

A STUDY MADE IN SENTINEL, OKLAHOMA, OF PRESENT LOCATIONS AND
PERFORMANCES OF LAUNDRY ACTIVITIES/ AND HOMEMAKERS'
PREFERENCES FOR THE LOCATION AND PERFORMANCE
OF LAUNDRY ACTIVITIES IN THE HOME

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PREFACE

A livable and well-planned home is fundamental to satisfying home life. How may this be realized? Part of the answer is dependent upon the homemaker's, the architect's, and the builder's use of fundamental principles of good management when planning or remodelling a home.

The purpose of this study is to discover the present and preferred performances of homemakers' laundry activities in order that these preferences can be incorporated in planning with principles of good management.

The writer wishes to express her deepest gratitude to Dr. Maie Nygren, Professor of Housing and Interior Design, for her expert guidance in bringing this study to completion. Indebtedness is also acknowledged to the Sentinel High School homemaking students for their assistance in obtaining homemakers' names, and to the many homemakers who so graciously cooperated in this study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As observed by the writer, the majority of older homes and a few new homes in Sentinel, Oklahoma, do not have adequate facilities for performing the tasks associated with the family laundry and the storage of laundry supplies and equipment. In some homes, conventional washers are placed in or near the kitchen sink on wash day. These washers are not always conveniently placed and may lack sufficient work space near them.

In the past, very little thought has been given to planning the laundry area in a home according to the homemaker's preferences and the management principles by which she works. In the planning and building of low-cost homes, more attention has been given to the structural design than to the work area needs and work area preferences of the homemaker. It evidently has been assumed that those needs and preferences would be met by the architect or builder who planned the house; but this is not always true. When asked why spaces and facilities in a house have not been arranged according to certain work simplification principles, builders explain to buyers that the house is of low cost construction. This seems to reflect a belief that a house cannot be low-cost and at the same time meet the needs of the family or provide for the efficient discharge of household responsibilities.

It is possible, however, that a house can do both if studies of homemaking activities, work areas and preferences for performing

homemaking activities are first made, and the findings, along with the principles of good management, are used as the basis for planning homes.

Beyer, Mackesey, and Montgomery discovered that men and women have different attitudes and impressions about some aspects of housing.¹ It seems reasonable, therefore, that a homemaker should be given an opportunity to make decisions regarding the organization of work areas in a home rather than leaving such decisions solely to the male architect or builder.

The planning of a home by the architect or builder should be based on his knowledge of the homemaker's preferences for performing such homemaking activities as the laundry. Because the number of persons living in a family and the age and sex of the children affect the frequency of and the time required for doing the laundry, knowledge of these aspects of a family will provide additional planning bases for the builder.

Statement of the Problem

What are the present locations and performances of laundry activities of selected homemakers in Sentinel, Oklahoma, and what are their preferences for the location and performance of the laundry activities in the home?

The study seeks to discover the present locations and performances of homemakers' laundry activities and their preferences for the location and performance of these activities, and to determine if present locations and performances of laundry activities differ from the homemakers' preferences for the location and performance of those activities.

¹Glen H. Beyer, Thomas W. Mackesey, and James E. Montgomery, Houses are for People (Ithaca, New York, 1955), pp. 37-39.

Hypothesis

Differences may exist between what the homemakers are doing in regard to the performance and location of their laundry activities and their preference for the performance and location of these activities.

The Purpose of the Study

It is as important that the laundry area be well planned as it is to have the other areas of a house well planned. Homemakers do not enjoy unnecessary expenditures of time or energy in doing any household task. The washday phrase, "Blue Monday," can soon become extinct if laundry work areas are planned according to the principles of good management and work simplification and according to preferences expressed by the homemaker.

The ultimate purpose of this study is to use the findings regarding the homemakers' preferences for location and performance of laundry activities in developing an educational unit which it is hoped will help homemakers: (1) understand other possibilities for locating, arranging, and using laundry facilities, and (2) have a clearer knowledge of what to look for when evaluating the arrangement of a proposed or an existing laundry area.

The Philosophy of Home Economics

Education is the continuous growth and development of the individual who has visions toward achieving a full and satisfying life. Through such continuous growth, one develops a set of values which are important to every day life. Each individual must decide for himself what he desires most out of life, determine the cost of the possible courses of

action, and make a choice that will satisfy himself and will be acceptable to society. The goals he sets for himself, however, must be possible within the social and economic world in which he lives. Most educational institutions contribute to the educative process by helping the individual:

1. Discover his needs, interests, and capabilities.
2. Clarify his philosophy.
3. Evaluate his resources.
4. Establish his goals.

Because the objectives of home economics are concerned with the individual's achievements of his goals, particularly those in relation to family life, institutions which are notably qualified to assist individuals in reaching their goals, are those colleges and universities which incorporate a home economics program in the curriculum.

In the most recent statement of philosophy and objectives issued by the American Home Economics Association, home economics is described as the field of knowledge which:

. . . synthesizes knowledge drawn from it's own research, from the physical, biological, and social sciences, and from the arts and applies this knowledge to improving lives of families and individuals.

