

Abstract

This bachelor's thesis examines the portrayal of depressive disorder in the three most widely read newspapers in the Czech Republic before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. Depressive disorder is one of the most prevalent mental illnesses in the general population. According to the World Health Organization, there was a 28% increase in depression during the first year of the coronavirus pandemic. Although depression is a treatable disorder, those in need often receive inadequate care. One of the reasons for this is stigma and the associated self-stigmatization, whereby a person with symptoms of mental illness does not seek professional care for fear of being judged and in self-distrust. According to some media theories, the mass media are involved in shaping a person's attitudes and can transmit stereotypes and prejudices in their content. However, at the same time, the media can serve as a quality source of information and educate society. Therefore, using quantitative content analysis, this research attempted to assess whether the coverage of depressive disorder is good-quality and non-stigmatizing. It also focused on the frequency of articles published before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. The analysis of the journals Blesk, Aha! and Mladá fronta DNES did not show any significant changes in the number of articles published during the coronavirus pandemic. Following the knowledge gained from the Media Guide of the Czech project NA ROVINU, the research units of measurement were identified as low quality and stigmatizing, with most articles portraying depressive disorder in the context of a public figure.