

Extent of prominence given to 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 1st April, 2007 to 31st August, 2007 in Parabhani district of Maharashtra state to know the prominence given to home science information 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. Around half of the items appeared in seventh and later pages followed by special supplement (25.76%) of newspaper. Majority of the home science articles were having headline width less than two columns and with one illustration. Most of them were containing black and white illustrations and in the form of pictures/photos.

KEY WORDS : Prominence, Page number, Headline width, Illustrations, Colour, Forms

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INTRODUCTION

Newspaper is like a mirror to the society in which the state of affairs gets reflected and demand attention of the public. It is only through newspaper that general public is informed and guided by. Newspapers are cosmopolitan in nature giving information on variety of subjects. This is the easiest and novel way of getting acquainted with knowledge. They are the best agents of mass communication (Arya, 2002).

Approximately two decades back contents of newspaper were readable by only serious minded people. But with the growth of media, demassification *i.e.*, separate information sources for the different segment of the audience had

increased and specialized newspapers were launched for a special audience having special taste. In other words, newspapers had started publishing supplements and special pages which cater to varied tastes and interests such as diet and fitness, family relationship, wise parenting, human psychology, ecological concerns, welfare programmes etc. These supplements can be read at home in leisurely surroundings and almost every member of the family.

In view of the fact that there are hardly any studies on the subject, an attempt was made with the objective to know the prominence given by selected dailies to the home science information in terms of page number; headline width; number, colour and form of illustrations.

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METHODOLOGY

Based on high circulation, two English and two Marathi dailies were selected for the purpose of research in Parabhani district of Maharashtra state. 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 1st April, 2007 to 31st 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.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

The experimental findings obtained from the present study have been discussed in following heads:

Distribution of home science related newspaper items according to page number :

Table 1 explains the distribution of home science related newspaper items over different pages *i.e.*, first page to last page and special supplements. It was evident that out of the total 1999 home science related items about half (50.60%) of the items appeared in seventh and later pages followed by special supplement (25.76%). Very less percentage of items appeared on the third page (2.75%) followed by sixth page (2.50%) and first page (2.40%). Approximately four to six per cent items appeared in remaining pages *viz.*, second, fourth and fifth page.

National English newspaper on an average reported more home science items (58.47%) on the seventh and later pages followed by special supplement (13.99%). Least number

of newspaper items were published in the sixth page with a percentage of 2.58.

A glance at the individual English dailies shows that home science issues appeared were more in percentage on seventh and later pages (62.37% and 55.37%) followed by special supplement (8.11% and 18.68%) in both English dailies Times of India and Indian Express, respectively. Least items appeared on the sixth page of Times of India (1.25%) and on the first and second page of Indian Express (2.97% each).

In respect of regional Marathi dailies, home science issues were recorded in seventh and later pages with highest percentage (42.06) followed by special supplement (39.76%). Very few items appeared on the first page with 0.33 per cent (Seemaprakalpa and Singh, 2013).

Considering regional Marathi newspapers individually, Sakal published home science issues more frequently in special supplements (56.79%) followed by seventh and later pages (26.25%). Reverse trend was found in case of Lokmat, *i.e.*, reporting of home science items more often on seventh and later pages (56.68%) followed by special supplements (23.27%). Lokmat recorded least items on first page (0.67%), whereas, there was not a single issue on first page of Sakal regarding home science subject.

Taking into consideration all selected four newspapers, Indian Express reported highest percentage of home science issues on seventh and later pages, whereas, Sakal published highest percentage of items in special supplements. Overall, it can be concluded that majority of the items appeared in special supplements and seventh and later pages in all newspapers.

The probable reason could be that in almost all newspapers, front page usually covers political news. Since in the main newspaper majority of the space is occupied by other topics such as politics, trade, defence, sports and various international issues, the newspaper might have started publishing home science information in special supplements.

