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Perceived Exertion of Homemakers While Performing Selected Household Activities and Their Attitude towards These Tasks

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Abstract:

A homemaker spend a substantial portion of her time in doing household activities. On an average Indian homemakers spend approximately 6 to 9 hours on household work. (Vargese et al., 1989, Masur and Surendra 1990, Kulkarni and Murali, 1991) Most homemakers readily identify some tasks as liked and others as not liked. This aspect may contribute to homemaker's perceived exertion. Feeling of work easy may contribute to lower perceived exertion and feeling of work hard may explain higher perceived exertion on the part of worker. Present study was undertaken during 2012 in Parbhani city of Marathwada region.

A survey was conducted among randomly selected 100 homemakers from Parbhani city to elicit the information regarding likes and dislikes, perceived exertion and attitude of homemakers towards selected household tasks. The extent of likes and dislikes was assessed by using five points summated rating scale adopted by George and Ogale (1986). Perceived exertion of selected household tasks was assessed by using five points summated rating scale developed by Ningarwal et al. (1995). Correlation coefficient test was applied to find out the relationship of extent of likes and dislikes as well as perceived exertion with selected independent variables. Analysis of variance technique was applied to find out drudgery prone household activities. It was found that washing clothes and mopping floor were more exerting tasks. Liking towards the task was negatively correlated with perceived exertion of household tasks. Age, family size, income and type of family were correlated with perceived exertion and liking of tasks.

Keywords: Homemaker, household tasks, perceived exertion, attitude

1. Introduction

Women constitute half of the population in India and their development reflects the progress of society. Majority of the women are born and bred to do the traditional work and are a real symbol of dedication, patience and sacrifice. A woman spends a substantial portion of her time in doing household activities. On an average Indian homemakers spend approximately 6 to 9 hours on household work. (Vargese et al., 1989, Masur and Surendra 1990, Kulkarni and Murali, 1991). Homemaker is the administrator in the home, shouldering the responsibilities by organizing a complicated schedule of various household tasks. The household routine activities consist of cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, washing utensils, fetching water, mopping floor, serving food etc. The household work performed by homemaker is not at all considered as the economic activity and in any way a contribution to the household development. Any amount of time spent, any number of activities performed by them will go unnoticed because of its non economic value. But the drudgery involved in it is very high. Drudgery and resulting strain not only impairs health, but also affect the quality of work and performance. One of the criteria for evaluating strain and fatigue during any physical activity can be based on an individual's sensation as perceived following an activity. This can be designated as perceived exertion. (Rao, 1987) Perceived exertion is considered to be an important measure of individual strain as a complement to physiological variables. (Boki, 2000). Attitude of homemaker towards work plays an important role in determining the exertion and output of work. Most homemakers readily identify some tasks as liked and others as not liked. This aspect may contribute to homemaker's perceived exertion. Feeling of work easy may contribute to lower perceived exertion and feeling of work hard may explain higher perceived exertion on the part of worker. The

present investigation was carried out with the specific objective of finding out the extent of perceived exertion and attitude in terms of likes and dislikes of home makers towards household tasks.

2. Experimental Procedure

The survey was conducted among randomly selected 100 homemakers from Parbhani city of marathwada region who were involved in doing selected household tasks. The extent of likes and dislikes of homemakers towards selected household tasks was assessed by using five points summated rating scale adopted by George and Ogale (1986). Perceived exertion of selected household tasks was assessed by using five points summated rating scale developed by Ningarwal et al. (1995 & 1997). Correlation coefficient test was applied to find out the relationship of extent of likes and dislikes as well as perceived exertion with selected independent variables. Analysis of variance technique was applied to find out drudgery prone household activities.

3. Observations and Analysis

Table 1 indicates general information of homemakers. It was observed that majority of the homemakers were between the age group of 25 years and 35 years (67%), belonging to nuclear type of family (62%) and having 1-4 members in family (56%). The homemakers were educated up to Junior college and had monthly family income ranging between

Rs. 10,000/- and 20000/-

The score of liking and perceived exertion of homemakers regarding selected household activities is presented in table 2. It is clear from the table that the liking scores of the homemakers were negatively correlated with perceived exertion experienced by homemakers while performing cooking ($r = -0.83^{**}$), cleaning grains ($r = -0.38^{**}$), sweeping ($r = -0.51^{**}$) and mopping floor ($r = -0.70^{**}$). Only in case of tidying and dusting the liking score was positively correlated with perceived exertion ($r = 0.34^{**}$). Statistical analysis with ANNOVA indicated that there was a significant difference in perceived exertion experienced by homemakers while performing selected household tasks ($F = 79.85^{**}$). Washing clothes was perceived as most exerting task (4.13) by selected homemakers followed by mopping floor (2.98).

Correlation between selected independent variables and extent of liking towards selected household tasks is reported in table 3. It is clear from the table that age of the homemakers was positively correlated with liking towards cooking ($r = 0.26^{**}$), cleaning grains ($r = 0.20^{*}$) and washing clothes ($r = 0.25^{**}$). Type of family ($r = 0.44^{**}$) and family size ($r = 0.34^{*}$) was positively correlated with liking towards washing clothes whereas family income was negatively correlated with cooking ($r = -0.39^{*}$) and type of family was negatively correlated with tidying and dusting ($r = -0.20^{*}$). Thus it indicates that with an increase in the age of the homemakers extent of likes increased in cooking, cleaning grains and washing clothes. The homemakers belonging to joint and large families had more liking towards washing clothes. More the family income, the homemakers were less interested in cooking and the homemakers from the joint families disliked tidying and dusting.

