Teenage magazine's role as a health educator

- A content analysis of *Cosmopolitan*'s health message

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Abstract

Aim
The aim of this study was to examine a women's magazine *Cosmopolitan* and to study what kind of message the magazine gives about health. The following questions were posed:
1. What kind of topics does *Cosmopolitan* discuss in health related articles?
2. How does *Cosmopolitan* motivate the readers in health related articles?
3. What kind of pictures are presented in health related articles?

Method
A quantitative content analysis was used as the study method and it intends to analyze meanings in the content as well as describes and interprets the material by using statistics and numbers. The analysis was executed with the help of coding categories. The material used for the analysis was 26 health related articles and the articles were found in 11 *Cosmopolitan* issues published in 2010. *Cosmopolitan* was chosen because it is a well known magazine in the whole world and it also has lots of young readers.

Results
The results showed that the most common topics in the articles were physical activity and nutrition. Most of the articles (14) aimed to promote healthy lifestyle, but almost as many articles (12) were promoting appearance or both healthy lifestyle and appearance. Most of the articles (14) gave general information. The most common pictures in the articles were whole body pictures (13) or upper body pictures (9). The most used motive in the articles was: get healthier/general well-being (16). Other motives used in the articles were: get better body (6); get better endurance/strength (3); get better mental health (1).

Conclusions
*Cosmopolitan* magazine lacked a comprehensive perspective to health. Positive health outcomes were presented, but also appearance had a central role in the magazine. Bigger variation of motives presented could give a more interesting aspect to the magazine content and also give better and more comprehensive education about health. It is important that youngsters understand the media's impact and can critically interpret the content of magazines.
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1 Introduction

During my physical education (PE) teacher studies in The Swedish School of Sports and Health Science (GIH) I have been thinking about health's role in the subject Physical education and Health (PEH). My experiences at GIH and in schools in Sweden raised a question if pupils get enough health education in schools. PE teacher studies in GIH in my experience has focused most of the time on physical activity and somewhat little on the health aspects. I have noticed the same pattern in schools where I have been doing my practice and the curriculum in PEH does not provide proper requirements when it comes to health education. Physical activity is really important, but there is more to health than just exercising.

Adolescences and young adults' health problems, such as risky alcohol behavior, poor mental health and overweight, have increased. (Folkhälsorapport 2003, p. 97) It can be an outcome of lots of things, for example decreased everyday physical activity and other changes in the community. But that health education plays a role in the adolescences and young adults' health can't be denied. There is also some evidence that skills and knowledge about health related topics is quite low among school pupils (Pirouznia 2001). Various studies show different things about the connection between knowledge and behavior itself. Some of them suggest that knowledge can directly affect behavior and others suggest that additional things are needed to change one's behavior. For example Pirouznia (2001) has studied the relationship between nutrition knowledge and eating behavior in school pupils. The children answered to a questionnaire which measured both knowledge and behavior related to nutrition. The overall nutrition knowledge of the pupils was somewhat low and the relationship between knowledge and behavior was significant for 7th and 8th graders, but not for 6th graders. It means that both the nutrition knowledge scores and the eating behavior scores of 7th and 8th graders were low. (Pirouznia 2001)

I have been wondering what the source of the health related information for young people is, if it's not the school. When I was younger I remember reading a lot of teenage magazines and that the magazines also had articles about health. The various information given in magazines is debatable. And it's not just the information itself, but also all the pictures, adds and the overall content of the magazine that influences the reader. All this wondering about health education in school and constantly seeing the magazine headlines about the latest and hottest weight-loss, diet and exercise
methods, got me interested about how teenage magazines write about health related subjects and what kind of effect it may have on adolescences and young adults. That is why I wanted to examine teenage magazines and study what and how they write about health, to see what kind of health messages they send to their young readers. I am also interested in the health education in schools, and wanted to see where the focus lies in the curriculum. What I mean with health is an overall well-being. WHO's definition of health is “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease” (World Health Organization 2014-01-13).

2 Background

Media coverage is everywhere and it is hard to escape its influence. The messages we receive through media have an impact on our perceptions about our surroundings and ourselves (Utter, Neumark-Sztainer, Wall & Story 2003; Field, Cheung, Wolf, Herzog, Gortmaker & Colditz, 1999). The public, including adolescents and young adults, get lots of information about what is healthy and desirable through media such as television, magazines and internet. There has been lots of discussion and concerns whether the media can have negative effect on adolescents who nowadays spends lots of their time surrounded by media. Media also provides health related information for example how you should eat, what kind of physical activity you should do, how you should look, how you can lose weight and even better how you can lose it fast. Interesting is whether and what kind of effects all of these health advice and health related articles have on adolescents. Interesting is also the school's role in the health education, and what kind of health topics does the school focus on.

2.1 Health education – schools responsibility?

Because of my future occupation as a PE teacher I am not only interested in what magazines teach about health, but also what young people learn about health at school. It is interesting to examine where the focus lies in health education in schools and what is the focus in magazines. In this part I am going to write about the meaning and relevance of PEH -subject related to the information adolescents gets about health and show what the subject curriculum in schools says about health education.
2.1.1 Evaluation of the subject Physical education and Health

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen), which monitors and investigates schools, has done an evaluation of teaching and education in the subject PEH. The evaluation covered school classes 4–6 in 36 schools. Results of the evaluation showed that there are many shortages and problems in PEH education. Not every pupil got the amount of education that they have right to. There is often too big of a focus to sports and not the health aspects such as developing healthy lifestyle. So in summary many of the pupils get too little and one-sided teaching in PEH. (Skolinspektionen 2012, p. 10-12)

The evaluation also revealed that there weren't that much of education about terms and discussion related to experiences on life style, body-image and self-image and different sports. There are three topics in PEH subject: movement; health and life style; outdoor activities and recreation (friluftsliv). But there are no indications of how much teaching time each of these topics should have. (Skolinspektionen 2012, p. 10-12) That means that it is up to the teacher to decide whether she or he chooses to educate pupils in health and life style and if so, how much and in what topics.

2.1.2 Physical education and Health curriculum

Health doesn't get that much of attention when looking at the curriculum and the evaluation done by The Swedish Schools Inspectorate tells that the pupils don't get enough health education in school, though the subject name, Physical education and Health, suggest that. To get more detailed information I present the core contents of the course Physical education and health 1 in upper secondary school in Sweden.

