



COVERAGE OF HEALTH ISSUES IN SMALL AND MEDIUM NEWSPAPERS: A CASE STUDY OF SUDDIMOOLA

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ABSTRACT:

Media plays a significant role in educating public about health. It is recognized that the mass media like Newspaper, Television, Radio, and Internet are effective communicating tools. They play crucial role in public response to health issues. Newspapers help health communicators to achieve their goal by covering health issues. Newspaper played major role in making public aware about the hazardous diseases like Swine flu, H1N1, Dengue etc... Timely coverage of such diseases paved a way for precautions and saved many lives. Small and Medium newspapers also give importance to the health issues. Suddimoola is one of the prominent small and Medium newspaper in Karnataka, which was established on April 15, 1988. The people of Raichur, Koppala, Yadagiri, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bellary and Hyderabad –Karnataka region read this newspaper. Suddimoola is an eight page broad sheet size small newspaper which has celebrated its silver jubilee recently. The present study is to analyze the coverage of health issues in Suddimoola newspaper. To evaluate the steps taken by Suddimoola to create awareness about health issues. Content analysis method is adopted for this study. Four months newspapers of Suddimoola has taken for content analyze. Primary data indicated that Suddimoola gave priority to social and agricultural news and Health issues got 11th rank among all the news covered by Suddimoola.

KEYWORDS : Print media, Small and Medium Newspaper, News Coverage, and Health issues, Health Awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Mass media provides information among people at large so that there is receiving of new idea to create interest. Mass media displays information about health and make people aware so as to prevent the spread of various new diseases. There are various types of mass media (magazines, television, internet, newspapers, etc.). The media have the power to direct our attention towards certain issues. The media play big roles in the public understanding of many health issues, and the information relayed to the public through the media clearly influences behavior. There is a bigger demand and need for accurate, relevant, rapid and impartial public health information by people, and a growing dependence on mass media as it is the main source of information. It is well known that the mass media area an important social institution in any modern society.

The media have the power to direct our attention towards certain issues. This is the agenda setting theory. In the words of Cohen (1963), the media "may not be successful in telling their readers what to think, but are stunningly successful in telling their readers what to think about". Freimuth et al. (1984) have shown that many people rely on the news media for their health-related information. Policy makers also obtain

considerable amount of information from the media. As Bryant and Thompson (2002) have suggested that news coverage of health matters takes on considerable significance that has the potential to shape the impression of average citizens and powerful policy makers alike. In the words of Brown and Walsh-Childers (1994), news coverage of health “tends to ascribe the power to control individuals’ health to medical experts using high-technology equipment”. Studies have also shown that the news media tend to increase their coverage of health concerns as they affect the society’s mainstream and/or the greatest number of people in their audience.(Achala Gupta and A. K. Sinha, 2010). The purpose of the present study is to evaluate the health related messages in Suddimoola, a small and medium Kannada Newspaper in Karnataka.

SUDDIMOOLA- A REGIONAL NEWSPAPER

Suddimoola was launched in April 15, 1988, as a fortnight and later it became daily newspaper. It is the first newspaper of Hyderabad- Karnataka region which had offset printing machine and imported computers from America. It is a broadsheet size regional newspaper with 8 pages. **Basavaraj Swamy** is the founder Editor of this paper. Presently this newspaper includes 56 staff and has the reporters in Raichur, Bellary, Yadgir, Koppal, Gulbarga, Bidar, and Bangalore. It has the circulation of 30,945 in Hyderabad – Karnataka region. It adopts the changes every now and then as the society undergoes changes. Its main aim is to protect the democracy. This newspaper includes the column of senior journalists like M K Bhaskarao, Sheshchandriksa, Khadri Achyutan, Eshwar Daitot, Dr.Basaling Soppimath, Vittahappa Gorantli. Sunday 6th page carries ‘SuddiSampad’, where space for local writers, social and political issues reviews. It gives importance to local development news.

Small and medium newspapers have low circulation, so their cost is also low. Maintenance of such newspaper is problematic, still then as a result of some people’s hard work and interest few newspapers across the country have celebrated their silver and golden jubilee. Local newspapers are been launching and some local newspapers are closing due to no support. Raichur has 7 local newspapers. Big newspapers give importance to national and international news. Present study is to analyze the coverage of health news in the regional and local newspapers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

Wanda Firmansyah, SIP. SaharHegazi, MA. SitiRokhmawati. Darwisyah, SKM . Lila Amaliah, SKM . (2001),This indicates a good use of an interactive style to reach out to the general public. However, capacity building programs are still needed to empower journalists to produce more investigative articles discussing reproductive health issues in greater detail. The quality of articles written by both the project group and non-group members demonstrated a great diversity of information and resources and good use of research findings to substantiate key points.

