



Review on News About Midwifery and Fertility Covered on Newspapers in Turkey

Türkiye'deki Gazetelerde Yer Alan Ebelik Ve Doğurganlığa İlişkin Haberlerin İncelenmesi

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Abstract

Aim: This research was conducted with the purpose of making content analysis of the news about midwifery and fertility covered on newspapers in Turkey.

Material and Method: Population of this retrospective descriptive study consisted of news of nine newspapers with the highest circulation in Turkey which were accessible on the internet. The data was obtained from the newspaper news that were included in the scope of the research as a result of review using the determined keywords (mother, breast milk, baby, birth, midwife, midwifery, breastfeeding, pregnant, gestation, pregnancy, postpartum, newborn). The data obtained was recorded on the 'News Evaluation Form' by the researchers. Percentage distribution, arithmetic average and standard deviation were used in the statistical evaluation.

Results: Highest percentage of reviewed news were obtained from Newspaper 4 by 27.8%, Newspaper 6 by 24.7% and Newspaper 1 by 11.1% respectively. It was determined that 9.5% of the news were in the headline, 1.6% were in subheading, 72.5% had appropriate picture and 67.1% were of newsworthy. It was determined that only 28.5% of the news were written by healthcare professionals, 55.4% covered special days for midwives and 63.9% did not include the source of the article. It was determined that titles of 49.4% of the news were perceived as positive impact and 33.9% contained titles in relation to pregnant-pregnancy words. It was determined that physical status and/or problem (22.5%) matters were discussed most frequently in the contents of newspaper news.

Conclusion: It was determined that the news obtained were intended for giving updated status, of informative news quality in general and a very few of them were discussed by healthcare professionals. In addition, it was determined that more than half of the newspapers covered news of special days for midwives, only one third of the news contained the source for the article, approximately half of them were positive news and news regarding pregnant-pregnancy keywords were written most frequently.

Keywords: Mother, fertility, midwife, newspaper, woman.

Öz

Amaç: Bu araştırma, Türkiye'deki gazetelerde yer alan ebelik ve doğurganlık ile ilgili haberlerin içerik analizini yapmak amacıyla gerçekleştirildi.

Materyal ve Metot: Retrospektif tanımlayıcı türde olan bu araştırmanın evrenini Türkiye'de en yüksek tiraja sahip dokuz gazetenin internet ortamında ulaşılabilen haberleri oluşturdu. Veriler, araştırma kapsamına alınan gazete haberlerinden, belirlenen anahtar kelimeler (anne, anne sütü, bebek, doğum, ebe, ebelik, emzirme, gebe, gebelik, hamilelik, lohusa, yenidoğan) ile yapılan tarama sonucunda elde edildi. Elde edilen veriler araştırmacılar tarafından 'Haber Değerlendirme Formu'na kaydedildi. İstatistiksel değerlendirmede; yüzdeler dağılımı, aritmetik ortalama ve standart sapma kullanıldı.

Bulgular: İncelenen haberler sırasıyla en fazla % 27.8 ile Gazete 4, %24.7 ile Gazete 6, %11.1 ile Gazete 1'den elde edilmiştir. Haberlerin; %9.5'inin manşet, %1.6'inin sürmanşette yer aldığı, %72.5'inde konuya uygun görselin olduğu, %67.1'inin ise aktüel haber niteliği taşıdığı belirlendi. Haberlerin sadece %28.5'inin sağlık çalışanları tarafından yazıldığı, %55.4'ünde ebelerle ait özel günlerin konu edildiği ve %63.9'unun yazı içeriğine ilişkin kaynağının belirtilmediği saptandı. Haberlerin; %49.4'ünün başlığının olumlu etki olarak algılandığı ve %33.9'unun gebe-gebelik-hamile-hamilelik kelimelerine ilişkin başlık içerdiği saptandı. Gazetelerdeki haber içeriklerinde en sık fiziksel durum ve/veya problem (%22.5) konularının ele alındığı belirlendi.

