

## Coverage of Home Science information in selected Dailies

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### ABSTRACT

The research investigation was carried out during the period of five months i.e. from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2007 in Parabhani district of Maharashtra state to know the home science subject coverage in selected dailies. On high circulation basis, two national English (Times of India and Indian Express) and two regional Marathi (Sakal and Lokmat) dailies were selected. The findings revealed that out of total 1999 home science articles from all four newspapers, maximum articles belonged to human development (33.12%) followed by food science and nutrition (25.26%) and home science extension education (16.61%). Majority of them were published in the form of feature articles (34.31%) followed by news items (29.01%) and recipes (11.00%).

**KEY WORDS:** Food science, Human development, Family resource management, Home science extension education

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Approximately two decades back readers of newspapers had little or no choice in the matter. They used to bring and read or tried to read whatever was available. Only serious minded people and those having sufficient information about surroundings could utilize the newspapers properly. Considering this drawback, about ten years ago, the newspapers started publishing supplements and special pages on family related home science information which cater to varied tastes and interests such as foods and nutrition, diet and health, exercise and fitness, family relationship, human development, home decoration, craft making, psychological aspects, environmental issues, women and children welfare programmes, etc. In almost all language newspapers these types of supplements are included with attractive titles, alluring colours, enticing get up, with sensational stories and articles for the readers' attention.

Special page is a supplement attached to the daily newspaper or a special page in the daily itself. This page is targeted to a particular audience interested in specific field which may be related to women, children, health, development, business, politics, sports, science and technology, advertising, general articles, film, agriculture, entertainment, etc.

The reasons behind growth of these supplements may be growth of formal education, industrialization, consequent employment opportunities and leisure time reading of the middle and urban class women. These supplements can be read at home in leisurely surroundings

and by almost every member of the family.

Home science education integrates the application of knowledge synthesized from different sciences and humanities to improve the human environment, family nutrition, management of resources, child development and consumer competences. Many studies have been conducted for seeking coverage of agricultural information, women related issues, sports news, foreign news etc. However, none or few have touched upon the coverage of home science related aspects.

Hence, with the intention to know the coverage and content of home science related information published in dailies, the present study has been undertaken in order to fulfil the following objectives: to study the coverage of home science related information in the selected dailies and to seek the frequency of appearance of home science related information under different categories of articles.

### RESEARCH METHODS

Based on high circulation, two English and two Marathi dailies were selected for the purpose of research. The English dailies selected were 'Times of India' and 'Indian Express' whereas the Marathi dailies selected were 'Sakal' and 'Lokmat'. All these newspapers publish family related home science information under different headings in one or the other form daily or weekly. The sample was selected from the specified newspapers, only during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2007

excluding the only general holiday on which newspaper was not published. A total of 1999 issues regarding home science subject published in selected two national English and two regional Marathi dailies formed the sample of the universe.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study as well as relevance discussion have been summarized under following heads:

### Distribution of newspaper articles according to main areas of home science:

Distribution of newspaper articles according to main eight areas of home science has been shown in Table 1. Here, miscellaneous category included topics such as family lifestyle of different generations, care during different seasons, various cultures, religious customs and tradition etc. Totally 1999 items were recorded related to home science subjects from all four newspapers. National English newspapers on an average published 543 items, whereas, regional Marathi newspapers reported on an average 456.50 items. Thus, as compared to national English newspapers, regional Marathi newspapers contained lesser number of newspaper articles.

Out of a total of 1999 items reported by all four newspapers, maximum number of items belonged to human development (33.12%) followed by food science and nutrition (25.26%) and home science extension (16.61%). Comparatively the items under the area of clothing and textile and miscellaneous appeared with less percentage of 2.15 and 0.95, respectively.

Considering average 543 items published by national English newspapers, items related to human development

had maximum percentage (36.65%) followed by home science extension education (18.60%) and food science and nutrition (16.48%). Among national newspapers, human development bagged first place in both Times of India (40.75%) and Indian Express (33.39%). Food science and nutrition acquired second place in Indian Express (18.84%), whereas, third place in Times of India (13.51%). Home science extension education was given third place in Indian Express (17.52%) and second place in Times of India (19.96%).

