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Evaluation of Some Stain Removal Characteristics of Cotton Fabrics Used by Different Consumers and Its Economic Implications*

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One of the primary needs of mankind is clothing, proper care of which improves appearance and also increases the wearing ability. The care for garments and other products made of fabrics has always been a concern of consumers and is reflected in economy, the household budget, service-ability and appearance. Stain is a spot or mark of discolouration left on fabrics by the contact and absorption of some foreign substances. Moss (1961) and Lyle (1977) stated that prime importance in stain removal is identification of stain. Hingorani *et al.* (1983) suggested some basic concept of stain removal. The choice of the method used may vary amongst various consumers. Informations on these aspects are very meagre in Assam. Hence, the present investigation was carried out togather some useful informations on the stain removal characteristics of cotton fabrics by different consumers.

The present survey study was conducted at the Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat and nearby areas of the Jorhat city during 1992. Fifty respondents both housewives and students were selected for the survey. The data were collected through an interview schedule and were analysed for percentage of age group, community, educational qualification, marital status, family size, occupation, income, method used for stain removal and satisfaction of stain removal methods.

Results revealed that majority (52%) of respondents belonged to 25-40 years age group, most of which were Hindu (94%) with general caste (58%) having educational qualification graduates (58%). Percentage of married people were 66 with 62% having family of 3-5. Most of the respondents (42%) were wiithin the income group of Rs. 2001-3000 per month.

It was interesting to note that all the respondents were in favour of washing their clothes at home and most of them could identify stains on their clothes. About 62-72% respondents could assume the mud, *Sindur*, blood and milk tea stain whereas 44-50% could assume the coal tar and spittle stains, 24-40% ball pen ink and hair oil, pickle oil and mobil stain, 28-30% lipstick and grass stain. Only 12-18% respondents could assume cough syrup and rust stain.

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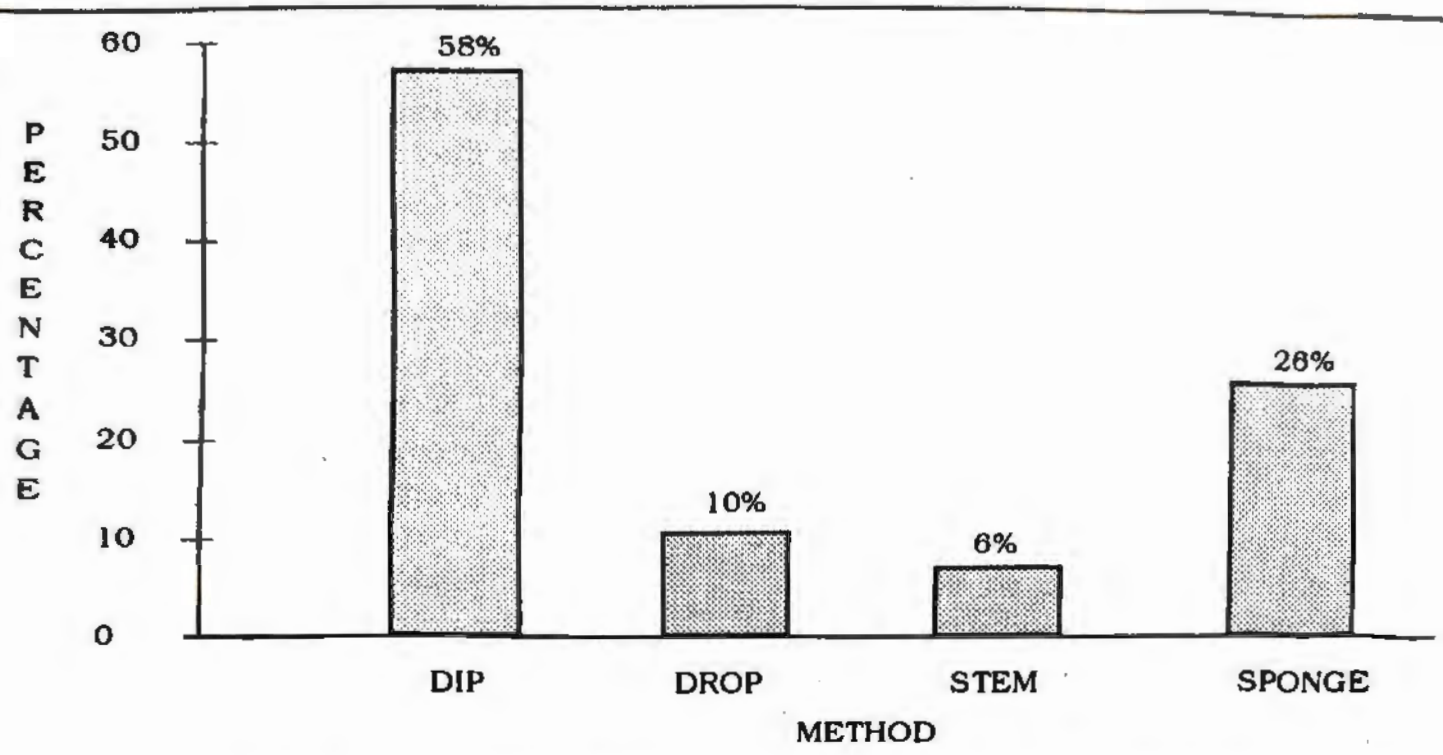


Fig. 1 : Percentage distribution of method used to remove the stain.