It is further described as being concerned with the following aspects of family living:

family relationships and child development,
consumption and other economic aspects of personal and family living,
nutritional needs and the selection, preservation, preparation, and use of food,
design, selection, construction, and care of clothing, and its psychological and social significance,
textiles for the home and for clothing,
housing for the family and equipment and furnishing for the household,

art as an integral part of everyday life, management in the use of resources so that values and goals of the individual, the family, or of society may be attained.²

Some of the purposes of home economics as prescribed in the constitution of the American Home Economics Association is to provide students with professional preparation and to:

. . . provide opportunities for professional home economists and members from other fields to cooperate in the attainment of the well-being of individuals and families, the improvement of homes, and the preservation of values significant in home life.³

A profession today must be willing and equipped to recognize and be guided by change and to relate its research and other activities to change. This is particularly true of professions which are concerned with family life. Therefore, as a profession concerned with family life, home economics, can be effective only as it alleviates stresses and promotes satisfactions which are brought about by change in family situations and circumstances.

Before home economists as professional people can coordinate knowledge for the benefit of families living today, they need to understand the social and economic conditions which exist and the circumstances of others' lives. The homemaking teacher, in order to understand the needs of her students, her students' families, and of others in the community, must have information concerning them. This information can be obtained by means of a survey. Through such a survey, the homemaking teacher can

²American Home Economics Association, New Directions: A Statement of Philosophy and Objectives, Committee on Philosophy and Objectives of Home Economics, the American Home Economics Association (Washington, D. C., June, 1959), p. 4.

³Ibid., p. 6.

learn about the different needs and problems being experienced by families. The clearest new direction for the homemaking teacher then, is to help her students identify and develop certain fundamental competencies which will be effective in personal and family living regardless of the particular circumstances of the individual or family. Once these are identified by the teacher and the student, the teacher can develop a more valuable family life unit to present to her students or to an adult group.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature reviewed for this study is based on various aspects of laundry activities, equipment, and management as they relate to laundry activities. In general, the studies reviewed are concerned with:

1. The relationship of space in the home and attitudes toward family life in the home
2. Consumer buying practices for home furnishings
3. The use of laundry supplies and equipment
4. Storage space allowances in the home
5. Body fatigue in relation to various household activities
6. Type of housing related to the age of the family
7. Minor improvements in house structure
8. Some of the work areas in the home.

The criteria given by Cowles, Steele and Kishler as being important to consider when evaluating time spent in doing household activities are:

1. Organization of work areas
2. Organization of activities
3. Size of family
4. Age cycle of the family.¹

¹May L. Cowles, Sara M. Steele, and Mary B. Kishler, "Savings in Distance Walked in Kitchens Through Reorganization of Storage and Work Space," Journal of Home Economics, I (March, 1958), pp. 169-171.

Also, according to Cowles and her associates, if supplies and equipment for carrying on work are to be used effectively they must be stored at the place of first and/or most frequent use.² They should also be placed on shelves so they are not stacked or hidden from view. Arranging supplies and equipment according to these principles renders them more readily accessible to the homemaker and helps decrease the time and energy used by her in performing laundry activities.

Nickell and Dorsey believe that doing the work which must be done each day without too great an expenditure of time and energy is one of the major problems of homemaking.³ According to them, how effectively a homemaker is able to use her time and energy in the performance of homemaking activities depends upon her ability to adjust to and to control the different forces in family life which affect her time and energy-spending patterns.⁴

The findings of a survey made by Bratton show that many homemakers experience fatigue after long periods of time on their feet while doing the family ironing. Others who use the sitting position while ironing notice discomfort in their arms if the angle of the armlift is greater than the angle of the armlift when they iron while standing. Thus, some of these homemakers preferred to stand while doing part of the repetitive tasks.⁵ Bratton also found that homemakers who sat with their knees

²Ibid., p. 174.

³Paulena Nickell and Jean Muir Dorsey, Management in Family Living (New York, 1959), p. 12.

⁴Ibid., p. 13.

⁵Esther C. Bratton, "Some Factors of Cost to the Body in Standing or Sitting to Work Under Different Postural Conditions," Journal of Home Economics, L (November, 1958), p. 711.

forced to the side when ironing frequently commented about a tired back, strained muscles, or difficulty in rising.⁶

Gross believes that each person establishes habits which result in fatigue from special activities. Fatigue, therefore, is an outcome of certain forms of personal disorganization rather than a lack of energy.⁷ A study made by Gross in 1949 in East Lansing, Michigan, on two sets of homemakers doing their regular weekly house cleaning revealed that some fatigue resulted after stooping or kneeling while performing household tasks. The study also showed that an orderly procedure with relatively few delays is linked with lack of fatigue.⁸ It can be assumed then that homemakers who have organization in performing laundry activities which require stooping will show less fatigue than those who perform the laundry activities in an unorganized manner.

Johnston studied the extent to which homemakers used recommended laundry practices. Homemakers were scored by the way they performed certain laundry activities and on how they thought they should have performed the activities. The scoring was based on a list of desirable laundry practices compiled from recommendations made in various publications concerning laundry procedures. The factors found to be significantly related to the scores of the homemakers were the:

1. Type of washer used
2. Amount of investment in laundry equipment

⁶Ibid., p. 713.

⁷Irma H. Gross, "Fatigue in Relation to House Care," Journal of Home Economics, XLII (December, 1950), p. 794.

⁸Ibid., p. 795.

