

Factors Determining Intention to Pursue Genetic Testing for People in Taiwan

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Abstract : The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion proposed that the role of health services should shift the focus from cure to prevention. Nowadays, besides having physical examinations, people could also conduct genetic tests to provide important information for diagnosing, treating, and/or preventing illnesses. However, because of the incompleteness of the Chinese Genetic Database, people in Taiwan were still unfamiliar with genetic testing. The purposes of the present study were to: (1) Figure out people's attitudes towards genetic testing. (2) Examine factors that influence people's intention to pursue genetic testing by means of the Health Belief Model (HBM). A pilot study was conducted on 249 Taiwanese in 2017 to test the feasibility of the self-developed instrument. The reliability and construct validity of scores on the self-developed questionnaire revealed that this HBM-based questionnaire with 40 items was a well-developed instrument. A total of 542 participants were recruited and the valid participants were 535 (99%) between the ages of 20 and 86. Descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, two-way contingency table analysis, Pearson's correlation, and stepwise multiple regression analysis were used in this study. The main results were that only 32 participants (6%) had already undergone genetic testing; moreover, their attitude towards genetic testing was more positive than those who did not have the experience. Compared with people who never underwent genetic tests, those who had gone for genetic testing had higher self-efficacy, greater intention to pursue genetic testing, had academic majors in health-related fields, had chronic and genetic diseases, possessed Catastrophic Illness Cards, and all of them had heard about genetic testing. The variables that best predicted people's intention to pursue genetic testing were cues to action, self-efficacy, and perceived benefits (the three variables all correlated with one another positively at high magnitudes). To sum up, the HBM could be effective in designing and identifying the needs and priorities of the target population to pursue genetic testing.

Keywords : genetic testing, knowledge of GT, people in Taiwan, the health belief model

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