

Citizen's View on the Institution of World Days Related to Health Issues in Central Greece

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Abstract

The institution of World Days appeals today to millions of people around the world. Students from Greece created works of art about World Days related to health issues. These works were exhibited in the "Center of Culture" area of the University General Hospital of Larissa.

The purpose of this exhibition was to promote the World Days related to health issues and investigate the impact of world days on the visitors to the exhibition.

For this purpose a questionnaire comprising 14 questions was made, available in printed and electronic form. It questioned the demographics of the respondents and their evaluation of both the event and the World Days in general. 45 works of art accounted for 25 different World Days and 141 questionnaires.

The majority of respondents were women at 60%. The participants' ages ranged from 12 to 75 years, with an average age of 36 years. 79% were urban residents, while 23% had a level of primary or secondary education. Of all the international days in general, those who touch the participants the most were World Cancer Day and World No Tobacco Day. 86% believe in the necessity of international days. However, 27% disagree with the view that World Days contribute to safeguarding human rights. Finally, 92% of the participants seemed to be satisfied with the presentation of the world days in the exhibition.

In conclusion, almost all respondents agree on the establishment of World Days related to health issues. Thus, through the exhibition we achieved to promote the institution.

Keywords: World days; Painting exhibition; Public health; Social medicine

Introduction

World Days are today one of the most popular and at the same time of the most important institutions in the world. These are common days in which a special characteristic has been assigned. This distinguishing feature is related to issues of particular importance that are frequently observed and that concern the global community to a significant degree, such as AIDS or human rights [1]. The purpose of this action is to highlight these important aspects and problems of everyday life and to inform the public of them as they need attention and response [2,3]. Many of them refer to social medicine, public health, medical ethics and science.

World Days and especially those related to health issues set the basis for the students attending the optional undergraduate course "Medical Communication" of the Larissa Medical School of Thessaly University to organize two several nationwide painting contests. The main theme of both contests was "World Health Days". The first one was held between January 2018 and April 2018 and it was presented in a former paper [4] and the second one between November 2018 and March 2019 is presented in this paper. To take part in the contests, someone

should be undergraduate or postgraduate student of Greece. To confirm their participation, each one was asked to design and create their own pieces of art on a World Day related to a health issue of their choice. The contestants were obliged to subjectively engage in the creation of their work, regardless of the structure or the theme.

A total of 25 works of art were added to the 20 already existing from the first exhibition. Many of these were related to World Days already represented by paintings and drawings in the previous event. The rest concerned 9 World Days represented for the first time in the exhibition. In total, the exhibition after the second collection consisted of 45 works of art, on canvas or collage, covering 25 World Days. Topics that already existed were: World Blood Donor Day, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Children's Rights, Mental Health, Blindness, International Nurses Day, Laboratory Animals, Diet, International Heart Day, World Health Day, Organ Donation and Transplantation, Autism, International Midwives Day, Female Genital Mutilation, Fertility, Safety and Health at Work. The new topics were: Tuberculosis, Multiple Sclerosis, Cancer, Childhood Cancer, World Elderly Day, People with Disabilities, World No Tobacco Day, International Women's Day, World Bioethics Day. All the pieces of art were collected by students attending the chosen course and each one was accompanied by a text with basic information about the world day

being presented. The exhibition took place at the specially designed space called "Cultural Center" at University Hospital of Larissa.

The purpose of the study was to investigate participants' knowledge and viewpoints of World Days related to health with the best possible deduction in the general population. At the same time, it aimed to present as many unknown World Days as possible to highlight the respective issues. Finally, with the addition of new paintings and the representation of new World Days, an effort was made to compare the results between the first and second exhibitions.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted at the University Hospital of Larissa and the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Thessaly by undergraduate medical students of the third and fourth academic year. The exhibition was open to the public. The visitors were mainly patients, as well as their families and friends and members of the hospital's administrative, medical and nursing staff and medical and nursing students.

Citizens' opinions on World Days were captured by filling in a questionnaire. The creation and distribution of the questionnaire was done by the students and it was available in paper and electronic form. The questionnaire for this exhibition consisted of 14 questions. These included the demographics of the participants and the evaluation of the exhibited artwork, the World Days institution, and the organization of the event [5]. In turn, they were about: Gender, Age, Place of residence, Level of Education, where if they were students they should mention the university they attend, the painting, drawing or collage and the corresponding World Day presented at the exhibition that moved them the most, the World Day that moves them in general, the influences they were affected by and that led to the selection of that specific World Day. On the institution of World Days, they were asked whether or not they agreed with the institution of World Days in particular on health issues, and if they disagreed, to state the reason for the disagreement, the necessity of existence of World Days nowadays, whether global days contribute to the preservation of human rights and finally if they were satisfied with the presentation of the World Days in the exhibition.