3. Number of loads laundered per week
4. Composition of the family
5. Number in the family
6. Age of the homemaker.⁹

According to Johnston, the knowledge homemakers had of desirable laundry procedures were more advanced than were their practices. Her study showed that when knowledge and practices were compared, the recommended laundry procedures could be classified into three groups:

1. Those which the homemaker thought were right but did not follow.
2. Those which the homemaker thought were right and followed.
3. Those which the homemaker did not recognize as being desirable.¹⁰

When planning a good, modern home laundry one must think through the total laundry process. Every factor related to the laundry activities should be considered if a laundry area is to function efficiently. A basic principle given by McCullough is that all work operations in a laundry area should move in the direction of the drying area, and then to the ironing area. By moving in this direction, when doing her laundry, the homemaker will save time, energy, and steps.¹¹

The current trend for locating the laundry area is to bring it out of the basement and into a separate utility room. Miller relates that

⁹Betty Jane Johnston, "Consumer Practices in Buying and Use of Laundry Supplies and Equipment," Journal of Home Economics, LI (March, 1959), p. 221.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Helen E. McCullough, Laundry Area Space Requirements and Location, Urbana: University of Illinois, Small Homes Council, LV (December, 1957), p. 5.

a little over one-half of the families she studied in 1958 preferred a separate laundry room located on the first floor of the home.¹² By placing this room on the ground floor near the kitchen or the bath, the builder economizes on both plumbing fixtures and on steps and energy required for doing the laundry.

The latest trends in automatic washer design, flexibility and simplicity, are also pointed toward reducing the homemaker's expenditures of time and energy. A wide variety of choices is possible for water temperatures during the wash and rinse cycles, for the spin periods, and for agitation and spinning speeds. Furthermore, the variations are attained by merely pushing a labeled button. Washing is no longer confined to Monday, nor must it await good weather, because the time required to do the washing and drying processes has been reduced to the extent that they can be completed in a matter of minutes on any day of the week.

A survey made by the American Home Laundry Manufacturer's Association revealed that the combination washer-dryer machines of today are faster-drying than were earlier models.¹³ With these new models a total of only 100 minutes is required to completely launder a standard load of seven pounds. The wash-rinse cycle takes thirty minutes, and the dry cycle lasts seventy minutes. Other equipment which can save time and energy for the homemaker are adjustable ironing boards and special chairs developed for use with some automatic ironers. Ludwig reports that these chairs assure a proper posture--thus keeping fatigue at a minimum

¹²Gladys Miller, "Plunge Into the Laundry-Head First," What's New In Home Economics, XXIV (January, 1960), p. 46.

¹³Jane Cornish, "Combination Washer-Dryer. Are They Wonderful?" Good Housekeeping, CL (June, 1960), p. 168.

for the homemaker when she irons.¹⁴ Such chairs lighten the task of ironing which is generally disliked by homemakers. Adjustable lights are also available which decrease the amount of time required for the task of ironing.

Not only have time and energy been reduced to a bare minimum by the use of new equipment but the space required is also growing smaller and smaller. A combination washer-dryer can increase the efficiency of a laundry area by saving space for the other family activities; and it is small enough to be installed in the kitchen, utility room, family room, or bath. The burdensome task of transferring clothes from the washer to the dryer is eliminated, thus saving time and energy for the homemaker.

The Westinghouse Company recently developed an experimental "Laundry Center" which is now being tested by the public. According to Ludwig and Beinert, this compact unit:

1. Provides facilities for pretreating, washing, drying, and ironing clothes
2. Has a washer-dryer combination which is 60 inches by 25 inches
3. Provides storage for laundry supplies
4. Provides a washer which automatically adds detergent, bleach and fabric softener
5. Features remote control.¹⁵

McCullough says:

¹⁴Amber C. Ludwig and Frederica L. Beinert, "Ironers, Irons, and Ironing Tables," What's New in Home Economics, XXIV (April, 1960), p. 73.

¹⁵Amber C. Ludwig and Frederica L. Beinert, "1960 Washers Feature Simpler Controls," What's New in Home Economics, XXIV (April, 1960), p. 68.

Convenience and the compact working arrangements offered by automatic washers and dryers have changed the concepts of washday in the home and the planning of laundry areas.¹⁶

She cautions, however, that there should be ". . . sufficient space around laundry equipment to permit the homemaker to perform all laundry operations with a free elbow movement."¹⁷ She recommends that a passageway in front of an appliance be three feet eight inches wide and at least four feet deep, and that a convenient space for ironing is five feet ten inches by four feet three inches.¹⁸

Because of the many new materials and equipment available today, laundering requires more skill than ever before. If homemakers are to work efficiently they need a greater knowledge of new materials and equipment as they are placed on the market. According to McDermott, some of this knowledge is available to homemakers through informative pamphlets published and distributed by equipment manufactures and dealers. Manufactures also teach and train dealers and public service workers to effectively operate the newest equipment and they in turn pass the information on to the public.¹⁹ Workshops sponsored by utility companies and educational organizations which are designed to train teachers in the effective use of equipment are other media by which knowledge of new equipment and materials are dispensed. Such a workshop was sponsored in 1955 by the Department of Home and Family Life of Teachers College,

¹⁶Helen E. McCullough, Laundry Area Space Requirements and Location, Urbana: University of Illinois, LV (December, 1957), p. 3.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁹Irene E. McDermott, "It's No Longer Blue Monday," Forecast, LXX (November, 1954), p. 52.

