

Space Utilisation during Meal Preparation in an Indian Kitchen Belonging to Middle-Income Group Family

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Abstract : A kitchen is a major workplace in any home. A large variety of tasks, mainly related to meal preparation is performed here. The types of activities performed are varied and vast. In a way, it is the activities performed that determine the way the space within the kitchen is going to be utilised. A study was conducted in 510 Indian kitchens belonging to middle-income group families living in Delhi. It was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, 510 non-working homemakers were interviewed and questions pertaining to their personal characteristics, meal preparation and physical aspects related to the kitchen were asked. In the second phase, the technique of Path Process Chart was developed. Subsequently, a sub-sample of 50 homemakers was selected from the larger group. The activity of meal preparation was carried out by the homemakers themselves in their kitchens. A time and motion study was conducted using the technique of Path Process Chart. The results were analysed using the appropriate analysis sheets and conclusions were drawn. It was found that the entire kitchen and more specifically, the counter had been 'divided' into a number of workplaces. These workplaces were being used either for performing operations or for the purpose of storage. In many cases, it was used for both. On the whole, in 50 kitchens studied, 21 workplaces were identified which were used for performing operations related to meal preparation and 17 for storage. It was also observed that almost the entire kitchen was used for the purpose of storage of some item or the other. The major workplaces where operations were performed were the range, workplaces to the right and left of range and sink and workplaces to the right or left of the sink. The same workplaces were also used for the purpose of storage. There were some workplaces outside the kitchen too, which were used for operations or storage. These were the dining table, courtyard or balcony, bedroom cupboard. On the whole, the range centre and the sink centre were found to be the two most important centres in an Indian kitchen belonging to urban middle-income group family.

Keywords : kitchen, workplace, meal preparation, path process chart

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