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## Coverage of health issues in Kannada magazines: A case study of Sudha magazine

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### Abstract

Health is the general condition of person's mind and body. The World Health Organization defined health in its broader sense in 1946 as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social status social and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Systematic activities to prevent or cure health problems and promote good health in humans are undertaken by health care providers like doctors. Addition to health care interventions and a person's surroundings, a number of other factors are known to influence the health status of individuals, including their background, lifestyle, and economic, social conditions, and spirituality; these are referred to as "determinants of health." So it is important to keep the healthy habits. Several studies have proved that stress always affects the health. Women's health issues majorly include menstruation, contraception, maternal health, child birth, menopause and breast cancer, breast tumor, migraine problems and post-delivery health problems. They can also include medical situations in which women face problems like gender-differentiated access to medical treatment. Media is bringing awareness about human health. Newspapers, Television, Radio are covering health issues regularly. Electronic Media go for phone in programmes, Interview with doctors; print media go for health articles, Doctors columns, Yoga columns etc... These days Magazines are playing decisive role in providing information and education. They focus on the health issues also which help humans in taking precaution to avoid common, major and dangerous diseases and disorders in advance and can lead a healthy life. Present study is to assess the coverage of health issues in Kannada Magazines. This study is a case study of Sudha magazine which is popular in Karnataka. Two months (October and November 2014) were taken for content analysis. This study is to analyze the contents of Sudha Magazines. It is found that, in this magazine more space is given to advertisements. Based upon the contents few suggestions are also drawn.

**Keywords:** Health, Magazines, Contents of SUDHA, Health issue coverage

### Introduction

Every day, people new health information from a wide range of sources: Television, Internet, Magazines and Newspapers. Its information they are seeking because all the health-care cutbacks have led them to take more responsibility for their own and family's health. People are more discerning in eating and exercising habits, more disciplined about regular checkups, more interested in reading about preventive health and alternative medicine. This proactive role is an important and positive change in their thinking, and one that will ensure the future good health of our families. It means they have the motivation and knowledge to become partners with health-care professionals, rather than passive recipients of their care. (Baker Cowan, 2004)

One of the key aspects of the development potential of the mass media is health communication. Ochonogor (2009) suggests that "development media messages, if structured and sustained over a long period of time will ensure a smooth transition of mass media agenda to public agenda." The media are significant sources of health-related information and can shape the way we think about and discuss health. According to the Health Reform Foundation of Nigeria (HERFON) in the *Nigerian Health Review* (2006) "recent assessment of the health of the Nigerian population indicates that the health situation in Nigeria and of Nigerians is dismal and efforts to change the situation over the years have been insignificant." Some health issues in Nigeria are as follows: Malaria, tuberculosis, tetanus, HIV/AIDS, cholera, chicken pox, diarrhoea, polio, measles, diabetes, and typhoid,

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among others. HERFON in the *Nigerian Health Review* (2006) assert that “the coverage of the national health system is limited and health education and enlightenment is weak, partly due to high level illiteracy.” The primary functions of the mass media are to inform, educate, and entertain and also to enlighten. The various mass media (magazines, television, internet, newspapers, etc.) have the power to direct our attention towards certain issues and this is evident in the Agenda-Setting function of the mass media. (Uwom, Oguchi Onyeizu, Oloyede, David Binta, 2014) [23].

The concept of health denotes more than just biological conceptions of wellness and illness; it is also shaped by social, political and cultural forces (Turner, 1996; Wakewich, 2000a). According to Robert Crawford (1984; 1994) health has become a central concept in the construction of identity in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Our concepts and beliefs about health have become a way of defining the boundaries between the self and other, and of constructing social and moral classifications around gender, social class, sexuality, race and other cultural categories. Crawford states that health is not only biological and practical, but also layered with connotations concerning “what it means to be a good, respectable, and responsible person” (Crawford, 1994:1348). Also, he states that the idea of the “healthy” self is partially defined and sustained through the identification of “unhealthy” others who embody characteristics which fall outside the health identity (Crawford, 1994; White, Young, & Gillett, 1995).

