

# Media Sources for Seeking Health Information in Women

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**Abstract:** Health information is a major component of health promotion. Health information increases the awareness, influences attitudes and knowledge related to the improvement of health. Information of health is widely available from different printed and electronic sources of media. The aim of this study is to determine the role of media sources for seeking health information in women. This descriptive study conducted in a Centre of Public Education in Corum. The data collected by using a 25-item questionnaire form containing socio-demographic features of women, using and understanding printed and electronic media sources for seeking health information. We assessed the data with SPSS package program by using percentage and Chi-Square test. We found that internet was the most preferred media sources to apply health information and TV/radio was the more reliable media sources among participants. To achieve correct health-related information, feel more confidence, assume health responsibility for self and their families, and increase community awareness, it will be useful emphasis on health promotion in televisions and radios which have a wide range audiences and dissemination of health-related public spots in these programs in county wide.

**Key words:** Health, information, media, women

## 1. Introduction

Health information seeking can be regarded as a knowledge-gathering process, resulting from a health query or need [1]. Health information seeking is associated with discussion of search results with physicians and patient satisfaction [2]. People also often desire more information in coping with their illness, medicinal decisions about treatment options, side effects of treatments and preventative health for self or others such as partners, relatives and friends [3].

Health status with reasons for health information seeking and with choice of search tools and media use [2]. The public has access to an ever-increasing range of health information. They often want more department of written information, or health care literature, to supplement the information provided during the office consultation [3]. Direct consultations with doctors and other health professionals are often supplemented with information in a variety of mediated formats such as leaflets, the internet,

touch-screen information kiosks, television, newspapers, magazines and books [4].

Media are a leading source of health information for the general public and for health professionals, and their choice of coverage can ultimately drive public policy and healthcare decisions [5].

The aim of this study is to determine using media sources for achieving health information in young adults and to determine the factors that impact on the use of these sources in Public Education Centers in Corum.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study was conducted with students who ongoing computer, embroidery, English classes in Public Education Centers of Corum in March 2013. Before the research written, verbal permission were taken from managers and participants. We planned to reach all 100 female participants during the study without going on the selection of the sample. We interviewed 83 women who accepted to join in the study by using face-to-face interview method. To obtain information about their socio-demographic

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characteristics, types and frequency of using media sources for reaching health information, it was established a questionnaire 25-item form.

The data based on the research was analyzed using by SPSS 17.0. The benchmark percentage, mean, Pearson Chi-square tests were used.  $P < 0.01$  and  $P < 0.05$  were considered significant.

### 3. Results

53.0% of the participants were over 21 years and mean ages of participants were  $20.60 \pm 1.86$ . Education levels of 51.8% participants were over 9 years. Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Media sources using by participants to achieve information such as for health-related diet, exercise, disease prevention and specific health issues are shown in Table 2. The 49.4% of participants said they preferred the internet for achieving health information. Rapid spreading of internet technology is an important place as the primary source in consumers' everyday lives for achievement of health information [6]. It have been found that internet is the most widely health information sources for people especially for adolescents and young adults [7-9].

It was determined that TV/radios (30.1% of participants) were found more reliable sources for health information. 83.1% of individuals found more remarkable television news programs between health-related programs (Table 3). Changes in health care services affect the ways of accessing health information. Using different information channels associated with the reliability of these channels [10]. Most of studies show that the most reliable third source was the internet than physicians and governments health policy in achieving health information [7, 11].

In this study, TV/radio was found to be the most reliable. Television programs include that human health risk behaviors which were threaten individuals health such as smoking and alcohol consumption so

**Table 1 Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.**

Socio-demographic characteristics (N = 83)	n	%
Age groups (age means: $20.60 \pm 1.86$ )		
20 ages and under	39	47.0
21 ages and over	44	53.0
Education levels		
8 years and under	40	48.2
9years and over	43	51.8
Marriage status		
Married	21	25.3
Single	62	74.7
Economic status		
Good	27	32.5
Bad	56	67.5
Living area		
Centre	65	78.3
Village	18	21.7
General health status		
Good	55	66.3
Bad	28	33.7
Chronic disease		
Yes	12	14.5
No	71	85.5
Going to doctor even if not sick		
Yes	13	15.7
No	70	84.3
Smoking status		
Yes	11	13.3
No	72	86.7
Total	83	100.0

**Table 2 Media sources used for health-related issues.**

Media sources	Always n (%)	Occasionally n (%)	Never n (%)
Internet	41 (49.4)	36 (43.4)	6 (7.2)
TV/radio	29 (34.9)	40 (48.2)	14 (16.9)
Book/leaflet	21 (25.3)	56 (67.5)	6 (7.2)
Newspapers	15 (18.0)	56 (67.5)	12 (14.5)
Posters	15 (18.1)	54 (65.1)	14 (16.9)