Columbia University. McCabe reports that at this conference new principles of laundering and new equipment were discussed, then the students applied these principles to laundry procedure.²⁰ New equipment which is placed in some schools by utility companies or dealers for use in classroom teaching also help in familiarizing prospective homemakers with the latest equipment and materials.

²⁰Esther McCabe, "Work Conference on Home Laundry Equipment, Textiles and Detergents," Forecast, CXXI (October, 1955), p. 35.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

An interview schedule was designed to gather data on: (1) the present location and performance of laundry activities of the homemaker and her preferences for the location and performance of these tasks; (2) the number of persons living in the home and the age and sex of the children; (3) the amount of laundry performed in the home and elsewhere; and (4) whether or not the homemaker is interested in an adult class on a well-organized home laundry area and the newest equipment.

The interview schedule was administered as a pretest to five ladies in their homes to determine the usefulness of the information received and to check on clarity of the questions. These five ladies, chosen at random, seemed to be representative of the group of homemakers to be interviewed. Their responses were tabulated and analyzed. Some of the questions were restated for greater clarity before the final survey was made.

Sixty homemakers in Sentinel, Oklahoma, who perform all or part of the activities related to doing the family laundry were chosen to be the sample. Thirty of these homemakers are the mothers of students in the homemaking classes at Sentinel High School. The remaining thirty are friends or neighbors of the mothers. Their names were obtained by the writer from the students.

The homes to be visited were grouped into four geographical areas.

A time schedule made by the writer was discussed with the students of the homemaking classes. Each student helped the writer arrange an appointment with her mother. The other homemakers named by the students were contacted by telephone and an appointment was arranged.

The data were collected by the writer during individual, informal interviews held with the homemakers in their homes. The writer recorded the responses given by the homemaker on the interview schedule. The sixty interviews were completed during a two week period in February.

The responses concerning the various aspects of laundry activities and the location of laundry equipment and supplies in the home were tabulated and classified according to "present locations (or performances)" and "preferred locations (or performances)." Other pertinent information such as: (1) total number of family members and others living in the home, and (2) age and sex composition of children was also tabulated.

Slightly more than three-fourths of the sixty respondents have from three to five family members living in the home. The smallest family has only one child and the largest family has six children. Four of the homemakers interviewed are widows.

One-fourth of the families have children five to eight years old, and one-fourth have children fourteen to eighteen years old. Fifteen per cent of the families have children under two years and only six per cent have children over eighteen years of age. Boys and girls are approximately equally distributed.

Eight of the sixty families have others (not of the immediate family) living in the home. Of these only one family has more than one other person living in the home, and that is a married daughter with her baby.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

"What are the present locations and performances of laundry activities of certain homemakers in Sentinel, Oklahoma?" "What are the homemakers' preferences for the locations and performances of laundry activities?" and "How many homemakers prefer to perform the laundry activities as they are now performing them?" These are the questions being considered in this study. No attempt is made to statistically analyze the findings because of the small number of cases.

All of the homemakers who participated in the study do some laundry in the home. The data in Table I show that approximately two-thirds of the homemakers perform all of their laundry in the home. More than nine-tenths of the women do "all" and "most" of their laundry in the home.

TABLE I
AMOUNT OF LAUNDRY PERFORMED IN THE HOME

Amount of Laundry Performed in the Home	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
All	39	65.0
Most	19	31.6
Little	2	3.4
Total	60	100.0

The frequency of machine laundering and the preference for frequency of machine laundering are practically identical. Over one-third of the homemakers launder and prefer to launder every day, and over one-third of the women launder and prefer to launder twice a week (Appendix A, Table X). Nine-tenths of them prefer to do the laundry as frequently as they are now doing it (Appendix A, Table XI).

A direct relationship exists between the present frequency of hand laundering and the preferred frequency of hand laundering. Most homemakers launder and prefer to hand launder only once a week (Appendix A, Table XII). Nine out of ten respondents prefer to launder by hand as frequently as they are now doing that task (Appendix A, Table XIII).

Of those homemakers who do not perform all of the laundry in the home, approximately equal numbers of them send their laundry to a commercial laundry or do it at a Help-Ur-Self Laundry. These findings are shown in Table II. The articles usually done outside the home are white shirts, sheets, men's work clothes, towels, uniforms, and diapers (Appendix A, Table XIV).

TABLE II
LOCATION FOR DOING THAT PART OF THE LAUNDRY
NOT DONE IN THE HOME

Location	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Commercial laundry	11	55.0
Help-Ur-Self laundry	10	45.0
Total	21	100.0

Washing

The data in Table III show that only one-third of the homes have a separate laundry room. In Table IV, however, the data indicate that over

TABLE III
HOMES HAVING A SEPARATE UTILITY ROOM

Utility Room	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Have a Separate Utility Room	20	33.3
Do Not Have a Separate Utility Room	40	67.7
Total	60	100.0

two-thirds of the homemakers clearly stated they would prefer doing the washing in a separate utility room. This latter finding verifies the thought expressed by Miller when she says that planners should refrain from combining the laundry area with other areas in the home.¹

TABLE IV
PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION FOR WASHING CLOTHES

Location	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Utility room	20	33.3	43	71.6
Kitchen	31	51.7	10	17.0
Bath	5	8.3	4	6.6
Others	4	6.7	3	4.8
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

¹Gladys Miller, "Plunge Into the Laundry-Head First," What's New in Home Economics, XXIV (January, 1960), p. 46.

