

Shaping tobacco control messages for the Chinese lunar new year through effective short videos

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- 1: Video1 Couple at home
- 2: Video2 Street interview A
- 3: Video3 Gifting harm
- 4: Video4 Gamified couple at home
- 5: Video5 Street interview B

Screenshots of five alternative videos for evaluation. Credit: Jiaruo Sun

China is the largest tobacco producer and consumer in the world. However, there is still a serious lack of public awareness of the hazards of smoking and second-hand smoke exposure in China. Furthermore, despite efforts by the government in tobacco control, challenges persist. For example, harmful behaviors, such as gifting cigarettes, are still prevalent, and legal restrictions on smoking in designated areas have not yet translated into completely smoke-free environments.

In a study published in the journal *Global Transitions*, a team of researchers in China conducted a mixed-methods [concept](#) testing study to evaluate the potential effect of creative concepts and scripts of short videos targeting [tobacco control](#) during the Chinese Lunar New Year.

"Chinese Lunar New Year is the most important festival in the country, with gift-giving being a cherished tradition. Notably, cigarettes have become a common gift during this festive period," says corresponding author Sitong Luo from Tsinghua University.

"Traditional public service announcements for tobacco control may no longer align with the cultural nuances of the Chinese Lunar New Year. Hence, we conducted this study [by combining] quantitative survey and qualitative discussion."

In the field of tobacco control, concept testing has served as a useful way to identify the most effective and appropriate concepts and designs of short videos to achieve the designated communication objectives.

The team conducted a concept evaluation test for five alternative short videos, in terms of ease of understanding, personal relevance, ability to teach something new, memorability, cultural appropriateness, generated emotions, and impact on behavioral intentions of cigarette gift-giving and support for smoke-free regulations in China.

The researchers found that all the alternative short videos were easy to understand, but differences were observed in their potential to change participants' behavioral intentions of cigarette gift-giving and culture appropriateness.

The short [video](#) titled "Gamified couple at home" was considered the most suitable short video for wide dissemination during the festive period because of its innovative style and potential effectiveness in changing behavioral intentions. In contrast, although the short video titled "Gifting harm" showed a notable impact on personal motivation to refrain from gifting cigarettes, it was not recommended due to cultural inappropriateness.

These findings provided important evidence for the development and production of final short videos for dissemination on TV and social media platforms.

"Short videos integrating innovative style, professional knowledge and cultural appropriateness may be the most suitable one for wide dissemination during the Chinese Lunar New Year," Luo says.

"Future development of public service advertisements such as short videos targeting [tobacco](#) control should consider about the cultural appropriateness of communication content and its alignment with the relevant occasion."

More information: Jiaruo Sun et al, A mix-methods concept testing study of short videos for the national anti-cigarette gift giving campaign in China, *Global Transitions* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.glt.2023.11.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glt.2023.11.001)

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