A FrameWorks Research Report (2003), This analysis began with an examination of the frames associated with health and the uninsured in all the media coverage. For the purposes of this study, three levels of analysis were undertaken in order to ascertain the specific issue frames, the categories of frames, and the values that inform the coverage in each article. Categories of policy issues were pre-selected based on a review of web sites on health care and health policy during the planning phase for this project. Issues such as the uninsured, layoffs and job losses, children’s health and insurance, and prescription drugs were included in the analysis. Specific policy issues that fell outside the purview of those in the search were coded as “other.” Articles were coded for all issues addressed (so total will not add to 100%). Among the total number of news articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor reviewed.

Roni A Neff¹, Iris L Chan¹ and Katherine Clegg Smith² (2008), Yesterday’s dinner, tomorrow’s weather, today’s news? US newspaper coverage of food system contributions to climate change US newspaper coverage of food systems’ effects on climate change during the study period increased, but still did not reflect the increasingly solid evidence of the importance of these effects. Increased coverage may

lead to responses by individuals, industry and government. Based on co-benefits with nutritional public health messages and climate change's food security threats, the public health nutrition community has an important role to play in elaborating and disseminating information about food and climate change for the US media.

Julie Leask¹, Claire Hooker, Catherine King (2010), This study focuses on the general aspects of the journalists' work. Analysis was informed by a priori interests in how media messages are framed along with the question of how health professionals using the media can best work with journalists. An awareness of how to work with the media is essential for health communicators. This includes understanding journalists' daily routines, being available, providing resources, and building relationships with specialist health reporters.

Achala Gupta and A. K. Sinha (2010), A study was conducted on the health related messages that appear in print media (Newspaper and Magazine) and electronic media (Television and Radio). The radio and television channels, newspapers and magazine used for the analysis were randomly chosen. From the detailed content analysis of various communication media, it can be concluded that all the different types of media provide information regarding health matters but the political subject is the most preferred area of news in all types of media.

Redhwan Ahmed Al-Naggar¹, Karim Al-Jashamy² (2011), Breast Cancer Coverage in the Media in Malaysia: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Star Newspaper Articles. The content articles of the most popular English newspaper in Malaysia on breast cancer. It is found that people are more influenced by and more likely to pay attention to risk messages concerning their health when a human interest story or case history is included rather than only medical or scientific data.

Robert Goulden, Elizabeth Corker, Sara Evans-Lacko, Diana Rose, Graham Thornicroft and Claire Henderson (2011), This is the first study to look at how UK newspaper coverage has changed through most of the 1990s and 2000s, comparing coverage across a range of psychiatric diagnoses. All this suggests that these disorders should receive particular attention in future campaigns to reduce mental health stigma. Given the relative infrequency of coverage of schizophrenia, the problem is more that there is an absence of explanatory and health service-related articles about this illness, than there is an abundance of negative articles.

Abigail C. Saguy, Kjerstin Gruys (2011), It was found that, in the contemporary U.S. society where thinness is highly prized, news articles are less likely to blame individuals for being (or trying to be) *too thin* than they are to blame them for being *too fat*. This suggests that, more generally, cultural values shape how the news media assign blame and responsibility. In turn, such reporting is likely to reinforce and naturalize such values. This article further suggests that, depending on how they report on the demographics of a given condition, the news media may reinforce group-based stereotypes.

Melinda R. Weathers, (2013), this study provides a baseline assessment of how GWCC, as a public health issue, is being presented to the American public through print news media and offers suggestions for media and environmental practitioners to better reach and influence these individuals.

Jennifer Stuber (2013), For this report, we completed a content analysis of Washington (WA) State newspapers to assess if there is evidence of the use of derogatory terms and negative stereotypes to describe people with mental illnesses and other inaccurate portrayals of mental illness. Such evidence would raise the legitimacy of this issue and help shape a course of action. The analysis demonstrates several ways state newspapers can sometimes provide inaccurate portrayals of mental illness. Accurate reporting about mental health issues would reflect today's realities about recovery and prevention and accurate descriptions of the causes and symptoms of mental illness.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Coverage of Health Issues in Small and Medium Newspapers: A Case Study of Suddimoola"