Table 1: Distribution of home science related newspaper items according to page number (n=1999)

Sr. No.	Page number	Name of the newspaper						Total
		English		Average	Marathi		Average	
		Times of India	Indian express		Sakal	Lokmat		
1.	First page	27 (5.61)	18 (2.97)	22.5 (4.14)	-	3 (0.67)	1.5 (0.33)	48 (2.40)
2.	Second page	47 (9.77)	18 (2.97)	32.5 (5.98)	30 (6.68)	8 (1.72)	19 (4.16)	103 (5.15)
3.	Third page	19 (3.95)	29 (4.79)	24 (4.42)	2 (0.44)	5 (1.08)	3.5(0.77)	55 (2.75)
4.	Fourth page	15 (3.12)	19 (3.14)	17 (3.13)	29 (6.46)	60 (12.93)	44.5 (9.75)	123 (6.15)
5.	Fifth page	28 (5.82)	51 (8.43)	39.5 (7.27)	2 (0.44)	5 (1.08)	3.5 (0.77)	86 (4.30)
6.	Sixth page	6 (1.25)	22 (3.64)	14 (2.58)	10 (2.23)	12 (2.59)	11(2.41)	50 (2.50)
7.	Seventh and later pages	300 (62.37)	335 (55.37)	317.5(58.47)	121(26.95)	263 (56.68)	192(42.06)	1019(50.97)
8.	Special supplement	39 (8.11)	113 (18.68)	76 (13.99)	255 (56.79)	108 (23.27)	181.5(39.76)	515 (25.76)
	Total	481 (100)	605 (100)	543 (100)	449 (100)	464 (100)	456.5 (100)	1999 (100)

Parenthesis indicate percentage

These home science related supplements are of the common interests of most of the readers specially home makers. These special supplements might have started to increase the market value of the newspaper. Similar results were obtained by Banakar (1996).

Distribution of home science articles according to headline width:

Table 2 reveals the distribution of home science articles according to headline width. From the total 1999 newspaper items concerned with home science subject, 51.53 per cent items were having headline width less than two columns, whereas, 48.47 per cent items were having headline width two columns and above. On an average, national English newspapers recorded maximum (63.81%) items with headline width two columns and above and 36.19 per cent with less than two columns.

The home science issues in regional Marathi newspapers bearing headline width less than two columns appeared with maximum frequency (69.77%) and headline width two columns and above appeared with less frequency (30.23%).

Overall, it was noticed that national English newspapers were having more percentage of home science articles with

two columns and above headline width, whereas, regional Marathi newspapers were having more percentage of articles with less than two columns headline width.

The reason for more articles with small headline width may be that regional Marathi dailies had no strong stuff for home science issues to publish with big headlines. The possible reason for the issues with small headline width could be that the regional dailies considered the home science issues as the issues not important enough to have big headlines.

The lack of editors' concern and ignorance regarding need and importance of home science subject could be the reason for the items with small headlines. It is the sub editors' work to give headlines to editorials, news items, articles and other items. Banakar (1996) also found similar results.

Distribution of home science articles according to number of illustrations:

Table 3 gives the distribution of home science articles according to number of illustrations. It was seen that out of 1999 home science issues, half of them (49.17%) were containing one illustration and less than one fifth items were containing two and above illustrations (15.91%). About 35 per cent of items were having no illustrations.

National dailies reported maximum items (49.36%) with

Name of the newspaper	Headline width		Total
	Less than two columns	Two columns and above	
English			
Times of India	193 (40.12)	288 (59.88)	481 (100)
Indian express	200 (33.05)	405 (66.95)	605 (100)
Average	196.5 (36.19)	346.5 (63.81)	543 (100)
Marathi			
Sakal	304 (67.70)	145 (32.30)	449 (100)
Lokmat	333 (71.77)	131 (28.23)	464 (100)
Average	318.5 (69.77)	138 (30.23)	456.5 (100)
Total	1030 (51.53)	969 (48.47)	1999 (100)

Parenthesis indicate percentage

Name of the newspaper	Number of illustration		
	Nil	One	Two and above
English			
Times of India (n=481)	153 (31.81)	260 (54.05)	68 (14.14)
Indian express (n=605)	202 (33.39)	276 (45.62)	127 (20.99)
Average (n=543)	177.5 (32.69)	268 (49.36)	97.5 (17.95)
Marathi			
Sakal (n=449)	140 (31.18)	220 (48.99)	89 (19.83)
Lokmat (n=464)	203 (43.75)	227 (48.92)	34 (7.33)
Average (n=456.5)	171.5 (37.57)	223.5 (48.96)	61.5 (13.47)
Total (N=1999)	698 (34.92)	983 (49.17)	318 (15.91)

Parenthesis indicate percentage

one illustration and 17.95 per cent items with two and above illustrations. Nearly one third of the items were without illustrations (32.69%).

