Measuring Health behavior problems in Chinese Adolescent: Scale Development and Preliminary Validation

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Research

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Abstract

Background

Health behaviors shape health and well-being, improve life quality, and provide economic benefit. Adolescence is a life phase in which the opportunities for health are great. Adolescent health brings not only the benefits of the present but also the well-being of the future and the next generation. We aimed to develop a reliable and valid scale that was used to evaluate the health behavior of the late adolescent, namely, the senior high school student.

Methods

In this study, we conducted two surveys: For the first survey, we recruited 526 senior high school students (318 boys, 208 girls; Mage = 16.5), and the data were used for item analysis and exploratory factor analysis. For the second survey, we recruited 542 senior high school students (249 boys, 293; girls; Mage = 15.5), and the data were used for confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency reliability analysis.

Results

In exploratory factor analysis, we extracted four factors with 23 items in all: exercise awareness and habits (5 items), master and apply healthy behavior knowledge (10 items), emotional regulation (4 items), and environment adaptation (4 items). The Cronbach’s alpha values of the factors ranging from 0.863 to 0.937. A satisfactory goodness of fit model was achieved (CMIN/DF = 3.18, RMR = 0.04, GFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.06).

Conclusions

These results suggest that the Chinese version of the Health Behavior Scale is a reliable and valid instrument for assessing the health behavior of senior high school students.

1. Background

Health behaviors broadly refer to actions taken by individuals that affect health, disease, and mortality.\(^1,2\) Health behavior\(^3–5\) such as physical activity, reasonable diet, no smoking, and not addicted to alcohol could decrease the risk of chronic diseases (i.e. obesity, cardiovascular disease, and cancer), improve life quality, and provide substantial economic benefit.\(^4,6\) Although chronic diseases do not appear until adulthood, behaviors that cause chronic diseases are usually formed in childhood and adolescence.\(^6–8\) Adolescence was previously considered to be a relatively healthy stage of life, but studies have found
that many major behavioral risk factors leading to non-communicable diseases (smoking, drinking, and sedentary) are mainly formed during adolescence and affect forming habits that track into adulthood. Other studies have confirmed that the improvement of risk behaviors in adolescence is an important way to prevent chronic diseases at an older age. Health behavior in the early stages of life has an impact on the health consequences in later life. Adolescence is a critical transitional period within the life course during which rapid physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development occurs. Adolescent health brings not only the benefits of the present but also the well-being of the future and the next generation. This generation of adolescents can transform all of our futures. Moreover, the latter phase in adolescent brain development brings continued development of executive and self-regulatory skills, leading to greater future orientation and an increased ability to weigh up the short-term and long-term implications of decisions. Therefore, it is particularly important to cultivate and evaluate late adolescent health behavior.

Currently, research on healthy behavior focuses on adults and the elderly. No previous study has comprehensively assessed trends in healthy behaviors among Chinese adolescence. The Physical Education and Health Curriculum Standard (2017 edition) put forward the concept of the core literacy of physical education and health. And sports morals, health behavior, and sports ethics are the main components of the core literacy of physical education and health discipline. The national curriculum standard brings forward that health behavior consists of four major parts including exercise awareness and habits, master and apply healthy behavior knowledge, emotional regulation, environment adaptation. To the best of our knowledge, there are currently no studies on healthy behaviors based on the curriculum standard (2017 edition). No existing validated healthy behavior scales based on the physical education and health curriculum standard (2017 edition) were found. The aim of this study was therefore to develop a reliable and valid scale that could be used to evaluate the health behaviors of senior high school students, so as to better promote the cultivation of Chinese senior high school students' health behaviors.

2. Materials And Methods

2.1. Original Items for Scale Development

The dimensions of this scale are in accordance with the core literacy content of physical education and health in the general high school physical education and health curriculum standards promulgated in 2017. Healthy behaviors include physical exercise awareness and habits, the mastery and application of health knowledge, emotional regulation, and environmental adaptation. The original items were created through a literature survey, group discussion, and expert consultation to compile an item pool for the evaluation of senior high school students' health behaviors. Four sources were used for the evaluation of senior high school students' health behaviors: compiled related items based on the content in the physical education and health textbooks for senior high school students approved by the Ministry of Education and the physical education and fitness textbooks published by Shanghai Education Press;
items found in the literature that relates to health behaviors in senior high school students; creatively compiled entries based on the characteristics of senior high school students and combined with the current background; and other items referenced by relevant scales.