“The teaching in the course should cover the following core content:
1. The importance of physical activity and lifestyle for physical ability and health.
2. Exercise, sports and outdoor activities which develop all-round physical ability.
3. Training methods and their effects, such as training fitness and coordination.
4. Movement to music and dance.
5. Outdoor environments and nature as arenas for physical activity and recreation.
6. Methods and equipment for outdoor activities.
7. Safety in connection with physical activity and outdoor activities.
8. Methods in the event of injuries and emergencies, such as emergency procedures for bleeding and near drowning incidents.
10. Stress management and mental training.
11. Work and study environments: interaction between the demands of different situations and people with regard to ergonomic aspects, such as physical balance and lifting techniques.”
(Skolverket 2012, p. 3)

There isn't much health related content in this curriculum. The main focus is on physical education and sports. To get some perspective to the matter and to see what kind of health aspect there could be in a curriculum, I have also looked into Finland's health education curriculum. In Finland physical education and health education are two different subjects. To see what topics are contained in the subject health education, I present the core contents of the course Health education 1: Foundations of health in upper secondary school in Finland.

“Core contents:
1. factors influencing working and functional abilities and safety: nutrition, sleep, rest and stress, health-related exercise, mental health, social support, well-being at work, occupational safety, safety at home and in leisure time, environmental health;
2. sexual health, the couple relationship, family and the social legacy of previous generations;
3. national diseases and the most common communicable diseases, including relevant risk and protective factors, and measures to influence these;
4. self-care of diseases and injuries, first aid and seeking help;
5. global health differences, factors influencing health differences;
6. methods to acquire health information and critical interpretation of health-related communication, advertising and marketing;
7. use of health care and social welfare services, civic activities in the field of public health.
(Finnish national board of education 2003, p. 215)

The content of the Finnish course content is wider and more detailed when it comes to health issues, but it can be explained by the fact that health education is an independent subject in Finland. But this shows the possibilities a school can have as a health educator.
2.2 Research

In this part I am going to introduce different studies and research that has examined the media content and its effects as well as other studies that may have relevance to my study.

2.2.1 Media's impact on adolescents

There are lots of evidence that support the idea that media has a strong influence to adolescents and young adults. The ideal women body image creates unhealthy behavior among adolescents. The desire of this ideal body causes dieting and weight control behavior that in many cases leads to unhealthy and eating-disordered measures (Thomsen, Weber & Brown 2001). The ideal images also affects the self-esteem and body satisfaction of young people and can moreover cause psychosocial distress. (Utter et. al. 2003; Field et. al. 1999)

The relationship between reading health or fitness magazines and the use of unhealthy diet methods has been examined in many studies. Thomsen, Weber and Brown (2001) have studied diet methods that have characteristics more commonly found in eating disorders (laxatives, intentional vomiting, appetite suppressants, diet pills and diets with intake of only 1200 calories or less per day), magazine reading and their relationship. Findings suggested a positive linkage between the magazine reading frequency and the use of diet methods with characteristics of an eating disorder. The participant who read more frequently also had higher score on the Mizes Anorectic Cognitions Scale. The scale is used to evaluate the presence of eating-disordered cognition. (Thomsen, Weber & Brown 2001)

Another study that shows similar results is Reading magazine articles about dieting and associated weight control behaviors among adolescents by Utter et al. (2003). The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between reading diet related magazines and diet behavior as well as psychosocial well-being. The study aimed to learn more about the adolescents who read dieting articles and research linkage between reading diet related magazines and endorsing diet and weight control behaviors as well as psychosocial well-being indicators. One of the aims was also to examine if psychosocial agony can restrain the effect of reading diet articles on commitment to unhealthy dieting. The results showed a link between frequent magazine reading and unhealthy dieting and/or weight control behavior. Also increased frequency of magazine reading showed worse scores in questionnaire related to psychosocial well-being. (Utter et al. 2003)
Another similar study (Field et al. 1999) has been made about media's influence on body dissatisfaction, idea of the perfect body shape, dieting to lose weight, and initiating an exercise program. The participants in this study were 584 5th through 12th-grade girls. Majority of the girls (69 %) described that pictures in magazines affects their perception of what is the perfect body shape. Also almost a half (47 %) of the girls reported that they wanted to lose weight because of pictures in magazines. The results showed also that frequency of reading magazines had a positive association with the prevalence of having dieted with purpose to lose weight, started a diet because of an article in a magazine, exercising to lose weight or to get better body and begin exercising because of an article in a magazine. (Field et al. 1999)

There is some evidence that media can also have an influence on public's physical activity levels. Taveras, Rifas-Shiman, Field, Frazier, Colditz and Gillman (2004) studied the association between young people's desire to look like figures in the media and their physical activity levels. The participants were between 9–16 years old and they were requested to report their physical activities and score (from 1 to 5) how much they wanted to look like figures in media. The results showed that 46 % of the girls and 27 % of the boys made an effort to look like media figures. The physical activity levels were higher for those who reported higher score in wanting to look like figures in the media. The results showed that an increase by one in the score (from 1-5) of wanting to look like media figure, resulted an increase of physical activity levels by 0,7-1,2 hours per week. (Taveras et al. 2004)

Slater and Tiggemanns have studied how physical activity, both past and current levels, and media use influences women's body image. The participants included 144 women who reported their current levels of media use, physical activity and body image as well as the levels in their childhood. The current activity levels (total time spent on physical activities) had a positive correlation with body dissatisfaction. The current media use in terms of watching television and listening to music had no correlation with body-image concerns, but there was a positive correlation between reading fashion magazines and body shame as well as drive to thinness. The reported levels of physical activity in childhood also correlated with body-image concerns. Those who reported higher activity levels had higher body-image concerns. There were positive
correlations between media use in childhood and current body-image concerns: body shame, drive for thinness, appearance anxiety and body dissatisfaction. The findings suggest that physical activity levels and media use in childhood predicts body-image concerns in adulthood stronger than current levels of media use and physical activity. (Slater & Tiggemann 2006)

There are more different kind of consequences when it comes to mass media use. Adolescents' risky or unhealthy behavior and usage of mass media has been studied by Klein, Brown, Dykers, Childers, Oliveri and Porter (1993). They studied eight potentially risky behaviors by doing a data analysis of a survey. In the survey had participated 2760 adolescents between 14–16 years. The eight behaviors studied were drinking, cheating, sexual intercourse, stealing, cutting class, driving a car without permission and smoking cigarettes as well as marijuana and the use of mass media. Results showed positive relationships between engaging risky behavior and more frequent mass media use. There were also magazine related results. “Adolescents reported reading a wide diversity of magazines, and most reported reading at least one of a few selected magazines. Sports and music magazines were most likely to be read by adolescents who had engaged in many risky behaviors.” (Klein et al. 1993, p. 24)

### 2.2.2 Magazines' health messages

Guillen and Barr (1994) have studied the nutrition and fitness messages and whether the messages changed in a teen magazine between 1970–1990. They analyzed text, advertisements and recipes that related to nutrition and/or fitness. Data was collected from 132 magazines. Guillen and Barr even looked at the bust:waist and hip:waist ratios of the underwear models in the magazines to see if the models body shape has changed over the years. Results showed that the focus of the articles was in weight-loss and physical appearance. Also the reasons magazines provided to motivate the readers to follow diet or exercise plans were focusing on losing weight and becoming more attractive. A weight-loss-product was found in 47 % of the advertisements related to nutrition. The hip:waist ratio got significantly smaller over the years.

