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Analysis of newspaper coverage of active aging through the lens of two key documents

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Introduction

- ❖ The World Health Organization revealed in 2002 the report *Active ageing: A policy framework* [1] describing active aging as the “process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age” [1].
- ❖ The 2010 Toronto Charter for Physical Activity: A Global call for Action[2] presents physical activity as being vital for health, the economy, and the environment [2].

Objective

- ❖ to generate qualitative and quantitative data on media coverage of the two documents, and themes evident within the two documents and the social groups visible

Methods

- ❖ Analytical framework: The two key documents
- ❖ Data Source: Calgary Herald , Globe and Mail, the New York Times, China Daily, Malaysia Star, The Independent, The Guardian and The Times (all UK); the Canadian newsstand (database of n=300 Canadian newspapers)
- ❖ Inclusion criteria: active aging and related terms
- ❖ Coding: deductive and inductive content analysis using Atlas.ti[®] software

Results and Discussion

- ❖ The WHO report and the Toronto Charter were invisible (Table 1).
- ❖ Themes of importance mentioned in the two documents were also invisible.
- ❖ Both of the documents mentioned the need to include socially disadvantaged groups. However socially disadvantaged groups such as disabled people, indigenous people, immigrants and the poor are under-represented in the media coverage of active aging.

Table 1. Frequency analysis of coverage of the WHO Policy framework for active ageing and the Toronto Charter for Physical Activity in various newspapers

| Newspapers | WHO framework for active aging (n=) | Policy for Physical Activity in various newspapers (n=) |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Calgary Herald (Canada, local reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>The Globe and Mail (Canada, national reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>National Post (Canada, (national reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>The New York Times (USA, national reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>China Daily (National reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Malaysia Star (National reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>The Independent (UK, National Reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>The Guardian(UK, National Reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |
| <i>The Times(UK, National Reach)</i> | 0 | 0 |

Table 2. groups mentioned in media articles covering active aging" OR "advanced aging" OR "natural aging" OR "mindful aging" OR "aging well" OR "longitudinal aging" OR "successful aging" OR "healthy aging")

| Social Groups | Canadian Newsstand (n=300 newspapers) 4569=100% | Calgary Herald 161=100% | The Globe and Mail 149=100% | The New York Times 209=100% |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Aboriginal People | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Business | 18.9 | 12.4 | 13.4 | 16.7 |
| Caregiver | 3.8 | 6.8 | 0.67 | 0.95 |
| Corporate | 1.75 | 3.7 | 2.67 | 4.3 |
| Family/ies | 136.3/14.7 | 28.5/9.9 | 28.1/7.38 | 29.6/9,5 |
| First Nation | 0.39 | 3.1 | 0 | 0 |
| Gerontologist | 1.51 | 2.4 | 0.67 | 4.78 |
| Government | 16.15 | 8.0 | 14.0 | 13.4 |
| Indigenous People | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Industry | 6.76 | 8.0 | 8.7 | 8.61 |
| Inuit | 0.21 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Immigrants | 1.77 | 8.0 | 2.68 | 0.047 |
| Nurses | 3.91 | 4.3 | 3.35 | 2.87 |
| Parents | 13.59 | 13 | 8.7 | 11.96 |
| People with Disabilities | 0.91 | 0 | 0 | 0.047 |
| Physicians | 4.33 | 8.0 | 4.6 | 7.17 |
| Society | 28.4 | 21.1 | 19 | 20.09 |
| Therapist | 6.12 | 1.8 | 3.35 | 5.74 |

- ❖ One of the issues raised in the Toronto Charter included “categories for adopting evidence based strategies that target the whole population as well as specific population sub groups, particularly those facing the greatest barriers” [2], In this case a total of one article in the *Calgary Herald* and five in *The Globe and Mail* mentioned anything in relation to stakeholders and individuals who face the greatest barriers.

- ❖ Both document include the issues of income of and cost for the aging population [1,2]. The Canadian newspapers present minimal interest on income, and zero results were found in the New York Times.
- ❖ Both documents mention violence and abuse as one of the factors that play a role active aging. Only 2 articles in the Calgary Herald, 4 articles in the Globe and Mail and 0 articles in the NYT mentioned abuse.
- ❖ Social protection seen as important in the WHO report is mentioned by no newspaper.
- ❖ The Toronto Charter states that one has to embrace an equity approach aimed at reducing social and health inequalities and disparities of access to physical activity. Eliminating inequalities were mentioned as important in the WHO report However equity and inequality was not covered in the newspaper articles.

Conclusion

- ❖ Newspapers covered were so far useless in giving visibility to the WHO report on active aging and the 2010 Toronto Charter and the themes they see as important.
- ❖ Other Media strategies might have to be taken such as using more social media to organize especially local coverage.

REFERENCES

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