**Sudha:** Sudha is a Kannada weekly magazine published in Bangalore since 1948. It is published by The Printers (Mysore) Pvt. Ltd

### Review of Related Literature

Ballaster, Beetham, Frazer, & Hebron, (1991) [2] Women’s magazines are unique in that they are addressed to women readers solely by virtue of their gender. The magazines purport to understand women’s interests, acting as guidebooks for women’s lives—women are to read them to learn how to be women

Jack Demarist, (1992) [18], This study shows that a gradual decline in the number having themes of women lives, mothers, and homemakers and an increase in articles with political, social and economic (i.e. career) themes. Traditional sex role models, however, still dominate the pages of most women’s magazines.

Joke Hermes (1995) [17] the study of women’s media, particularly magazines, is a marginal area neglected by mainstream researchers. She states that most of the academic study of women’s magazines is conducted by women, most of who identify as feminists. She feels the mainstream academic world does not see women’s magazines as having any value, and are therefore unworthy of study.

Dawn Currie (1999) notes the lack of research about and dismissal of women’s magazines may stem from the historical association of women with the private/domestic sphere, an area which only received serious academic study after the emergence of second-wave feminism in the 1960s.

Ballaster *et al.*, 1991; [2] McRobbie, (2000) Feminist researchers have found that women’s magazines treat all women as a monolithic group with similar experiences, feelings and problems based solely on the fact that they are women. On closer examination, this “implied reader” has

been found to bemiddle-class, white heterosexual, young, and able-bodied. Issues of race, sexuality, ability, age and class are rarely acknowledged by women’s magazines and if they are, these issues are seen as cultural and aesthetic categories (especially in terms of race) rather than political ones

Sahar Hegazi, Mona Khalifa, (2000) [22], This project was based on the previous experiments of the FRONTIERS and POLICY projects to widen media coverage of critical reproductive health issues and to communicate related research findings in a more systematic manner. This project had a positive impact on increasing the coverage of reproductive health issues in Egypt and hence in raising public awareness of these important issues. It also contributed to the formation of an informed cadre of print journalists who are knowledgeable and committed to reporting on critical reproductive health issues in Egypt.

Gough-Yates, (2003), A survey of existing research both alerts us to some of the complexities involved in the study of women’s magazines and highlights the variety of ways in which the field has been accorded significance within the social sciences. A review of earlier scholarly work also allows the context and concerns of the present study to be mapped out

Wanda Nicholson, Bridget Gardner, Holly A. Grason, MSa, and Neil R. Powe, (2005) [24], After adjustment for sociodemographic and medical factors, use of print health media and computer-based resources was associated with 1.9 and 1.6 more visits, respectively compared to non-use (Regression coefficients 1.9; [95% confidence interval {CI} 0.1, 3.7] and 1.6; [95% CI 0.3, 3.0]). Print health media and computer-based sources are associated with a higher number of health care visits.

Karen Ruth Brown, (2006) [19], Female undergraduate students between the ages of 19 and 22, provided the body image rankings used in this quantitative content analysis research study. These statistics show that the media representations of female body images for the years 1995, 2000, and 2005 were thin based on Thompson and Gray’s (1995) CDRS. The statistics also show that the media representations of female body images became significantly thinner between 1950 and 2005 and between 1995 and 2005.

Jennifer Stuber, Peg Achterman, (2009), this study was conducted to study to know the coverage of mental health issues in Washington State Newspaper, and the study reveals that one-third of news stories used negative or derogatory language to describe a person(s) with mental illness. The most common theme of newspaper stories was to report an instance where a person identified as having a mental illness did something violent to another person. It is found that few stories that discussed significant improvements in quality of life or a reduction of symptoms people with mental illness or that reported on prevention. We identified instances where newspaper stories gave inaccurate descriptions of the symptoms or the cause of mental illness. Collectively, these findings suggest a need to improve reporting on mental health issues in WA State newspapers.