McCullough also found that two areas which homemakers do not like to have combined are food preparation and laundry because they dislike having soiled clothes in the same area with foods.² Perhaps this is one reason why such a small proportion of the homemakers interviewed prefer to do the laundry in the kitchen.

A comparison of the responses indicating where the washing is done and where homemakers prefer doing it reveals that approximately two-thirds of the homemakers prefer their present location, while one-third prefer a different location (Appendix A, Table XV).

In Table V, the data show that the largest proportion of homemakers have modern laundry equipment in their homes. All of the homemakers have an electric washer and nine out of ten use an automatic washer. Slightly more than this proportion prefer to use this kind of washer. Several of the respondents stated that although they had once had an automatic combination washer-dryer they believed it to be inferior to the automatic washer and had changed back to the single machine.

TABLE V
TYPE OF WASHER USED AND PREFERRED

Type of Washer	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Electric	60		60	
Automatic	56	90.0	56	93.3
Conventional	4	10.0	3	5.0
Automatic Washer-Dryer	0	0.0	1	1.7
Gas	0		0	
	<u>60</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>100.0</u>

²Helen E. McCullough, Laundry Area Space Requirements and Location, Urbana: University of Illinois, LV (December, 1957), p. 6.

Drying

From a study of the data in Table VI it appears that similarities exist between the present location and the location preferred for drying clothes in the summer. Over seventy per cent of the homemakers both use and prefer to use a drying yard in the summer months. In the winter months, however, three-fifths of the homemakers use a dryer and three-fourths of the homemakers would prefer to use the dryer.

TABLE VI
PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION FOR DRYING CLOTHES
IN SUMMER AND WINTER

Location	Respondents							
	Summer				Winter			
	Present		Preferred		Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Dryer	15	25.0	17	28.3	36	60.0	45	75.0
Drying Yard	44	73.3	43	71.7	11	18.2	12	20.0
House	1	1.7	0	0.0	7	11.7	2	3.3
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	10.1	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0	60	100.0	60	100.0

From the comments made by the homemakers, their reasons for preferring a drying yard in the summer were that they liked the fresh smell of the clothes, the sun helped bleach white articles, and the clothes were not so wrinkled. They also indicated that the weather is too severe for hanging clothes in the drying yard in the winter months; therefore, they would prefer using a dryer during those months.

Sprinkling

A greater proportion of homemakers actually sprinkle clothes in their kitchen than do those who prefer that location for sprinkling.

More women prefer to sprinkle in a separate utility room than are now sprinkling their clothes in such a room. This suggests possibly more homemakers would use a utility room for sprinkling their clothes if they had such a room or had sprinkling facilities in their present utility room. It is interesting that a number of women actually sprinkle and prefer to sprinkle their clothes in a bedroom where a source of water is not generally available. This seems to indicate that these women have little interest in saving time or energy while doing this task.

TABLE VII
PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION FOR
SPRINKLING CLOTHES

Location	Respondents			
	Present Number	Per Cent	Preferred Number	Per Cent
Kitchen	40	66.6	25	41.6
Bedroom	9	15.0	10	17.0
Utility	4	6.7	20	33.2
Others	7	11.7	5	8.2
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

Folding Clothes

When the responses to the questions concerning the present and preferred location for folding clothes were analyzed, the greatest difference emerged in the use and preference of the utility room. Whereas one tenth of the homemakers fold their clothes in a utility room, one-half prefer that location. A comparison of the responses concerning the present location and the preferred location shown in Table VIII reveals that almost three-fourths of the homemakers were satisfied with their present location for folding clothes (Appendix A, Table XVI).

TABLE VIII
PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION FOR FOLDING CLOTHES

Location	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Kitchen	18	30.0	14	23.3
Bedroom	22	36.7	15	25.0
Utility	6	10.0	20	33.3
Others	14	23.3	11	18.4
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

Ironing

The data in Table IX show that the greatest difference exists between the present and the preferred use of a utility room for ironing. Over one-third of the homemakers prefer to iron in the utility room but only one-seventh actually iron there. It is interesting to note that three other areas, the kitchen, a bedroom, and the living room are approximately equally preferred for ironing.

TABLE IX
PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION FOR IRONING

Location	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Kitchen	17	28.3	13	21.7
Living Room	16	27.0	9	15.0
Bedroom	12	20.0	9	15.0
Utility	5	8.3	22	36.6
Others	10	16.4	7	11.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

The preferred position for ironing is still standing. Over four-fifths of the homemakers stand but only three-fourths prefer to stand (Appendix A, Table XVII). Some homemakers voluntarily stated that they disliked ironing especially when alone and many expressed a desire to iron in the living room where they could watch television. Being able to do this, they thought, compensated for having to iron.

When asked where the finished garments were stored while ironing, four-fifths of the respondents indicated that they hang them near the ironing board in the same room. Nine-tenths of the homemakers prefer to hang the finished garments in the same room where they iron. One-fifth of the women walk to another room to hang their clothes, but only one-tenth prefer that arrangement (Appendix A, Table XVIII).

