

The Effect of Media on Women's Health and the Role of Midwives

Medyanın Kadın Sağlığına Etkisi ve Ebelerin Rolü

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ABSTRACT

Women's health is affected by many factors such as psychosocial factors arising from family and society, the individual health status of women, fertility behaviors, and the quality of health services. Therefore, the issue of health promotion concerns many sectors, not just the health sector. One of the most important of these sectors is the media. In addition, the media can affect women of all educational levels. "Health-related news" in the media is of great importance due to the importance of health in human life. Media also publishes health-related publications in response to this interest of people. One of the most protective groups in the media; are adult women. The negative influence of women of childbearing age from the media also affects pregnancy, child-birth, and postpartum. The influence of the media, even the mediatic doctor, is great in aesthetic interventions. It is possible to evaluate the effects of the media on female aesthetics positively and negatively. Considering the fact that almost all of the population that midwives serve is women, midwife is a key professional member in protecting and improving women's health. In the impact of the media on women's health, it is important that midwives fulfill their responsibilities. Midwives should first increase awareness of the effects of the media, and then raise women's awareness on this issue with their roles as educators, advocates, caregivers, researchers, leaders, and consultants.

Keywords: Media, midwife, women's health

ÖZ

Kadın sağlığı; aile ve toplumdan kaynaklanan psiko-sosyal faktörler, kadının bireysel sağlık durumu, doğurganlık davranışı, sağlık hizmetlerinin kalitesi gibi pek çok faktörden etkilenmektedir. Sağlığı etkileyen faktörler çok ve çeşitli oldukları için, sağlığı geliştirmeye yönelik stratejiler ve eylemler de çok ve çeşitlidir. Bu nedenle, sağlığın geliştirilmesi konusu, yalnızca sağlık sektörünü değil, birçok sektörü ilgilendirir. Bu sektörlerin en önemlilerinden biri de medyadır. Ayrıca medya, her eğitim düzeyindeki kadını etkileyebilmektedir. Medyada "sağlık konulu haberler" sağlığın insan yaşamındaki önemi nedeniyle büyük önem teşkil etmektedir. İnsanlar sağlıkla ilgili gelişme ve bilgileri büyük oranda medyadan öğrenir ve medya da insanların bu ilgisine karşılık olarak, sağlıkla ilgili yayınlar yapar. Medyanın en çok etkilediği gruplardan biri; yetişkin kadınlardır. Doğurganlık çağındaki kadınların medyadan olumsuz etkilenmesi gebelik, doğum ve doğum sonrasını da etkilemektedir. Estetik girişimlerde medyanın hatta medyatik doktorun etkisi büyüktür. Medyanın kadın estetiği üzerine etkilerini olumlu ve olumsuz değerlendirmek mümkündür. Ebenin hizmet verdiği kitlenin tamamına yakınının kadın olduğu gerçeği göz önünde bulundurulursa, kadın sağlığının korunması ve geliştirilmesinde ebe kilit meslek üyesidir. Medyanın kadın sağlığı üzerine etkisinde ebenin rol ve sorumluluklarını yerine getirmesi önem taşımaktadır. Ebeler, öncelikle medyanın etkileri konusunda kendi farkındalığını artırmalı ve daha sonra eğitici, savunucu, bakım verici, araştırmacı, liderlik ve danışmanlık rolleriyle kadınları bu konuda bilinçlendirmelidir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Medya, ebe, kadın sağlığı

Introduction

Women's health includes spiritual, social, and physical well-being and is determined by the social, political, and economic dimension of life as well as physical dimension (Women and health policy document, 2008). Women's health is affected by many factors such as psychosocial factors arising from family and society, the individual health status of women, fertility behaviors, and the quality of health services. Because the factors influencing health are many and varied, strategies and actions

