

EXAMINATION OF PERSONALITY DISORDERS ON NATIONAL NEWS WEBSITES IN TERMS OF STIGMATIZATION**Merve KARABURUN***
Burcu TÜRK****ABSTRACT**

Societies consider the media as an important source of information on psychological disorders. Evaluated from this perspective, the content of news in the media may contribute to an increase in stigmatization. This study aims to examine the news related to personality disorders on the most traffic-receiving news websites in Turkey in terms of stigmatization. The content analysis method was employed in this research. Relevant news between January 1, 2019, and January 1, 2023, were included and evaluated. The news was segregated by researchers into four main themes: informative, crime-related, culture/art/events, and entertainment) based on similarities in content. In terms of stigmatization, the news content was assessed under headings such as murder, violence, threat/harassment, and others (deception, fraud, self-harm). The news content scanned in four media outlets between 2019 and 2023 was classified as negative or neutral. 54.26% of the news was negative, while 45.74% was neutral. According to the data, 54.26% of the news was negative, while 45.74% was neutral. The utilization of murder was observed in 20.00% of news articles with negative content, while violence was present in 25.71% of such articles. Among the negatively toned news, 20.00% was associated with murder, 25.71% with violence, 18.57% with threat/harassment, and 35.72% with other forms of stigmatization (deception, fraud, self-harm). In 60.00% of the news, the person's photograph was included, while 54.29% included the person's name. These statistics suggest that these topics were employed to stigmatize certain individuals or groups. Photographic representations of individuals were employed in 60.00% of the news articles, while the mention of individuals' names was seen in 54.29% of the news articles. Considering the scope of the issue and the stigmatizing content in the media, these results support the need for strong national and international alliances against stigma to coordinate the linguistic content in the news.

Keywords: Stigmatization, Personality Disorders, Media, Psychopathology.

ULUSAL HABER WEB SİTELERİNDE KİŞİLİK BOZUKLUKLARININ DAMGALAMA AÇISINDAN İNCELENMESİ**ÖZET**

Toplumlar medyayı psikolojik bozukluklarla ilgili bilgi edinmede önemli bir kaynak olarak kabul etmektedir. Bu açıdan değerlendirildiğinde medyadaki haber içerikleri damgalamanın artmasına neden olabilir. Bu çalışmada Türkiye'de en çok trafik alan haber sitelerinde kişilik bozukluklarına ilişkin haberlerin damgalama açısından incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Araştırmada içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. 01.01.2019 ile 01.01.2023 tarihleri arasındaki ilgili haberler araştırmaya dahil edilerek değerlendirilmiştir. Haberler, içerik bakımından benzerliklerine göre ayrıştırılarak araştırmacılar tarafından dört ana tema (bilgilendirici, suçla ilgili, kültür/sanat/etkinlik, magazin) altında gruplandırılmıştır. Damgalama açısından haber içerikleri cinayet, şiddet, tehdit/taciz ve diğer (aldatma, dolandırıcılık, kendine zarar verme) başlıkları altında değerlendirilmiştir. 2019-2023 yılları arasında dört medya organında taranan haberlerin haber içerikleri olumsuz ve nötr olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Haberlerin %54,26'sı olumsuz, %45,74'ü ise nötr içeriklidir. Olumsuz içerikli haberlerin %20,00'si cinayet, %25,71'i şiddet, %18,57'si tehdit/taciz, %35,72'si diğer (aldatma, dolandırıcılık, kendine zarar verme) açısından damgalama ile ilişkili bulunmuştur. Haberlerin %60,00'ünde kişinin fotoğrafı, %54,29'unda kişinin adına yer verilmiştir. Sorunun kapsamı ve medyadaki damgalama içerikli haberler göz önüne alındığında, bu sonuçlar, haberlerdeki içeriksel dili koordine etmek için güçlü ulusal ve uluslararası damgalama karşıtı ittifaklara ihtiyaç olduğu görüşünü desteklemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Damgalama, Kişilik Bozuklukları, Medya, Psikopatoloji