Less than half of the homemakers prefer the utility room for performing the three activities: sprinkling, folding, and ironing. Perhaps this is the reason builders use their own opinions in planning for these activities in homes. They are not sure which homemaker will live in a house, so they probably plan and build according to their own past experiences.

Storage and Work Areas

Of the sixty homemakers, forty-eight store the washing products near the washing machine, but fifty-eight would prefer that storage location (Appendix A, Table XIX). Approximately four-fifths of the homemakers are satisfied with their present location for storing the washing products (Appendix A, Table XX). It appears therefore that homemakers generally recognize the value of storing washing supplies and equipment near the washing machine in order to conserve their time and energy.

Slightly over one-third of the homes do not have a work shelf near the washing machine. Fifty-nine of the sixty respondents expressed a desire to have such a convenience (Appendix A, Table XXI).

A light was located near the washing machine in most of the homes. All of the homemakers said that this was a must in every laundry room (Appendix A, Table XXII).

Body Position

Approximately one-half of the homemakers interviewed for this study stated that stooping was necessary while performing one or more laundry activities (Appendix A, Table XXIII). Some of the laundry activities mentioned as requiring some stooping by the homemaker are washing, hanging clothes, and folding clothes (Appendix A, Table XXIV).

The findings of Johnston's³ study on recommended laundry practices indicate that it is important for homemakers to know correct laundry procedures so that they will not follow undesirable ones, and to know how to organize and arrange work areas according to principle of management. When asked "Would you be interested in an adult class on a well organized home laundry area and the newest equipment?" one-third of the women responded in the affirmative (Appendix A, Table XXV). Of this one-third, the majority were young homemakers who were eager to gain a better knowledge and understanding of the more modern methods of laundering new miracle fabrics and the proper use and care of new automatic washers, dryers, and other laundering equipment.

³Betty Jane Johnston, "Consumer Practices in Buying and Use of Laundry Supplies and Equipment," Journal of Home Economics, LI (March, 1960), p. 221.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Although some studies have been concerned with work activities, work areas, and homemakers' preferences for these activities and areas, the need for such studies continues to exist because of social, economic, and technological developments. Builders still need to be made aware of the important contribution that housing and home management consultants can make in the planning of efficient work areas; and homemakers need to be made aware of the values to be gained from determining their preferences for performing all work activities and from examining their work habits. When this is done builders, contractors, architects, and homemakers can work together in planning more efficient work areas.

The major hypothesis of the study is that differences may exist between what the homemakers are doing in regard to the performance and location of their laundry activities and their preference for the performance and location of these activities.

An interview schedule was designed for obtaining data on the present laundry activities of the homemakers and their preferences for performing these activities. Other pertinent questions were also included in the schedule. Sixty homemakers who do all or part of their laundry at home comprised the sample of the study. Thirty were mothers of the students

in the homemaking classes at Sentinel, Oklahoma, High School and thirty were friends or neighbors of the mothers.

Following a pretest and a revision of the questions, the data were collected by the writer during an informal interview in the home of each homemaker. The data were analyzed and the findings presented.

The major findings show that all homemakers have an electric washer and nine out of ten have automatic washers. Over one-third of the women send some garments outside the home to be laundered and almost all do some hand washing. Homemakers prefer to launder by machine and by hand as frequently as they are now doing these tasks.

The homemakers prefer an outside drying area in the summer months and an automatic dryer in the winter. Almost three-fourths of the women prefer to have a utility room. Therefore, most house plans should include a separate utility room. Those homemakers who have a utility room use it less than other areas of the home for folding, sprinkling, and ironing. Three-fourths of the homemakers prefer to stand while ironing. Stooping does not seem to be too big a problem for the respondents. One-half of them stoop in doing some of their laundry activities and they indicated they would not do it differently.

Almost all homemakers have a good light near the washer but do not have a work shelf. They expressed a preference for a light and a work space near the washer.

Approximately two-thirds of the homemakers prefer the present location for performing the following laundry activities: washing clothes, drying clothes in the winter, folding, sprinkling, and ironing clothes.

From eighty-three to ninety-three per cent of the homemakers prefer their present situation in regard to the;

1. Location for drying clothes in the summer
2. Position used for ironing
3. Location for storing finished garments while ironing
4. Location for storing the washing products
5. Frequency for machine washing
6. Frequency for hand washing
7. Type of washing machine used
8. Location of a light near the washing machine.

Conclusions

Approximately fifty-four homemakers out of the selected sixty prefer the present (1) frequency of hand and machine washing, (2) location for drying clothes in the summer, (3) location for storing washing products, (4) location for storing the finished garments while ironing, and (5) position while ironing. Therefore, it appears the hypothesis that differences may exist between what the homemakers are doing in regard to the performance and location of their laundry activities and their preference for the performance and location of these activities is not justified.

Since two-thirds of the homemakers interviewed for this study prefer to launder in a utility room while only one-half of them now use such a room, housing consultants, architects, and builders would not be amiss in including a separate utility room in most of the plans for which they are responsible. Because one-third of the homemakers prefer to use a utility room for folding, sprinkling, and ironing clothes, but less than

one-tenth now use such a room for these activities, it appears that facilities and space should be provided for them in every third utility room planned or constructed.

