

HOME LAUNDRY PRACTICES USED BY RURAL WOMAN

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ABSTRACT

The clothes, which we wear and use, come in contact with various things. The dirt and dust, which is present in our environment stick to our clothes and has deteriorating effect on them. The dirt and dust are sometimes not visible but we can estimate it when we clean it. In order to take good care of clothes knowledge of laundering is equally essential. Regular care of clothing helps to extend wearing time and ensures that clothing is always ready to be worn when needed. Present investigation was undertaken with the objective to study the home laundry practices used by rural women. For this purpose 30 respondents were selected from Manpura village of Badgav Block of Udaipur District of Rajasthan. The results of the study reveal that similar type of method and soap was used by the respondents for all the type of clothes. Sizing was done only on cotton clothes using Maida. Very few respondents used brightening agents that too after five wash. On the basis of results of the study researcher felt the need to impart the training to enhance the knowledge about the care of different type of clothes.

INTRODUCTION

Man began to give a great deal of importance to not merely clothes but clean laundered clothes. In order to take good care of clothing knowledge of laundering is equally essential. The traditional method of washing or laundering the clothes, included laundry at the river bank, substituting sand for detergent and pounding or stamping for agitation. Primitive people washed their clothes by hand in the water of a stream or lake. Care of textile products is an important element in consumership. It includes conditions of cleaning and maintenance of these textile products when they are not being worn. Woollens should be given sensible care if long service is to be expected. They should be brushed and placed on hangers carefully. This removes surface dust and soil and the acids of atmospheric pollution or the presence of moths or other pests that cause deterioration during storage. The proper care of clothes will keep them neat and clean and will increase their wearing life as well as save time and money. A person will look well dressed only when his/her clothes are clean, free of perspiration, odour and stains. Attention towards the correct procedure for cleaning and maintaining textile products will extend the life of the product. Improper cleaning of fabrics can result in severe damage to the fabric.

Hence the present study on care and maintenance of clothing practice was taken up by the researcher. It will help to find out the knowledge of the rural women regarding washing practices and finishing practices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Present study was conducted in *Manpura* village of *Badgav* panchayat samiti of Udaipur division of Rajasthan. Thirty respondents were selected randomly to fulfill the objective of present study. Structured interview schedule was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General information of the respondents

Data regarding the age of respondents as revealed from Table 1 clearly shows that nearly half of the respondents (53.33%) belonged to 31-40 years of age range and nearly three-fourth of them (76.67%) belonged to backward caste and majority (83.33%) had joint family with more than five members. Nearly one fourth of the respondents (26.69%) were senior secondary educated, 20 percent were illiterate. Monthly income of 40 percent of the respondents was 10,000 to 20,000 and rest had less than Rs.10,000 per month. Majority of the respondents were married (90%). Farming was their main occupation but

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47 percent were also doing service along with farming and were also selling milk. Majority of the respondents (83.33%) were residing in rural area and two

third of the respondents were not the member of any organization.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their personal variables

n=30

S. No.	Aspects	Categories	No of Respondents	
			(f)	(%)
1	Age (in years)	20-30	5	16.67
		31-40	16	53.33
		41& above	9	30.00
2	Caste	SC/ST	7	23.33
		Backward (OBC)	23	76.67
		General	-	-
3.	Family Type	Nuclear	5	16.67
		Joint	25	83.33
	Family Size	Small (up to 4 members)	8	26.67
		Medium (5-8 members)	12	40.00
		Large (8 or more members)	10	33.33
4.	Education	Illiterate	6	20.00
		up to Primary	5	16.67
		up to Middle	6	20.00
		up to metric	5	16.67
		up to senior secondary	8	26.6
5.	Monthly Income (Rs.)	up to 5000	10	33.33
		5000-10000	8	26.6
		10000-20000	12	40.00
6.	Marital Status	Married	27	90.0
		Divorced	3	10.0
7.	Family occupation	Farming	16	53.33
		Farming, selling milk & service	14	46.67
9.	Area of residence	Rural	25	83.33
		Urban	5	16.67
10.	Member ship of organization	Yes	10	33.33
		No	20	66.67

Specific information

Under this head information about washing

agents used, laundering method, brightening agents, and stiffening agents used was collected.