The printout was available at the exhibition venue, the University Hospital of Larissa Cultural Center. Its electronic form was provided as a form and accompanied by a PDF file containing all the projects with the corresponding texts. This was done to make the exhibition accessible to as many people as possible and especially to those who were unable to visit it for various reasons. The online form and the PDF file were then posted to social media sites. When the exhibition was over, questionnaires were collected, responses recorded and data processed with Microsoft Excel [6].

Results

A total of 141 questionnaires were collected, of which 79 were in print and 62 in electronic form. The male participants were 39.72% and the female 60.28%. Depending on age and gender, participants can be divided as follows (Table 1).

Age	Male	Female	Total
5 to 24	19	34	53
25 to 44	19	25	44

45 to 64	13	23	36
65+	5	3	8
TOTAL	56	85	141

Table 1: Total number of participants.

They were then asked about their place of residence. The majority of the participants 79.43% stated that they lived in a city small or large, while only 9.2% in a town and 11.35% in a village. The next question was about the educational level of the participants. 5% had primary education, 18% had secondary education, 55% had tertiary education, and 15% had a master's degree and 7% had a doctorate degree. Of the 78 participants who stated that they had higher education, 59 were students, of whom, there were 24 were medical students. This corresponds to only 17% of all participants and 40.68% of students.

Participants were asked to choose which of the World Days presented in the event was the most moving. The ones that stood out were: 1) International Childhood Cancer Day (11.35% or 16/141), 2) World Blood Donor Day (10.64% or 15/141), and 3) World Cancer Day 10% or 14/141). With regard to the exhibited works, the visitors were able to express in a few words their views on the work that most impressed them [7,8]. The majority of the responses concerned a very good portrayal of reality and greater awareness of the projected subject as they knew through the presented piece of art exactly what was going on and in some cases even had the opportunity to be informed of a World Day that moved them and did not know about its existence.

When asked which day moves them the most in general, 1 in 5 participants (28/141 or 19.86%) chose World Cancer Day. In the second place with 14.18% (20/141) was the World No Tobacco Day, while in the third place was the International Childhood Cancer Day and the International Children's Rights Day with 9.22% (13/141). The choices were then disaggregated by gender (Table 2).

World day that moves the most	Male	Female	Total
Cancer	9	19	28
No tobacco	14	6	20
Childhood cancer	6	7	13
Children's rights	5	8	13
Blood donor	7	4	11
Mental health	1	8	9
Autism	2	4	6
Women	0	6	6
Breast cancer	0	5	5
Laboratory animals	0	3	3
Multiple sclerosis	2	1	3
Health	0	3	3
Aids	2	0	2
Bioethics	0	2	2
Organ donation and transplantation	0	2	2

Heart	1	1	2
Mother	1	1	2
Down syndrome	0	1	1

Table 2: Gender-based distribution of the world days that generally moved the participants.

Among the medical students, the most emotional World Days were: With the most votes, World Cancer Day (first), World Children's Rights Day (second) and World Blood Donor Day and International Childhood Cancer Day both in third place.

The participants were then asked what influenced them in choosing that particular World Day in the question above. In this question they

had the choice of more than one reason. Both exposure and personal experiences appear to have played a decisive role in choosing the World Day that moves them in general as they were selected by an overwhelming 51.4%. About 1 in 3 stated that their response came from influences they received from their social environment (35.2%) and/or the internet (31.7%). Fewer (22.5%) were those who stated that social media had their say [9].

The following questions addressed the viewers' view of the World Days. These questions were also included in the questionnaire of the first exhibition. The answers were also classified here based on the level of education of the participants. The results of the questions are presented in Tables 3-5.

Do you agree with the institution of world health days?	Primary education	Secondary education	College/ university	Postgraduate studies	Doctoral studies	Total
YES	5	21	69	20	9	124
NO	2	4	9	1	1	17
% YES	71.43%	84.00%	88.46%	95.24%	90.00%	87.94%

Table 3: Education-based distribution of those who agree with the institution of World Days.

Do you consider necessary the existence of world days in our days?	Primary education	Secondary education	College/ university	Postgraduate studies	Doctoral studies	Total
YES	5	21	68	18	9	121
NO	2	4	10	3	1	20
% YES	71.43%	84.00%	87.18%	85.71%	90%	85.82%

Table 4: Education-based distribution of the necessity of World Days.

Do you believe that world days contribute to the protection of human rights?	Primary education	Secondary education	College/ University	Postgraduate studies	Doctoral studies	Total
YES	4	18	55	17	9	103
NO	3	7	23	4	1	38
% YES	57.14%	72%	70.51%	80.95%	90%	73.05 %

Table 5: Education-based distribution of the contribution of World Days in the protection of Human Rights.

