

ABSTRACT

NUTRITION RELATED TOPICS IN PRINT MEDIA: A COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF LEADING NEWSPAPERS

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Newspapers also serve as a source of information to the readers on health and nutrition related topics. However, there is a concern about the scientific validity of source of the information. Keeping this in view, a study was conducted to analyse the coverage of health related topics with special reference to nutrition published in major English and Telugu dailies circulated in Andhra Pradesh, for a period of six months.

Objectives: (a) to assess coverage of nutrition-related articles for a period of six months by major English and Telugu dailies (three from each language) published from Hyderabad, India. (b) To assess number of articles and priority of space allotted for nutrition-related topics and compare between English and Telugu language dailies.

Materials and Method: Three leading English dailies, Deccan Chronicle, The Hindu and The Times of India and three Telugu dailies, Eenadu, Andhra Jyothi and Andhra Bhumi were selected for the study. Each newspaper was screened from 1st Sept 2007 to 29th Feb 2008 for nutrition related information. These articles were classified into different categories/groups for quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Findings: A total no. of 667 nutrition related information / articles appeared in all the six newspapers during the study period. Telugu newspapers published (345) more articles on nutrition related topics than English dailies (322). Number of supporting visuals was less in English dailies i.e. 280 as compared to 524 in Telugu newspapers. Variation in the coverage of nutrition related topics was observed in English and Telugu newspapers. Around 80% of the nutrition related articles were presented in Women's Page and Health Page in Telugu dailies indicating that, these items were meant for the target readers, whereas, English newspapers published these type of articles mostly in general pages. This research paper discusses the dissemination of health information through mass media and its impact on nutrition status of mother and child.