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Domestic work stress among home makers while performing different household activities in Ayodhya district of Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

Due to the huge burden of domestic work on women, it negatively effects on their physical as well as psychological health. The present study explores the nature of those household tasks that require time and effort and are most associated with fatigue. The goal of this study is to better understand the physical demands of household tasks and to collect information that can be used as the basis for recommendations about ergonomic improvements to household tasks and products. a cross-sectional survey was done through interview schedule. The participant was 240 from Ayodhya District of Uttar Pradesh. The home makers above 30 years who lives in rural areas were randomly selected for the study. The result was found that the unpaid domestic/household tasks is badly affects the home makers. The psychological health of women is negatively associated with domestic work stress regardless of employment status.

Keywords: Domestic work, home makers, burden, fatigue, physical & psychological health

Introduction

Housework is traditionally a labor performed by women. It involves routine and compulsory household maintenance tasks (cleaning, cooking, purchasing, etc.) and family care duties (child rearing and other care giving responsibilities) that require substantial physical, emotional and intellectual labor (Bianchi *et al.* 2000, Coltrane 2000) [1]. For women the household work is very time consuming and drudgery prone activity. Studies have found that housework can be more energy intensive than some types of paid work (Sujatha *et al.* 2003, Brooks *et al.* 2004) and is a source of hazards comparable to other occupational settings (Habib *et al.* 2010) [3]. (WHO, 2006) [8]. Women are forced to engage in household tasks due to the influence of traditional gender norms; women's/wife's role as home maker and men's/husband's role as breadwinner of the family. In India, more than 60% of women are primarily engage in household tasks (S, 2014). Physiological fatigue can arise from repetitive motions, extended reaching, standing, bending, lifting and carrying. The task elements that produce fatigue may differ on an individual basis. An individual's threshold may be stressed to within a few degrees of tolerance by reoperating conditions (prior activities), with the result that homemakers have no tolerance to cope with an overly demanding mental task or situation". (Oberoi and Gill 2003) [4], Poor work postures are the leading cause of fatigue and stress in all types of work. Due to inefficient use of the human body, it wastes a lot of time and human energy. However, Women are often unaware of their mistakes and continue to perform. the activities carried out under drudgery-inducing postures and surroundings Efficient Improved technology for women's work could be extremely beneficial. Variables that can impact fatigue include gender, age, product design and use, task performance activities and environmental conditions etc. Occupation, health and the family environment also interact to determine who performs household tasks, and the time and frequency that the tasks are performed. For some individuals, the physical demands of household tasks are superimposed on the demands of a full-time job and a family. The present survey explores the nature of those household tasks that require time and effort and are most associated with fatigue. The goal of this study is to better understand the physical demands of household tasks and to collect information that can be used as the basis for recommendations about ergonomic improvements to household tasks and products. Therefore, the present research study is designed with the following objectives:

1. To find out the work-related stress among the housewives while performing different household activities.

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Limitation

1. The proposed research was conducted on the home makers who involved in the household tasks only.
2. The study was limited to Ayodhya District only.
3. The study was limited to the sample size of 240 only.
4. The study was limited to the ergonomic analysis of household activities and not on productivity aspect.
5. The study was limited to the housewives of above 30 years of age.

Methods

Subjects: Two localities were purposively selected from Ayodhya District, i.e., Milkipur Block and Amaniganj Block. Simple random sampling without replacement was used to select the study area and samples. In this study were self-selected women over the age of 30. Total 240 housewives who are performing group of activities such as preparation of food, cooking, cleaning home, dish washing was selected randomly.

Sources of data

The study is based on primary data & secondary data. Data has been collected through survey techniques with self-structured questionnaire cum interview schedule.

Procedure

A comprehensive survey questionnaire was administered. The survey comprised 30 questions, most of which have multiple items requiring separate responses. The questionnaire collected demographic information, including gender, handedness, age, occupation, education, number of persons in household, cast category, economically active family member, monthly income of the family and type of residence etc. It also collected information on a range of household tasks: on the equipment used for those tasks, on the time spent per task, on how tiring the tasks are and on sources of help with tasks.