**Table 3 Considered the safest media sources and the more attractive TV programmes connected with health.**

Considered the safest media sources	Yes n (%)	No n (%)
TV/radio	25 (30.1)	58 (69.9)
Internet	24 (28.9)	59 (71.7)
Posters	20 (20.1)	63 (79.9)
Books/leaflets	14 (10.9)	69 (89.1)
Considered the more attractive TV programmes		
News	69 (83.1)	14 (16.9)
Health Programmes	49 (59.0)	34 (41.0)
Advertising, public spots	45(54.2)	38 (45.8)

that increases their popularity [6]. Television and radio programs have been oriented to both leisure and guests who were an expert on the diseases may have increased the reliability of these sources in our country. Also, the new treatment methods were given wide coverage by television news programs about health and disease.

Relationship between participants' age and using health-related media sources were shown in Table 4. Participants who were under 20 years of age (48.7%) stated that they used TV/radios and respondents aged 21 and over (53.3%) reported that they used internet every time to achieve health-related information. In both age groups, it was common to use newspapers, books and pamphlets, banners and posters occasionally.

It was found a statistically significant relationship between the age of participants with frequency of using media sources such as TV/radio and newspaper ( $P < 0.05$ ). Individuals may feel the need to reach more information about health and disease when their age progressed. This situation may encourage the

individuals to use of internet in every period of the daily lives.

Table 5 shows health-related issues about the relationship between frequency of media resources and presence of chronic disease which diagnosed in participants by a physician. The 41.6% of individuals with a diagnosis of chronic illness by a physician preferred TV/radio for health-related information and the 50.0% stated that they used Internet, books and booklets. It was determined a statistically significant relationship between the presence of chronic diseases in individuals with frequency of using media sources for using health-related information ( $P < 0.001$  ve  $P < 0.05$ ).

Individuals with chronic disease (hypertension, diabetes, COPD and cancer) may need to gather more information about the possible complications for the prevention and treatment methods of disease. In a study conducted in the United States and Korea, 61.7% of individuals diagnosed with chronic disease, were using the internet to obtain information on the health status [3, 12].

**Table 4 Relationship between participants' age and frequency of using health related media sources.**

	Age Groups		$\chi^2$	P
	20 years and under (n = 39)	21years and over (n = 44)		
<b>TV/radio</b>				
Always/occasionally	19 (48.7%)	10 (22.7%)	6.688	0.035
Never	20 (51.3%)	34 (77.2%)		
<b>Newspapers</b>				
Always/occasionally	8 (20.5%)	7 (15.9%)	12.454	0.002
Never	31 (79.5%)	37 (84.1%)		
<b>Internet</b>				
Always/occasionally	18 (46.2%)	23 (53.3%)	3.432	0.180
Never	21 (53.8%)	21 (47.7%)		
<b>Books/leaflets</b>				
Always/occasionally	11 (28.2%)	10 (22.7%)	5.767	0.060
Never	28 (71.8%)	34 (77.3%)		
<b>Posters</b>				
Always/occasionally	7 (17.9%)	8 (18.2%)	2.420	0.298
Never	32 (82.1%)	36 (81.8%)		

**Table 5 Relationship between presence of chronic disease in participants with frequency of using health related media sources.**

Frequency of using media sources	Chronic Disease		$\chi^2$	P
	Yes	No		
TV/radio				
Always/occasionally	5 (41.6%)	25 (35.2%)		
Never	7 (58.4%)	46 (64.8%)	6.691	0.035
Newspaper				
Always/occasionally	5 (41.6%)	12 (16.9%)		
Never	7 (58.4%)	59 (83.1%)	0.593	0.743
Internet				
Always/occasionally	6 (50.0%)	35 (49.3%)		
Never	6 (50.0%)	36 (50.7%)	15.532	0.000
Books/leaflets				
Always/occasionally	6 (50.0%)	15 (21.1%)		
Never	6 (50.0%)	56 (78.9%)	13.261	0.001
Posters				
Always/occasionally	5 (41.6%)	11 (15.5%)		
Never	7 (58.4%)	60 (84.5%)	3.538	0.171

#### 4. Conclusions

We found that internet was the most preferred media sources to apply health information and TV/radio was the more reliable media sources among participants. Also we found television news programs more remarkable among health related programs. It was determined closely relation between individuals' ages and chronic diseases with using health-related media sources.

To achieve correct health-related information, to feel more confidence, to assume health responsibility for self and their families, to increase community awareness, it will be useful emphasis on health promotion in televisions and radios which have a wide range audiences and dissemination of health-related public spots in these programs in county wide.

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