1. INTRODUCTION

The term "stigma" conveys a negative connotation, implying a sense of humiliation and disdainful behavior towards an individual or event, sometimes associated with wounds or scars. Stigma can be defined as a manifestation of shame and humiliation that serves to label an individual, highlighting their divergence from

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societal norms and thus leading to diminished worth, undesirability, and discriminatory treatment of the branded person. It is based on negative beliefs and prejudices (Taşkın, 2007:17; Avcil, Bulut, & Hızlı Sayar, 2016:176). The history of stigma is as old as human history. In the past, it was seen that people were stigmatized because of leprosy, cancer, tuberculosis, AIDS, epilepsy diseases. Today, it is possible to say that individuals with mental disorders are the ones who are most exposed to stigma in all societies (Taşkın, 2007:17; Çam & Çuhadar, 2011:136; Avcil, Bulut, & Hızlı Sayar, 2016:177; Bekiroğlu, 2021:595).

It is seen that society has negative beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, even if they do not have any experience with individuals with mental disorders. Having a mental disorder is seen as weakness, deficiency, and inadequacy in society. It is thought that people with mental disorders are dangerous and can never live in harmony with other people. In this regard, individuals with mental disorders do not seek treatment or may discontinue treatment, and both themselves and their families may be adversely affected. Therefore, it is of great importance to understand the causes and effects of stigma with such devastating consequences (Avcil, Bulut, & Hızlı Sayar, 2016; Bekiroğlu, 2021:595). Diagnosis of the disease, symptoms, severity of symptoms, hospitalization, lack of social support, sociocultural structure, education level of the people around, and knowledge and awareness level of individuals in society about mental disorders are among the factors affecting stigmatization (Bekiroğlu, 2021:596).

Understanding the psychological and social processes by which symbolic communication affects human cognition, emotions, and actions is essential due to the significant impact of the media on society (Bandura, 2009). The mass media have the capacity to incite, elicit emotional reactions, and perhaps alter aggressive inclinations, among several other psychological states. The term "mood" is commonly used when discussing the media as a whole. Individuals select their media consumption based on their present emotional or mood conditions and their anticipations of how the media will impact or modify those conditions. Viewers desire to experience emotional impact, and the mass media is specifically designed to fulfill this desire (Saddiqi & Silab, 2023:59). There are many studies indicating that media technologies and content influence the user's behaviors, perspectives, and values (Winston, 1998; Battin, 2017). These technologies have the potential to alter our time management, political and historical perceptions, and cultural values (Gillespie, Boczkowski & Foot, 2014:21; Bolin, 2012). Bernstein&Adorno (1991) argues that mass culture generally distracts our attention and is designed to hinder our processes of self-understanding and distance us from comprehending sociological and political realities. According to McLuhan (1963), the technological tools used carry a message in themselves, and the way they are used can create effects on individual, social, and cultural levels. Media is also concerned with how the message is perceived as it is being conveyed. Thus, the viewer's relationship with the communication medium is determined and their behavior is shaped accordingly (Gecer, 2019:417). In addition, it is seen that the media plays an important role in the attitudes and behaviors of individuals, as they have a strong persuasion and direction effect (Açıkgöz & Akkuş, 2018:142).

Societies accept the media as an important source for information about psychiatric illnesses. In this context, newspapers, television, and magazines are among the most frequently consulted news sources. Newspaper and television news are considered to be influential sources with higher credibility and reliability (Ayhan & Seki Öz, 2020:2786). While it may be beneficial for accurate information about mental disorders and reducing stigma, in practice, it is seen that news that contains misinformation and interpretations that may lead to stigmatization and a negative attitude is published (Açıkgöz & Akkuş, 2018:2786; Asan, 2019:201).