Wei Peng, Lu Tang, (2010) [25], It was found that certain diseases and risk factors were underreported as compared with their actual morbidity and mortality rates in China. Most of the health reporting was framed in a non-negative frame. It was also found that causes and preventions of diseases were more likely to be attributed to the individual than to the society. As one of the first comprehensive content

analyses on the coverage of health-related issues in China, this study provides health care professionals and policymakers a broad picture of health information available to the public in Chinese newspapers.

Chelsea A. Doub, (2011) [10] this study examines the public health messages contained in *Essence* magazine over 10 years (2001-2010). The study on health messages in *Essence* magazine from 2001-2010 provided a succinct pattern of information related to Black women’s health. The purpose of the study was achieved through examining over 400 health articles from the magazine over a 10-year time period. Focuses on weight loss and nutrition became heavily documented toward the latter half of the decade. Sexual health was also a popular topic, but *Essence* did lack in the areas of HIV/AIDS and breast cancer specifically.

Dr. Africanus L. Diedong (2013) [1], “Covering Health Issues: The Role of Newspapers in Ghana” study says that enhancing the quality of health of Ghanaians is central to the ability of the country to create and maintain a healthy pool of labor force for its socio-economic development as well as enabling people to live in dignity. The media can influence people with relevant information to empower them in their health-seeking behavior and attitudes. Through a content analysis of three newspapers – Daily Graphic, Ghanaian Times, and Public Agenda – this paper interrogates how Ghanaian newspapers portray shared understandings of issues and problems of health through framing of newspaper articles to empower readers towards attainment of greater health. The paper examines how health issues are framed and the kinds of solutions offered to address them.

Uwom, Oguchi Onyeizu, Oloyede, David Binta, (2014) [23], This study sought to establish the extent to which the media are working to set public agenda for the health sector so that it can mobilise both the government and the governed towards achieving a healthy state.. *The Guardian* and *The Punch* newspapers were chosen based on AMPS 2010 newspaper readership data. The single disease that garnered the most media attention was HIV/AIDS, and the most reported genre was straight news story. The newspapers did not give prominence to health issues. In light of the findings, this study recommends that the newspapers should endeavour to give more prominence to health issues.

**Statement of the problem**

For understanding the background of the research topic, “Coverage of Health issues in Kannada Magazines; A Case study of Sudha Magazine”, Literature review of the relevant studies has been carried out. There are no much studies carried about this issue. Hence, with this advantage the study is done with the following objectives.

**Objectives of the study**

- To study the content of Sudha magazine.
- To evaluate the preference given to the different issues in Sudha.
- To study the space allocated to each issues in Sudha.
- To study health issues in the Sudha.
- To study the space allocated to health issues in Sudha.
- To study the formats preferred in health issues in Sudha.
- To study th health issues on the cover page of Sudha.

**Research Methodology**

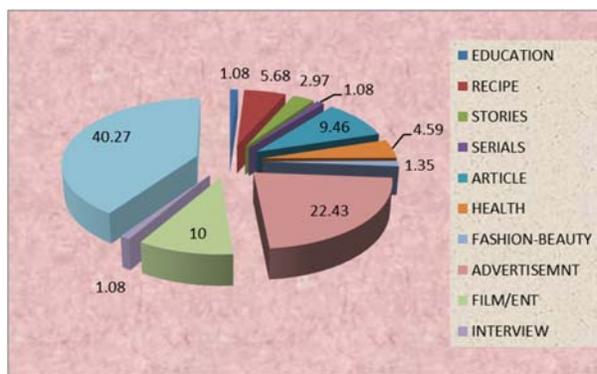
This study was conducted by using content analysis method. Eight magazines of 2 months i.e. October, November 2014

are taken for content analysis. The contents of magazines are categorized into 12 categories those are, Education, Advertisements, Recipes, Stories, Serials, Articles, Fashion/Beauty tips, Film/Entertainment, Health, Interviews, Question and Answers, and others. Others include Interior design, general knowledge column, Jokes, sports, letters to editors, astrology, comics etc. These are analyzed with the numbers and space occupied. Conclusion is drawn using statistical methods.