In respect of average 456.50 items appeared in regional Marathi newspapers, maximum number of items (35.71%) were on food science and nutrition followed by human development (28.92%) and home science extension education (14.24%). Considering regional newspapers individually, food science and nutrition acquired first position in both Sakal (34.97%) and Lokmat (36.42%), whereas, human development acquired second position in both of them with 33.85 and 24.14 per cent. Third position was gained by health and hygiene and home science extension education in Sakal (13.36%) and Lokmat (19.61%), respectively.

Thus, items related to human development, home science extension education and food science and nutrition were found to be most often reported home science issues by the national level newspapers as well as regional newspapers. Articles related to home science subject were highest in number in Indian Express among all four selected newspapers (Table 1).

Human development is very significant issue which is closely related to human life. The topics like child related issues, psychological aspects, stress management strategies, human relationship, gender discrimination etc.

**Table 1: Distribution of newspaper articles according to main areas of home science (n=1999)**

Home science areas	Name of the newspaper						Total
	English			Marathi			
	Times of India	Indian Express	Average	Sakal	Lokmat	Average	
Food science and nutrition	65(13.51)	114(18.84)	89.50 (16.48)	157( 34.97)	169(36.42)	163(35.71)	505 (25.26)
Human development	196(40.75)	202(33.39)	199 (36.65)	152(33.85)	112(24.14)	132(28.92)	662 (33.12)
Family resource management	59 (12.27)	65(10.74)	62 (11.42)	17(3.79)	31(6.68)	24 (5.26)	172 (8.60)
Clothing and textile	8(1.66)	19(3.14)	13.50 (2.49)	8(1.78)	8 (1.72)	8(1.75)	43 (2.15)
Home science extension education	96(19.96)	106(17.52)	101 (18.60)	39(8.69)	91(19.61)	65(14.24)	332 (16.61)
Health and hygiene	47(9.77)	87(14.38)	67 (12.34)	60(13.36)	27(5.82)	43.50 (9.53)	221 (11.05)
Skincare, hair care and beauty concerns	4(0.83)	9(1.87)	6.5 (1.20)	10(2.23)	22(4.74)	16 (3.50)	45 (2.25)
Miscellaneous	6(1.25)	3(0.50)	4.5 (0.83)	6(1.37)	4 (0.86)	5(1.09)	19 (0.95)
Total	481(100)	605 (100)	543 (100)	449 (100)	464 (100)	456.50 (100)	1999 (100)

Parentheses indicate percentage

are providing interesting news stories to the newspapers. Hence, human development area might have taken first place in both the national as well as regional dailies.

Food science and nutrition area was covered with second preference by selected dailies. It may be because of the reason that food is the main basic need of the human being and now-a-days people have become more conscious about diet and fitness. Another reason may be that majority of the items under this area were recipes, because both regional newspapers were publishing recipes almost daily. Thus, so many number of recipes might have made significant contribution in giving second position to food science and nutrition area.

Selected dailies gave third rank to home science extension education. The area of home science extension education includes various welfare and developmental aspects, social issues, women empowerment, etc. In these days, government is implementing various welfare and developmental schemes for the benefit of vulnerable groups, backward and poor people. Only the beneficiaries of such schemes and programmes may be interested to

read. Hence, for informing people about such welfare schemes, social issues, women empowerment, Panchayat raj etc., home science extension education area might have covered with third rank.

All the news papers covered clothing and textile related newspaper articles with very less percentage. The possible reason could be that the newspapers may not feel much importance for this area. There may not be much realization that this area has its own significance and should be given sufficient attention.

**Appearance of home science information in selected dailies under different categories of newspaper articles:**

Table 2 reveals the appearance of home science information in selected dailies under different categories of articles such as news items, feature articles, editorials, etc. It was observed that out of total items feature articles were found to be published with maximum percentage (34.31%) followed by news items (29.01%) and recipes (11%). Home science related items in the form of

**Table 2: Appearance of home science information in selected dailies under different categories of newspaper articles (n=1999)**