Conclusions presented in the study were: “The nutrition and fitness messages in this magazine for adolescent women emphasize body shape and appearance, similar to findings from adult women's magazines, and contribute to the cultural milieu in which thinness is an expectation for women.
Between 1970–1990, the emphasis on fitness increased, and the body shape of models tended to become more linear.” (Guillen & Barr 1994, p. 464)

Another study has been made about nutrition content in a women's magazine. The aim of the study was to research trends in food advertising and how those trends changed between years 1928–1986. Total amount of 5175 food advertisements were analyzed and coded. Findings showed that the nutrition related messages changed over time. There was a decrease in the amount of messages about general health and nutrition as well as basic nutrients, but messages about avoiding specific dietary components had increased. (Barr 1989) A study by Luff and Gray (2005) showed that teen magazines (YM and Seventeen) had increased the diet an exercise-related material over the years from 1956 to 2005. The cover model body size increased in YM but had no difference in Seventeen. (Luff & Gray 2005)

What also has been studied is what kind of health impression adolescents gets from popular teenage magazines. The participants in the study were 12 adolescents in an age between 12–18 years. They discussed in two groups about chosen images and text from teen magazines Seventeen, YM and Teen. Discussions were audio-taped and analyzed. The participants paid attention to the images of perfection that the magazines promoted. The models in the magazines had perfect bodies, eyes and teeth. Other interesting findings in the study were among other things that: “Participants stated that magazines suggest that adolescent women need male attention for protection and companionship, in order to achieve fulfillment. Being healthy or whole seemed to be dependent on the adolescent reader embracing and becoming the ideals portrayed in teen magazines.” (Chow 2004, p. 132) These findings suggest that there are big expectations and demands for teenagers and whether those expectations are reasonable and healthy is questionable.

3 Theoretical aspect

I have already presented multiple studies that show the effects of media. To get even more support and a more theoretical aspect to the effects of media I am going to apply a theory to explain the media influence: Agenda-setting theory.
Agenda-setting theory is developed by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw in 1972. They had been studying the presidential election campaign and the voters in 1968. In this study they found a correlation between things that the voters though were important and things that media presented as prominent. To determine the importance of an issue media uses many indicators, for example the size of the story headline and the page where the story appears. According to this theory media has the power to affect what the public talks and thinks about. (McCombs & Shaw 1972)

Media usually focuses on certain subjects and gives less attention to other subjects. Agenda-setting theory considers that only that can influence what the public thinks. Media forces public's attention to certain matters and that way it affects what matters public considers as important. Media doesn't necessarily steer the opinions that the public has on matters, but it influences what kind of matters public discusses. "The agenda-setting theory says that because of newspapers, television, and other news media, people are aware or not aware, pay attention to or neglect, play up or downgrade specific features of the public scene." (Shaw 1977, p. 96)

4 Aim

The aim of this study is to examine a women's magazine Cosmopolitan and to study what kind of message the magazine gives about health.

The following questions were posed:
1. What kind of topics does Cosmopolitan discuss in health related articles?
2. How does Cosmopolitan motivate the readers in health related articles?
3. What kind of pictures are presented in health related articles?

5 Method

In this part I will describe the method I used as well as how I chose and analyzed the material in this study.
5.1 Quantitative content analysis

To study the health messages in *Cosmopolitan* magazine I chose a quantitative content analysis for the method. *Cosmopolitan* is a popular magazine among adolescents and young adults in Sweden and in the whole world.

Quantitative research data analysis is based on describing and interpreting the material numerically. Quantitative analysis seeks to explain causal connections of, connections between or the prevalence of different phenomena by using numbers and statistics. Typically a quantitative analysis begins with a descriptive statistical analysis, which can also be the aim of the study itself. It is quite common to describe the study material with statistics and then use graphs for illustrating. Statistical analysis can be used to show the amount or prevalence of phenomena as well as how the phenomena can be divided or organized into different categories. Often statistical analysis works as a basis for more profound analysis. (Jyväskylän yliopisto 2013-11-21)

Contents analysis is a research technique that has been used quite a lot in the social sciences. The technique aims to analyze meanings in the content. Meanings that the creator of the content, for example a writer of an article, has attributed to it. According to Krippendorff (2012) the definition of a content analysis is: "Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (Krippendorff 2012, p. 403). Content analysis is suitable for almost any kind of data, for example, letters, interviews, audio-taped discussions and films. But maybe the most outstanding data used for content analysis is the mass media. Very popular way to use content analysis in media studies is to examine how often a subject is mentioned, for example which subjects get attention in the news. (Krippendorff 2012)

I chose this method because of the aim of my study. The aim of the study is to find out what kind of health messages a teenage magazine gives to the readers therefore a content analysis is a suitable method. Primary material in this study is magazines and like stated before, content analysis is a common method used when studying media content.

The approach used in this study is quantitative. A quantitative approach means that the material is studied in a way that can be resulted in a numerical form. For example counting the frequency of a specific word, meaning or phenomenon mentioned in a text. The aim is to quantify something in
the text. (Boréus & Bergström 2005, p. 43-44) Also a quantitative approach in this study is acceptable because of the somewhat large sample of material. It would have been challenging to describe the content of a large amount of material within a short period of time without using a statistical approach. Also like stated before it is quite common to describe the study material with statistics and graphs and it can be the aim of the study itself.