Specifically, for the literature survey, Based on the search term "healthy behavior" and the subject terms of each dimension “exercise awareness and habits”, “mastering and applying healthy behavior knowledge”, “emotional regulation”, and “environment adaptation”, we collect relevant literature according to the research theme, sort out and analyze the literature, and summarize relevant research contents.

For the expert investigation, Firstly, providing the expert panel with our working definition of the construct, having experts review the item pool. Then ask experts who have worked extensively with the construct in question to rate how relevant they think each item is to what we intend to measure. Besides, ask experts to point out awkward or confusing items and suggest alternative wordings. Finally, the project pool is modified according to the needs of the research content and combined with expert opinions.

2.2. Participants

Sample 1, used for the measurement of the preliminary scale, comprised 526 senior high school students (318 boys, 208 girls; M_age= 16.5) recruited from four public schools in Shanghai, located in the east of China. All the participants were recruited via convenience sampling of the adolescent students attending schools, and parents or legal guardians provided written consent for their children to cooperate with our research. Although we adopted convenience sampling, recruiting students from public schools in China could provide a representative population for this study due to the school size being able to represent most senior high schools. The data of Sample 1 were applied to item analysis and exploratory factor analysis.

Sample 2, used for the measurement of the formal scale, comprised 542 senior high school students (249 boys, 293; girls; M_age=15.5) recruited from four public schools in Shanghai. The data of Sample 2 were applied to internal consistency reliability analysis and confirmatory factor analysis.

This study was approved by the ethics committee of East China Normal University (HR 095 in 2019). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants and their parents in China.

2.3. Item and scoring method

The Health Behavior Scale for senior high school students includes 54 items. Students are required to answer according to their actual situation. Each item uses a five-level scoring method, from "completely disagree", "basically disagree", "somewhat agree", "basically agree", "completely agree", and score 1–5 points in sequence. Except for the 5th and 8th to take reverse scoring, the remaining questions are forward scoring, and finally unified coding.

2.4. Statistical Analysis
Data were entered into and analyzed using the IBM SPSS statistics 26.0 packages. The first step was the descriptive statistics. Means and standard deviations were calculated for all normally distributed variables. The purpose of item analysis was to test the appropriateness or reliability of individual items in the scale. Explore the differences of participants in each item after high and low groups or to test the homogeneity of items. After the preliminary scale was tested, the item analysis, validity test, and reliability test should be carried out as the basis for the development of the formal scale. And the result of item analysis (i.e. critical ration and homogeneity test) could be used as a basis for filter or delete items.

The third step was the Exploratory factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis is a common method used for scale development, including reliability tests and validity tests. The fourth step was the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The construct validity was done through the confirmatory factor analysis using IBM Graphics package 24.0.0(2016), building the structural equation model. The model's overall goodness of fit was assessed using a combination of indices: (CMIN/DF), root mean square residual (RMR), the goodness of fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). During the analysis process, the following criteria were used to determine whether the items were reasonable:

1. Critical ratio. The critical ratio is a commonly used discriminant index in item analysis. The critical ratio should be above 3.0.
2. Homogeneity test. In item analysis, in addition to the critical ratio, a homogeneity test can also be used. The homogeneity test includes the correlation between the item and the total score of the scale (item-total correlation), the factor loading of the common factor of the item in the scale, or the internal consistency reliability test value.
3. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO). Whether the items are suitable for factor analysis can be judged from the value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistics. According to Kaiser's point of view, when the value of KMO is in the 0.90, marvelous; in the 0.80, meritorious; in the 0.70, middling; in the 0.60, mediocre; in the 0.50, miserable; below 0.50, unacceptable. In other words, The KMO statistics range from 0 to 1, the closer to 1, the more suitable for factor analysis, the minimum recommended value is 0.6.
4. Factor loading. Factor loading reflects the importance of the item to the extracted common factor, and the value cannot be less than 0.4.
5. Communality. The communality is the variation in the observed variables which are accounted for by a common factor or common variance.
6. Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is one of the indexes to test the internal consistency of the scale in reliability analysis. When the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is above 0.9, the reliability of the scale is ideal; when between 0.8 to 0.9, the reliability of the scale is very good; when between 0.7 to 0.8, the reliability of the scale is good; when between 0.6 to 0.7, the reliability of the scale is acceptable; when between 0.5 to 0.6, the scale is acceptable but very low; when below 0.5, the reliability of the scale is unacceptable. In another word, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient range from 0 to 1, the closer the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale.
7. Corrected item and total correlation. The value of the corrected item and total correlation is an index used for judging the internal consistency of the item and the remaining items. If the value is less than 0.4, the internal consistency of the item and the remaining items are low.\textsuperscript{26}