Therefore, it was felt necessary to have an in-depth research study on this topic. Besides, these kinds of

studies have not conducted yet. Hence, with this advantage the present investigation carried out with the following objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To know how much importance given to health issues by Small and Medium newspapers.
- To evaluate the space given to Health news in Suddimoola.
- To study which Health issues are getting importance in Small and Medium Newspapers.
- To know which category Health news is highlighted and which category is neglected in Small and Medium Newspapers.
- To assess the quality of Health news of Small and Medium Newspapers.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Raichur has Kannada as its regional language. Suddimoola is a Kannada regional newspaper. It has its circulation in 6 Districts of Hyderabad- Karnataka. So, 4 months newspapers are collected namely. April, May, June, July' 2017 and their content is analyzed. The content of Suddimoola news coverage and circulation, space are also calculated. The Health news of National, State and International are categorized in 17 categories Social, strike, Agriculture, Politics, Drinking water, Development, Road –Transportation, Education, Electricity, Women and Children, Health, Residential, Entertainment, Employment, Commercial, Sports and Weather.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table.1: Total contents and their space analysis of Suddimoola newspaper.

Contents	No. of news	%	Space in sq cm	%
News	8986	85.09	1225070	79.33
Articles	273	2.58	111104	7.19
Advertisements	1302	12.33	208018	13.48
Total	10561	100	1544192	100

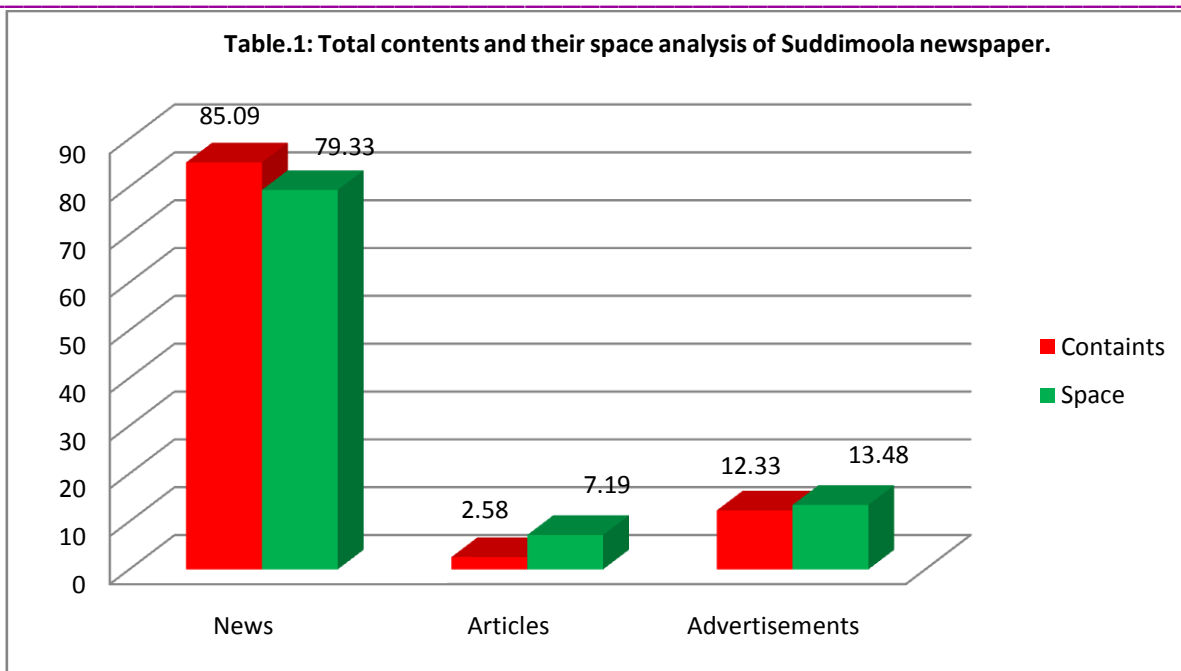


Table 1 revealed that Suddimoola newspaper has carried 10561 total content and devoted 1544192sq cm space in 4 months span i.e.April, May, June, July 2017. It includes 8986 news, 273 articles and 1302 advertisements.

Table no.2: Geographical Categorization of the contents and their space analysis.

