Hashim, Z., Mohd Radi, M. F., & Kwan, S. C. (2021). COVID-19 Epidemic in Malaysia: Epidemic Progression, Challenges, And Response. *Frontiers in public health*, 9, 560592.
- Havighurst, R. J. (1952). *Developmental tasks and education*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Hofmann, H., Harding, C., Youm, J., & Wiechmann, W. (2020). Virtual bedside teaching rounds with patients with COVID-19. *Medical Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.14223>
- Hwang, J. K., Zhang, T., Wang, A. Z., & Li, Z. (2021). COVID-19 vaccines for patients with cancer: benefits likely outweigh risks. *Journal of Hematology & Oncology*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13045-021-01046-w>
- Kacar, G. Y. (2021). Congress on Multidisciplinary Social Sciences. *Full Text Booklet*, 150.
- Lee, Y.C., & Wu, W.L. (2023). Key drivers of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy: A perspective of collectivism. *Healthcare*, 11(2), 176. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11020176>
- Naeem, S. B., Bhatti, R., & Khan, A. (2020). An exploration of how fake news is taking over

- social media and putting public health at risk. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 38(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/hir.12320>
- Muhamad, M., & Carter, G. L. (2002). *Designing & Facilitating Adults Learning*. Penerbit Universiti Putra Malaysia.
- Mohamed, N. A., Solehan, H. M., Mohd Rani, M. D., Ithnin, M., & Che Isahak, C. I. (2021). Knowledge, acceptance and perception on COVID-19 vaccine among Malaysians: A web-based survey. *PLoS ONE*, 16(8). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256110>
- Naeem, S. B., Bhatti, R., & Khan, A. (2020). An exploration of how fake news is taking over social media and putting public health at risk. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 38(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/hir.12320>
- Omar, O., & Muhamad, M. (2010), “*The survivors’ lump ‘epic’*,” in *Breast Cancer Survivorship in Malaysia: Profile & Learning Pattern*, Muhamad, M. (Ed.), pp. 17–26, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia
- Schimmelpfennig, R., Vogt, S., Ehret, S., & Efferson, C. (2021). Promotion of behavioural change for health in a heterogeneous population. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 99(11), 819–827. <https://doi.org/10.2471/BLT.20.285227>
- Shi, H. (2017). Planning Effective Educational Programs for Adult Learners. *World Journal of Education*, 7(3), 79-83.
- Syed Alwi, S. A. R., Rafidah, E., Zurraini, A., Juslina, O., Brohi, I. B., & Lukas, S. (2021). A survey on COVID-19 vaccine acceptance and concern among Malaysians. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11071-6>
- Terry, D. J., & Hogg, M. A. (2001). *Attitudes, behavior, and social context: The role of norms and group membership in social influence processes*. 253–270.
- Tomaka, J., Thompson, S., & Palacios, R. (2006). The Relation of Social Isolation, Loneliness, and Social Support to Disease Outcomes Among the Elderly. *Journal of Aging and Health*, 18(3), 359–384. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0898264305280993>
- Yu, Y., Lau, M. M. C., & Lau, J. T.-F. (2021). Positive Association between Individualism and Vaccination Resistance against COVID-19 Vaccination among Chinese Adults: Mediations via Perceived Personal and Societal Benefits. *Vaccines*, 9(11), 1225. <https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines9111225>