Regional newspapers also recorded most of the items with one illustration (48.96%) and 13.47 per cent items with two and above illustrations. About 38 per cent items were without illustrations (Arneja, 2003).

With regard to individual English newspapers Times of India published more percentage of items having one illustration (54.05) than Indian Express, whereas, Indian Express was having more items with two and above illustrations (20.99%) than Times of India (Fonesca and Kearn, 1960).

Among regional newspapers, in Sakal more items with two and above illustrations (19.83%) appeared than Lokmat. On the other hand, Lokmat was having more newspaper articles without illustrations (43.75%) than Sakal. Almost equal percentage (49.00%) of items with one illustration were appeared in both Marathi dailies.

Both national and regional dailies published newspaper articles containing one illustration with almost equal percentage. National dailies were however ahead of regional dailies in publishing newspaper articles with two and above illustrations, whereas, regional dailies included more percentage of items without illustrations than national dailies (Prakash, 2004).

When national and regional dailies were compared, national dailies published more percentage of articles with two and above illustrations, whereas regional dailies published more percentage of articles without illustrations. National dailies are having more number of pages than regional dailies. Thus, they are getting more space for publishing many numbers of illustrations. As an indicator of good quality articles more number of illustrations might have included in newspaper articles of national dailies.

Overall it can be concluded that prominence given to

home science issues in terms of number of illustrations is more by national dailies than regional dailies (Prakash, 2004).

Distribution of home science articles containing illustrations according to their colour :

Table 4 depicts the distribution of home science articles containing illustrations according to their colour. Out of total 1999 news paper items only 1301 newspaper articles were containing illustrations. Among them 60.72 per cent were with black and white illustrations and 40.05 were with multicoloured illustrations.

Table 4: Distribution of home science articles containing illustrations according to their colour (n=1301)

Name of the newspaper	Colour of illustration	
	Black and white	Multi colour
English		
Times of India (n=328)	199(60.67)	129 (39.33)
Indian Express (n=403)	270 (66.99)	136 (33.75)
Average (n=365.5)	234.5 (64.16)	132.5 (36.25)
Marathi		
Sakal (n=309)	140 (45.31)	174 (56.31)
Lokmat (n=261)	181 (69.35)	82 (31.42)
Average (n=285)	160.5 (56.32)	128 (44.91)
Total (n=1301)	790 (60.72)	521 (40.05)

Note : (1) Only home science articles containing illustrations were considered (2) In one article both black and white and multi colour illustrations are possible (3) Parenthesis indicate percentage

Among the average newspaper articles with illustrations (365.5) published by national dailies, more percentage of articles was containing black and white illustrations (64.16). Even the individual English newspapers were publishing maximum illustrations in black and white.

With regard to average 285 items with illustrations that

Table 5: Distribution of home science articles containing illustrations according to their forms (n=1301)

Sr. No.	Forms of illustrations	Name of the newspaper						Total
		English			Marathi			
		Times of India (n=328)	Indian express (n=403)	Average (n=365.5)	Sakal (n=309)	Lokmat (n=261)	Average (n=285)	
1.	Pictures	251 (70.11)	371 (92.06)	311 (85.09)	256 (82.85)	244 (93.49)	250 (87.72)	1122(86.24)
2.	Cartoon/animated pictures	67 (20.43)	10 (2.48)	38.5 (10.53)	35 (11.33)	12 (4.60)	23.5 (8.25)	124 (9.53)
3.	Symbols	9 (2.74)	13 (3.22)	11 (3.01)	8 (2.59)	3 (1.15)	5.5 (1.93)	33 (2.54)
4.	Sketches	1 (0.30)	3 (0.74)	2 (0.55)	1 (0.32)	-	0.5 (0.17)	5 (0.38)
5.	Figures	9 (2.74)	8 (1.98)	8.5 (2.32)	11 (3.56)	-	5.5 (1.93)	28 (2.15)
6.	Maps	2 (0.61)	3 (0.74)	2.5 (0.68)	-	-	-	5 (0.38)
7.	Tables	5 (1.52)	18 (4.47)	11.5 (3.15)	3 (0.97)	7 (2.68)	5 (1.75)	33 (2.54)
8.	Graphs	3 (0.91)	2 (0.50)	2.5 (0.68)	3 (0.97)	-	1.5 (0.53)	8 (0.61)
9.	Bulleted text	18 (5.49)	15 (3.72)	16.5 (4.51)	-	-	-	33 (2.54)
10.	Chart	4 (1.22)	-	2 (0.55)	1 (0.32)	-	0.5 (0.18)	5 (0.38)

