Information and correct nutrition
self help literature analysis 1984 – 2004/
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Abstract

Obesity is a medical and social problem which its incidence increases over the years. The confrontation with obesity demands nutrition and diet customs. Obsessive pursuit with weight and diet is one of the factors causing eating disorders. The main eating disorders problem, are anorexia which means self starvation and bulimia which is defined as compulsive eating. One of the social ways of dealing with all of these problems is by using self help books. This literature volume increases in the last years, and destined to fulfill certain need, and serve as a help tool to the readership that require this. Studies in this field of literature show positive influence, and though there are those who object it, actual data indicates on increasing trend over the years.

The current study deals in the expanded subject of correct nutrition, and includes the following subjects: obesity, nutrition, diet and eating disorders in self help books between the years 1984 – 2004.

The goal of the study is to examine information development in self help books on the subject of correct nutrition, by using quantitative and qualitative study. The qualitative study is based on content analysis; in it were examined types and subjects of the literature study. The quantitative study is based on bibliometrics; that examine the distribution of information in the investigated books. The study purpose is to check the amount and growth of publications on the main and sub subjects in the expanded subject of correct nutrition, as well as literature types. The study defined four literature types. 1. Guidance books, books that direct to information in the field. 2. Popular science books, books that were written by questioners and published in comment language. 3. Personal stories, eating problem narratives. 4. Mixed books, books that contain all the types above or part of them. The study included checking various types of readers. Checking writers education. Checking the use of bibliography. Checking the main publications in the field, and if most books are original Israeli books or translated books.

The working process contained literature analysis questionnaire which was build to answer all research questions, by checking every book individually. The decision to examine every single book was made after a pre check which detected that search and bibliography information is not enough, thus every book was examine directly. The pre check also led to choose the research period, after discovering lack of books on this subject in the years before. The data collection process was made from the national library which includes Kiryat Sefer which contains every published book in Israel.

Other sources which were used are Aleph application of Bar Ilan University and public library database – Beit Ariela. The research contained 165 books. The study results show growing tendency in the published books of the research, mostly from the middle of the 90's. Also the most common literature subject that was found is nutrition, which includes almost half of the research books with 48%. After that the subjects diet, obesity and eating disorder. In most of the books there is no sub subject. In terms of percent, books without sub subject are 63% from all books. In books that includes sub subject, the fields are by order diet, nutrition, obesity and eating disorder. The main literature type is guidance which includes 49% from all books after that mixed books with 38%, personal stories with 8% and popular science with 5%. The main types of readers are for all public with 80% of the books. There is a main majority of academic writers which includes 64% off all writers. 43% out of them includes academic that are specialized in the field. It was found that the use of bibliography is growing over the years. The main publications are matar, or-am and modan. There is a majority of translated literature, mostly in English. Yet the Hebrew literature is growing in parallel to English over the research period.

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