Contents	Regional	%	State	%	National	%	International	%
News	5772	54.65	3128	29.62	78	0.74	8	0.08
Article	215	2.04	42	0.40	16	0.15	-	-
Advertisement	1169	11.07	110	1.04	23	0.22	-	-
Total	7156	67.76	3280	31.06	117	1.11	8	0.08

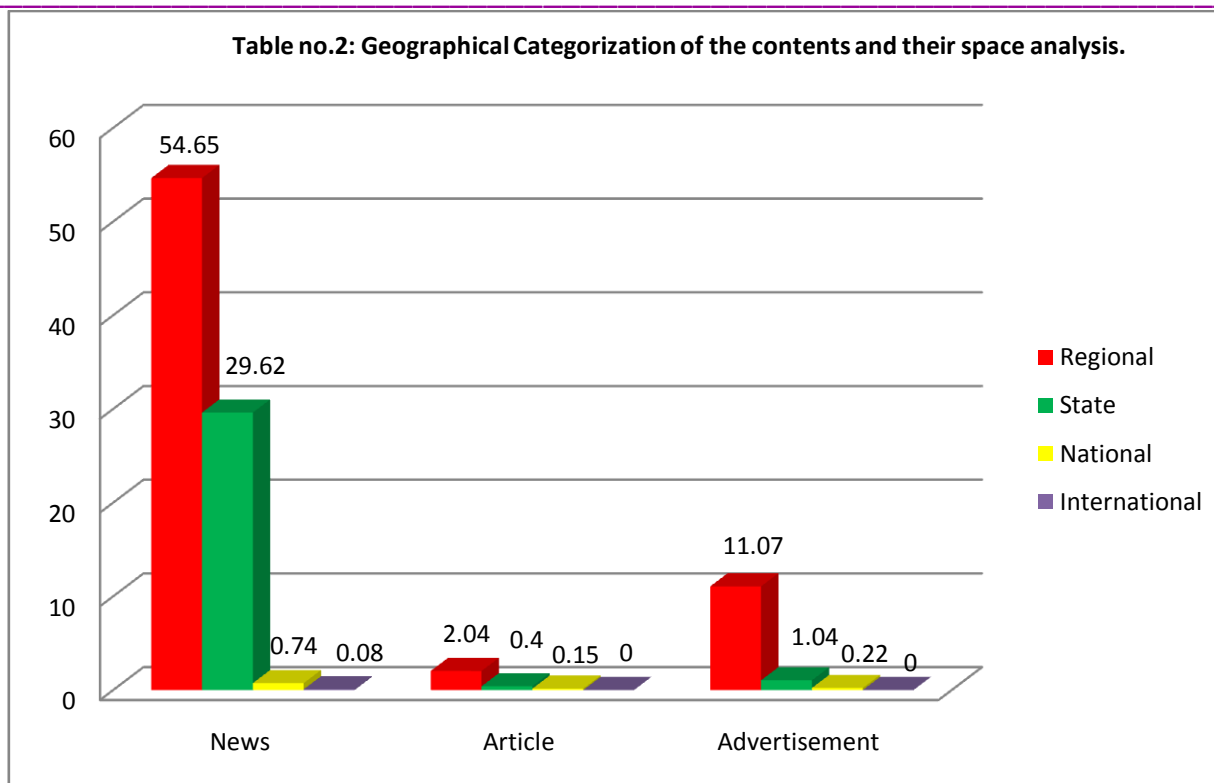
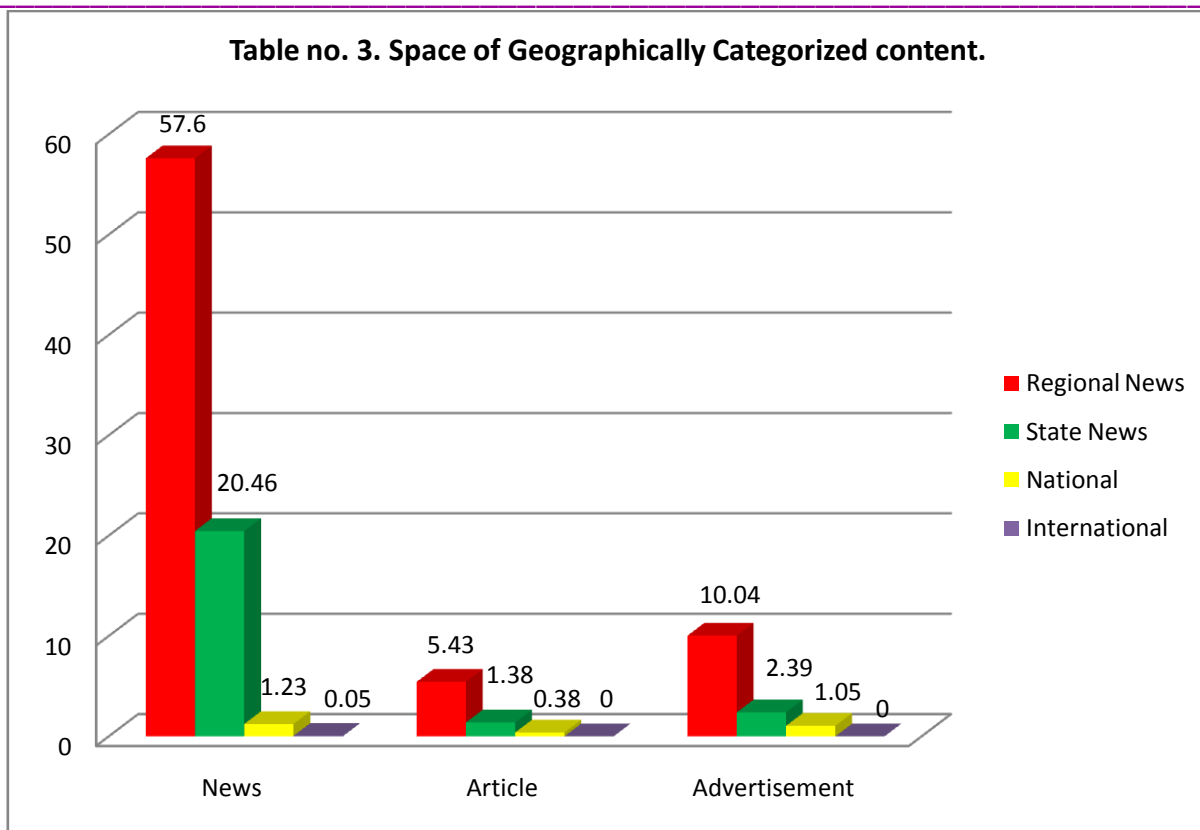