Recommendations

Although homemakers appear to prefer the present locations and performances of their laundry activities it is possible that these preferences may be associated with factors which were not examined in the present study. It would be interesting to know, for example, if relationships exist between the homemakers preferences for her present location and performance of her laundry activities and certain other factors such as: (1) her knowledge of recommended laundry procedures, (2) her age, (3) the size and socio-economic status of her family, and (4) the investment she has made in laundry equipment. The writer, therefore, recommends: that a larger study be conducted to ascertain if preferences may be related to certain factors in the homemaker's background or her family situation.

If such a study were conducted, the writer recommends that a larger randomly selected sample be used which would permit statistical analysis to determine significant relationships. The findings could then be generalized for a larger proportion of the population. If any part of the present instrument were to be used in such a study the writer recommends that the instrument be revised to obtain additional data regarding the proportion of homemakers who own and use dryers and the number who use the utility room for washing purposes, only.

Implications

The best approach to helping people see how the location and arrangement of a work area, such as a laundry area, can help the homemaker work efficiently is through education. The fact that twenty-two homemakers indicated an interest in an adult class concerned with a well organized home laundry area and the newest equipment suggests that offering such an adult class is feasible.

New automatic laundry appliances are practically a necessity in the operation of the modern home, and in many instances are preferred. Homemakers should be helped, therefore, to understand the principles of proper selection, arrangement, use and care of the automatic home laundry appliances. They should also be given information about new fibers, textiles and finishes which have relevance to laundry practices and methods, and about the types of soaps, starches, water conditioners, and bluing and how they should be used.

With the many new fabrics and kind of equipment on the market today, laundry requires more skill than ever before and the homemaker must be ready to accept the challenge of doing it successfully. The homemaking teacher, through her homemaking classes, can help both future and present homemakers meet this challenge.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

TABLE X
FREQUENCY OF MACHINE LAUNDERING

Frequency	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Every day	23	38.4	22	36.6
Twice a week	22	36.6	21	35.0
Others	15	25.0	17	28.4
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

TABLE XI
COMPARISON OF FREQUENCY AND PREFERENCE FOR FREQUENCY
OF MACHINE LAUNDERING

Comparison of Responses	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Same	54	90.0
Different	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

TABLE XII
FREQUENCY OF HAND LAUNDERING

Frequency	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Every day	10	16.7	10	16.7
Twice a week	12	20.0	11	18.3
Once a week	29	48.3	27	45.0
Others	9	15.0	12	20.0
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

TABLE XIII
COMPARISON OF FREQUENCY AND PREFERENCE FOR FREQUENCY
OF HAND LAUNDERING

Comparison of Responses	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Same	52	86.7
Different	<u>8</u>	<u>13.3</u>
Total	60	100.0

TABLE XIV
ARTICLES DONE OUTSIDE THE HOME OF TWENTY-TWO HOMEMAKERS

Articles Laundered Outside of Home	Respondents Reporting Articles Laundered Outside the Home Number
White shirts	11
Sheets	9
Work clothes	8
Towels	5
Uniforms	1
Diapers	<u>1</u>
Total	25*

* This total does not correspond with the twenty-two homemakers who reported some laundry being done outside the home because some homemakers indicated that more than one kind of article was laundered outside the home.

TABLE XV
COMPARISON OF LOCATION AND PREFERENCE OF LOCATION FOR LAUNDERING

Comparison of Responses	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Same	38	63.3
Different	<u>22</u>	<u>36.7</u>
Total	60	100.0

TABLE XVI
COMPARISON OF PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION
FOR FOLDING CLOTHES

Comparison of Responses	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Same	44	73.3
Different	16	26.7
Total	60	100.0

TABLE XVII
PRESENT AND PREFERRED POSITION WHILE IRONING

Position	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Standing	50	83.4	45	75.0
Sitting	2	3.3	5	8.3
Some of each	8	13.3	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

TABLE XVIII
PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION FOR STORING
FINISHED GARMENTS WHILE IRONING

Location	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Near the ironing board	49	81.7	54	90.0
In another room	11	18.3	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

TABLE XIX
PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION FOR STORING WASHING PRODUCTS

Location	Respondents			
	Present		Preferred	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Near the washer	48	80.0	58	97.0
Across the room	6	10.0	1	1.5
In another room	6	10.0	1	1.5
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

TABLE XX
COMPARISON OF PRESENT AND PREFERRED LOCATION
FOR STORING WASHING PRODUCTS

Comparison of Responses	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Same	50	83.3
Different	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

TABLE XXI
COMPARISON OF AVAILABILITY AND PREFERENCE FOR
A WORK SHELF NEAR THE WASHER

Comparison of Responses	Respondents			
	Availability		Preference	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Yes	37	61.7	59	98.3
No	23	38.3	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

TABLE XXII

COMPARISON OF "PRESENCE OF" AND "PREFERENCE FOR"
A LIGHT NEAR THE WASHING MACHINE

Comparison of Responses	Respondents			
	Light Present Number	Per Cent	Light Preferred Number	Per Cent
Yes	56	93.3	60	100.0
No	<u>4</u>	<u>6.7</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

TABLE XXIII

RESPONDENTS WHO REPORT STOOPING WHILE
PERFORMING LAUNDRY ACTIVITIES

Body Position	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Stoop	27	45.0
Do not stoop	<u>33</u>	<u>55.0</u>
Total	60	100.0

TABLE XXIV

LAUNDRY ACTIVITIES WHERE STOOPING IS NECESSARY

Activity	Respondents Number
Hanging clothes	10
Washing	9
Folding	5
Others	<u>6</u>
Total	30*

*This total does not correspond with the twenty-seven who reported stooping because some homemakers indicated that they stooped for more than one laundry task.