Table 2: Washing agents used for laundering clothes**n=30**

S.No.	Type of clothes	Laundering								Dry			
		Detergent powder		Washing soap		Neutral liquid		Reetha nuts		Home made soap		Cleaning	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	White Cotton	15	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	50	2	6.66
2	Coloured cotton	8	26.66	7	23.33	-	-	-	-	15	50	-	-
3	Cotton polyester blends	12	40	10	33.33	-	-	-	-	15	50	-	-
4	Synthetic	15	50	15	50	-	-	-	-	15	50	-	-
5	Silken	15	50	-	-	5	16.66	-	-	10	33.33	-	-
6	Pure Woolen sweaters	-	-	10	33.33	5	16.66	2	6.66	-	-	13	43.33
7	Woolen sweater	-	-	10	33.33	5	16.66	3	10	12	40	-	-
8	Woolenshawls	-	-	10	33.33	5	16.66	3	10	12	40	-	-

Data in Table-2 regarding laundering practices showed that one third to half of the respondents were using washing soap as well as homemade soap for all types of clothes. Detergent powder was also used for white cotton, coloured cotton, synthetic and even on silken clothes. Nearly equal percent of the respondents used neutral liquid soap for silken and pure woolen shawls and sweaters. These respondents had some knowledge. A respondent lacks

the awareness about the type of soap and detergent to be used on different types of clothes. Critical review of table clearly shows that silken and woolen clothes are also washed by homemade soap as well as washing soap which contains strong alkaline chemical, which is harmful for the life of the garment. Only 43.33 per cent respondents laundered the pure woolen clothes by dry cleaning.

Table 3: Method followed for laundering clothes

S. No	Washing steps		White Cotton		Coloured cotton		Synthetic		Cotton polyester blends		Silken clothes		Woolen sweaters		Woolen shawls	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
			1	Soaking clothes	hot soap solution	10	33.33	-	-	5	16.66	5	16.66	-	-	5
cold soap soln.	7	23.33	10		33.33	-	-	-	-	10	33.33	-	-	8	26.66	
2	Boil clothes before washing		10	33.33	-	-	-	-	7	23.33	-	-	5	16.66	-	-
3	Wash in	warm water	5	16.66	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	40	8	26.66
		cold water	28	93.44	-	-	25	83.34	25	83.34	28	93.44	25	83.34	22	73.34
4	Method of washing	Machine wash	10	33.33	10	33.33	-	-	10	33.33	-	-	8	26.66	3	10
		Hand wash	20	66.67	20	66.67	20	66.67	20	66.67	20	66.67	15	50	-	-
		Dry-clean	2	6.66	-	-	-	-	-	10	12	40	13	43.33	-	-
		Beating	15	50	20	66.67	-	-	10	33.33	-	-	12	40	12	40

Data in Table-3 clearly reveals that one third of respondents soaked white clothes in hot soap solution followed by one fourth of respondents in cold water. Nearly one fourth and 16.67 per cent respondents soaked woolen sweaters and shawls in hot soap solution. Majority of the respondents washed all the types of clothes in cold water, only 40 and 26.66 per cent of the respondents washed woolen sweaters and shawls in hot water. When asked about the reasons it was said that they wash the woolen sweaters and shawls only once that too at the end of season. Regarding method of washing used the table further clearly indicates that only one third of the respondents laundered clothes by machines, rest by hand. Beating method was also used by one third to two third of the respondents for various types of clothes. Silken and woolen clothes were dry cleaned by 40 and 43.33 per cent of the respondents. This shows that respondents lack the knowledge of use of proper laundry method and soap for care of woolen and silken clothes.

Soap making method used

Method of preparation of soap as reported by respondents is documented below.