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to promote health are also many and varied. Therefore, the issue of health promotion concerns many sectors, not just the health sector. One of the most important of these sectors is the media (Özbaş, 2010). In addition, the media can affect women of all educational levels (Aktaş et al., 2014). Media covers a wide range of mass media such as books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, film, video, and the internet. The internet is undoubtedly the newest and fastest growing among these mass media. Despite the rapid increase in Facebook and smart mobile phones, it is possible to say that television is still the most effective and most widespread mass media tool today (Aktaş et al., 2014). According to the research conducted by Radio and Television Supreme Council, it is stated that television is watched most between 21 and 24 (70.2%) and between 18 and 21 (57.1%) hours of the day. The World Health Organization (WHO) is one of the health institutions that use social media tools most effectively. The WHO has approximately 2.7 million followers on Twitter and approximately 2.5 million followers on Facebook (Tosyalı, 2016). "Health-related news" in the media is of great importance due to the importance of health in human life. The internet is undoubtedly the newest and fastest growing among these mass media. One of the groups most influenced by the media, every function of which is based on a purpose, is adult women (Aktaş, 2016). It is important for women's health to be negatively affected by the media in adulthood, which is the most productive period of women. Health professionals play a role in the correct use of media for women's health.

Media and Women's Health

In order for the media to be effective in the protection and development of women's health, the first point to be known is what kind of mass media women can access and how often and for what purpose they use these tools. Television is one of the media tools used frequently by adult women in our country, and the difference between rural and urban areas is low (Özbaş, 2010). In a study conducted on 488 women in Istanbul, it was seen that health-related programs were watched first, followed by programs about bad habits such as drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. It has been stated that those affected by health-related programs pay more attention to their health (Hill, 2007).

In a study of 327,144 women in the United States, investigating the impact of news about the use of hormone therapy, according to the education level and rural-urban settlement, it has been seen that the news about the bad effect of hormone therapy use affects hormone use (Hass, 2007).

The Effects of the Media on Women's Health

Effect on Aesthetic Image

When the archives of national newspapers are scanned, it is seen that news and advertisements related to diet and cosmetics have increased exponentially in recent years. Again, on the first pages of the newspapers, it is seen that there are headlines such as "Your beauty is worthless, if there are no plastic surgeons;" and "Black Sea nose will be corrected." As can be understood from these examples, the influence of the media and even the mediatic doctor is great in aesthetic interventions. It is possible to group the effects of the media on female esthetics into two as positive and negative (Mejia, 2012).

Adverse Effects

Media can show woman as an objectified object "meta" aesthetic element. For example, in auto vehicle purchases and sales, thin, tall, thin, low-cut female models are used in their advertisements,

although they have no close relation to women. As understood from these examples given, the media woman; it shows with representational features such as sexual magazine object. When we look at it in this context, it is possible to say that the media follows a gender-based path (Mejia, 2012).

The media, which draws its power from advertisements, and the propaganda it makes through advertisements, also draws the ideal woman profile in the society (e.g., women with a 90-60-90 size, upturned nose, erect breasts, and so on). As a result of this profile, although each of them is different in the beginning, a single-type (stereotypical) female model is created as a result of the same type of aesthetic intervention (such as women with the same type of nose and lips) (Odabaş, 2008).

Since each development will change the previous structure, people's perspectives on events, entertainment, and consumption style are going through a great change process. For example, in Turkey in the 1950s, when mass media were scarce, overweight women created a "nice, wanted, admired" feeling in people, but today this perception is directed towards thin, thin women with the influence of the media. In the literature, the rate of being affected by the media and magazines is very high that overweight adolescent girls and boys decide to start a weight-loss diet (Abrams, 2002).