Sonuç: Elde edilen haberlerin genellikle güncel durum vermeye yönelik, bilgilendirici haber niteliğinde olduğu ve çok az bir kısmının sağlık çalışanları tarafından ele alındığı belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca gazetelerin yarısından fazlasında ebelerle ait özel günlere ilişkin haberlerin yer aldığı, haberlerin sadece üçte birinin yazı içeriğine ilişkin kaynağının belirtildiği, yaklaşık yarısının olumlu haber niteliğinde olduğu ve en sık gebe-gebelik-hamile-hamilelik anahtar kelimelerine ilişkin haberlerin kaleme alındığı belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anne; doğurganlık; ebe; gazete; kadın

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is a significant method of transferring knowledge and experience and with communication, consensus and awareness are formed about a topic in the society. Communication about disease and health constitutes the most vital aspect of human experiences (1). One of the fundamental objectives of communication in health is to spread knowledge and educate people about health and diseases (2). Health communication by means of various media tools such as television, printed and visual media and internet has increased gradually in the recent years (3). Newspapers play a significant role in health communication. Newspapers allow people to access to information including symptoms of the disease, risk factors, existing treatments and recommendations for health-improving behaviours (2). For that reason, it can be said that healthcare information offered by printed and visual media has more physical impact and reach than the information offered by healthcare professionals (4).

Newspapers are considered as one of printed media tools with the potential to change society's health status positively or negatively (5). The health of women, who have a significant place in the society, are under such positive and negative impact of the newspaper (6). Women's health is affected by a number of factors such as psychosocial factors, family and social structure, woman's individual health status, fertility behaviour and quality of healthcare services. One of the most important ones of those factors is considered to be the media (5). Key role for protecting and improving women's health is given to midwives (6). Midwives offer services during pregnancy, birth and the entire postpartum period in which the woman is located in the centre (7). In that context, midwives offer care and service to the woman and the newborn fundamentally and to the society generally (8). Midwifery has a significant social position and midwifery has a direct impact on public health (9).

A lot of positive and negative news about midwives and fertility were covered in the media. It is necessary that the impact of media especially on people's perceptions and expectations about birth is examined carefully (10). In the literature, it is reported that pregnancy and labour is not a disease, but a natural, normal and healthy function of the body and all kinds of unnecessary intervention have negative impacts on the birth process. However, painful labour scenes shown on visual media cause that women create a negative labour image (11). Therefore, the image that labour is a painful, bloody and scary occasion makes the women think that they will have this terrifying experience about vaginal labour during pregnancy as well and this focuses their preferences on C-section (5). This may increase unnecessary C-section rates. It was presented in studies conducted that mothers obtain most of the information about pregnancy, labour and child raising from printed media and printed media is effective in medicalizing the labour (12).

World Health Organization (WHO) states that women want a positive labour experience which meets their

personal and sociocultural expectations (13). Therefore, it is necessary to use media's support as well for positive labour experience and continuous midwife support. Reducing C-section rates and encouraging the society towards vaginal delivery is quite important for both women's health and national aspects. For that reason, it is necessary to expand midwifery roles which have narrowed down in our country's healthcare system the media is largely responsible in that matter. Health news without due diligence damage the public health (14). It is necessary to encourage proper use of the media which might be quite effective in improving women's health (5). The aim of this research is to make content analysis for the news about midwifery and fertility written by nine national newspapers with high circulation in Turkey and shed light to the press perception in Turkey about these matters.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Population of this retrospective descriptive study consisted of news of nine newspapers with the highest circulation in Turkey between 04.05.2020 and 10.05.2020 which were accessible on the internet between 1 July 2019 and 1 July 2020. In daily circulation assessment, the data on May 2020 periodical of Press Advertisement Agency was taken into consideration (15). According to the data taken into consideration; Sabah, Hürriyet, Sözcü, Milliyet, Türkiye, Posta, Akşam, Yeni Şafak and Takvim newspapers were reviewed within the scope of the study using Google search engine. In the evaluation, newspapers are indicated as Newspaper 1 (Sabah), Newspaper 2 (Hürriyet), Newspaper 3 (Sözcü), Newspaper 4 (Milliyet), Newspaper 5 (Türkiye), Newspaper 6 (Posta), Newspaper 7 (Akşam), Newspaper 8 (Yeni Şafak) and Newspaper 9 (Takvim). Headline news of the nine newspapers identified according to circulation, which were accessed on the internet within the last one year and news obtained as a result of searching the keywords "mother, breast milk, baby, birth, midwife, midwifery, breastfeeding, pregnant, gestation, pregnancy, postpartum, newborn" in the search engines on websites of the newspapers were evaluated (16). 345 news were reached about midwifery and fertility. However, 29 duplicate news were eliminated and 316 news in total constituted the population of the research.

The news obtained as a result of review were read by the primary researcher who is a midwifery specialist and the links on the internet address bar and the contents of the news suitable for inclusion criteria were recorded. A similar procedure was implemented by the three other researchers and deficient selection was avoided and suggested news were included in the data collection form. Inclusion criteria was that the headline or contents of the news contain at least a few sentences about midwifery and fertility.

