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ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT AWARENEES LEVELS OF HOUSEWIVES

Sinem KARS*, Firdevs Kevser Alagöz**

*PhD, OT, Hacettepe University, Department of Occupational Therapy, Ankara, Turkiye

** BSc Student, Hacettepe University, Department of Occupational Therapy, Ankara, Turkiye

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Occupational Therapy and Ecology

Why are we discussing ecological literacy at an occupational therapy congress?

As occupational therapists, we should view the concept of 'Occupation' as part of environmental justice and sustainable living practices. This study approaches an individual's daily life routines as an 'ecological occupational performance'.



Theoretical Framework

Ecological literacy is not just about being informed; it is also about feeling responsible towards ecosystems and acting accordingly.

The ecological footprint is a concrete indicator that measures the impact of daily activities on environmental resources . These concepts are directly related to the interaction between occupation, environment, and participation in occupational therapy.

Turkiye and the Karabük Example

According to Türkiye's Ecological Footprint Report, our country has exceeded its biological capacity by 100%. This means we have a serious ecological deficit. The province of Karabük, with its industrial history and nature, is one of the places where this transformation can be most clearly observed. Housewives are the 'invisible CEOs of the home', directly managing household consumption habits, waste management, and energy use.



Objectives and Research Questions

In our research, we sought answers to three fundamental questions:

1. What are housewives' general views on their ecological footprint?
2. What are their current levels of awareness?
3. How is this awareness influenced by demographic variables such as age, education and income?

Method

- Cross-sectional research design
- Snowball sampling
- N = 75 housewives
- Karabük, TÜRKİYE
- Ecological Footprint Awareness Scale

Key Findings

Our findings are as follows. The dimension in which housewives' awareness is *highest* is '**Energy**', while the dimension in which it is *lowest* is '**Water Consumption**'. This tells us that energy saving has become a 'compulsory activity' because it is directly linked to economic gain through bills.

However, water remains an 'automated routine' whose ecological value has not yet been fully grasped. It is clear that occupational therapy interventions are needed for water conservation to become a way of life.



The Effect of Age and Education

When we delved deeper into the data, we saw that the 56-65 age group had a significantly higher awareness of energy and water than younger generations. This reminds us of the value of the 'old-fashioned culture of saving'. On the other hand, we found that as the level of education increases, awareness of food and energy peaks, especially among postgraduate graduates.

	Scale total score	Food	Transportation and housing	Energy	Waste	Water consumption
Total scores ($\bar{X} \pm Ss$ (min-maks))						
	3,94±0,41 (2,85-4,75)	3,43±0,49 (2,12-4,5)	3,37±0,55 (1,71-5)	4,42±0,43 (3,08-5)	4,03±0,71 (2,75-5)	2,64±0,4 (1,12-3,12)
Age groups						
<i>Age range of 25-35</i>	3,82±0,38 (2,85-4,35)	3,20±0,46 (2,12-3,87)	3,27±0,47 (2,14-4,42)	4,41±0,33 (3,83-5)	3,86±0,7 (2,75-5)	2,57±0,36 (1,62-3,12)
<i>Age range of 36-45</i>	3,94±0,48 (3,15-4,75)	3,59±0,51 (3-4,5)	3,48±0,51 (2,42-4,71)	4,29±0,5 (3,33-5)	4,11±0,66 (3-5)	2,51±0,54 (1,12-3,12)
<i>Age range of 46-55</i>	3,93±0,37 (3,15-4,52)	3,43±0,45 (2,75-4,25)	3,25±0,64 (1,71-5)	4,45±0,49 (3,08-5)	4±0,73 (2,75-5)	2,71±0,27 (2,25-3,12)
<i>Age range of 56-65</i>	4,12±0,39 (3,47-4,67)	3,56±0,53 (2,75-4,37)	3,59±0,46 (3-4,14)	4,56±0,35 (3,83-4,91)	4,23±0,77 (2,87-5)	2,84±0,33 (2,25-3,12)

Level of education						
<i>Literate</i>	3,91±0,47 (3,42-4,55)	3,75±0,48 (3,12-4,25)	3,57±0,42 (3,14-4,14)	4,45±0,38 (3,91-4,83)	3,37±1 (2,87-4,87)	2,65±0,32 (2,37-3,12)
<i>Primary school graduate</i>	4±0,46 (3,15-4,67)	3,55±0,5 (2,75-4,5)	3,44±0,62 (2,28-5)	4,43±0,54 (3,08-5)	4,10±0,81 (2,75-5)	2,68±0,41 (1,87-3,12)
<i>Middle school graduate</i>	3,76±0,39 (3,4-4,32)	3,5±0,64 (2,75-4,25)	3,17±0,53 (2,42-3,57)	4,22±0,34 (3,91-4,66)	3,75±0,77 (2,75-4,62)	2,46±0,11 (2,37-2,62)

<i>High school graduate</i>	3,75±0,39 (2,85-4,12)	3,16±0,52 (2,14-3,71)	3,15±0,44 (2,14-3,71)	4,34±0,37 (3,83-4,83)	3,83±0,60 (2,87-5)	2,5±0,41 (1,62-3)
<i>University graduate</i>	3,89±0,38 (3,15-4,75)	3,28±0,44 (2,25-4,25)	3,32±0,59 (1,71-4,71)	4,41±0,40 (3,5-5)	4,03±0,65 (3,12-5)	2,61±0,44 (1,12-3,12)
<i>Graduate degree holder</i>	4,03±0,01 (4,02-4,05)	3,37±0,21 (3,12-3,5)	3,47±0,08 (3,42-3,57)	4,38±0,19 (4,16-4,5)	4,29±0,28 (4,12-4,62)	2,87±0,21 (2,75-3,12)

The Relationship Between Income and Transportation

The increase in awareness of transportation and housing as income levels rise aligns with the concept of 'Occupational Justice' in occupational therapy. Making eco-friendly choices can sometimes be perceived as an economic luxury. The fact that individuals below the poverty line focus solely on survival and basic needs proves that social policy recommendations are essential for spreading ecological awareness to the grassroots level.



Occupational Therapy Intervention Recommendations

So, what should we occupational therapists do?

- ✓ First, we must make 'Ecological Literacy' training a part of rehabilitation.
- ✓ We should organise 'Sustainable Kitchen and Home Management' workshops for housewives.
- ✓ We should present water conservation not merely as a prohibition but as a 'daily occupational adaptation.'

Our role is to align the individual's routines with the health of the planet.

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Sinem KARS & Firdevs Kevser ALAGÖZ

snmkars@gmail.com

f.kevseralagoz@gmail.com