The media creates a unparalleled model for adolescent girls who identify themselves with this model, that is, they think like this model and maintain a lifestyle like this model. If adolescent girls do not resemble these models that they identify with themselves, then this causes eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. As it is known, eating disorders cause many serious complications such as delayed menstruation, amenorrhea, osteoporosis and related fractures, kidney failure, depression, and obsessive compulsive personality disorder. Male aesthetics can be classified into two groups as positive and negative. Prolonged daily use of mass media (especially internet and television) and sedentary "sitting" life can increase the risk of being obese and obesity-related cardiovascular diseases. Frequent coverage of products and applications with low evidence value or non-evidence-based value in advertisements in the media (e.g., cosmetics, weight loss drugs, body tattoos, and so on) may increase the purchase demand for these products. These situations, which are experienced due to the fact that individuals are not sufficiently conscious and the media is not ethical and controlled (e.g. starting a weight loss drug or diet and the ensuing death coma), can affect our women's physical health (e.g., blood-borne diseases, dermatological problems, infection, and so on) and their mental health (e.g., depression) in a very negative way. Recently, women, in order to look nice, be attractive, be aesthetic, and relax psychologically, often do online clothes shopping, and these shopping unfortunately even turn into cognitive addictions (Odabaş, 2008).

Positive Effects

When we look at the reasons for women to apply aesthetic products and use surgical interventions, we see that the main reasons are to stay young and beautiful and be attractive. The frequent coverage of these practices by the media creates a desire for need for this element in women. Self-confidence and socialization opportunities increase in women who meet this need, and the person feels more positive both mentally and physically (Foss & Southwell, 2006).

In some professions, aesthetic appearance is considered as an important criterion for the continuation of the profession. Initiatives made for this purpose can increase women's careers and incomes (e.g., modeling). On the other hand, some health programs (e.g., sports, nutrition, skin care, and so on) that are frequently covered by the media can protect and improve mental and physical health by raising women's awareness. One of the important duties of the media is to make the existing problem visible in the society and to increase the awareness of this problem in the society. For example, making negative images such as violence against women visible in the media plays an important role in preventing discrimination based on the gender of women by activating relevant institutions and organizations (Aktaş et al., 2014).

Effect on Nutrition

It is known that most of the individuals in Turkey lack adequate and balanced nutrition knowledge. Nutritional errors in families show parallelism with the education level of the woman responsible for nutrition at home. As the education level rises, it is seen that wrong and erroneous practices decrease, and some useful practices and habits related to health and nutrition increase (Oran, 2017).

In the most sensitive period of life such as pregnancy, expectant mothers search for their baby's health and their own health from the media and take into account the experiences and suggestions of others. Nutrition is also one of the most curious topics. Finding 1,350,000 results on nutrition in one of the internet search engines (Google) on pregnant nutrition in August 2017 is enough to explain how popular it is. When the social media contents are examined, there are many resources that are useful and provide scientific and correct answers to the questions, operating within the scope of official and social responsibility projects. The media is a good environment for report and propagates correct information and nutritional behaviors. One of the best examples of this is breakfast cereal advertisements. Low-fat cereals, which are a balanced and healthy alternative when consumed with milk for breakfast in Western societies, have been adopted as a dietary habit of the society owing to advertisements. In addition, advertisements and other sources in the media may promote unhealthy foods rich in sugar, fat, and salt as ideal food choices (Oran et al., 2017).

Effect on Pregnancy and Postpartum

The media also affects women in periods such as pregnancy, puerperium, and breastfeeding (Çalık & Aktaş, 2011). Media pregnancy, puerperium and breastfeeding etc. It also affects women in the period. Today, the media has an important role as a source of information in the life of women during pregnancy and postpartum (Güneş-Öztürk et al., 2020). The majority of pregnant women accept the media as a very reliable source of information (Bert et al., 2013; Kavlak et al., 2012; Larsson, 2009). However, women use the media as a source of information because they cannot obtain enough information from health professionals (Bert et al., 2013). In this process, women want to be sure that their pregnancies are progressing normally, and they seek information to investigate the causes of the changes, to find solutions to their health problems and physical complaints, and to have a safe birth experience (Bjelke, 2016; Scaioli et al., 2015). Unlike traditional mass media, social media creates a rapidly expanding sphere of influence and also affects women's ability to obtain information about their pregnancy (Baker & Yang, 2018). In the

literature, it is stated that women use the media for communication, information seeking, and health management during their pregnancy (Baker & Yang, 2018; Marcon et al., 2019; Scaioli et al., 2015). The media has positive effects on breastfeeding (Gazali-Demirtaş & Çelik, 2017). The media can both increase the knowledge of mothers about breastfeeding and guide breastfeeding problems. The fact that mothers reach different solutions to breastfeeding problems through groups can also affect their breastfeeding positively (Bert et al., 2013; Güneş-Öztürk et al., 2020).