Note : (1) Only home science articles containing illustrations were considered (2) One article may contain more than one illustration (3) Parenthesis indicate percentage

appeared in regional dailies, articles with black and white illustrations were published more often (56.32%). A glance at individual Marathi newspapers depicted that Sakal reported home science issues with multicoloured illustrations more frequently (56.31%) than black and white illustrations (45.31%). In contrast to that Lokmat contained more percentage of items with black and white illustrations (69.35%) than multi coloured illustrations (31.42%).

Thus, Sakal was having highest percentage of articles with multicoloured illustrations, whereas, Lokmat was having lowest percentage. On the other hand highest percentage of articles with black and white illustrations was observed in Lokmat and lowest percentage in Sakal (Rao and Kherde, 1968).

Possible reason for publishing more number of black and white articles could be that home science articles were not considered worthy of being published with multi coloured illustrations by the newspapers.

Distribution of home science articles containing illustrations according to their forms :

Table 5 refers to the distribution of home science articles containing illustrations according to their forms. Out of total 1999 newspaper articles published in national and regional newspapers 1301 articles appeared with illustrations. Hence, only 1301 newspaper articles were selected for studying different forms of illustrations such as pictures, cartoon/animated pictures, symbols, sketches, figures, maps, tables, graphs, bulleted texts and charts. Majority of the items were containing pictures (82.24%). Only a few (0.38% each) newspaper articles were containing sketches, maps and charts. Items containing symbols, tables and bulleted text were covered with equal percentage (2.54% each).

On an average national dailies, published most of the newspaper articles with pictures (85.09%) followed by cartoon/animated pictures (10.53%). Items with sketches and charts appeared with less frequency (0.55% each). Considering English newspapers individually, it was noticed that, home science items containing pictures appeared with maximum percentage in both Times of India (70.11%) and Indian Express (92.06%). Least number of items with sketches appeared in Times of India (0.30%). Indian Express did not publish any item with charts.

In respect of regional Marathi newspapers, average home science articles containing pictures were covered with maximum frequency (87.72%). There was not a single item containing maps and bulleted texts. A glance at individual Marathi newspapers showed that newspaper items containing pictures were most frequently published in both Sakal (82.85%) and Lokmat (93.49%). There was not a single newspaper article with maps and bulleted text in Sakal, whereas, Lokmat did not include any article with sketches, figures, maps, graphs, bulleted texts or charts.

Regional newspaper published more percentage of newspaper articles with pictures than national newspapers, whereas, national newspapers were ahead of regional newspapers in publishing all other remaining forms of illustrations.

Illustrations appearing with home science articles in the form of pictures/photos give liveliness to the article and prove the practical applicability of the topic to the reader. This could be the reason for publishing more number of articles with illustrations in the form of pictures/photo.

Home science articles containing all other forms of illustrations appeared with very less percentage *i.e.*, less than ten per cent. The probable reason behind this could be that other forms of illustrations such as, graphs, tables etc., may be considered difficult to understand by the readers or they may not be much favoured by the readers when compared to pictures or photographs.

Conclusion:

Overall it was found that around half of the items appeared in seventh and later pages followed by special supplement (25.76%) of newspaper. Majority of the home science articles were having headline width less than two columns and with one illustration. Most of them were containing black and white illustrations and in the form of pictures/photos. Home science articles need to be given more prominence in terms of big caption width and more number of multicoloured illustrations.

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