Considering the studies conducted to determine the role of the media in the process of beliefs, attitudes, and stigmatization regarding mental disorders, for example, McCrae, Sharif, & Norman (2019) found that one quarter of the articles are likely to reinforce negative attitudes, according to their analysis of articles obtained from online newspaper sources in Saudi Arabia. In addition, it was seen that the theme of dangerousness was included in one-third of the articles, and people with mental disorders were portrayed as violent, unpredictable,

and a danger to their society (McCrae, Sharif, & Norman, 2019). In another study, Anderson et al. (2018) found articles on mental health in newspapers in England between 2008 and 2016, and because of the content analysis, they found that the evaluations of all diagnoses except schizophrenia were anti-stigmatizing rather than stigmatizing. Since studies on the subject have not been adequately researched on personality disorders, this research aimed to understand the stigmatization processes of the media associated with personality disorders.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Stigmatization

The concept of stigma was first introduced by Erving Goffman in 1963. The author characterized stigma as a quality or trait that leads to the devaluation, contamination, or perception of shame or dishonor towards an individual. The subsequent research conducted in this field has been shaped by the contributions of Goffman, and the notion of stigma has been extensively examined across various contexts and cultures. The perception of stigma is significantly shaped by cultural and environmental value systems, which exhibit variations both temporally and spatially. Nevertheless, most scholars concur with Goffman's fundamental conceptualization, which delineated the primary components of stigma, including labeling, stereotyping, social exclusion, prejudice, ostracism, lack of knowledge, loss of social standing, diminished self-worth, reduced self-efficacy, marginalization, and discriminatory practices (Corrigan, Watson & Barr, 2006).

The concept of mental health stigma can be described as the act of stigmatizing, socially disapproving, or disparaging those who are experiencing mental health issues (Goffman, 1963:546). The existing body of literature encompasses various dimensions or categories of stigma pertaining to mental health, which encompass self-stigma, public stigma, professional stigma, and institutional stigma. Self-stigma, also known as internalized stigma, pertains to the adverse sentiments that an individual holds towards their own mental condition (Corrigan, Powell & Rüsç, 2012:382). The presence of self-stigma has been found to be associated with negative consequences, including limited utilization of therapy, feelings of disempowerment, diminished self-confidence, and a decline in overall quality of life (Corrigan, Druss & Perlick, 2014). Public stigma is characterized by the presence of unfavorable attitudes towards individuals with mental illness, which are commonly held by the general population (Corrigan, Powell & Rüsç, 2012:382). These sentiments are frequently rooted in ignorance, fear, and prejudice. Perceived stigma, a concept closely associated with public stigma, refers to an individual's subjective perception of societal attitudes towards mental illness. Previous studies have provided empirical evidence regarding the notable influence of public stigma, namely in the form of employment and public agency discrimination (Livingston, 2013). Professional stigma refers to the phenomenon where healthcare professionals possess stigmatizing attitudes towards their patients. These attitudes are frequently rooted in fear or misconceptions surrounding the causes and symptoms of mental illness. Additionally, professionals may also encounter stigma from the public or other healthcare professionals due to their association with stigmatized individuals (Ahmedani, 2011:2). The issue of professional stigma is a matter of significant importance due to its potential impact on the provision of care and treatment for individuals with mental illness (Ahmedani, 2011:2). This stigma can extend to the treatment of physical disorders as well, thereby potentially compromising the overall well-being and recovery of these individuals (Livingston, 2013:4). In conclusion, institutional stigma pertains to the policies and cultural norms inside an organization that foster unfavorable attitudes and beliefs towards individuals who are stigmatized, including those with mental health issues (Ahmedani, 2011:2; Corrigan, Powell & Rüsç, 2012:383). The perpetuation of stigma can also be strengthened through legislative frameworks, public policy, and professional practices, resulting in its profound integration into society (Livingston, 2013:26).

Personality Disorders

Personality disorders refer to a classification utilized to describe prevalent physiological, psychological, and spiritual attributes. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-V (DSM-V)

developed by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), personality disorder is characterized as a chronic maladaptive pattern of behavior and rigid disposition that is accompanied by personal distress or impairment in social and occupational functioning. Individuals diagnosed with personality disorders have difficulties in their interpersonal interactions and demonstrate an elevated propensity for engaging in self-harming behaviors, including suicide attempts and acts of harm towards their immediate surroundings (APA, 2015:645).

