

FRAMING OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF WOMEN'S MAGAZINES IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This article reports a qualitative content analysis study that examined how mental health issues were portrayed in Malaysian women's magazines. It identified the frames and sources of mental health issues used in three most popular English language women magazines. Thirty-six issues of *Cleo*, *Female* and *Her World*, were analyzed and 18 mental health related articles were identified and were subjected to a detailed framing analysis. The main findings revealed that issues of mental health were generally positively framed. The mental health articles provided definitions of the issue and explained further about its nature, causes, symptoms, consequences, coping mechanisms and societal relevance in a positive and encouraging manner. A positive frame that was absent in earlier reviewed studies, the notion of hope, was also found. Negative frames such as "criminally insane killer or lunatic-on-the loose" were not apparent in the portrayal.

KEYWORDS: Media Framing, Mental Health Issues, Magazine Portrayals of Women