8. The Fit indices of structural equation model: CMIN/DF, RMR, GFI, CFI, TLI, RMSEA.

CMIN/DF (Chi-square/Degrees-of-freedom). Bentler and Bonnet suggest the CMIN/DF as an appropriate measure of model fit, which should not exceed 5.\textsuperscript{27} If the CMIN/DF is between 1 – 3, it means that the model fits well, and if the value is less than 5, it means the value is in an acceptable range.\textsuperscript{28, 29}

RMR (Root mean square residual). The smaller the RMR, the better, and the smaller the value, the better the fit of the model. Generally speaking, the RMR below 0.05 is an acceptable fit model.\textsuperscript{30}

GFI (goodness of fit index), CFI (comparative fit index), and TLI (Tucker-Lewis index). The value of GFI, CFI, TLI range from 0 to 1, the closer the value is to 1, the better the reliability of the scale is.\textsuperscript{31} In general, GFI, CFI, TLI value greater than 0.90 indicates a good model fit. If the value were greater than 0.90, indicates an acceptable fit.\textsuperscript{32, 33}

RMSEA (Root mean square error of approximation), if the RMSEA close to 0.06, we can conclude that there is a relatively good fit.\textsuperscript{34} A commonly used rule of thumb is that an RMSEA less than 0.05 indicates a close approximate fit, while values between 0.05 and 0.08 indicate acceptable fit\textsuperscript{32} and values above 0.10 indicate poor approximate fit.\textsuperscript{34, 35}

3. Results

The recovery rate of Initial participants in the study is 100%, and the effective rate is 97%. The recovery rate of retest participants in the study is 99.1%, and the effective rate is 96%. There were no missing data in both. No violations of normality in total score distributions were evident. Skewness and kurtosis values for items were within acceptable limits across samples.

With the preliminary 54 items, we conducted the item analysis, the indicators of critical ration (<3), item-total correlation (<0.4), factor loading (<0.45) were below the standard. According to the results of the item analysis, the indexes of Q8 (I eat fast.) are less than statistical standards, thus removing Q8, Table 1.

Validity was tested by KMO and Bartlett’s test of the sphericity. The KMO value was 0.97 greater than 0.60 and Bartlett’s test of sphericity was highly significant ($\chi^2=230, 05786.12$, df=1378, and $P \leq 0.01$) indicating the existence of common factors among variables, which are very suitable for factor analysis.

In exploratory factor, Remove the items which factor load below 0.5 for the next rotation. Results of the principal component analysis using varimax rotation four common factors with 23 items were extracted (Table 2). The first factor contained ten items and accounted for 26.6% variance and was labeled “master and apply healthy behavior knowledge”. This domain includes disease prevention and control, safety consciousness, basic healthy knowledge, rational nutrition, and a healthy lifestyle. The second factor
contained five items and accounted for 17.8% variance and was labeled “exercise awareness and habits”. This domain includes exercise habits, exercise persistence, and exercise emotion of senior high school students. The third factor contained four items and accounted for 14.0% variance and was labeled “environment adaptation”. This domain includes social community ability, adaptability, and the ability to deal with the relationship between cooperation and competition. The fourth component contained four items and accounted for 12.2% variance and was labeled “emotional regulation”. This domain includes the understanding of emotions and the identification of different emotions. The details for each factor with 23 items are shown in table 3. The explanation rate of cumulative variance after rotation was 70.7%, which was greater than 50%, indicated that the amount of information of the item can be effectively extracted. The Cronbach's alpha values for each factor as well as the overall scale were high, namely 0.937 for factor 1, 0.907 for factor 2, 0.863 for factor 3, 0.874 for factor 4, as well as 0.958. For the overall scale, suggesting good reliability and high internal consistency for each factor and the scale.