Personality disorders are categorized into three clusters, namely Cluster A, Cluster B, and Cluster C. Cluster A is distinguished by individuals who exhibit peculiar and idiosyncratic traits, encompassing the diagnostic categories of paranoid, schizoid, and schizotypal personality disorders. Personality disorders within this cluster are assessed within the spectrum of schizophrenia. Cluster B is distinguished by individuals who exhibit highly emotional and volatile personalities. This cluster include personality disorders such as antisocial, borderline, histrionic, and narcissistic personality disorders. Cluster C personality disorders are distinguished by individuals exhibiting anxious and scared personality traits. This cluster encompasses personality disorders such as withdrawn, addicted, and obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (APA, 2015:646).

3. METHOD

Research Design

In this study, a content analysis method was used to examine the news about personality disorders in terms of stigmatization on the news websites that receive the most traffic in Turkey. Content analysis is a scientific approach that allows for the objective and systematic examination of oral, written, and other materials (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001:27). The purpose of content analysis is to determine the presence of words or concepts within a text or text group. (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008:270). It is also defined as summarizing the basic messages in the content of written texts (Coken, Marion & Morrison, 2007).

Data Collection

The data for the study were obtained from the most heavily trafficked news websites (Hürriyet, Sabah, and Sözcü) based on similar web data measuring the traffic and performance of the websites, and the related news between January 1, 2019, and January 1, 2023 was included in the research and evaluated using keywords. Keywords used in the study were "paranoid personality disorder", "schizoid personality disorder", "schizotypal personality disorder", "histrionic personality disorder", "borderline personality disorder", "narcissistic personality disorder", "antisocial personality disorder", "obsessive-compulsive personality disorder", "avoidant personality disorder" and "dependent personality disorder".

Data Analysis

A total of 129 news items were accessed using keywords. The year of the news, the website where the news is given, the negative or neutral emotional aspect of the news, and if there is a person who is the subject of the news, whether their picture or image is shared or not, were evaluated. The news has been categorized as information-oriented, crime-related, culture-arts/event content, or magazine. In terms of stigmatization, the news contents were evaluated under the headings of murder, violence, threat or harassment, and others (deception, fraud, and self-harm). The news about violence is only about physical violence. Stigmatization was evaluated according to Link and Phelan's (2001) theoretical approach. Accordingly, when the news separates, labels, explains the differences in terms of negative features, and expresses class differences and loss of status through personality disorders, it is considered stigmatizing news.

4. FINDINGS

Table 1: Findings Related to the Year of Publication of the News

Year	n	%
2019	36	27,91
2020	34	26,36
2021	27	20,93
2022	32	24,80
Total	129	100

According to the distribution of data regarding the publication year of the news, it was determined that 27.91% of them were published in 2019, 26.36% in 2020, 20.93% in 2021, and 24.80% in 2022.

Table 2: Findings Related to the News Broadcast Category

Category	n	%
Informative	75	58,14
Crime Related News	32	24,81
Culture-Art-Event	9	6,97
Magazine	13	10,08
Total	129	100

According to the distribution of data on the broadcast category of the news, 58.14% were related to information, 24.81% were related to crime, 6.97% were related to culture, art, and events, and 10.08% were related to magazines.

Table 3: Findings Concerning the News Media Organ

Website	N	%
Hürriyet	83	64,34
Sabah	35	27,13
Sözcü	11	8,53
Total	129	100

According to the data, the majority of news articles, specifically 64.34%, were published in Hürriyet, followed by Sabah with 27.13%, and Sözcü with 8.53%.

Table 4: Findings Related to the Emotional Aspect of the News

Emotional Aspect	n	%
Negative	70	54,26
Neutral	59	45,74
Total	129	100

The news contents of the news that were scanned in four media organs between 2019-2023 were classified as negative and neutral. 54.26% of the news are negative and 45.74% are neutral.

Table 5: Findings on Stigma

Negative Content	n	%
Murder	14	20,00
Violence	18	25,71
Threats/Harassment	13	18,57
Other (Deception-Fraud- Self/Harm)	25	35,72
Total	70	100

In 20.00% of the news with negative content, murder, 25.71% violence, 18.57% threat/harassment, 35.72% other (deception, fraud, self-harm) categories were used for stigmatization.