5.2 Choice of material

The aim of this study is to examine what kind of information and message teenage magazines give about health related subjects. To ensure that the magazine I choose is relevant for this study I started researching which magazines have a large distribution and a high teenage readership. After a long search I found a rapport of magazine readers in Sweden 2010, done by TNS Sifo, the leading market research company in Sweden. I browsed data collected about popular fashion and lifestyle magazines. In this section there were three magazines with most young readers (15–24 years): VeckoRevyn (182 000 readers where 103 000 were 15–24 years old), Elle (270 000 readers where 88 000 were 15–24 years old) and Cosmopolitan (166 000 readers where 93 000 were 15–24 years old) (TNS Sifo 2011, p. 6). This information lead to my decision to choose Cosmopolitan. Cosmopolitan had largest percentage of young readers and second biggest amount of young readers. Also it is not only popular among adolescents and young adults in Sweden, but also in the whole world. What also influenced my choice of magazine, was that I was already familiar with this magazine and knew what kind of articles they write.

Cosmopolitan is one of the most famous women's magazine in the world and it has published in over 100 countries with 64 editions and in 35 languages. It reaches readers worldwide. Cosmopolitan presents articles among other things about relationships, celebrities, fashion, beauty and health. (The Hearst Corporation 2013-11-21) Cosmopolitan being a well known magazine in the whole world and having large distribution as well as lots of young readers makes it suitable material for the study.

After choosing the magazine I needed to see if there were enough issues available in Sweden. I searched the word Cosmopolitan at Libris database. Results of the search showed that the Swedish version of Cosmopolitan was available in one library in Stockholm: National Library of Sweden. These Cosmopolitans that were available contained issues from years 2001–2010. I browsed some
of the magazines and chose to focus on one year's issues to get a proper overall picture about the contents in the magazine, but also to limit the amount of material. I decided to choose the newest issues, in other words issues published in 2010, because it was more relevant for this study to look at the health messages in 2010 than look at the health messages ten years ago. Things often change over the years and newest issues explains the current situation better and that is what I wanted to study, the current situation. Also the information about Cosmopolitan's readers in Sweden was from year 2010. Unfortunately not every issue was available in the library, so I took a look into those 11 issues that were available (issues 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12).

When I browsed these 11 issues I was searching for health related articles. I started with looking at the table of contents to see if there were articles about health. Most of the issues had a health related title in the table of contents and under that were listed all the health related articles which made it lots of easier to find the relevant articles. I chose all the articles that had something to do with health such as articles about nutrition, physical activity, psychosocial health and sleep. After researching all the 11 issues I found that there were 26 health related articles and these articles were the material I used in this study.

5.3. Execution of the analysis

After choosing the magazine I began to prepare for the analysis. With the help of literature that describes and explains a content analysis I started creating categories for the classification of the content I was going to analyze. I followed instructions for doing a content analysis given on the website of University of California. I studied the material, Cosmopolitans, to get a sight of the themes in the magazine to help me with the selection of categories. I started listing categories and defined them so that others could understand them. Then I added some categories to be more comprehensive. After that I ensured that the material couldn't be classified into one or another category. If there were material that could be placed in two or more categories I made an additional category that combined these categories. (University of California 2013-12-16)

The first version of the categories was used on couple of articles in Cosmopolitan to see if the categories were relevant. After that some changes were made to the categories to make them better suited for the aim of this study. Some of the categories were deleted because they felt irrelevant to the study. At the same time some new categories were added to the final version of the categories.
The categories were (See Attachment 1):

- **Topic of the article**
  - Physical activity
  - Nutrition
  - Sleep/tiredness
  - Mental health
  - Disease/sickness
  - Alcohol, tobacco and drugs
  - Combination/overall health

- **Aim of the article**
  - Promote healthy lifestyle
  - Promote appearance
  - Promote both: healthy lifestyle and appearance

- **Features of the information**
  - Give general information
  - Give advice to an issue/problem
  - Give instructions

- **Picture in the article**
  - Topic related picture (no person)
  - Face
  - Upperbody picture (from head to stomach)
  - Whole body picture with lots of coverage/clothes (more skin was covered than showing)
  - Whole body picture with little coverage/clothes (more skin was showing than covered)

- **Motives in the article**
  - Get healthier/generall wellbeing
  - Lose weight
  - Get better body
  - Trendiness
  - Get better endurance/strength
  - Get better mental health

The coding aims to objectivity when interpreting the texts. But in the end constructing a coding categories is the result of subjective thinking. Also when it comes to choosing the material and executing of the analysis the results may be different depending on the person doing the research.

After construction of the coding categories I started to analyze the magazines. I collected the basic information from each article: the title of the article and the issue where the article was published.
Additionally I wrote down the page numbers. Then I used the coding categories to analyze the content of the article. I wrote down all the information in one document. For minimizing the typing errors and making sure that I had divided the articles in right categories I even analyzed all the articles again when some time had passed after the first analysis.

After analyzing all of the material I started composing the results.

5.4 Validity and reliability

Validity describes if a measuring procedure measures what it's intended to measure. Validity needs to be evaluated for every study itself to see how well the study answers to the research questions. According to Potter and Levine Donnerstein (1999) confirming validity in a quantitative content analysis can be seen as a process with two steps. First step is constructing the coding categories and confirm its validity by ensuring that it's committed to the theory. The second step is to compare the codes with a standard for correct decision making and if they match the analysis/coding -procedure can be seen as valid. (Potter & Levine Donnerstein 1999, p. 266)

The validity of my coding categories is questionable because I couldn't find any suitable theory to support the way I constructed the coding categories. Neither did I find any standards to my coding categories.

Reliability describes if the measuring procedure is reproducible, gives the same results on repeated trials. According to Potter and Levine Donnerstein (1999) reliability can be regarded by using a test-retest procedure. In practice it means that the researcher does the coding and makes perceptions about the content and then lets some time go by and then does the coding again. If the perceptions made matches each other, then the coding can be seen as stable. Also reproducibility can be used to confirm the reliability. In this case the content can be analyzed by other researchers and if their perceptions are similar it supports reliability of the data. There is one more method to support the reliability: measure the accuracy. It can be established by comparing the coders' perceptions to a known standard. (Potter & Levine Donnerstein 1999, p. 271)

In this study I have used the test-retest procedure. I analyzed and coded the material once and then after some time had passed, I analyzed it again. My coding was the same in both times, so the
reliability of the method is good. Sometimes is said that in a quantitative content analysis reliability is more important than validity (Boréus & Bergström 2005, p.78). Having that perspective my study method can be seen as dependable.

5.5 Ethical aspects

When doing a research there is always some ethical aspect to consider. But because of the nature of my study there was no need to take notice of the ethical aspect. In this study the material used was only textual and there were no persons involved.