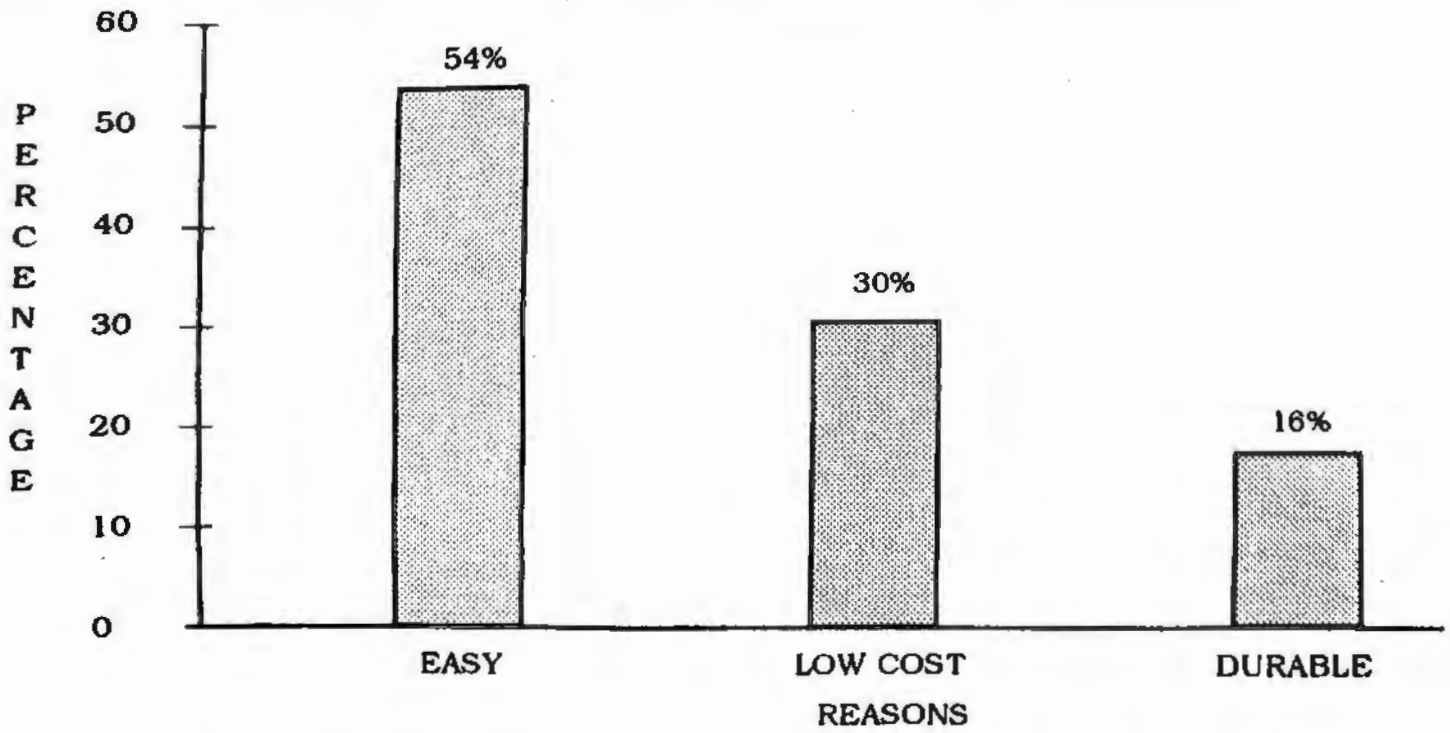


Fig. 2 : Percentage distribution of reasons which gave satisfaction for the method of stain removal.

Regarding removal of stains, it was noted that all the respondents knew only one treatment to remove stain. Majority (86%) remove stains from their clothes immediately and about 58% prefered to use dip method for removing the stain followed by sponge method (Fig. 1). For removal of blood, milk coffee, hair oil or pickle oil, lipstick, milk tea, spittle, cough syrup, grass, ball pen ink, rust and *sindur* stain, soap and water is used by 54.12, 36, 20, 8, 18, 10, 37, 14, 10 and 66% respondents, respectively. Lemon was used for removal of blood, milk coffee, milk tea, spittle, cough syrup, ball pen ink and rust stain by 4, 6, 10, 32, 2, 8 and 4% respondents, respectively. Kerosine oil was used by 44% respondents for coal tar and 4% used it for mobil stain. Only 10% respondents used salt and water for removal of blood stain. Out of the total population 54% were satisfied with the method they use, as they feel it was easy for them, 30% prefered to use the method because of low cost and 16% feel it to be durable (Fig. 2).

From the survey results it revealed that very few people knew different stain removal methods, the knowledge of which is very important in our day-to-day life. It is necessary to motivate people in a proper direction towards care of clothing to remove different stains from their clothes.

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