Table no. 2 shows that Suddimoola newspaper carried most of the local news 5772 (54.65%), state news 3128 (29.62%), national news 78 (0.74%) and only 8 (0.08%) international news. In the same way, 1169 regional advertisements (11.07%), 110 state advertisements (1.04%), 23 national advertisements (0.22%) and no international advertisements carried in Suddumoola Newspaper. It contained 215 (2.04%) articles in the articles also regional articles are more, 42 (0.40%) State development articles, 16 (0.15%) national developments News in Sudimoola.

Table no. 3. Space of Geographically Categorized content.

Contents	Regional News		State News		NationalNews		InternationalNews	
	Space	%	Space	%	Space	%	Space	%
News	889388	57.60	315914	20.46	18926	1.23	842	0.05
Article	83896	5.43	21312	1.38	5896	0.38	-	-
Advertisement	154969	10.04	36845	2.39	16204	1.05	-	-
Total	1128253	73.06	374071	24.22	41026	2.66	842	0.05

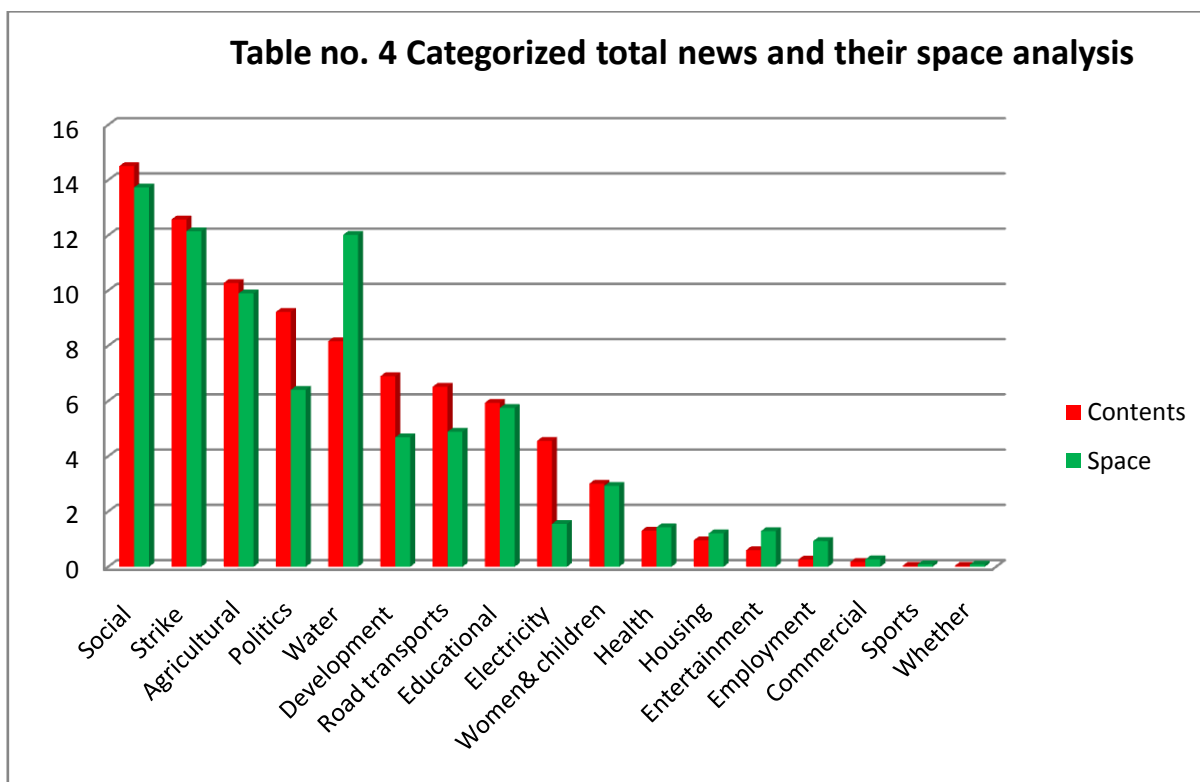


The analysis of Table no.3 shows that of Sudimoola has 1128253 (73.06%)sq cm space for Regional content, State content 374071 (24.22%)sq cm and Nationalcontent 41026 (2.66%) sq cm, International