In confirmatory factor, the four-factor health behavior structure model was found to have an acceptable fit to the data (fig 1), since RMSEA =0.06, was below 0.08, CMIN/DF (3.18) was below 5, RMR(0.04) was below 0.05, both CFI(0.92), GFI(0.90), and TLI(0.91) was above 0.90 the Based on the criteria recommended by Dullie. Besides, all the factor loading ranged between 0.53 and 0.88 and were significant, indicating a good relationship between the observed variable and latent variable.

Table 1. The item analysis summary table
| Items | Critical ration | Item-Total Correlation | communality | Factor loading | Substandard index | Note |
|-------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------|------|
| Q1    | 14.471          | .675**                 | 0.462       | 0.680          | 0                | retain |
| Q2    | 15.197          | .647**                 | 0.397       | 0.630          | 0                | retain |
| Q3    | 14.611          | .667**                 | 0.440       | 0.663          | 0                | retain |
| Q4    | 18.284          | .674**                 | 0.431       | 0.657          | 0                | retain |
| Q5    | 16.484          | .677**                 | 0.449       | 0.670          | 0                | retain |
| Q6    | 20.324          | .719**                 | 0.485       | 0.696          | 0                | retain |
| Q7    | 16.588          | .634**                 | 0.369       | 0.607          | 0                | retain |
| Q8    | 2.372           | 0.028                  | 0.000       | -0.020         | 4                | delete |
| Q9    | 19.498          | .694**                 | 0.469       | 0.685          | 0                | retain |
| Q10   | 14.354          | .678**                 | 0.483       | 0.695          | 0                | retain |
| Q11   | 13.769          | .673**                 | 0.485       | 0.696          | 0                | retain |
| Q12   | 17.451          | .642**                 | 0.391       | 0.625          | 0                | retain |
| Q13   | 17.382          | .622**                 | 0.364       | 0.603          | 0                | retain |
| Q14   | 15.877          | .703**                 | 0.499       | 0.706          | 0                | retain |
| Q15   | 20.901          | .780**                 | 0.606       | 0.779          | 0                | retain |
| Q16   | 15.048          | .645**                 | 0.417       | 0.646          | 0                | retain |
| Q17   | 13.71           | .636**                 | 0.414       | 0.644          | 0                | retain |
| Q18   | 18.059          | .647**                 | 0.403       | 0.635          | 0                | retain |
| Q19   | 19.124          | .747**                 | 0.566       | 0.752          | 0                | retain |
| Q20   | 18.998          | .723**                 | 0.538       | 0.733          | 0                | retain |
| Q21   | 15.765          | .704**                 | 0.523       | 0.723          | 0                | retain |
| Q22   | 13.434          | .678**                 | 0.493       | 0.702          | 0                | retain |
| Q23   | 17.915          | .729**                 | 0.548       | 0.740          | 0                | retain |
| Q24   | 16.836          | .695**                 | 0.482       | 0.694          | 0                | retain |
| Q  | Value 1 | Value 2 | Value 3 | Value 4 | Value 5 | Status  |
|----|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Q25| 16.053  | .705**  | 0.522   | 0.723   | 0       | retain  |
| Q26| 14.57   | .708**  | 0.534   | 0.731   | 0       | retain  |
| Q27| 15.845  | .718**  | 0.551   | 0.742   | 0       | retain  |
| Q28| 19.844  | .767**  | 0.601   | 0.775   | 0       | retain  |
| Q29| 19.354  | .732**  | 0.554   | 0.744   | 0       | retain  |
| Q30| 18.972  | .692**  | 0.470   | 0.686   | 0       | retain  |
| Q31| 21.143  | .739**  | 0.538   | 0.734   | 0       | retain  |
| Q32| 19.58   | .698**  | 0.477   | 0.691   | 0       | retain  |
| Q33| 20.848  | .722**  | 0.504   | 0.710   | 0       | retain  |