TABLE XXV
INTEREST IN AN ADULT CLASS

Response	Respondents	
	Number	Per Cent
Interested	22	36.6
Not Interested	<u>38</u>	<u>63.4</u>
Total	60	100.0

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Number of immediate family _____

2. Children _____

Sex	Age
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Others living in the home _____

- a. _____ adults
b. _____ children

4. How much of your laundry do you perform in the home?

- a. _____ all
b. _____ most
c. _____ little
d. _____ other (specify)

5. If not all:

A. Where is the other done?

- a. _____ at a commercial laundry
b. _____ at a Help-Ur-Self
c. _____ other (specify)

B. What kinds of things do you do or have done there?

- a. _____ towels
b. _____ sheets
c. _____ white shirts
d. _____ work clothes
e. _____ others (specify)

6. For the laundry you do in your home, do you have a laundry room?

- a. _____ Yes b. _____ No

7. A. Where do you now wash?

B. Where would you prefer to wash?

- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------|
| _____ | a. utility room | _____ |
| _____ | b. kitchen | _____ |
| _____ | c. backyard | _____ |
| _____ | d. garage | _____ |
| _____ | e. basement | _____ |
| _____ | f. bathroom | _____ |
| _____ | g. other (specify) | _____ |

8. Where do you dry the clothes? Where would you prefer to dry them?
 A. Winter B. Summer C. Winter D. Summer
- | | | | | |
|-------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | a. dryer | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | b. utility room | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | c. back porch | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | d. front porch | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | e. wash house | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | f. basement | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | g. house | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | h. garage | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | i. drying yard | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | j. other (specify) | _____ | _____ |
9. A. Where do you sprinkle clothes? B. Where would you prefer to
 sprinkle clothes?
- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------|
| _____ | a. kitchen | _____ |
| _____ | b. bedroom | _____ |
| _____ | c. utility room | _____ |
| _____ | d. other (specify) | _____ |
10. A. Where do you fold the clothes? B. Where would you prefer to
 fold clothes?
- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------|
| _____ | a. kitchen | _____ |
| _____ | b. bedroom | _____ |
| _____ | c. utility room | _____ |
| _____ | d. other (specify) | _____ |
11. A. Where do you do the ironing? B. Where would you prefer to iron?
- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------|
| _____ | a. utility room | _____ |
| _____ | b. living room | _____ |
| _____ | c. bedroom | _____ |
| _____ | d. kitchen | _____ |
| _____ | e. dining room | _____ |
| _____ | f. first floor | _____ |
| _____ | g. basement | _____ |
| _____ | h. other (specify) | _____ |
12. A. In what position do you iron? B. In what position would you
 prefer to iron?
- | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-------|
| _____ | a. sitting | _____ |
| _____ | b. standing | _____ |
| _____ | c. some of each | _____ |
13. A. Where do you store the finished
 garments while ironing? B. Where would you prefer to store
 the finished garments while
 ironing?
- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| _____ | a. near ironing board | _____ |
| _____ | b. in another room | _____ |
| _____ | c. other (specify) | _____ |
14. A. Where do you store the washing
 products? B. Where would you prefer to store
 the washing products?
- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-------|
| _____ | a. near the washer | _____ |
| _____ | b. across the room | _____ |
| _____ | c. in another room | _____ |

15. A. How much washing do you do by hand?
 _____ a. all
 _____ b. part
 _____ c. none
 _____ d. other (specify)
- B. What kind of washing do you prefer to do by hand?
 _____ specify
16. How often do you wash? How often would you prefer to wash?
 A. In Machine B. By Hand C. In Machine D. By Hand
- | | | | | |
|-------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | a. once a week | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | b. twice a week | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | c. every 2 weeks | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | d. other (specify) | _____ | _____ |
17. A. What type of washer do you now use? B. What type would you prefer to use?
- | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| _____ | a. conventional | _____ |
| _____ | b. automatic | _____ |
| _____ | c. automatic combination | _____ |
| _____ | d. electric | _____ |
| _____ | e. gas | _____ |
| _____ | f. other (specify) | _____ |
18. A. Do you have to stoop to perform the laundry activities?
 a. _____yes b. _____no
- B. If yes, which laundry activities?
 _____ a. washing
 _____ b. ironing
 _____ c. sprinkling
 _____ d. folding
 _____ e. other (specify)
19. A. Is a work shelf near the washer?
 a. _____yes b. _____no
- B. Would you like one?
 a. _____yes b. _____no
20. A. Is a light near the washer?
 a. _____yes b. _____no
- B. Would you like one?
 a. _____yes b. _____no
21. Would you be interested in an adult class on a well organized home-laundry area and newest equipment?
 a. _____yes b. _____no

VITA

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