6 Results

In this part I will present the results of this study and also show some citations from the articles to make it easier to understand how the categorizing of the articles was done.

The material used in this study contained 11 *Cosmopolitan* issues (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12, number 11 was not available) published in 2010. In these 11 issues were a total amount of 26 health related articles published. The distribution of the 26 articles was 2 in January, 2 in February, 3 in March, 4 in April, 1 in May, 3 in June, 2 in July, 2 in August, 3 in September, 2 in October and 2 in December. The distribution of the articles is illustrated in Graph 1.

Graph 1 – Illustrating the distribution of the health related articles over the year 2010. (* No data available)
6.1 Topics of the articles

Topics of the articles were categorized with the help of the under-categories: Physical activity; Nutrition; Sleep/tiredness; Mental health/stress; Disease/sickness; Alcohol, tobacco and drugs; Combination/overall health. Most of the articles discussed physical activity or nutrition. Amount of articles discussing Physical activity were 14. Amount of the Nutrition related articles were 5. There were 2 articles that discussed about Sleep/tiredness. There was 1 article related to Mental health/stress and 4 articles related to Combination/overall health. The results are illustrated in Graph 2.

Graph 2 – Illustrating the amount of articles in different health -categories.

The articles were categorized after the main topic or focus in the articles. In most of the cases it was pretty clear already when reading the title what the article was about. Some of the articles lacked a main focus or discussed more than one health related topic and these articles were added to the category: Combination/overall health. It means that in these articles there were a combination of two or more topics, which already had their own categories in the coding schedule. For example an article that discussed about physical activity, sleep and psychosocial health was categorized in the category: Combination/overall health.
6.2 The aim of the articles

In this section I clarify if the articles aimed to *promote healthy lifestyle* or *appearance* or *both healthy lifestyle and appearance*. Total amount of 14 articles were *promoting healthy lifestyle* and 6 articles were *promoting appearance*. There were 6 articles that were *promoting both healthy lifestyle and appearance*. The results are illustrated in Graph 3.

![Graph 3 – Illustrating the aim of the articles.](image)

The articles *promoting healthy lifestyle* presented different subjects, often physical activity or nutrition, that is good for your overall health. The focus with these articles often was to point at the positive or negative health outcomes of physical activity, nutrition or other subject. Sentence like "*får dig att må bra / makes you feel good*" (Persson 2010 June, p. 113) aimed to promote healthy lifestyle and overall well-being. For example one article presented lots of different healthy snacks. Writing about choosing a healthy snack instead of candy also promotes healthy lifestyle. The article gave information about how you can make a healthier choice. Another article was presenting food combinations that can have positive effect on your health: "*vissa nyttiga näringssämnen ger dubbelt utslag på hälsobarrometer / certain healthy nutrients double the amount of health benefits*" (Berg 2010 June, p. 115).
The author of one article wrote about physical activity and how it makes you feel good as well as makes you strong both physically and mentally: "att träna frigör lyckokänslor och gör dig stark både fysiskt och mentalt / exercising releases feelings of happiness and makes you strong both physically and mentally" (Persson 2010 September, p. 66). One article was giving information how different habits and manners can affect your body and your health: "förstå hur din kropp funkar / understand how your body function"; "vissa vanor inte är bra för din hälsa / certain habits are not good for your health" (Persson 2010, July, p. 124). All the articles that promoted healthy lifestyle focused on general well being and how you can achieve better health. None of these articles referred to appearance.

The articles that promoted appearance focused on the looks. Usually these articles were focusing on physical activity and how that has a positive effect on your appearance and mostly on your body. The information given in the article is about how to look better. Here are some text samples from the articles that aimed to promote appearance: "kurviga figur har aldrig sett bättre eller friskare ut / curvy figure has never looked better or healthier” and "vältränade och starka kropp / fit and strong body”. (Bjurström-Watts 2010, March, p. 124) This article was discussing how famous actresses exercise to keep their attractive body. Another example was an article about how to get a flat stomach: "träna dig till en platt, stark och snygg mage / exercise to get a flat, strong and good-looking stomach” (Ekblad 2010, April, p. 122). A third article was focusing on how to get the best summer body: ett träningspass som svarvar och tightar till hela dig på nolltid / a workout that forms and tightens your whole body in no time” (Azodi 2010, June, p. 116).

Some of the articles were focusing on the appearance as well as on the overall positive health effects. These articles were added to the category: promoting both healthy lifestyle and appearance. For example one article about running pointed out positive effects on both appearance and overall health: "förutom en tonad kropp får du ett starkare hjärta, ökad koncentrationsförmåga och minskad risk för benskörhet / besides a toned body, you get a stronger heart, increased concentration and reduced risk of osteoporosis”; "finslipa formen och lägg grunden till ett långt och friskt liv / get the perfect shape and get the basis of a long and healthy life” (Ek 2010, April, p. 117). Another article was focusing on nutrition and also referred to how you can get better well-being as well as better looks: "...tänk på vad du äter. Det kan göra dig både piggare och snyggare / ...think about what you eat. It can make you both healthier and better
“looking” (Johansson 2010, April, p. 120). By referring to the looks and the health aspects these articles were promoting both appearance and healthy lifestyle.

6.2.1 The aim of the physical activity related articles

There were 14 articles about physical activity. Almost half of these articles (6 articles) were promoting appearance and rest of the articles were promoting healthy lifestyle (4 articles) or both healthy lifestyle and appearance (4 articles). The results are shown in Graph 4.

![Graph 4 – Illustrating the aim of the physical activity related articles.](image)

6.3 Features of the information

Features of the information in the article was defined depending on how the information in the article was given. The categorizing was made depending on if the article was giving general information, giving advice to an issue/problem or giving instructions. Of the 26 articles 14 were giving general information, 9 were giving advice to an issue/problem and 3 were giving instructions. The results are illustrated in Graph 5.
Articles that were giving general information didn’t have any particular aspect when discussing the topic. These articles only presented neutral information about the subject. Most of these articles were presenting different sports, for example trail running, water training or piloxing, or food related information.