Media information resources are important in terms of enabling pregnant women and their families to reach the information they are looking for (Dündar & Özsoy, 2020). In order to ensure easy access of pregnant women to correct information, it can contribute to the development of mother–infant health by controlling the accuracy of the information shared in these environments. Midwives have the responsibility to learn the information needs and resources of women during pregnancy and postpartum period and to protect the health of the mother and fetus with the necessary intervention (Güneş-Öztürk et al., 2020).

Effect on Birth Type

Birth is a very special event, and it is one of the most beautiful experiences in the lives of expectant mothers and fathers. However, in the “delivery mode preference” of women of childbearing age, apart from family and friends, birth stories and photos in the internet and newspapers, and painful birth scenes shown in visual media also play an important role (Luce et al., 2016).

In addition, recent studies have revealed that the media medicalizes and unnaturalizes birth and presents vaginal birth as a risky birth. Television often portrays labor as a potential danger, pointing to mothers with hypertension, postpartum hemorrhage, cervical cancer, preterm labor, and diabetes. In another study conducted on 3680 people on the fear of birth and birth preferences of women in Canada, it was found that women who obtained information about pregnancy and birth from the media had higher fear of birth and cesarean birth preferences. In a study examining 85 television programs showing childbirth in the United States, it was shown that women could not give birth without medical intervention (Morris, 2010).

Effects on Parenting Approach

Today, the most important change in parenting is parenting that extends to social media. Blogger mothers, who started blogging to use free time, turned to the media and made a difference with their visuals, especially as they became known. These visuals are households living in different conditions than many parents in the society, pictures and videos of themselves and their children, and the clothes they wear (Çalapkulu et al., 2020). Parents should consider both the positive and negative aspects of the media; In this situation, which is called as disrespect for the privacy of children who do not yet have the ability to reason, media parents first shake the foundations of the concepts of privacy and shame, which are the basis of the individual child and then the society in which he lives. Although it may not seem like a problem in the short term, it is obvious that it will cause problems in the long term. These posts are made in the sense of entertainment of the day, create a feeling of constant appreciation and approval in the child. Therefore, in the future, he will start to expect attention and appreciation from everyone in his work (Dönmez, 2019).

Conclusion

Considering the fact that almost all of the population that midwives serve is women, midwife is a key professional member in protecting and improving women's health. We can list the roles /responsibilities of the midwife in the influence of the media on women's health as follows:

1. The midwife should first increase her awareness of the effects of the media and then raise women's awareness on this issue with her roles as educators, advocates, caregivers, researchers, leaders, and consultants.
2. The midwife should fill her own professional gap in the media by taking part in the media personally. Midwives should take part in programs related to the field and convey practices that can contribute positively to women's health to their colleagues and society with evidence-based data.
3. Attempts should be made to explain the positive effects of breastfeeding support on breastfeeding first to themselves, then to their spouses and families, and finally to the whole society, and encouraging activities are frequently brought up in the written and visual media.
4. The positive power of the mass media and the media should be used by including positive birth stories, the benefits of vaginal birth, prenatal education, and counseling services to increase the WHO's urgently recommended vaginal births, in other words to reduce cesarean deliveries (Aktaş, 2016; Kurnaz, 2014).

As a result, the importance of the media is great in the field of women's health, as it is effective in many fields. There is a lot of information on the internet that can negatively affect women's health. Midwives, who are the key point of women's health, should raise awareness and inform women. When necessary, it should be able to present informative trainings and notes to women through the media. In addition, it should provide training and consultancy on how to reach the right information shared by the media.

