

**BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF BEAUTY**  
**BRINGING EDUCATION AND UNDERSTANDING TO YOU: SEEKING AN APPROACH THAT**  
**REACHES PEOPLE'S HEARTS AND MINDS, BASED ON THE DIVERGENCE FROM THE**  
**RATIONAL HUMAN IMAGE ASSUMED BY PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS**

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**Keywords:** non-communicable diseases, beauty salon, health communication, community, non-traditional approach

Covid-19 has exhausted healthcare systems around the world, and limited attention has been paid to non-communicable diseases due to the current pandemic and preparation for the future pandemic. In addition to this neglected situation in the medical area, the pandemic has fragmented local connections, and in many places, communities are not well-functioning as it used to.

From 2014 to 2017, ACF conducted a health education project in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province of China. Education on health checkups was conducted together with local public health experts at first but it was not effective. The project then incorporated a concept of beauty, which is a great interest to people, seminars using Shiseido cosmetics started drawing attention from many people (Fig.1). Furthermore, local beauticians received educational program by the project and played a role of delivering a health education to clients and sharing the information about medical checkups. This activity, centered on beauticians and involving the local women's association, spread through WeChat, a social networking service that was just becoming popular at the time, and information on beauty and medical checkups were simultaneously disseminated. In addition, to attract people's attention, posters were used for advertising that the checkups in the village were cheaper than those offered elsewhere. These efforts to disseminate information have led to the increase in the number of residents participating to the cancer screening in the village, resulting in the early detection of cervical and uterine cancers in two women in their 40s.

The findings from this experience were that people rarely listened to information from public health experts as their own business, and that using people close to them as touchpoints (customer contact points) and distributing messages that touch their hearts is more likely to lead to changes in their behavior. Also in regards to information about people's pain points, which is usually difficult to obtain, can only be reached through a circuit of information that leads to a gain point (something to gain) for that person. Many health awareness materials have



Figure 1. Beauty Seminar and activities in Chinese village

been developed based on the premise by public health experts that "humans are creatures that make rational decisions," but this case study suggested that such an approach alone does not really reach people's minds and lead to the desired behavioral change.

This lesson from China led to the launch of the BEAUTY project in Malaysia. This study will first conduct basic research on various population demographics, and then develop practical research activities based on the results of the findings. The local barbershops and beauty salons are considered as health communication platforms for cancer prevention and screening, and the beauticians who work there are educated on cancer awareness. The goal is to expand people's networks and realize a new form of collaboration that combines the digital and the human factors, utilizing mobile applications that have proven effective in China. The study will take a unique, non-traditional approach to cancer awareness, with the NGO National Cancer Society of Malaysia (NCSM) with its strong ties and extensive network with local communities as well as national government as a project counterpart, and a team from the Asian Cancer Forum with diverse expertise in medicine, public health, ethics, marketing, IT, architecture/urbanism, disaster management, and journalism. The power of the concept of "Beauty" is great and it has the potential to change people's behavior.