Tools for analysis

The statistical tool used for the purpose of the analysis of this study is simple percentage technique and ranking techniques. After the collection of data through the questionnaire cum interview schedule, editing was done carefully. And based on the responses of the samples, tables were prepared.

Personal and background information of the respondents

Under this section of findings, the personal and background information pertaining to age, educational qualification, family type, type of dwelling etc., are discussed. Data on personal information of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Information regarding the background information of the respondents

Background Information	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
30-40	93	38.75
40-50	77	32.08
50 and above	70	29.16
Education		
Illiterate	62	25.83
Literate (both read & write)	60	25.00
Primary school	44	18.33
Middle school	30	12.05
Highschool	23	9.58
Intermediate	14	5.83
Graduation	7	2.91
Post-graduation & above	0	0.00
Family size		
Small	68	28.33
Medium	132	55.00
Large	40	16.66
Family type		
Nuclear	115	47.91
Joint	90	37.05
Extended	35	14.58
Cast category		
General	67	27.91
OBC	70	29.16
SC	66	27.05
ST	37	15.41
Economically active family member		
Male	154	64.16
Female	36	15.00
Both	50	20.83
Monthly income		
Less than 10,000/-	86	35.83
10,000-20,000/-	127	52.91
More than 20,000/-	27	11.25
Type of dwelling		
Kaccha	90	37.05
Semi pucca	116	48.33
Pucca	34	14.16

Age of the respondents

It is clear from the data presented in Table No. 1 that most of the respondents i.e., 38.75% belonged to age group (30 to 40) years. Followed by 32.08% belonging to the age group (40 to 50) and 29.16% of the respondents belonging to the age group (50 and above).

Educational Qualification

Data pertaining to the educational qualification of the respondents it was observed that majority of the respondents i.e., 25.83 were (illiterate) followed by 25.00% of them were (literate they can read & write), 18.33% of the respondent have only (primary education), 12.05% were belonging to (middle high school), 9.58% of the respondent have (high school education), 5.83 of them were from (intermediate) and only 2.91% of the respondent have the qualification at (graduation level).

Family size

Table also revealed that majority of the respondents i.e., 55.00% have (medium family size i.e., up to 5 to 7 members) followed by 28.33% have (small family size i.e., up to 5 members) and 16.66% of the respondents have (large family size i.e., more than 8 members).

Family type

About 47.91% of the respondents have (nuclear family type) followed by 37.05% of the respondents have (joint family) and only 14.58% of them have (extended family).

Cast category

Out of the total selected respondent's majority of the respondents i.e., 29.16 belonging to the (OBC category) followed by 27.91% of the respondents belonging to the (general category) 27.05% of the respondents belonging to the (SC category) and only 15.41% of them belonging to the (ST category).

Economically active family member

From the data it was observed that majority of the male i.e., 64.16% are (economically active in the family) followed by 20.83% both male & female are (economically active in their family) and only 15.00% female are (economically active member in their family).

Monthly Income

The data showed that monthly income of the respondents 52.91% have the income between (Rs. 10,000 to Rs.20,000 per month) followed by 35.83% of the respondents have income of (less than Rs.10,000 per month) and only 11.25% of the respondents have income of their family (Rs.20,000 and above).

Mode of Dwelling

From the table it was found that the majority of the respondents i.e., 48.33% live in (semi pucca house) followed by 37.05% of the respondents live in (kaccha house) and only 14.16% of the respondents live in (pucca houses).