Sr. No.	Categories of home science articles	Name of the newspaper						Total
		English		Marathi				
		Times of India	Indian Express	Average	Sakal	Lokmat	Average	
1.	News items	207(43.03)	240(39.67)	223.5(41.16)	45(10.02)	88 (18.96)	66.5(14.57)	580(29.01)
2.	Feature articles	161(33.47)	206(34.05)	183.5(33.79)	151(33.63)	168(36.21)	159.5(34.94)	686(34.31)
3.	Editorials	23(4.78)	9(1.49)	16(2.95)	6(1.34)	7(1.51)	6.5(1.42)	45(2.25)
4.	Letters to editor	37(7.69)	18(2.97)	27.5(5.06)	24(5.34)	51(10.99)	37.5(8.21)	130(6.50)
5.	Question and answer	7(1.45)	22(3.64)	14.5(2.67)	27(6.01)	7(1.51)	17(3.72)	63 (3.15)
6.	Book reviews	6(1.25)	4(0.66)	5(0.92)	9(2.00)	9(1.94)	9 (1.97)	28 (1.40)
7.	Success stories	17(3.53)	38(6.28)	27.5(5.06)	11(2.45)	9(1.94)	10 (2.19)	75 (3.75)
8.	Research findings	2(0.42)	55(9.09)	28.5(5.25)	46(10.24)	1(0.21)	23.5 (5.15)	104 (5.20)
9.	Domestic/beauty tips	-	-	-	16(3.56)	18(3.88)	15 (3.28)	34 (1.70)
10.	Recipes	1(0.21)	1(0.16)	1(0.18)	114(25.39)	104(22.41)	109(23.88)	220 (11.0)
11.	Educational messages	-	10(1.65)	5(0.92)	-	2(0.43)	1(0.22)	12 (0.60)
12.	Views	18(3.74)	-	9(1.66)	-	-	-	18 (0.90)
13.	Interviews	1(0.21)	-	0.5(0.09)	-	-	-	1(0.05)
14.	Reviews	1(0.21)	-	0.5(0.09)	-	-	-	1(0.05)
15.	New arrivals	-	2(0.33)	1(0.18)	-	-	-	2 (0.10)
	Total	481(100)	605(100)	543(100)	449 (100)	464 (100)	465.5 (100)	1999 (100)

Parentheses indicate percentage

interview and review appeared only once each.

National English dailies reported the maximum news items (41.16%) followed by feature articles (33.79%). Domestic or any type of tips did not appear even once in both the newspapers. News items were reported with maximum percentage in both Times of India (43.03%) and Indian Express (39.67%) followed by feature articles with 33.47 and 34.05 per cent respectively. Among both the newspapers, only Times of India published views, interviews and reviews, whereas, educational messages and new arrivals appeared in Indian Express only.

Majority of the newspaper items published in regional Marathi dailies belonged to feature article category (34.94%) followed by recipes (23.88%) and news items (14.57%). Views, interviews, reviews and new arrivals did not appear in both the Marathi newspapers. Feature articles were given first preference in both Sakal (33.63%) and Lokmat (36.21) followed by recipes with 25.39 and 22.41 per cent, respectively. Sakal gave third preference to research findings (10.24%), whereas, news items were given third preference by Lokmat (18.96%).

Thus, it is clear from Table 2 that Indian Express recorded highest number of news items and feature articles, related to home science, whereas, highest number of editorials appeared in Times of India. Most of the home science items were in the form of news items and feature articles than other categories of newspaper items.

In the present study, the category or type of article refers to the general type of the item, such as news item, feature article, editorial, review of book etc., on home science subjects. When the distribution of type of newspaper items on home science subject was examined, it was found that most of the home science issues were in the form of feature articles followed by news items compared to other categories of newspaper items (Table 2). National English newspaper reported more news items than feature articles, whereas, regional Marathi newspapers published more feature articles than news items. The home science issues appeared in the form of interviews and reviews just once in only Times of India and twice in the form of new arrivals in Indian Express.

The important categories such as editorials, book reviews, question and answer and success stories also got very low coverage as a whole *i.e.*, less than five per cent. The national dailies were better in covering editorials and success stories with more percentage than regional dailies. The percentage of reporting book reviews was more by regional dailies than national dailies.

The probable reason for less number of editorials and book reviews on home science issues could be that the newspapers considered them least important to publish in the above forms. The editors or writers might have neglected the home science information by considering it mere a woman related subject.

The book reviews may be reported with more percentage by regional Marathi dailies than national English dailies because regional newspapers were read by majority of the readers of that particular region. Thus, ultimately book reviews published in regional dailies would be region specific, readable and of the interests of maximum readers of that particular region. Mehta (1998) and Banakar (1996) reported the similar findings.

On the whole it can be concluded that out of total 1999 home science articles from all four newspapers, maximum articles belonged to human development (33.12%) followed by food science and nutrition (25.26%) and home science extension education (16.61%). Majority of them published in the form of feature articles (34.31%) followed by news items (29.01%) and recipes (11.00%).

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