Table 6: Use of Name and Photo in the News

	Use	n	%
Photo	Yes	42	60,00
	No	28	40,00
Name	Yes	38	54,29
	No	32	45,71
Total		70	100

Photographs of people were used in 60.00% of the news, and names of people were used in 54.29% of the news.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, news about personality disorders was evaluated by the content analysis method in terms of stigmatization, based on the three news sites with the highest performance and traffic. When the websites were scanned, 129 news items were accessed. In the evaluation, the year of the news, the website where the news is given, the negative or neutral emotional aspect of the news, and if there is a person in the news, their picture and image are categorized in terms of whether they are shared. According to the news broadcast category, it has been categorized as information-oriented, crime-related, culture-art/activity content, or magazine.

Mass media have an active role and power in shaping reality and determining the situation (Arslan, 2006:2). On the other hand, mass media is an important means of socialization. In the socialization process, individuals learn the behaviors required by the roles given by society, the status they have because of these roles, and the expectations of society from them. Mass media also fulfill functions such as spreading the cultural production system to society, teaching, and helping to internalize it by spreading to every point of people's living spaces. It has the power and ability to convey many and different messages to different social groups and individuals in the same news (Arslan, 2006:4).

The distribution of the news over the years has been at a similar level. Looking at the broadcast category, it is seen that more than half of the news is about giving information. Information-oriented news is news that describes the personality disorder and roughly mentions its symptoms and treatment methods. These articles are written by an editor or a columnist. The point that draws attention to these news stories is the language used. Certain stigmatizing statements ("individuals with bipolar personality disorder cheat") were included even in the news content where the columnist was a psychologist or psychiatrist. Ozer et al. (2017:225) found in their study that if the use of language in psychological problems is not correct, people are called dangerous and unpredictable, which causes stigma and social isolation. According to Shattell (2009:199), to prevent stigmatizing language in psychological problems, it is necessary to use language with purpose and grace.

As a result of the evaluation of the emotional aspect of the news together with the visual and content analysis, it is seen that more than half of them have a "negative" emotional aspect or tone. The emotional aspect or tone was determined according to the negative or neutral feeling of the news content in the reader. While the negative emotional aspect is mostly seen in the news related to crime, it is also seen in the news about magazines and giving information. Ayhan and Öz (2020:2788) examined newspaper news in terms of stigma against schizophrenia and found that 58% of the news had a negative emotional tone, and 48.8% of this negative news were related to crime. Similar findings are seen in other studies (Dubugras et al., 2011; Rodrigues-Silva et al., 2017). Although personality disorders may be related to crime, it is not expected that every individual with a personality disorder will exhibit crime-related behavior (Eastman et al., 2019). According to Corrigan

(2014:1263), media reports that exaggerate the link between psychological disorder and violence cause public fear by maintaining the "dangerous" perception. Society sees these people as responsible and guilty of their disorder and believes that these people make choices that cause their symptoms or that they do not make adequate recovery efforts.

The findings in our study support the relevant literature, and it is seen that the negative content of the news is matched with personality disorders to support negative perception and stigmatization. The presentation of personality disorders in the news with the content of murder, violence, threats, harassment, deception, self-harm, and sharing the photos and identity information of the people who are the subject of the news are also factors that increase negative perception and stigma.

The impact of negative media images extends far beyond the interpersonal realm to broader socio-structural processes. A qualitative study of stigma experiences conducted in Germany revealed that patients with schizophrenia felt that most of their stigmatization experiences were related to negative public images portrayed in the media, inequalities in social and health policy, and limited access to social roles. Social stereotypes have imposed on them a particular illness identity that shapes how others perceive them and limits their social contact. The resulting social structural barriers hindered their life chances and reduced their overall quality of life (Stuart, 2003:652; Schulze & Angermeyer, 2003:300).

In conclusion, this article adds to the review literature focusing on the extent to which a broader understanding of mental health issues featured on local news websites is possible. Given the scope of the issue and widespread media bias, these results support the view that strong national and international anti-stigma alliances are needed to coordinate media response efforts globally. For this reason, it is important to educate media workers about stigmatization and psychiatric diseases through various seminars and trainings. It is also recommended to organize various events on a social scale against stigmatization and to raise awareness on this issue.

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