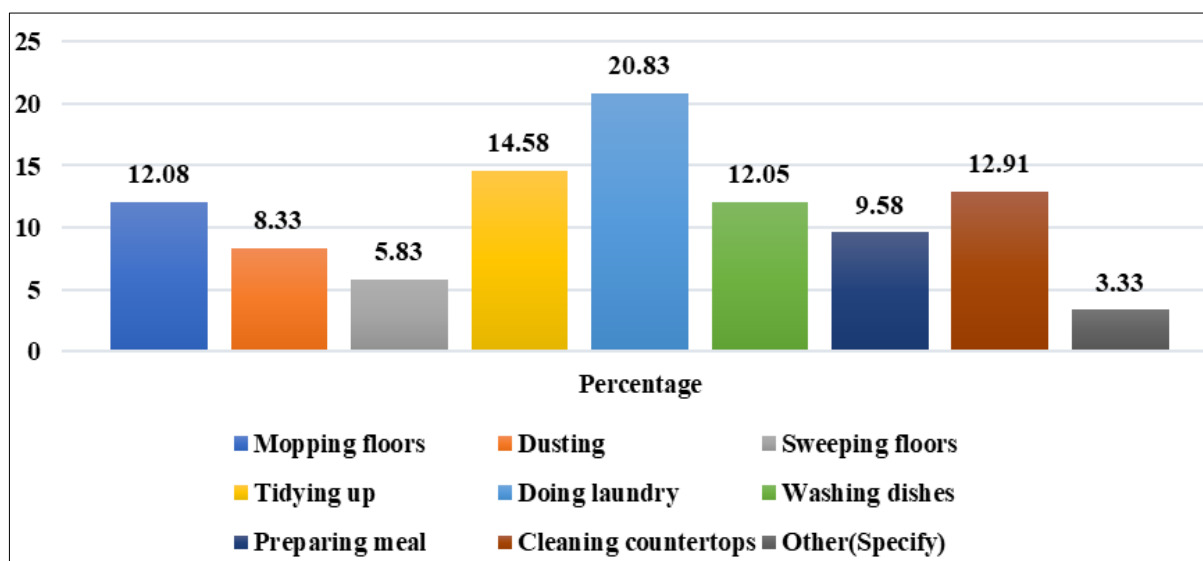


Fig 1: Most tiring household tasks felt by the respondents

Household management is the important and necessary part of the family, it is a mental process and involves many steps. Generally, most of the household works is done by the home makers, women of all ages spend much of their day engaged in domestic activities, including mopping floors, tidying up, doing laundry, cleaning counter tops, dusting, washing dishes, processing and preparing food etc. According to the Soraya S. and Marta R. (2021) [7], Women spend an unequal amount of their time carrying out three quarters of the world's unpaid

work i.e., (11 billion) hours a day. Globally women undertake three times more care and domestic work than men. Unpaid domestic work refers to services provided within a household for its members, including personal care and housework. Because of the gendered nature of domestic and reproductive roles, women and girls are often expected to assume unpaid domestic work and care. Unpaid domestic and care work is associated with greater mental health burden and negative effects on quality of life of the home makers.



Fig 2: The data presented majority of the women home makers

It was observed from the data presented in figure 2 that majority of the women home makers i.e., (20.83%) told that (doing laundry) was the most tiring household task. The home makers feeling tired soon when they performing the laundry task. Followed by (14.58%) of the home makers reported that (tidying up) was the most tiring household task, the respondents said that they felt burden very easily while they performing the task. Followed by (12.91%) of the home makers reported that (cleaning counter tops) was the most tiring task for them. Mopping floors was the most tiring task for (12.08%) of the home makers because it consumes lots of their time and energy and they feel tired very soon while performing the mopping task. (Washing dishes) was the most tiring task for (12.05%) of the respondents. (9.58%) of the home makers didn't like the (meal planning and meal preparation) task. (Dusting) was the most tiring task for (8.33%) of the homemakers. (5.83%) of the homemakers didn't like the (sweeping floors) task. And lastly very few i.e., (only 3.33%) of the homemakers stated that (the other tasks including; firewood and water collection & smear earthen floors with cow dung, raring of family members, and some agricultural activities like; milking and taking care of animals etc.) was the most tiring for them.

Conclusion

Homemakers is the back bone of the family. Although their work load and health generally neglected by the other members in the family. In this study it was found that psychological health of women is negatively associated with domestic work stress regardless of employment status. So, in this way to promote women's health, we need to take into account the effects of domestic work, work-family conflicts, and social support from families, as well as occupational factors.

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