The data was collected by means of the data collection form drawn up by the researchers. News were reviewed from official webpages of the newspapers. Online newspaper news link and news content were written in a Word document and the data obtained was entered in the

form. Each researcher evaluated the news and necessary corrections were made on the data collection form and the study is completed. The definitions used in evaluation of the research data are:

News: "Information, advice obtained about an incident, a phenomenon. Information conveyed through communication or media organs" (17).

Mother: Woman with child, mom, old lady (18)

Breast milk: Breast milk is the milk produced by the female human and used for feeding the newborn (19).

Baby: Breastfeeding or lap child (18).

Birth: The act of being born (18).

Midwife: The woman who helps women when they are having a baby (18).

Midwifery: "The state of being a midwife or the work done by midwife. The gift given to the midwife who helped the labour (18).

Breastfeeding: The process of feeding a mammal's breast milk to her infant (20).

Impregnate: With a baby in her womb (woman or animal), loaded, pregnant (18).

Pregnancy: The state of being pregnant, gestation (18).

Pregnant: Impregnate (18).

Gestation: Pregnancy (18).

Postpartum: A woman who had a baby recently (18).

Newborn: 0-28 days old baby (18).

Newspaper: "A periodical publication published daily or on certain intervals with or without commentary to deliver news and information about politics, economy, culture and other topics" (18).

Circulation: Number of printing (18).

Data Collection Tools

News Evaluation Form

It is a form which is prepared by the researchers in accordance with literature review and contains questions about reviewing the news (21-24).

Questions used for reviewing the news are the name of the newspaper, location of the news on the main page (subheading, headline, etc.), type of article (updated status/information, column, interview, etc.), visuals of the news (photograph-picture-graph available or not, etc.), impact type of the news, source of the news, owner of the news, news content (diagnosis, treatment, physical problems, etc.), presence of news on midwives' day, midwives' week, etc. on the newspaper, the period when the news is published (weekdays, weekend), status of citing the source for article content, positive or negative impact of the news title, headline, keyword searched according to headline, the link to the news.

Data Evaluation

The data is encoded and evaluated on computer using SPSS 25.0 software package (Statistical Package for

the Social Sciences Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). Percentage distribution, arithmetic average and standard deviation are used in statistical evaluation.

Ethical Regulations

For implementation of the research, approval is taken from Republic of Turkey, İnönü İnönü University, Scientific Research and Publication Ethical Committee, Medical Sciences Non-Invasive Clinical Researches Ethical Committee (Decision No: 2020/937).

Limitations of the Research

This research is limited to the news published on 9 newspapers between 1 July 2019 and 1 July 2020. Another limitation is that the news were reviewed on the web pages of the newspapers, not on the printed original copies.

RESULTS

Distribution of the number of news covered in newspapers is given in Table 1. According to the results obtained, the highest percentage of reviewed news were obtained from Newspaper 4 by 27.8%, Newspaper 6 by 24.7% and Newspaper 1 by 11.1% respectively.

Table 1. Distribution of the number of news covered in newspapers (n=316)

Newspapers Name	n	%
Newspaper 1 (Sabah)	35	11.1
Newspaper 2 (Hürriyet)	34	10.8
Newspaper 3 (Sözcü)	20	6.3
Newspaper 4 (Milliyet)	88	27.8
Newspaper 5 (Türkiye)	28	8.9
Newspaper 6 (Posta)	78	24.7
Newspaper 7 (Akşam)	18	5.7
Newspaper 8 (Yeni Şafak)	8	2.5
Newspaper 9 (Takvim)	7	2.2
Total	316	100

Distribution of keywords included in headlines is given in Table 2. When we look at the keywords included in headlines, there are news about pregnant-pregnancy by 33.9%, birth by 16.8% and breast milk-breastfeeding by 15.2%.

Table 2. Distribution of keywords included in headlines (n=316)

Keywords Included in Headlines	n	%
Pregnancy -Pregnant-Pregnant Women	107	33.9
Birth	53	16.8
Breast Milk-Breastfeeding	48	15.1
Baby-Newborn	46	14.6
Mother	30	9.5
Postpartum woman-Postpartum	21	6.6
Midwife-Midwifery	11	3.5
Total	316	100.0