| Q34| 22.557  | .730**  | 0.515   | 0.718   | 0       | retain  |
| Q35| 21.568  | .751**  | 0.570   | 0.755   | 0       | retain  |
| Q36| 24.894  | .800**  | 0.623   | 0.790   | 0       | retain  |
| Q37| 20.409  | .761**  | 0.596   | 0.772   | 0       | retain  |
| Q38| 16.939  | .699**  | 0.508   | 0.712   | 0       | retain  |
| Q39| 18.083  | .733**  | 0.556   | 0.745   | 0       | retain  |
| Q40| 19.92   | .780**  | 0.616   | 0.785   | 0       | retain  |
| Q41| 16.93   | .739**  | 0.573   | 0.757   | 0       | retain  |
| Q42| 19.087  | .731**  | 0.541   | 0.735   | 0       | retain  |
| Q43| 18.462  | .725**  | 0.548   | 0.740   | 0       | retain  |
| Q44| 14.275  | .650**  | 0.437   | 0.661   | 0       | retain  |
| Q45| 21.102  | .758**  | 0.583   | 0.763   | 0       | retain  |
| Q46| 23.211  | .713**  | 0.480   | 0.693   | 0       | retain  |
| Q47| 21.854  | .735**  | 0.531   | 0.729   | 0       | retain  |
| Q48| 16.096  | .646**  | 0.434   | 0.659   | 0       | retain  |
| Q49| 19.611  | .664**  | 0.422   | 0.649   | 0       | retain  |
| Q50| 16.354  |         | 0.474   | 0.689   | 0       | retain  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q51 | 17.8 | .691** | 0.477 | 0.690 | 0 | retain |
| Q52 | 18.835 | .673** | 0.452 | 0.673 | 0 | retain |
| Q53 | 20.228 | .656** | 0.400 | 0.632 | 0 | retain |
| Q54 | 18.6 | .704** | 0.502 | 0.709 | 0 | retain |
| Judgement criterion | ≥3.00 | ≥.400 | ≥.200 | ≥.450 |
| Item                                                                 | Component |   |   | communality |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---|---|-------------|
| I will actively try my best to prevent all kinds of diseases.       | 0.796     |   |   | 0.743       |
| I have the awareness and ability of security precautions.            | 0.789     |   |   | 0.749       |
| I understand the harm, routes of transmission, and preventive measures of infectious disease. | 0.784     |   |   | 0.723       |
| I have a comprehensive grasp of the methods of self-protection and mutual protection in exercise. | 0.716     |   |   | 0.717       |
| I never litter and I can garbage sort.                              | 0.708     |   |   | 0.644       |
| I understand the harm of malnutrition to healthy.                   | 0.680     |   |   | 0.632       |
| I know the characteristics and changing rules of psychological development during puberty. | 0.656     |   |   | 0.623       |
| I have good personal and public health habits.                      | 0.626     |   |   | 0.580       |
| I understand that different intensity of exercise has different needs for nutrition. | 0.611     |   |   | 0.606       |
| I have a good sense of health and pay attention to developing a healthy and civilized lifestyle. | 0.524     |   |   | 0.639       |
| Even if there is no physical examination, I will still stick to physical exercise. | 0.840     |   |   | 0.794       |
| I have good physical exercise habits.                               | 0.784     |   |   | 0.773       |
| I can actively participate in or organize sports competitions in my class. | 0.777     |   |   | 0.716       |
| I know that physical exercise produces more positive emotions than negative emotions. | 0.746     |   |   | 0.720       |
| I can keep exercising for my favorite sports.                       | 0.743     |   |   | 0.701       |
| I can quickly adapt to the new learning and living environment.     | 0.805     |   |   | 0.796       |
| I have good social communication abilities. | 0.778 | 0.774 |
|------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| I will take the initiative to ask my classmates to do physical exercise together in the new class. | 0.712 | 0.720 |
| I know that the harmonious combination of competition and cooperation will make me progress faster. | 0.564 | 0.620 |
| I can distinguish between positive and negative emotions. | 0.761 | 0.844 |
| I know depression is a negative emotion. | 0.707 | 0.703 |
| I have a positive, optimistic, and cheerful attitude towards life. | 0.598 | 0.723 |
| I understand the harm of unhealthy emotions to health. | 0.518 | 0.695 |