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Geniřletilmiř Özet

Kadın Saęlıęı; aile ve toplumdan kaynaklanan psiko-sosyal faktörler, kadının bireysel saęlık durumu, doęurganlık davranıřı, saęlık hizmetlerinin kalitesi gibi birok faktörden etkilenir. Saęlıęı etkileyen faktörler ok ve eřitli olduęundan, saęlıęı geliřtirmeye yönelik stratejiler ve eylemler de ok ve eřitlidir. Bu nedenle saęlıęın teřviki ve geliřtirilmesi konusu sadece saęlık sektörünü deęil birok sektörü ilgilendirmektedir. Bu sektörlerin en önemlilerinden biri de medyadır. Medyanın kadın saęlıęının korunması ve geliřtirilmesinde etkili olabilmesi için ilk bilinmesi gereken nokta kadınların ne tür kitle iletiřim araçlarına ulařabildikleri, ulařtikları bu araçları ne sıklıkla ve hangi amala kullandıęıdır. Ülkemizde yetiřkin kadınların sık kullandıęı, kıır-kent arası farkın az olduęu medya araçlarından biri televizyondur. (Özbař,2010). Bu örneklerden de anlaşılacaęı gibi estetik giriřimlerde medyanın hatta medyatik doktorun etkisi büyüktür. Medyanın kadın estetięi üzerine etkilerini olumlu ve olumsuz olarak iki grupta deęerlendirmek mümkündür. (Odabař,2008). Medya, kadını objeleřtirilmiř nesne 'meta' estetik unsuru olarak gösterebilmektedir. Örneęin, oto araç alım ve satıřlarında, kadınla yakın / hi ilgili bulunmamakla birlikte reklamlarında ince, uzun, zayıf, dekolte kadını mankenler kullanılmaktadır. Medyada, reklamlarda kanıt deęeri düşük veya kanıtı dayalı olmayan ürün ve uygulamalara sık yer verilmesi (kozmetik ürünler, zayıflama ilaları, vücuda dövme vb.) kiřide bu ürünlere yönelik alım talebini artıracaktır. Medya adolosan dönemdeki kız çocuklarında da olumsuz davranıřlara neden olmaktadır. Bu dönemdeki çocuklarda kendine özgü bir model yaratmakta ve bu modelle kendini özdeřtirmekte yani bu model gibi düşünüp, bu model gibi yařam tarzını sürdürmektedir. Kendisiyle özdeřtirdięi bu modellere benzeme; anoreksiya nervoza, bulimia nervoza gibi yeme bozukluęu hastalıklarına sebep olmaktadır. Bilindięi gibi yeme bozuklukları; adet gecikmesi, adet görmeme, kemik erimesi ve buna baęlı kırıklar, böbrek yetmezlięi, depresyon ve obsesif-kompulsif kiřilik bozukluęu gibi bir ok ciddi komplikasyonlara neden olmaktadır. Bireylerin yeterince bilinli ve medyanın etik ve denetimli olmamasına baęlı yařanılan bu durumlar (örn: rastgele bir zayıflama ilacına veya diyete bařlama ve ardından gelen ölüm koması); kadınlarımızın hem fiziksel saęlıęını (örn: kan yoluyla bulařan hastalıklar, dermatolojik sorunlar, enfeksiyon v.b) hem de ruhsal saęlıęını (örn: depresyon) ok olumsuz yönde etkileyebilmektedir. Son dönemlerde kadınlarda; hoř görünme, cazibeli olma, estetik olma, psikolojik olarak rahatlama adına online kıyafet alıřveriřleri ok sık yapılmakta, hatta bu alıřveriřler ne yazık ki biliřsel baęımlılık haline dönüşmektedir. Kadınların estetik ürünleri uygulama ve cerrahi giriřimleri kullanma nedenlerine baktıęımızda; ana nedenlerin genç kalma, güzelleřme ve ekici olma olduęunu görmekteyiz. Medyanın bu uygulamalara sık yer vermesi, kadınlarda bu ögeye yönelik gereksinim isteęini doęurmaktadır. Bu gereksinimi karřılayan kadınlarda özgüven ve sosyalleřme olanaęı artmakta