Table 3. Distribution of descriptive features about newspaper news (n=316)		
Descriptive Features		
News Position on Home Page	n	%
Other Part / Section (Upper, Middle and Lower Part)	281	88.9
Headline	30	9.5
Subheading	5	1.6
News Post Type		
Current News	212	67.1
Interview	48	15.2
Corner post	33	10.4
Magazine	15	4.7
Public (T. C. Ministry of Health and / or Appointment)	7	2.3
Advertisement	1	0.3
Visual Status of the News		
There are visuals and suitable for the topic	229	72.5
There are visuals and not suitable for the topic	45	14.2
No visuals	42	13.3
The Impact of the Headline		
Positive ^a	156	49.4
Neither positive nor negative / Information	86	27.2
Negative ^b	74	23.4
News Source		
Citizens of the Republic of Turkey	299	94.6
External sources	12	3.8
Foreign Nationals Living in Turkey	5	1.6
News Owner		
Newspaper worker / writer	226	71.5
Expert / Health worker	90	28.5
News Content		
Physical matters and/or problems (Pregnancy and breastfeeding pe-riod changes, etc.)	71	22.5
Description/introduction (Introduction of a product used in breastfee-ding period etc.)	70	22.2
Diagnosis-treatment ("What is Mastitis and how it should be treated" etc.)	49	15.5
Pregnancy and Breastfeeding during Covid-19	35	11.1
Psychosocial matters and/or problems (Postpartum depression and treatment etc.)	17	5.4
Legal matters and/or problems ("Sued the Doctor" etc.)	16	5.1
News about healthcare professionals	15	4.7
Magazine (Pregnancy and birth news of celebrities etc.)	14	4.4
Economic matters and/or problems (Child support after birth etc.)	11	3.5
News about healthcare organizations	10	3.1
Aesthetic matters and/or problems (Vaginoplasty etc.)	8	2.5
The Period When the News was Published		
Weekdays	260	82.3
Weekend	56	17.7
Source of Text Content		
There is a source	114	36.1
No source	202	63.9
News Status Regarding Special Days Regarding Midwives		
Yes	175	55.4
No	141	44.6
Total	316	100.0

^a Sample Headline; "At least 7.470 Turkish Liras for new mothers in 2020 (<https://www.posta.com.tr/>)" etc.

^b Sample Headline; "Breaking News: Terrible end in the birth in Ankara! Baby's head off... (<https://www.milliyet.com.tr/>)", "Breaking News: Terrifying birth moments astounded those around! Twisted in pain... (<https://www.sabah.com.tr/>)" etc.

Distribution of descriptive features about newspaper news is given in Table 3. The news found are on the headline by 9.5% and subheading by 1.6%. 72.5% of the news had visuals suitable to the topic. The impact that the news left is evaluated as positive by 49.4%. The sources of the news written by newspaper employees by 71.5% are the citizens of the Republic of Turkey by 94.6%. When we look at the news covered on newspapers, the most frequent news content is identified as physical status and/or problem by 22.5%. 55.4% of the newspapers covered news about special days for midwives. 82.3% of the news were published on weekdays. It was found that 63.9% of the news did not cite the source for the article content.

DISCUSSION

Today, when we say media (mass communication tools); especially newspaper, magazine, theatre, video, cinema, radio, television and internet come to mind (25). Media is considered as a significant force in all fields. One of these fields is the field of health (24). The power of media in the field of health has a significant impact of public's perceptions of health problems (26). Media is used especially in critical areas such as preventing and management of addictive items such as smoking-alcohol or cancer and chronic diseases. Furthermore, using media as a source of information in the field of health takes a significant place in acquiring and maintaining health improving behaviours (27). Media has important impacts on women's and family health. It is especially emphasized that defective and deficient information on labour or terrifying scenes and dialogues covered on the media create a negative impact on vaginal delivery and has a great share in the increase in elective C-section rates (5, 24, 28, 29). In this section, results on the news of nine national newspapers with high circulation in Turkey about midwifery and fertility are discussed with the related literature.

In this research in which we review the newspaper news on midwifery and fertility concepts in Turkey; the most news were obtained from Newspaper 4 by 27.8%, Newspaper 6 by 24.7% and Newspaper 1 by 11.1% (Table 1). In the research, it was found that the position of news on midwifery and fertility is mostly on the other part (top, middle and bottom part) (88.9%) (Table 3). In literature review, it was found in a study reviewing news on women that the news are quite few on the headline and subheading (21- 23, 30) and health related news are mostly published on other parts of the newspaper (22) similar to our results.