Articles giving advice to an issue/problem were always presenting a health related issue/problem that could need solving and then they presented some advice to how to minimize or get rid of the issue/problem. The text in one article about tiredness in spring time revealed that they were trying to solve a problem: "5 vägar förbi vårdeppen / 5 ways past the spring depression"; "Vinn mot vårtröttheten / Win against the spring tiredness" (Persson 2010, p. 117). Another sleep/tiredness related article gave information and possible reasons and solutions for tiredness problem: "Hitta orsaken till din utmattning för att tackla problemet från rätt håll / Find the cause of your fatigue to tackle the problem from the right direction" (Persson 2010 October, p. 84). Articles in the category giving advice to an issue/problem usually had a character of assuming that the reader has this specific issue/problem and they wanted to provide information and advice according to the problem. This is how they differed from the articles that were giving general information or giving instructions.
One article about nutrition gave advice to different issues, for example one issue was: "du har överdrivet sockerbehov / You have excessive sugar needs” and the advice to the issue was: "dina räddare: krom och omega 3 / your saviors: chromium and omega 3” (Johansson 2010 April, p. 121). One article was giving advice about what to do when you have a bloated stomach. Another article was giving advice to several issues/problems, for example one of the issues presented was stress related stomach issues and one of the advice given was that you should plan your day by prioritizing food (Persson 2010 December, p. 63).

One article was giving advice to a motivation problem. The issue related to motivation to exercise was: "jag har inte tid / "I don't have time” and the advice was: "planera in träning i din kalender på samma sätt som andra aktiviteter / schedule workouts in your calendar the same way as other activities” (Persson 2010 September, p. 66). Another example about an article giving advice: "...du inte får tillräckligt med sömn? / ...you do not get enough sleep?”; "släck ner några timmar innan du somnar och undvik aktiviteter som stimulerar hjärnan för mycket / turn of the lights a few hours before going to sleep and avoid activities that stimulate the brain too much” (Persson 2010 July, p. 124-125).

The few articles giving instructions were all about physical activity and giving instructions about a workout. All of the three articles presented a workout and with the help of text and pictures instructed how to do the different moves in the workout-program. For example in one article there was a series of different exercises and the movements were described and instructed with a help of text an pictures. Sentences like “Börja på alla fyra och gör en bakåtspark med vänster ben så att det blir parallellt med golvet. Foten är flexad så att tårna pekar ut mot sidan. / "Start on all four and make a backward kick with your left leg so that it is parallel to the floor. The foot is flexed so that the toes point to the side.” were instructing how to do a leg movement. (Azodi 2010 June, p. 118)

Another article was giving instructions about how to do a stomach movement: “Ställ dig i plankpositionen på händerna och tårna. Håll händerna i axelbredd, tårna böjda och magen spänd och kroppen så rak som möjligt. Lyft höger ben någon decimeter från golvet med sträckta fötter. / Begin in the plank position with your hands and toes on the floor. Keep your hands at shoulder width, toes bent and abs tight and your body as straight as possible. Lift your right leg a few
There were one or more pictures in each article. The picture that was largest was the one being categorized. There were two articles that had a topic related picture, two articles that had a face picture and nine articles that had a upper body picture. A whole body picture with lots of coverage(clothes) was in three articles and a whole body picture with little coverage(clothes) was in ten articles. The results are illustrated in Graph 6.

There were two topic related pictures, one picture of a bread and one picture of a balloon. Face pictures were close up pictures where you could only see the face and neck. Upper body pictures presented a half of a female body, from stomach to head. Whole body pictures were the most used in the articles. Lots of coverage(clothes) means that there was more skin that was covered than what was showed. For example a picture of a woman wearing a pair of long pants and a t-shirt. Also the layout of the picture or the pose of the model could affect so that you couldn't see that much of skin. Little coverage(clothes) means that there was more skin showing than skin covered.
In these pictures the models where mostly wearing shorts and sport bra/small tank top or bikinis.

### 6.5 Motives in the articles

The motives in the categories were: Get healthier/general well-being; Lose weight; Get better body; Trendiness; Get better endurance/strength; Get better mental health. The most used motive in the articles was get healthier/general well-being, and there were 16 articles in that category. There were 6 articles that used the motive get better body and 3 articles that used motive get better endurance/strength. In 1 article was presented the motive get better mental health. The results are illustrated in Graph 7.

![Graph 7](image)

Graph 7 – Illustrating the motives used in the articles.

Most of the articles were motivating the readers by referring to getting healthier/overall well-being. One example is an article about nutrition and how it can have a positive effect on health: "sänker blodtryck / lowers blood pressure"; "skyddande effekt mot cancer och hjärt- och kärlsjukdomar / "protective effect against cancer and cardiovascular diseases" (Berg 2010 June, p. 115). Similar motives were given in another article: "sänker bland annat värdet av det onda kolesterol / lowers among other things the bad cholesterol level"; "minskar risken för hjärt- och kärlsjukdomar / reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease" (Levine 2010 September, p. 65). Another article gave a various of health related motives such as: sleep better; get rid of the flue; get rid of the stress (Johansson 2010 April, p. 120-121).
Articles that used *get better body* as a motive was usually about physical activity. One article presented motives such as toned waist, thighs and bum: “*exclusiva träningspasset för att ge midjan, rumpan och lären ett snabbyft* / *exclusiva workout to give your waist, butt and thighs a quick lift*”; “*resultatet blir en lång, slank, stark kropp utan bulliga muskler / the result is a long, slender, strong body without bulging muscles*” (Ibid, p. 117). Another article motivated the readers with a sentence like: “*du booster din kropp / you boost your body*” (Bjurström-Watts 2010 April, p. 118).

One article motivated the readers already with the title “*Feta knep för en tajt kropp / Great tricks for getting a tight body*” and continues by referring to a toning effect of the workout: “*formshinande övningarna / body-shaping exercises*” (Eckert 2010 August, p. 66).

All the articles that motivated readers by referring to getting *better endurance/strength* wrote about physical activity and the main focus was in the physical effects on endurance and strength, instead of for example on overall well-being or appearance. Sentences like “*en jättebra konditionsövning / a really good endurance exercise*” and “*bästa, tuffaste och skönaste träning / the best, toughest and nicest exercise*” are referring to better endurance and fitness (Persson 2010 July, p. 123). Another example is an article that was presenting different sports that you can do in winter and there was a lot of focus on the training results: “*du blir mer uthållig / you get more endurance*”; “*du kommer att bli starkare / you are going to get stronger*” (Ek 2010 December, p. 59).

The one article that used *get better mental health* as motive presented different methods and sports that can help you to survive a crisis and decrease your stress. Examples on the mental health related motives were: “*Yogans avslappnande rörelser hjälper dig att ta tillbaka din mentala fokus / Yoga's relaxing movements will help you take back your mental focus*”; “*för att på lång sikt lära dig att leva ett mindre stressigt liv är det bra att träna yoga eller pilates regelbundet / in the long run to learn to live a less stressful life, it is good to practice yoga or pilates regularly*” (Persson 2010 January, p. 113).

