



A study of the change in the time and energy expenditure of home maker during lockdown due to Covid-19 Pandemic

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Available online at: www.isca.in

Received 7th September 2020, revised 26th December 2020, accepted 22nd January 2021

Abstract

The Covid pandemic has imposed an unforeseen, sudden lockdown on the families of most of the cities. This situation has forced all the members of the family to stay together at home. In this condition the demand of time and energy of the homemaker has increased. The social distancing norms have forced the families to discontinue the paid help from the maids as a result the housewives or homemakers workload has increased. This study is an effort to find out how this situation has changed the time and energy expenditure of the families. Questionnaire was prepared in the Google form by the researchers for this study. Convenient sampling method was used as the questionnaire was sent to homemakers through whatsapp groups. Results revealed that 63% homemakers feel that the time spent on household activities has increased by 40% or more. Nearly 50% homemakers reported that their energy expenditure has increased by 50% or more. Nearly 68.5% housewives reported that they are getting more time to take rest or to do leisure time activities. 68.6% homemakers reported that their time spent on mobile phones has increased.

Keywords: Time expenditure, energy expenditure.

Introduction

We all are facing an unimaginable, unforeseen condition of lockdown imposed on the families of most of the cities. This situation has forced all the members of the family to stay together at home. As a result the amount and types of household activities have increased the amount, types and duration of the household activities. Balakrishnan¹ *et al.* in their article "How homemakers are coping with extra work and keeping families positive amid coronavirus" also stated that "the corona virus pandemic, apart from bringing in a time of uncertainty, has saddled homemakers with an additional workload, a working spouse and children at home 24/7. A homemaker's work never ends. In between cleaning, cooking, mopping, taking care of the children, and sometimes care-giving for elders, her life is an endless whirl of chores to complete and things and people to take care of"¹.

The social distancing norms have forced the homemaker to discontinue the paid help provided by the maids. Most of the homemakers feel overloaded. According to an International Labour Organization report, "in 2018 women in urban India spent 312 minutes a day on unpaid care work. Men did 29 minutes. In villages, it was 291 minutes for women as against 32 minutes for men. But this gender disparity was brought into sharper focus as couples, and families, were confined to their homes during the strict countrywide lockdown to fight the Covid-19 pandemic"².

Being a homemaker and a lady we also faced this situation, which motivated us to take up this study to find out the changed

time and energy expenditure of homemakers during this pandemic time.

Objectives of the Study: To find out the increase in time spent on household activities of the homemakers. To find out the increase in the energy expenditure on household activities of the homemakers. To find out the availability of rest / leisure time by the homemakers. To find out the increase in the time spent on mobile phone.

Methodology

Research Design: Descriptive Research design was used where survey was conducted to study the time and energy expenditure of homemakers.

Tools: Questionnaire was prepared in the Google form by the researchers to study the time and energy expenditure of homemakers.

Sample: Convenient sampling method was used as the questionnaire was sent to homemakers through whatsapp groups. 89 responses were received.

Statistical analysis: Percentages were used to analyse the results.

Results and discussions

Objective wise analysis of data is given below:

Increase in the Time Spent on Household Activities: Figure-1 shows that 31.5% (16.9 and 14.6) homemakers feel that the time spent on household activities has increased by 60% or more. 31.4% (15.7 and 15.7) Homemakers said that the time spent on household activities has increased between 40% to 50%. However 16.9% Homemakers feel that the time spent on household activities has increased only by 20% whereas 12.4% homemakers do not find any increase in the time spent on household activities.

Probable reason for the increase in the time spent on household activities during covid-19 pandemic may be due to the fact that the family members are staying at home so the cooking related activities have increased. Homemakers have to cook variety of dishes according to the choice of the family members. This has resulted in the increased volume of the utensils to be cleaned. The second reason for the increased time is the unavailability of the paid help provided by the maids. This result is also supported by Sallapriya in her report “With support services like domestic help and daycare facilities also being impacted due to the pandemic, women like Aarti now have to shoulder an increased domestic workload, in addition to trying to keep their businesses afloat”.

Increase in the Energy Expenditure on the Household Activities of the homemakers: The Figure-2 shows that 23.6% (12.4 and 11.2) homemakers reported that their energy expenditure has increased by 60% or more. 25.8% homemakers feel that their energy expenditure on household activities has increase by 50%. Whereas 23.6% (12.4 and 11.2) homemakers reported that their energy expenditure has increased between 30 to 40%. Only 16.9% homemakers reported that their energy expenditure has increased by 20%. No increase in the energy expenditure was reported by 10.1% homemakers. As the previous result indicated that the time of homemakers increased on household activities, hence, it is obvious that energy expenditure will also increase, though the increase in percent of energy expenditure by homemakers varied from 20% to 60%.

Increase in the Rest / Leisure time: It is clear from the Figure-3 that nearly 68.5% housewives reported that they are getting more time to take rest or to do leisure time activities. 21.3% homemakers reported that they do not find time for rest. Probable reason for this result may be that because of the lockdown they do not go out for any activity or professional work so they are getting more time to take rest or to do leisure time activities.