In the research, type of the news on midwifery and fertility concepts consists of actual news by 67.1%. In terms of impact type of the news, it was determined that 72.5% of the news are informative news (Table 3). As specified in the report drawn up by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (31) commission, the functions of the media are listed as informing, socialization, motivation, discussion, education, cultural development, entertainment and participation (22-25,

30, 31). In addition, there is a society trying to increase their e-health literacy for keeping healthy and it is usual that such news are made (23, 32). When evaluated in that respect, the fact that news on midwifery and fertility obtained on the research are informative is a result in compliance with the literature (24, 25, 32). However, it is also important that the information given contains correct information on the matter and is supported by the experts or organizations (23, 33). In this research, it was determined that 71.5% of the news are made by newspaper employees and only 28.5% are made by healthcare professionals (Table 3). In literature review, it is thought that health news reviewed are mostly made by newspaper reporters due to the reasons that there is no standard about the source of newspaper news in Turkey as well as the entire world and the news are made mostly with rating concerns (24, 33). Furthermore, it is a known fact that newspapers have the potential to change attitude, behaviour and perceptions of masses as means for conveying information. For that reason, scope and content of every news on health and by whom the content is prepared become important (24). For a "healthy" health journalism away from sensation, it is necessary to employ health reporters specialized on their fields at all media organizations (23). In addition, it was determined that 55.4% of the news obtained in this research covered news on special days for midwives (Table 3). As many professional groups, coverage of news on midwives' day or midwives' week on newspapers can also be evaluated as a positive result. The result obtained can be interpreted as a positive indicator showing that news on special days for midwives are covered on newspapers with high circulation in Turkey.

In the research, it was found that the news on midwifery and fertility contained visuals and such visuals are suitable for the matter (72.5%) (Table 3). In addition, it was determined that a great part of the news sources is the citizens of the Republic of Turkey (94.6%) (Table 3). As a result of the investigation made, it can be said that this result complies with the literature (22). Unlike our result, studies reporting that news about external sources are made more were found as well (30, 33). When the news contents are reviewed, it is seen that there are news on physical matters and/or problems such as "pregnancy and breastfeeding period changes" (22.5%), description/introduction such as "introduction of a product used in breastfeeding period etc." (22.2%), diagnosis-treatment such as "What is Mastitis and how it should be treated" (15.5% and "pregnancy and breastfeeding during Covid-19" (11.1%) (Table 3). When the studies in the literature are reviewed, it was seen that other studies containing keywords focus on physical matters and/or problems such as changes concerning women and experience when a woman becomes a mother similar to our result (22-24, 34). Furthermore, it is necessary not to lead the individual and society to panic or to avoid news which would give false hope as much as possible. For that reason, it is important to be diligent while choosing

the words to be used in health news (21, 23, 33). In the review, it was determined that news evaluated in this research have left a positive impact on 49.4% of the readers. In literature review, it was found that there is mostly a male-dominant discourse in the news on and about women, but the news in which women are reflected positively are in majority (35).

When we look at the searched keyword according to the headline in the results of our study, it was determined that there are news on pregnant-pregnancy by 33.9% and on breast milk and breastfeeding by 15.2% (Table 2). In literature review, it was found that keywords similar to our result are used in the studies on the news about women and women's health (35,36). It can be said that this is because news on women's fertility are news that can draw attention of all walks of life (22). Furthermore, it was found that sources for the article contents are not cited in 63.9% of the news obtained (Table 3). When we look at the health news on newspapers, it is seen that the source of the article contents is not cited in most of them (Table 3). Although news in which sources are cited in were found in literature review (22), there are also studies in which the sources are cited at very low rates similar to our result (33). While press groups do not give much importance to the source, the reader is curious about and wants to learn the source. The reader would like to be sure about the accuracy of the information given by looking at the news source. In addition, technological developments are at top level today and there are more opportunities to reach the sources in news made by journalists on the field of health. In that respect, it is recommended that right sources are accessed in the news and such sources are cited in the news (23, 33).

CONCLUSION

In this research where content analysis is made for the news on midwifery and fertility covered in nine national newspapers with high circulation in Turkey; it was determined that the news are intended for giving updated status, they are newsworthy and very few of the news are written by healthcare professionals. In addition, it was determined that more than half of the newspapers covered news of special days for midwives, only one third of the news contained the source for the article, approximately half of them were positive news and news regarding pregnant-pregnancy keywords were written most frequently in terms of the keywords searched according to the headlines.

In the society, women use the mass communication tools at the most and they make searches with the purpose of obtaining information for themselves and their families. Midwives who are advocate and protector of women's rights should have a raised awareness about the news on women's health covered in the media and they should raise awareness among women about these matters. Midwives should use the enlightening and guiding power of mass communication tools such as newspapers and television effectively and productively in matters related

to their field. Furthermore, it should be ensured that media, which might be effective in improving women's health and supporting fertility, is used properly. Important duties rest on both healthcare and media professionals on that matter.

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