### 7. Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine what kind of message *Cosmopolitan* gives about health and what kind of health related issues the magazine presents as important. I also studied how the information was given and what kind of pictures were presented in health articles.
7.1 Topics of the articles

The results showed that most of the health articles were discussing physical activity and nutrition. Those are two important aspects for obtaining good health, but they are just a small part of health. *Cosmopolitan* magazine as a health educator gives very one sided information about overall health. Having the perspective of Agenda-setting theory you can interpret that the public reading *Cosmopolitan* thinks that physical activity is the most important aspect to health, because that is what the magazine presents as most important. According to Agenda-setting theory media forces public's attention to certain matters and that way it affects what matters public considers as important (Shaw 1977). Agenda-setting theory supports the idea that what is written in teen magazines influences the young people reading them. Subjects that the magazines presents as important influences what the young readers think is important, whether it is for example weight-loss, exercise or appearance.

The same pattern can be seen in the curriculum for the subject PEH in Sweden. The curriculum's focus lies on physical activities and the parts mentioning health are also usually connected to physical activity. For example one of the main contents in the PEH curriculum is: “*The importance of physical activity and lifestyle for physical ability and health*” (Skolverket 2012, p. 3). Though health is mentioned it is only connected to physical activity. Also nutrition is quite important according to *Cosmopolitan*. Diet is also something that is mentioned in the PEH curriculum and how it affects health: “*Impact of diet, drugs and doping substances on health and performance*” (Skolverket 2012, p. 3). Mentioning diet in this sentence feels out of context, because drugs and doping commonly is associated with negative thoughts. Diet on the other hand is a neutral subject, which can be seen as both positive and negative, depending on the diet.

It can be pointed out that the health education, both in school and in teenage magazines, lacks comprehensive perspective. It could be recommended to develop the current health education, especially considering the increase of health problems, such as obesity and poor mental health, among young people (Folkhälsorapport 2003, p. 97). There are other aspects supporting that some improvements should be made when it comes to health education, for example the evidence showing that skills and knowledge about health is quite low among school pupils (Pirouznia 2001).

Ideas for thinkable improvements in Swedish health education curriculum can be seen when
looking at the Finnish schools curriculum of health education and its comprehensibility as well as the more detailed structure. It includes among other things: nutrition; sleep and rest; stress; physical activity; mental health; sexual health and relationships; social support; work related health and safety; environmental health; national diseases; self-care and health care services. One of the core contents is particularly interesting and related to this study: “methods to acquire health information and critical interpretation of health-related communication, advertising and marketing”. (Finnish national board of education 2003, p. 215) Students get education of how to critically interpret media's health messages. That is something that could be discussed with pupils, so that they can understand the media's effect.

### 7.2 The aim of the articles

The majority of the health related articles in 2010 were about physical activity and nutrition. The aim of these articles was mostly about promoting healthy lifestyle. But also quite many articles were promoting appearance or both healthy lifestyle and appearance. There were surprisingly many articles that only pointed out the positive health outcomes, but still you can see that the magazine has lots of focus on appearance. Previous studies have concluded media's impact on adolescents. The way magazines promote appearance and thinness is concerning and can cause body-image concerns such as body shame, drive for thinness, appearance anxiety and body dissatisfaction (Slater & Tiggemann 2006). If the magazine presents appearance and thinness as important, according to McCombs and Shaws (1972) agenda-setting theory, the young public will also see appearance and thinness as important. Its no surprise that the magazine's focus on the importance of attractive and thin body, can cause body-image concerns and drive the young public to use extreme methods to get this body.

Studies have shown that frequency of reading magazines had a positive association with the prevalence of having dieted with purpose to lose weight, started a diet because of an article in a magazine, exercising to lose weight or to get better body and also to begin exercising because of an article in a magazine. (Field et al. 1999) Because of increase in the amount of overweight and obese people in the society and especially among young people this can't only be seen as a bad occurrence. It would be wrong to say that overweight teenagers shouldn't be encouraged to lose weight. Being overweight isn't healthy. But encouraging teenagers to look like skinny models is not the healthiest approach to the problem. That can cause some health problems like use of
unhealthy diet methods with characteristics more commonly found in eating disorders, such as laxatives, and diet pills (Thomsen, Weber & Brown 2001).

Magazines could be potential health educators for adolescents and young adults and in that way favor the public health. Articles about the health benefits of physical activity and diverse healthy nutrition could be recommended instead of the articles focusing on getting a more attractive appearance.

**7.3 Features of the information**

Most of the articles were giving general information, but giving advice to an issue/problem was also a quite common way to give information. General information can be seen as a neutral way to inform the readers. A magazine giving advice can be questionable, because it is not always an expert in these subjects who gives the advice. If you have a health problem it could be preferred to see a doctor or other experts on that topic. Though these subjects weren't usually serious health issues, for example they often advised people about how to treat a common cold or how to increase the quality of sleep, but they weren’t giving advice about serious diseases, for example cancer.

There weren't so many instructional articles and all of them were giving detailed instructions related to physical activity, usually how to do different workouts. These instructions included both texts and pictures. It can be a good thing to instruct and encourage the readers to exercise. Most of the exercises included simple movements where you use your own body-weight, which makes them easy to perform at home. But having an other perspective it's maybe not good for people that aren't used to exercising, because of the risks of injury. People who are significantly overweight and are inexperienced should have professional help and advice from a personal trainer or other experts with competence, when starting to exercise.

**7.4 Pictures in the articles**

Most of the pictures (24 out of 26) were presenting a woman. Most of these pictures were whole body pictures and in most cases there weren’t that much of clothes covering the body. There is a lot of focus on the appearance and the “ideal woman body”. Ideal woman body is often presented as
skinny and non-muscular in the magazines. In many cases there isn't any proper excuse to use pictures that shows lots of skin. In an article about trail-running there could be a picture of someone wearing a jacket and a pair of long pants as well as someone wearing a sports bra and shorts.

There are lots of evidence supporting the idea that pictures in magazines has a strong impact on teenagers perceptions of their weight and shape. For example Taveras et al. (2004) study about the association between young people's desire to look like media figures and their physical activity levels and the results showed that 46 % of the girls and 27 % of the boys made an effort to look like media figures. The more they wanted to look like media figures the more physical active they were. Increasing the physical activity levels can most of the time be seen as something positive. Physical activity is good for your health, but like stated earlier pictures of skinny models can have a negative effect to adolescents. It can cause the adolescents to use extreme methods such as eating-disordered dieting or excessive exercising. It can also have a negative effect to young people's perceptions of their own body and their psychosocial well-being (Utter et al. 2003). Changing the underweight models for healthy, normal weight and normal looking people could be recommendable.