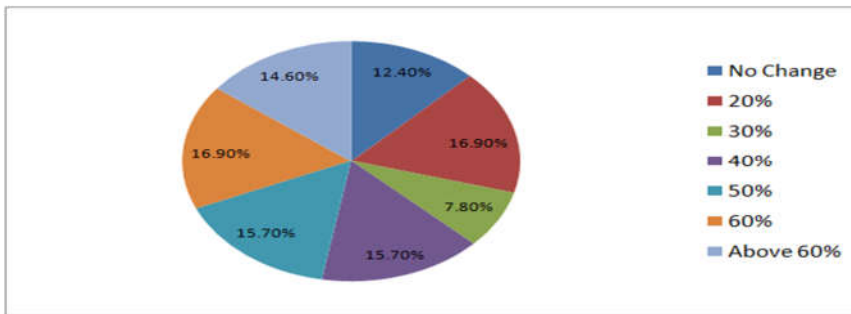


Figure-1: Increase in the time spent on household activities.

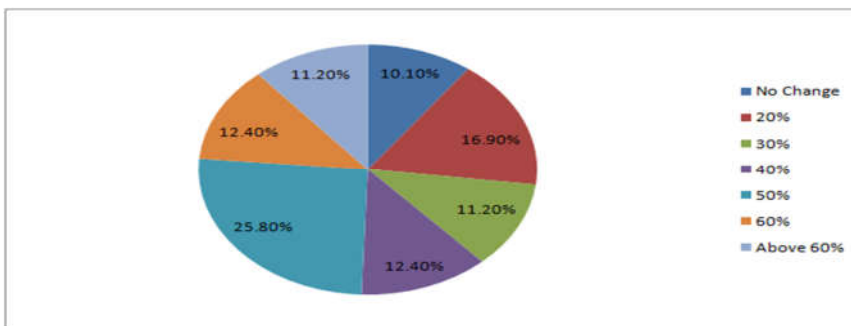


Figure-2: Increase in the energy expenditure on the household activities of the homemakers.

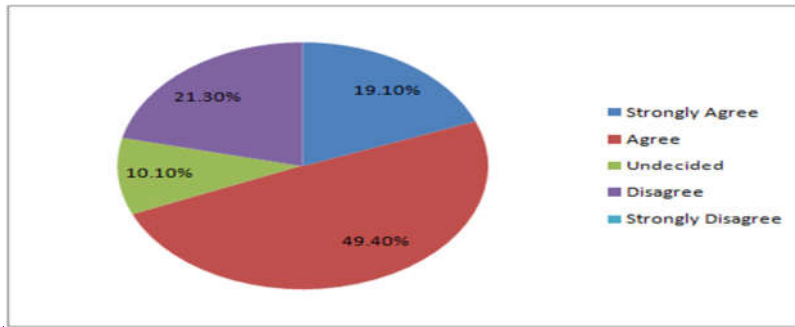


Figure-3: Increase in the Rest / Leisure time.

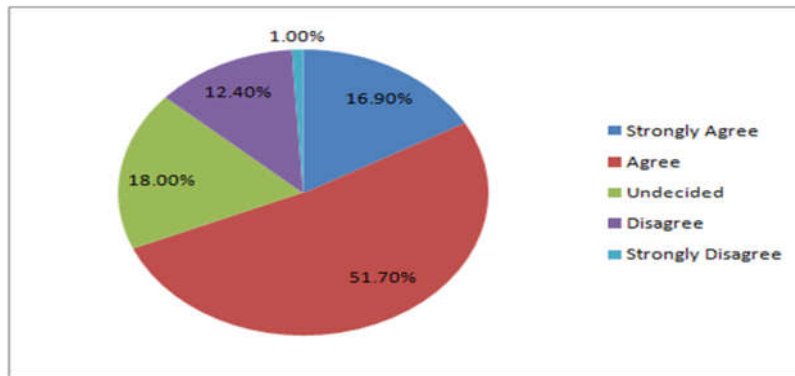


Figure-4: Increase in the time spent on mobile phones.

Increase in the time spent on Mobile Phones: The Figure-4 shows that 18% respondents are undecided if their time spent on mobile has increased or not, whereas nearly 13% find that the time spent on mobile has not increased. 68.6% homemakers reported that their time spent on mobile phones has increased.

The probable reason for the above result may be that due to the lockdown the family members are not allowed to go out and meet their friends and relatives personally so they are spending more time on mobile using whatsapp, face time and other methods of sending messages to their family members.

Conclusion

A Study of the change in the time and energy expenditure of homemakers during lockdown due to Covid Pandemic reveals following results: 63% homemakers felt that the time spent on household activities has increased by 40% or more. Nearly 50% homemakers reported that their energy expenditure has

increased by 50% or more. Nearly 68.5% housewives reported that they are getting more time to take rest or to do leisure time activities. 68.6% homemakers reported that their time spent on mobile phones has increased.

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