content 842 (0.05%) sq cm. This newspaper has Regional news 889388 (57.60%)sq cm space, State news 315914 (20.46%) sq cm, National News 18926 (1.23%)sq cm. International news 842 (0.05%) sq cm. Regional advertisements 154969 (10.04%)sq cm, State advertisements 36845 (2.39%)sq cm, National Advertisements 16204 (1.05%)sq cm. Regional article 83896 (5.43%)sq cm, State articles 21312 (1.38%)sq cm, National Articles 5896 (0.38%) sq cm.

Table no. 4 Categorized total news and their space analysis.

News	Number	Percentage %	Space in sq cm	percentage
Social	1532	14.51	212132	13.74
Strike	1328	12.58	187568	12.15
Agricultural	1086	10.28	152812	9.90
Politics	974	9.23	98984	6.41
Water	863	8.17	185564	12.02
Development	729	6.90	72418	4.69
Road transports	688	6.52	75549	4.89
Educational	628	5.94	88748	5.75
Electricity	481	4.56	23955	1.55

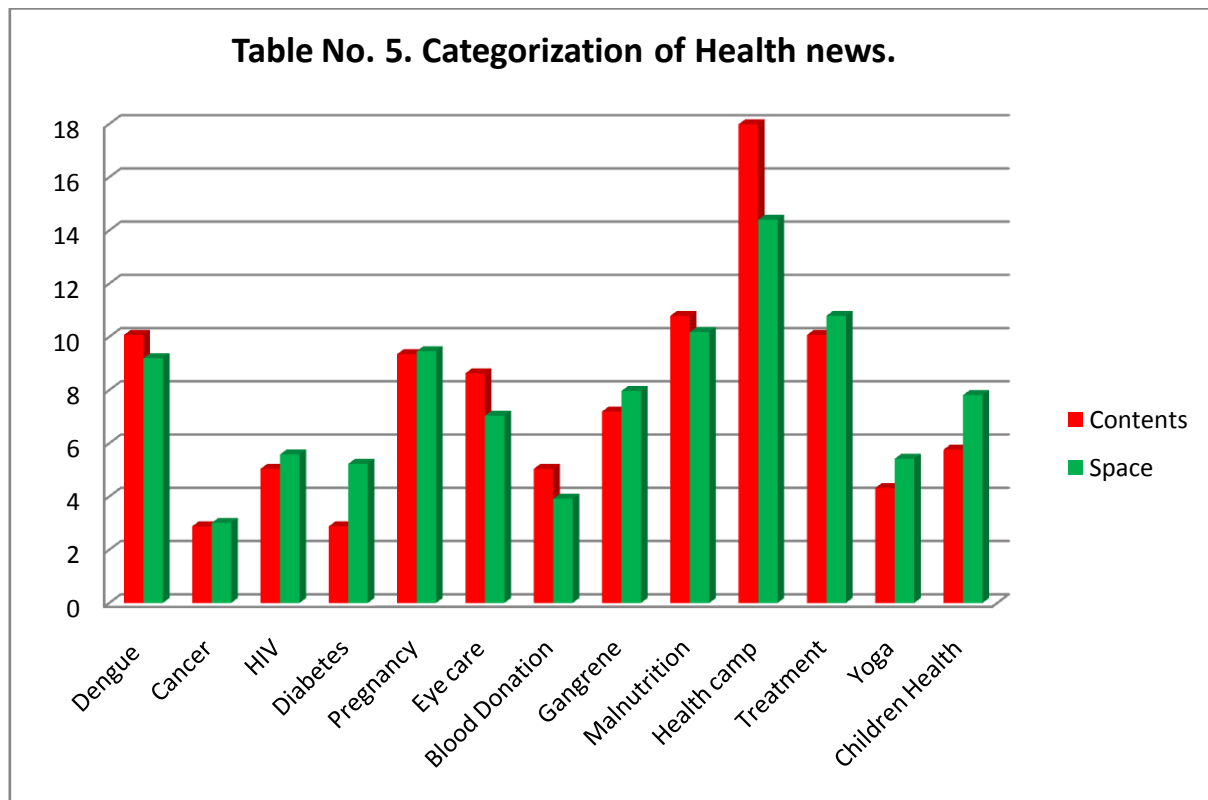
Women& children	318	3.01	45298	2.93
Health	139	1.31	22073	1.43
Housing	102	0.96	18643	1.21
Entertainment	64	0.60	19988	1.29
Employment	27	0.26	14418	0.93
Commercial	18	0.18	4312	0.27
Sports	5	0.04	1328	0.09
Weather	4	0.04	1280	0.08
Total	8986	85.09	1225070	79.33