Material used in soap making

Caustic soda	250gms
Water	8cups
Mahua oil	1killo
Besan	50gms

- 1- Caustic soda was dissolved in water, in an earthenware pot 6 to 8 hours.
- 2- Caustic soda solution was added to the mixture of oil and *besan* little at a time with continuous beating till the mixture is of a thick consistency.
- 3- The mixture was poured in tray, and allowed to set.

Whitening agent used for brightening

Table-4 enumerates the agents used by the re-

Table 4: Whitening agent used for brightening

n=30

S.No	whitening agent	White Cotton				Silk				Blend			
		Every wash	After 5 wash	After 10 wash	Never	Every wash	After 5 wash	After 10 wash	Never	Every wash	After 5 wash	After 10 wash	Never
1	Vanish	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	30
2	Ranipol	10			20	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	30
3	Ujala	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	30
4	Aala					-	-	-	30	-	-	-	30
5	Robin blue		15			-	-	-	30	-	-	-	30

Table 5: Stiffening agent used

n=30

S.No	stiffening agent	Cotton				Silk				Blend			
		A1	ST	N	WMS	A1	ST	N	WMS	A1	ST	N	WMS
1	Maida	27	-	3	1.8	-	3	-	.1	-	-	-	-
2	Rice	3	-	15	.2	5	12	-	.73	-	-	-	-
3	Arrowroot	3	-	-	.2	-	27	-	.9	-	-	-	-
4	Sago	-	-	-	-	-	10		.33	-	7	-	.23
5	Maize												
6	Instant (Revive)	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	.5	-	-	-	-
7	Gum	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	.1	-	7	-	.23

spondents for brightening were Ranipol and Robin blue. Respondents mainly used it for white cotton clothes. Very few respondents used Ujala as whitening agents. It was surprising to note that none of the respondents used whitening agents on silk and blended clothes. Only one third of respondents used whitening agents for cotton clothes after every wash. When asked about the reasons for not using the brightening agents it was reported that finance was the main reason followed by lack of awareness about the use of brightening agents.

Stiffening agents used

Data in Table-5 clearly indicates starching was done on cotton clothes mainly using Maida. Very few respondents used rice and *arrowroot* for cotton. Fifty percent respondents *sometimes* used instant starch for silk clothes. Silk clothes were starched sometimes that too by *arrowroot* by majority of the respondents. Fifty per cent used instant starch followed by rice and sago (40 & 33.33%). On blended clothes equal percentage of the respondents used sago and gum starch (23.3%).

Method of preparation of starch

Whatever ingredients they are using (*maida*, rice, sago or *arrowroot*). 100 gm of material was dissolved in 500 ml of water and boiled till it becomes viscous, than cold water is added in it, the solution is filtered. Cloth on which sizing is to be done is immersed in it for few minutes and then shade dried and ironed.

Table 6: Rank order as per the cost (rank 1 to the economical n=30)

S.No.	Stiffening agent	Rank order as per cost		
		F	%	Rank
1	Maida	30	100	I
2	Rice	28	93.33	II
3	Arrowroot	27	90	III
4	Sago	25	83.33	IV
5	Instant (Revive)	20	66.66	VI
6	Gum	23	76.66	V

Ninety percent of the respondents gave first rank as per stiffness to *Maida* followed by *arrowroot* (83.33%)rice (50%),and instant starch(40%).But as per cost again Maida was first choice followed by rice(93.33%), *arrowroot*(90%),sago(83.33%), gum(76.66%) and by instant starch (66.66%).

Information on stiffening charges for starching clothes was also collected. It was reported that for white shirt Rs 20-30 and for *Kurta, Saree, Salwar and Kameeze* Rs 10-20 were charged by commercial laundry man.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above study it can be concluded that rural women lack the knowledge of washing agents, laundry methods and stiffening and brightening agents to be used for different types of clothes. Hence the need arises to empower them about the proper laundering methods and agents according to the generic nature of fabric to increase the life of the garments.

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