ve kiři kendini ruhen ve bedenen daha pozitif hissetmektedir. Bazı mesleklerde, mesleęin devamı için estetik görüntü önemli bir ölçüt olarak deęerlendirilmektedir. Bu amala yapılan giriřimler, kadınların kariyerini ve gelirini yükseltmektedir (örn: mankenlik) Dięer taraftan, medyanın sık yer verdięi bazı saęlık programları da (spor, beslenme, cilt bakımı vb.) kadının bilinlenmesini saęlayarak, ruh ve beden saęlıęını koruyup, geliřtirebilmektedir. Medyanın önemli görevlerinden biri de, toplumda var olan sorunu görünür kılıp, bu soruna yönelik toplumda farkındalıęın artmasını saęlamaktır. Örneęin; kadına yönelik řiddet gibi olumsuz görüntülerin medyada görünür kılınması, ilgili kurum ve kuruluřları harekete geirerek kadının cinsiyetine dayalı ayrımcılıęın önlenmesinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır (Aktař,2014). Medya, tüm eęitim düzeylerindeki kadınları etkileyebilir. İnternet řüphesiz en yeni ve en hızlı büyüyen kitle iletiřim aracıdır. Dünya Saęlık Örgütü (WHO), sosyal medya araçlarını en etkin řekilde kullanan saęlık kuruluřlarından biridir. Örgüt tarafından 2012 yılında depresyonla mücadele kapsamında yayınlanan "Kara bir köpeęim vardı, adı depresyondur" bařlıklı video yaklařık 6 milyon kez görüntülendi (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiCrniLQGYc>). Yorumlarda depresyonu bu video sayesinde yendiklerini belirtti. Medyadaki reklamlarda (kozmetik, zayıflama ilaları vb.) kanıt deęeri düşük veya kanıtı dayalı olmayan ürün ve uygulamaların sık yer alması bu ürünlere yönelik satın alma talebini artırabilir. Bireylerin yeterince bilinli olmaması, medyanın etik ve kontrollü olmaması nedeniyle yařanan bu durumlar kadınlarımızın hem fiziksel hem de ruhsal saęlıęını (örn. depresyon) ok olumsuz etkileyebilmektedir. Hamilelik, doęum ve doęum sonrası gibi hayatın en hassas döneminde anne adayları, medya aracılıęıyla bebeklerinin saęlıęını ve kendi saęlıklarını aramakta, bařkalarının deneyimlerini ve önerilerini dikkate almaktadır. Gebelik gibi hayatın en hassas döneminde anne adayları bebeklerinin saęlıęı ve kendi saęlıkları için merak ettiklerini medyadan arařtırıp, bařkalarının deneyim ve önerilerini dikkate almaktadır. Doęurganlık aęındaki kadınların "doęum řekli tercihinde"; aile, arkadař dıřında, internet ve gazetelerde yer alan doęum hikayeleri ve fotoęrafları, görsel medyada gösterilen aęrılı doęum sahneleri de önemli rol oynamaktadır. (Luce et al., 2016). Sosyal medya içerikleri incelendięinde, resmi ve sosyal sorumluluk projeleri kapsamında faaliyet gösteren, faydalı ve sorulara bilimsel ve doęru cevaplar veren birok kaynak bulunmaktadır. Ebelerin rol ve sorumlulukları kadının hayatının her alanında önemlidir. Ebeler medyanın olumlu gücünü kullanmalıdır. Ebeler medyadaki mesleki boşluklarını medyada bizzat yer alarak doldurmalıdır. Alanlarıyla ilgili programlara dahil edilmeli ve kadın saęlıęına olumlu katkı saęlayabilecek uygulamaları kanıtı dayalı verilerle meslektařlarına ve topluma aktarmalıdır. Sonuç olarak ebeler eęitimi, savunucu, bakıcı, arařtırmacı, liderlik ve danıřmanlık rolleriyle kadınları medyadaki bilgi kirlilięinden korumalı ve bu konuda farkındalık yaratmalıdır.