Along with the question “Do you agree with the institution of World Health Days?”, for those who gave a negative answer, there was an additional one questioning the reason of the negativity. They had to choose between: 1) the commercialization of the World Days, 2) the fact that these Days may have minor effectiveness, 3) the opinion that every day is a World Day or 4) something else that the participants may believe. 44% supported the “Every day is a World Day” option, 26% voted for the minor effectiveness of the institution and 22% chose a different reason [10].

The final step was the assessment of the representation of the World Days in the exhibition. The vast majority of the participants 92.2% seemed to be satisfied by that extensive representation of the institution of the World Days especially on Health issues.

Discussion

Our results showed that the aim to highlight the existence and necessity of World Days and in particular those concerning health issues has been achieved. The exhibition proved to be a very helpful mean. It is interesting, the fact that through the event not only was the participants' interest for World Days raised but they were brought to the front of potentially unknown but very often health problems that deserve attention and awareness as well.

The second phase, which we are considering, could only be fully supported by the new works of art that have been collected. However, we thought it best to present as many world days as possible. The risk we faced was to distribute the votes of a relatively small set, to a larger

number of days and works in the questionnaire selection questions. This meant that we would be faced with very small and unreliable numbers since the ratio individuals/piece is approximately equal to 3 people votes per piece. Fortunately, from the results obtained from the processing of the responses, those that did stand out were measurable and assessable.

Another interesting point was the demographics of the participants, mainly their age distribution and educational level. The ages of the participants ranged from 12-75 years. Most participants belonged to the age group of 5 to 24 years. However, their proportion did not exceed 40% (53/141 or 37.58%) as opposed to the first phase [4] where it was greater than 50% (110/209). This practically shows a better representation of the other age groups in the second phase and a better reflection of the society. As for the educational level, the group that stated that they have higher education corresponds to 55% compared to 69% of the first phase and there is a corresponding increase in participants belonging to other categories with different education level. At the same time, all students accounted for 42% (59/141) of the participants, with only 24 being medical students and the remaining 25% attending another school. The first study listed 112 students of whom 72 (35% of the total) were medical students. It is clear that there is a significantly better representation of the group of non-students, but in the second phase all medical students are very few and therefore less representative to assess.

In the next step, we should note that both the question about the works of art and the global days presented in the exhibition that are the most moving and for the world day is the most moving in general, the participants' responses indicated options other than those of the first exhibition, several of which were first highlighted in the new event. These included World Cancer Day, International Childhood Cancer Day and World No Tobacco Day.

In the questionnaire of the second exhibition we are considering, there were three new questions, which were not in the questionnaire of the previous one and were incorporated in the questionnaire of the new. These were about the participants' place of residence and the factors that influenced them in choosing the World Day that excites them in general, while the question of choosing the project that moved them most from the exhibition was transformed into a descriptive approach to the project of preference. The purpose of the question examining the place of living was to explore a specific trend for a global day that excels in smaller societies, such as towns and villages. Because of the high proportion of those living in the city over the rest, the results obtained were small and could not be assessed. Even by mixing the other two groups into one, almost 4 out of 5 were urban residents, making thus no significant difference in numbers.

Investigating the factors that influenced the selection of the World Day that is most emotional for the participants is an extremely important element of the study. It highlighted both the impact of the exposure on people's contact with world days, but also gave a clear picture of the reason why the encounter will be largely personal experiences. Along with this question, the descriptive approach of the work that moved most from the exhibition was aimed at indirectly assessing the impact of the exhibition and adopting the logic of the existence of world days.

In evaluating the institution of World Days, the majority answered positively to all three questions about the institution, its necessity and its contribution to the protection of human rights. Distribution was made based on the educational level of the participants. It showed that

the highest percentage of negative responses came from people with primary or secondary education. Of particular importance are the extremely high rates of negative responses to the question of whether World Days contribute to the protection of human rights. Thus, 42.86% of those with primary education, 28% of those with secondary education and 29.49% (!!!) of those with tertiary education answered negatively to this question, with less than 3 in 4 (73.05% out of all the participants) responding positively.

In the end, the event received positive feedback and this was reflected in the results of the last question. 92% of participants stated they were satisfied with the presentation of World Days in the exhibition. This highlights the success of the event in achieving its goal and encourages those involved in promoting global days for the good of public health, to continue the effort.

Conclusion

World Health Days seem to play a very important role in everyday life. Despite the relatively smaller whole of participants, compared to the first exhibition, there was a better distribution in the age groups, as well as in the groups of education level. This could lead to a better reflection of the society. World Cancer Day, World No Tobacco Day and International Childhood Cancer Day were the most moving not only by their presentation in the exhibition but in general too. The exhibition and personal experience seemed to have affected the selection of these days. The existence of the institution of World Health Days is thought to be necessary by the vast majority. However, there are many people who believe it cannot contribute to the protection of human rights. Finally, the overall event and the presentation of World Health Days through this were positively assessed.

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