**Data Analysis**

**Table 1:** contents of the magazine.

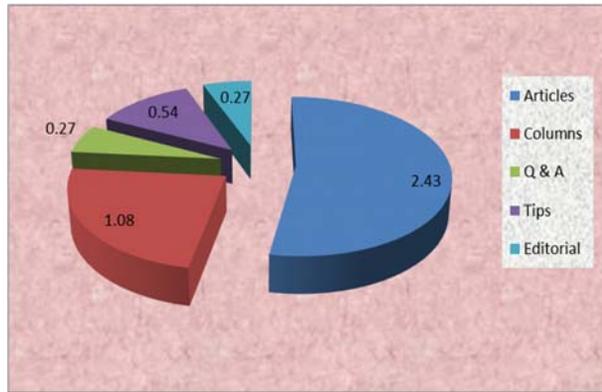
S. No	Name of the item	No. of the item	%	Space	%
01	Education	8	1.08	4401.5	1.65
02	Recipe	42	5.68	6522.08	2.44
03	Stories	22	2.97	16076	6.02
04	Serials	8	1.08	20530.5	7.69
05	Article	70	9.46	59401.7	22.25
06	Health	34	4.59	10704.1	4.01
07	Fashion-Beauty	10	5.35	13860.5	5.19
08	Advertisemnt	166	22.43	62090.14	23.26
09	Film/Ent	74	10.00	19604.5	7.34
10	Interview	8	1.08	3242.1	1.21
11	Others	298	40.27	50493	18.92
	Total	740	100	266926.12	100



The above table indicates that the magazine has given the preference to the advertisement. It is clearly seen that out of 740 (266926.12sq cm) total contents ads are 166 which makes the percentage of 22.43 with the space 62090.14 (23.26%) sq cm, Others 40.27% (298) with the space 50493sq cm, articles 9.46% (70) with the space 59401.7 (2.44) sq cm, Stories 2.97% (22)with the space of 16076 sq cm (6.02%), Serials 8 (1.08%) with the space 20530.5 sq cm (7.69%), Fashion and Beauty tips 5.35% (10) with space 13860.5 (5.19%) sq.cm, Recipes 5.68% (42) with space 6522.08 (9.53)sq.cm, Film and Entertainment is 10.00% (74) with the space 13860.5 (5.19)sq.cm, Health 4.59% (34) with the space 10704.1 (4.01) sq cm, Interview 1.08% (8) with the space 3242.1 (1.21%) sq. cm, (2.64)sq.cm.

**Table 2:** The forms of health issues in Sudha Magazine

Format	No. of items	Percentage
Articles	18	2.43
Columns	8	1.08
Q & A	2	0.27
Tips	4	0.54
Editorial	2	0.27
Total	34	4.59



The above table value indicates that the magazine has given the preference to the article format of the health issues. Out of 34 items, 2.43% (18), Columns 1.08 (8), Tips 0.54% (4), Question and Answer and editorial 0.27 (2) each. Health issues in the article forms are more favored in Sudha.

### Conclusion

The length of magazine articles was generally rather short; the majority was under two pages in length, including graphical elements. As a result, the examined women's magazines do not give health matters thorough treatment. They focus on presenting a wide range of issues in brief instead of treating a small number of topics more thoroughly. While feature-length stories are written about health topics in many issues, the general dynamic for short articles which can be easily read.

The above table indicates that the magazine has given the preference to the advertisement. It is clearly seen that out of 740 (266926.12sq cm) total contents ads are 166 which makes the percentage of 22.43 with the space 62090.14 (23.26%) sq cm. Health 4.59% (34) with the space 10704.1 (4.01) sq cm. Out of 34 health issues 2.43% (18), Columns 1.08 (8), Tips 0.54% (4), Question and Answer and editorial 0.27 (2) each. Health issues in the article forms are more favored in Sudha. Higher priority is given to advertisements and articles.

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