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Stigmatising AIDS: A Content Analysis on HIV/AIDS-Related News Articles Published in Three Major Philippine Broadsheet

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Abstract : HIV/AIDS has been dubbed as one of the most stigmatised diseases of the recent century. Nelson Mandela pointed out that PLWHA (People Living With HIV/AIDS) are not killed by the disease, but by the stigma surrounding it. Despite the numerous studies on HIV/AIDS Stigmatisation globally, little is known about how evident and how powerful the media can be in framing the views of the readers when it comes to print in the Philippine context. This study dealt with a quantitative content analysis of HIV/AIDS-related news articles published by the top three broadsheets such as Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Bulletin and the Philippine Star in the span of one year. The HIV/AIDS-related news articles were collected and subjected to coding according to their tones, stigmatising statements/terminologies and news prominence. An analysis of the results had supported the researchers' objectives (1) that there are different tones of HIV/AIDS-related news articles, (2) that there is a significant relation between the Stigmatizing Statements/Terminologies and the tone and that the (3) technical properties of HIV/AIDS related news articles determine the news prominence. Results revealed that despite the fact that the broadsheets were overtly reporting HIV/AIDS in Anti-Stigma-toned articles, they were covertly suggesting Stigma by the use of Stigmatising statements/terminologies present in it rather than plainly disseminating current medical knowledge about the transmission and treatments of the disease; the technical properties of the HIV/AIDS related news articles determined its prominence.