**Eigenvalues**

|   | 6.115 | 4.105 | 3.223 | 2.811 | — |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|

**Explanatory Variance**

|   | 26.6% | 17.8% | 14.0% | 12.2% | — |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|

**Cumulative % of Explanatory Variance**

|   | 26.6% | 44.4% | 58.4% | 70.7% | — |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|

Note: factor 1: master and apply healthy behavior knowledge; factor 2: exercise awareness and habits; factor 3: environment adaptation; factor 4: emotional regulation.

### 4. Discussion

#### 4.1 Interpretation of the Findings

We have designed and validated an instrument to assess the health behavior of senior high school students in Shanghai, China. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time that the healthy behavior scale has been developed and verified, and based on the Physical Education and Healthy Curriculum Standard (2017 edition).

Through exploratory factor analysis, we found that the reliability and validity of the healthy behavior scale are very good. The healthy behavior scale comprised four distinctive dimensions, i.e. master and apply healthy behavior knowledge, exercise awareness and habits, environment adaptation, and emotional regulation was extracted using principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation. This is consistent with the point of view put forward by the Physical Education and Healthy Curriculum Standard (2017 edition).

Because of cultural differences, the Chinese concept of health behavior is different from the interpretation of international health behavior. In China, according to the curriculum standard (2017 edition), health
behavior is an aspect of the core literacy of physical education and health discipline. Health behavior is a comprehensive manifestation of improving physical and mental health and actively adapting to the external environment, and is the key to raising health awareness, improving health status, and gradually forming a healthy and civilized lifestyle. Health behavior includes developing good exercise, rational diet, regular rest, good hygiene controlling weight, keeping away from bad hobbies, preventing exercise injuries and diseases, eliminating exercise fatigue, maintaining a good state of mind, and the ability to adapt to the natural and social environment and so on. Briefly speaking, health behavior refers to all health-related behaviors, including behaviors at the conscious level and the behavioral level. International health behavior, sometimes called health-related behaviors, are actions taken by individuals that affect health or mortality. These actions may be intentional or unintentional and can promote or detract from the health of the actor or others. Smoking, drinking, diet, physical activity, sleep, drug abuse, these are all examples of health behavior. Concerning the definition of health behavior, the international expression belongs to the specific micro level, while the Chinese expression belongs to the abstract macro level, which contains rich content.

According to the value of RMSEA, CMIN/DF, CFI, GFI, and TLI, we can conclude that there is a relatively good fit between the hypothesized model and the observed data.

In summary, this is the first preliminary validation to assess the health behavior of senior high school students. We found the healthy behavior scale to be reliable as a valid preliminary measure of healthy behavior in this sample. It is also can be a good assessment of the healthy behavior of senior high school students, and provide a reference basis for physical education teachers to better cultivate the core literacy of physical education subjects. Moreover, the scale is based on the latest research issued by the national curriculum standards. Thus, this study is significant, as it makes it possible to measure the healthy behavior of senior high school students. However, subsequent work is needed with additional independent data collected to gain a full psychometric validation of the healthy behavior scale. The validation of the healthy behavior scale should also be conducted in a more diverse sample.

4.2 Study Limitations

There are several study limitations to address. First is that although an adequate sample size as confirmed by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett’s test results, our sample was recruited from one single city Shanghai, which may limit its generalizability to the national scale particularly in that Western rural area. Thus, the generalizability of results may be limited to some extent. The second potential limitation on generalizability is the exclusion of elementary and middle school students, future research will expand the research sample to better cover the youth population. Besides, we confirmed high internal consistency and reliability by yielding high Cronbach’s alpha values in all four domains, as well as the overall scores, but several other components of reliability (e.g., test-retest reliability) could not be confirmed in this study. The above warrants future studies to examine these areas.

Although there are various limitations, it was possible to measure health behavior by developing a scale for senior high school students and involving the largest number of people in a study conducted in
Chinese on this topic so far. Our scale could contribute to a further understanding of the situation of the senior high school students.

5. Conclusions

Research on healthy behavior focuses on adults and the elderly, no previous study has comprehensively assessed trends in healthy behaviors among Chinese adolescence. Using 1068 senior high school students recruited from public schools in Shanghai, China, we developed a Health Behavior Scale for senior high school students. Our analysis identified four factors with 23 items, labeled “master and apply healthy behavior knowledge”, “exercise awareness habits”, “environment adaptation” and “emotional regulation”. Therefore, our study suggest that the Health Behavior Scale is a valid instrument to assess senior high school student health behavior. The scale is conducive to changing the way of healthy development, improve health literacy, and improving health equity.

6. Declarations

This study was approved by the ethics committee of East China Normal University (HR 095 in 2019). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants and their parents in China. Subject to review by the ethics committee, agree to carry out this study according to the research scheme under review.

Consent for publication I confirm that all methods were carried out in accordance with relevant guidelines and regulations. I confirm that informed consent was obtained from all subjects and consent for publication.

Availability of data and materials: The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article.

Competing interests: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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**Figures**
Figure 1

The structural equation model of health behaviors.

Supplementary Files

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• AdolescentsHealthBehaviorScale.docx