The analysis of Table no.4 indicates that in Suddimoola newspapers of 4 months there are 8986 (85.09%) news are there. with the space 1225070 sq cm. Among them **Health news are 139 (1.31%) with the space 22073 (1.43%) sq cm**, Social news are 1532 (14.51%) with the space 212132 (13.74%) sq cm, Strike news are 1328 (12.58%), with the space 187568 (12.15%) sq cm, Agricultural news are 1086 (10.28%) with the space 152812 (9.90%) sq cm, Politics news are 974 (9.23%) with the space 98984 (6.41%) sq cm, Water news are 863 (8.17%) with the space 185564 (12.02%) sq cm, Development news are 729 (6.90%) with the space 72418 (4.69%) sq cm, Road transports news are 688 (6.52%) with space 75549 (4.89%) sq cm, Educational news are 628 (5.94%) with the space 88748 (5.75%) sq cm, Electricity news are 481 (4.56%) with the space 23955 (1.55%) sq cm, Women and children news are 318 (3.01%) with the space 45298 (2.93%) sq cm, Residential news are 102 (0.96%) with space 18643 (1.21%) sq cm, Entertainment news are 64 (0.60%) with space 19988 (1.29%)sq cm, Employment news are 27 (0.26%) with the space 14418 (0.93%) sq cm, Commercial news are 18 (0.18%) with the space 4312 (0.27%) sq cm, Sports news are 5 (0.04%) with the space 1328 (0.09%) sq cm, Weather news are 4 (0.04%) with the space 1280 (0.08%)sq cm.

Table No. 5. Categorization of Health news.