The young readers are paying lots of attention to pictures in magazines. Chows (2004) study showed that the adolescents noticed that text and especially pictures in magazines were promoting perfection with models having perfect bodies, skin, teeth and eyes. It is unrealistic to have perfect qualities like that and it can cause young people to have unrealistic expectations of their own looks which can cause other problems.

Health messages and pictures presented in magazines directed to adolescents and young adults should be noticed by adults in the adolescents' life. Both school and parents could take responsibility of guiding young people and educate them about magazines main purpose. Publishers of magazines want to make money and sell as many issues as possible. The quality of the information and other content presented in magazines is questionable. Adults should make sure that young people understand the media's impact and can critically interpret the content of magazines.
7.5 Motives in the articles

It is positive that most of the articles motivated the readers by referring to getting healthier/general well-being. There were even references about for example physical activity's and nutrition's effect on decreasing risk for illness and diseases such as cancer and heart diseases. This supports the idea of magazines having some potential as a health educator.

Still quite many articles used achieving a better body as a motive. These articles were only referring to physical activity's effect on your body and how you can get more attractive with the help of some exercises. These findings are similar to the results of Guillen and Barrs (1998) study that showed that appearance and weight-loss was usually presented as a motive to follow a diet or exercise plan. No health aspects related to exercising were brought up in these articles. The importance of an attractive body can be questioned, because it doesn’t have any direct connections to health. The magazine is sending a message that it's important to be physical active so that you can get a attractive body. That can cause the young public to think that, getting an attractive body is the most important reason why they should exercise. Media influences what the public considers as important, like the agenda-setting theory (McCombs & Shaw 1972) suggests.

On the other hand getting a better body can be important to some persons and make them feel better about themselves and in that way improve their well being. What was interesting was that none of the articles directly referred to weight-loss. But if getting better body also means losing weight it can be stated as mentioned earlier that it doesn’t need to be something negative. People who are overweight and the weight is a health risk for them should be motivated to lose weight. But then again maybe it would be better to motivate people by using the health outcomes as a motive instead of attractiveness.

Some of the articles used endurance and strength as a motive. Usually getting more endurance and stronger means that there is also some positive health outcomes following. But for the readers it could be better if the articles would explain what getting more endurance or strong actually means, what happens in your body and what causes you to get stronger or more endurance.

The one article using mental health as a motive is a positive aspect to the magazine's health messages. Knowing that a lot of young people aren't feeling well and have problems with their
mental health it is positive that the magazine brings up physical activities' positive effect on mental well-being and for example stress. But there could be more different positive motives used in the articles. When it comes to health there are many ways to motivate people. Bigger variation of motives presented could give a more interesting aspect to the magazine content and also give better and more comprehensive education about health. It can be assumed that using more and different motives could cause more people to get motivated and try to improve/maintain their health, which is a good thing for the whole population.

8. Conclusions
According to the results from this study it can be concluded that Cosmopolitan magazine offers one sided information about health. Major of the articles were about physical activity. There were some articles about nutrition and overall health, but many health related subjects are left without attention. Cosmopolitan had health related articles in each issue and to some extent it discussed and brought out some important health issues. Magazines' influence has been stated in many studies and this influence could be used to favor the public health, by writing more comprehensively when it comes to health.

The findings suggest that though there were many articles referring to general health and healthy lifestyle, there were still lots of focus to women body and appearance. Both pictures and text in articles promotes and focuses on appearance. Many pictures presents unrealistic images of perfection. It is irresponsible to encourage young people to strive for that. It is also schools and parents responsibility to educate and make sure that adolescents understand medias influence and that the images that magazines present are often unrealistic ideals. It could be recommendable to schools to provide more comprehensive education in health to improve the health knowledge.
References

Primary literacy:


**Secondary literacy:**


University of California. *Doing a content analysis.*


World Health Organization. *Frequently asked questions.*

33
Attachment 1 Categories for the analysis

Basic information about the article:
• magazine issue
• title
• page numbers

Categories:
• Topic of the article
  ◦ Physical activity
  ◦ Nutrition
  ◦ Sleep/tiredness
  ◦ Mental health
  ◦ Disease/sickness
  ◦ Alcohol, tobacco and drugs
  ◦ Combination/overall health

• Aim of the article
  ◦ Promote healthy lifestyle
  ◦ Promote appearance
  ◦ Promote both: healthy lifestyle and appearance

• Features of the information
  ◦ Give general information
  ◦ Give advice to an issue/problem
  ◦ Give instructions

• Picture in the article
  ◦ Topic related picture (no person)
  ◦ Face
  ◦ Upperbody picture (from head to stomach)
  ◦ Whole body picture with lots of coverage/clothes (more skin was covered than showing)
  ◦ Whole body picture with little coverage/clothes (more skin was showing than covered)

• Motives in the article
  ◦ Get healthier/generall wellbeing
  ◦ Lose weight
  ◦ Get better body
  ◦ Trendiness
  ◦ Get better endurance/strenght
  ◦ Get better mental health
Attachment 2 Literature search

Aim and study questions: The aim of this study is to take a look at a women's magazine Cosmopolitan that has high adolescent and young adult readership and what kind of message the magazine gives about health and what kind of health-related issues the magazine presents as important.

The questions are:

1. What kind of topics does Cosmopolitan discuss in health related articles?
2. How Cosmopolitan motivates the readers in health related articles?
3. What kind of pictures there are presented in health related articles?

Words you used in the search?

| Media, adolescents, media's effect, media's impact, teenagers, teenage magazines, magazine contents, health message |

Where have you searched?

| GIH library catalog, Google Scholar, Ebsco |

Searches that gave relevant results

| Ebsco: Media's impact and adolescents |
| Ebsco: Media, effect and adolescents |
| Google Scholar: Teenage magazines |
| Google scholar: Magazine content |

Comments

It was quite easy to find relevant material and earlier research. Media's overall effect and affect on adolescent is a much researched area in the social sciences. Google Scholar and Ebsco were really good search databases. It was easier to find material on media's effect and a bit harder to find studies about media or magazine contents. I found lots of relevant studies but many of them were quite similar so I didn't use so many of them in my study.