Correlation between selected independent variables and perceived exertion of homemakers is reported in table 4. It is evident from the table that perceived exertion while performing cooking ($r = -0.19^{*}$), washing clothes ($r = -0.22^{**}$), and dish washing ($r = -0.41^{**}$) was negatively correlated with age of homemaker and positively correlated with perceived exertion while ironing clothes ($r = -0.25^{**}$) indicating that with age homemakers were feeling less exerted while cooking, washing clothes and dishwashing where as ironing was felt as an exerting task by homemakers with increased age. Perceived exertion regarding cooking was positively correlated with type of family ($r = 0.21^{*}$), income of family ($r = 0.57^{**}$) and family size ($r = 0.26^{**}$). This indicates that the homemakers from joint and large families and higher income were feeling more exerted while cooking. The results were vice versa in case of cleaning grains indicating that the homemakers from joint family ($r = -0.31^{**}$), higher income ($r = -0.25^{**}$) and large families ($r = -0.32^{**}$) were feeling less exerted while cleaning grains. Further, the results indicated that the homemaker's perceived exertion regarding ironing was more with joint family ($r = 0.35^{**}$) and large family size ($r = 0.31^{**}$). Age ($r = -0.41^{**}$) and Family size ($r = -0.22^{*}$) were negatively correlated with perceived exertion of dishwashing

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that washing clothes and mopping floor were more exerting tasks. Liking towards the task was negatively correlated with perceived exertion of household tasks. Age, family size, income and type of family were correlated with perceived exertion and liking of tasks.

Attributes Age (Years)	Frequency & Percentage of homemakers
> 25	27
25-35	67
>35	6
Type of family	
Joint	38
Nuclear	62
Income of the family (Rs)	
< 10,000	3
10000-20000	56
>20000	41
Family size (No.)	
1-4	56
4-8	44
Education	
Matriculate	27
Jr. College	48
Graduates	25

Table 1: General Information of the homemakers

Activities	Perceived exertion score	Liking score	r value
Cooking	2.73	3.79	-0.83**
Cleaning grains	2.12	2.62	-0.25**
Washing clothes	4.13	3.35	-0.38**
Ironing	2.78	2.00	-0.09 ^{NS}
Sweeping	2.18	3.46	-0.51**
Tidying & dusting	1.97	3.02	0.34**
Mopping floor	2.98	3.46	-0.70**
Dishwashing	2.70	2.16	0.03 ^{NS}

Table 2: Extent of perceived exertion and attitude of homemakers towards selected household tasks
F = 79.85**

Sr. No	Age	Type of family	Family Income	Family Size	Education
Cooking	0.26**	-0.06 ^{NS}	-0.39**	-0.005 ^{NS}	-0.03 ^{NS}
Cleaning grains	0.20*	0.12 ^{NS}	-0.01 ^{NS}	0.04 ^{NS}	-0.03 ^{NS}
Washing clothes	0.25**	0.44**	-0.1 ^{NS}	0.34**	0.01 ^{NS}
Ironing	0.10 ^{NS}	0.14 ^{NS}	0.05 ^{NS}	0.18 ^{NS}	0.11 ^{NS}
Sweeping	-0.03 ^{NS}	-0.13 ^{NS}	-0.10 ^{NS}	-0.01 ^{NS}	-0.03 ^{NS}
Tidying & dusting	-0.02 ^{NS}	-0.20*	0.17 ^{NS}	-0.16 ^{NS}	-0.03 ^{NS}
Mopping floor	-0.03 ^{NS}	-0.13 ^{NS}	-0.10 ^{NS}	-0.01 ^{NS}	-0.03 ^{NS}
Dishwashing	-0.13 ^{NS}	-0.002 ^{NS}	0.13 ^{NS}	-0.10 ^{NS}	-0.08 ^{NS}

Table 3: Correlation between selected independent variables and extent of likes of homemakers

* Significant at 5 % level of significance ** Significant at 1% level of significance
NS Non significant

Sr. No	Age	Type of family	Family Income	Family Size	Education
Cooking	-0.19*	0.21*	0.57**	0.26**	0.16 ^{NS}
Cleaning grains	-0.02 ^{NS}	-0.31**	-0.25**	-0.32**	-0.10 ^{NS}
Washing clothes	-0.22*	0.08 ^{NS}	0.14 ^{NS}	-0.14 ^{NS}	0.25**
Ironing	0.25**	0.35**	0.04 ^{NS}	0.31**	-0.01 ^{NS}
Sweeping	-0.10 ^{NS}	0.10 ^{NS}	0.12 ^{NS}	0.06 ^{NS}	-0.12 ^{NS}
Tidying & dusting	0.11 ^{NS}	-0.17 ^{NS}	0.04 ^{NS}	-0.01 ^{NS}	-0.07 ^{NS}
Mopping floor	0.02 ^{NS}	0.10 ^{NS}	0.10 ^{NS}	0.12 ^{NS}	0.04 ^{NS}
Dishwashing	-0.41**	-0.12 ^{NS}	0.02 ^{NS}	-0.22*	-0.03 ^{NS}

Table 4: Correlation between perceived exertion of homemakers and selected independent variables

* Significant at 5 % level of significance ** Significant at 1% level of significance
NS Non significant

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