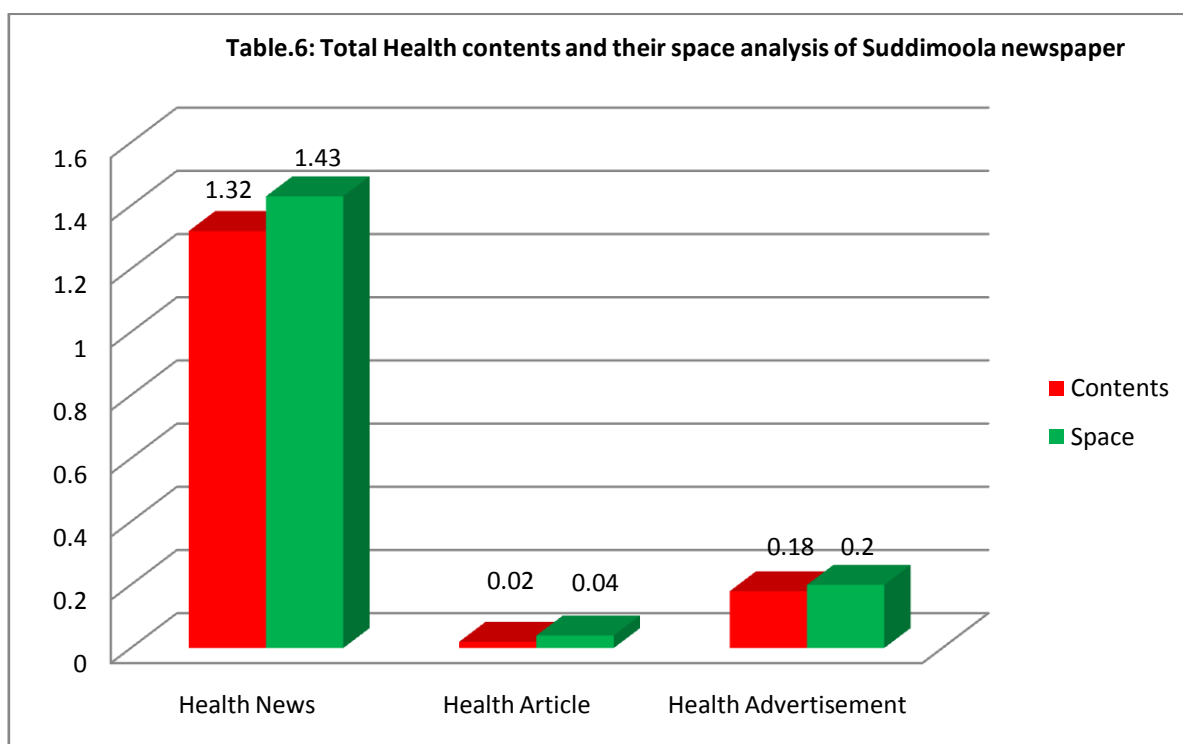
	Categories	No of news	%	Space in sq cm	%
1	Dengue	14	10.07	2030	9.20
2	Cancer	4	2.88	664	3.01
3	HIV	7	5.04	1231	5.58
4	Diabetes	4	2.88	1155	5.23
5	Pregnancy	13	9.35	2088	9.46
6	Eye care	12	8.63	1554	7.04
7	Blood Donation	7	5.04	866	3.92
8	Gangrene	10	7.19	1760	7.97
9	Malnutrition	15	10.79	2246	10.18
10	Health camp	25	17.99	3179	14.40
11	Treatment	14	10.07	2381	10.79
12	Yoga	6	4.32	1196	5.42
13	Children Health	8	5.76	1723	7.81
	Total	139	100.00	22073	100.00



The above table 5 shows the health issues contained by Suddimoolanews paper in the span of 4 months. It covered 139 with the space 22073sq cm. The close analysis of above table says that Suddimoola has given priority to health camp news 25 (17.99%) with the space 3179sq cm (14.40%), Followed by Malnutrition 15 (10.79%) with the space 2246 (10.18%)sq cm, Dengue 14 (10.07%) with the space 2030 (9.20%)sq cm, Treatment 14 (10.07%) with the space 2381 (10.79%)sq cm, Pregnancy 13 (9.35%) with the space 2088 (9.46%)sq cm, Eye care 12 (8.63%) with the space 1554 (7.04%)sq cm, Children health 8 (5.76%) with the space 1723 (7.81%)sq cm, Blood Donation 7 (5.04%) with the space 866 (3.92%) sq cm, HIV 7 (5.04%) with the space 1231 (5.58%) sq cm, Yoga 6 (4.32%) with the space 1196 (5.42%) sq cm, Cancer 4 (2.88%) with the space 664 (3.01%) sq cm, Diabetes 4 (2.88%) with the space 1155 (5.23%) sq cm.

Table.6: Total Health contents and their space analysis of Suddimoola newspaper.

Contents	No. of news	%	Space in sq cm	%
Health News	139	1.32	22073	1.43
Health Article	2	0.02	680	0.04
Health Advertisement	19	0.18	3110	0.20
Total	160	1.52	25863	1.67



The Table no.6 shows the analysis of Health news content of Suddimoola newspaper. This newspaper carried 160 (1.52%) health issues with the space 25863sq cm (1.67%) in 4 months. Among them, **139** Health News have covered the space of **22073 (1.43%)**sq cm. Followed by 19 (0.18%) Health Advertisements with the space 3110 (0.20%)sq cm and Health Article 2 (0.02%) with the space 680 (0.04%)sq cm.

CONCLUSION:

Suddimoola is the newspaper which works with the interest of public welfare. It covers the Health issues and tries to draw the attention of public. Local problems like Water, Road, Power cut, Seeds for Farmers, Drainage, Cheats in Pesticides, Municipality, problems in local governments, and gives daily half page column in the paper. Newspapers can change the world. This study shows that Suddimoola newspaper gives more coverage to the regional Health news. There are totally, **160 (1.52%) health issues** covered by Suddimoola in the span of 4 months. These health issues have occupied the space of 25863 (1.67%) sq cm. Among them, 139 (1.32%) with the space 22073(1.43%) sq cm. Followed by 19 (0.18%) Health Advertisements with the space 3110 (0.20%) sq cm and only 2 Health Article (0.02%) with the space 680 (0.04%) sq cm. This newspaper is purely regional and works for the development of rural level.

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