

## Utilization of Health Related Media Sources among Women

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### Abstract

**Objective:** The aim of this study was to determine women's utilizations from health-related media resources. **Material and Methods:** This descriptive study was conducted on women attending in a Centre of Public Education in Corum. The population of study was the 120 women who already had been attending in these courses. To collect the data a 25 item questionnaire form was used related with socio-demographic features, health behaviors and health related media sources of women. The data was evaluated by SPSS 17.0 programme using frequency distributions. **Results:** The 91,6 % of women used internet for getting information about health, 77, 1% of were informed about social responsibility projects. The 65% of the participants found that social responsibility projects were effective on health behaviours and 73, 5% of the women followed the media about illnesses and treatments. **Conclusion:** As a result of this study, it was found that the participants used visual media sufficiently. However, the same situation is not true for printed media. In line with these findings, improvement in the women's educational level and educative programmes on mass media raising awareness about issues such as health are required.

**Keywords:** media sources, utilization of health related, women

### Introduction

Women's health, family and community from the psycho-social factors, individual health status of women, are affected by many factors such as fertility behaviour. Education, employment, gender roles, number of children, the elderly and frequent delivery very early and those that come to mind first (Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women, 2008).

Women and health issues can be grouped into two main headings. First, women's health issues and disease risks, and the other existing services for women and by women, access to health services is related to how much they can be used. Women's health issues, and in particular the risk of diseases affecting public health problem in women's health in general. The life expectancy of women is longer compared to men, yet women undergo more illnesses and stress than men in most of the societies. It has been acknowledged that women experience problems related to reproduction. These problems might occur both in reproductive and menopause period (Akın and Mihçioğur, 2010).

It is a known fact that many women still work under negative conditions in Turkish society. Again, it is reality that women are exposed to violence more than men. In case of married woman's working, she excessively suffers from the stress caused by the working environment and being "the mother of the house" situation (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2005). The improvement of health term refers to several sectors concerning collaboration with health. Mass media is one of the most important ones. Mass media are the materials we use often and of certain roles in daily life. Mass media have significant effects on knowledge acquisition and transferring this knowledge into behaviour. Among the mass media, TV is an eye-catching and reachable one among other devices (Güler, 2006: 25 Anker, et al; 2011; Mukherjee et al, 2012). In recent studies, we observe that people lead TV-focused lives (Tian and Robinson, 2008). The commercials are highly used since they have a highly convincing power on people. Being another mass media, the newspapers are known to be followed by a specific segment of the Turkish society. The fact that TV serves everything as 'ready-made' cause idleness among people, and consequently people do not read newspapers (Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women, 2008). The aim of this study was to determine women's utilizations from health-related media resources.

### **Methods**

This descriptive study took place between March 1<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> in a Public Training Centre in Corum. In Public Training Centre several courses are arranged for adults education related to computers, embroidery, and music and marbling art. The population of study was the 120 women who already had been attending in these courses. In this vein, without sample selection 83 women were accessible, and were interviewed through face-to-face method. To collect the data a 25 item questionnaire form was used related with socio-demographic features, health behaviors and health related media sources of women. The data were analysed through SPSS 17.0 and frequency distributions were used in the statistical analysis.

### **Results and Discussion**

The sample comprises of only women. The women joining in the courses at Corum Public Training Centre were determined to be in the young profile. The 61,4% of them were single women and 59,0% of them were secondary school graduates; 34,9% of them are housewives and 47% of these women's monthly income was lower than their expenses (Table 1).

**Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Women**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Female	83	100,0
<b>Age group</b>		
18-22	73	88,0
23-27	10	12,0
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	51	61,4
Married	32	38,6
<b>Educational background</b>		
Primary school	26	31,3
Secondary school	49	59,0
High school	8	9,7
<b>Profession</b>		
Housewife	29	34,9
Officer	2	2,4
Health personnel	23	27,7
Student	29	35,0
<b>Income state</b>		
Income more than outcome	7	8,4
Income and outcome equal	37	44,6
Outcome more than income	39	47,0
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100,0</b>

The 74,7% of the participants expressed that they never smoked, 42,2% rarely do exercise, 43,4% sometimes buy newspapers, 91,6 % use internet for getting information about health, 45,8 % were interested in books, booklets, brochures and public spots (Table 2). The 77, 1% of them were reported to be informed about social responsibility projects. In the current study 91,6% of women reported that they were using internet to get information about health. A study related with this topic showed lower results (49.4%) than our study (Yilmazel et al., 2013).

**Table 2. Various Health Behaviours of Women**

<b>Smoking</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Never smoking	62	74,7
Quitters	9	10,8
Still smoking	12	14,5
<b>Doing exercise</b>		
Once a week	7	8,4
3-4 times a week	14	16,9
Now and then	35	42,2
Never	27	32,5
<b>The frequency of reading newspapers</b>		
Every day	24	28,9
Weekends generally	7	8,4
Once a month	4	4,8
Now and then	36	43,4
Never	12	14,5
<b>The often use of internet to get information at home</b>		
Yes	76	91,6
No	7	7,2
<b>The interest in books, booklets, brochures and public spots about health</b>		
Always	13	15,7
Often	20	24,1
Sometimes	38	45,8
Rarely	8	9,6
Never	4	4,8
<b>Mostly attracted media</b>		
TV	49	59,0
Newspaper	7	8,4
Magazine	1	1,2
Internet	26	31,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100,0</b>

The 65% of the participants expressed that social responsibility projects were effective on health behaviours. The 83,1 % of the participants heard about ‘smoke-free air zone’ project before, ‘quitting smoking’ project followed it with 81,9%. The 20,5 % of the women were informed about ‘HIV vaccine against cervical cancer’ as well (Table 3). Women’s rates were higher who were informed about social responsibility projects of smoking and health of heart than other projects. This result may be come from effective public spots. Because in our country, public spots were common on media especially related with smoking and heart health.

**Table 3. The Responses of the Participants about Certain Active Social Responsibility Projects**

Social Responsibility Projects	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
To be informed about ‘Love your heart, get dressed in red’ project	63	75,9	20	24,1
To be informed about Campaign against obesity’ social responsibility project	58	69,9	25	30,1
To be informed about ‘Smoke-free air zone’ social responsibility project	69	83,1	14	16,9
To be informed about Campaign against diabetes social responsibility project	20	24,1	63	75,9
To be informed about ‘Breast cancer consciousness raising’ social responsibility project	41	49,4	42	50,6
To be informed about ‘Quitting smoking social responsibility project	68	81,9	15	18,1
To be informed about ‘‘HIV vaccine against cervical cancer’ social responsibility project	17	20,5	66	79,5

\* Participants marked more than one options.

73,5% of the women within the scope of this study followed the media about illnesses and treatments, 69,9% about nutrition and diet, 56,6% about health researches, 20,5% about sex-related issues (Table 4). It was reported that most of mass media tools aimed to promote the use of health services (Grilli et al, 2009, Koparan, 2007). In our study, approximately two-thirds majority expressed that social responsibility projects were effective on health behaviours. Also illness and treatments, nutrition and diet were the most attractive subjects on mass media.

**Table 4. Attractive Health Issues on Media**

Attractive health issues on media (n=83) *	Number	%
Health politics	38	45,8
Illnesses and treatments	61	73,5
Medicines	33	39,8
Nutrition and diet	58	69,9
Health researches	47	56,6
Maternal and infant health	28	33,7
Sexuality	17	20,5
Psychology	35	42,2
Mouth and dental health	38	45,8

\* Participants marked more than one options.

### **Conclusion**

As a result of this study, it was found that the participants used visual media sufficiently. However, the same situation is not true for printed media. In line with these findings, improvement in the women's educational level and educative programmes on mass media raising awareness about issues such as women's health are required.

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