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Status of workers involved in chikankari work at small scale industry

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Abstract
In India maximum chikankari workers i.e. 40.00 percent are home/contractor based worker and belonged to the age group of 25-35 yrs. Only 10.00 percent of home based workers belong to the age group more than 45 yrs. It is revealed that majority 31.66 percent home based workers are educated upto high school. None of them are found to be postgraduate. Majority of the home based workers (37.50%) are found having working experience from 10-15 years in the chikankari business. Maximum (56.67%) are from in joint family. Cent percent home based workers are found working on contract basis. None of the worker is found to have the business of their own. Less than 37 percent chikankari workers are seen working for 6-8 hours per day. Only 15 percent workers are able to give more than 8 hours/day. Only 11.67 percent household workers are found to have income less than Rs. 2000/-, whereas, majority (38.33%) workers are earning Rs. 2000-4000/- from the chikankari business. long hours of static work with awkward posture at traditionally designed looms can cause high prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) among carpet weavers. Most back pain is caused by bad posture while sitting, even though bad posture may not cause any discomfort, continual poor posture will in the long term cause back pain. As the ladies have to sit in one posture and that to they have to bend forward in order to do their work. It leads spine adopting a forward c shape. Although the immediate effects are not visible but as the aging process starts the effects of long hours of wrong posture starts showing on the walking posture of majority of women when they walk slight stoop in their bodies. The effect is more because of no change in their posture as they have very little space to move and they are doing embroidery with the frame at 0 degree and no support for their back while sitting on the floor which further aggravates the situation. When the lady is bending forward to do the embroidery work it leads to further complication because a lot of place she has to crane her neck to do justice to the intricacies in embroidery involved. Poor neck posture leads to a forward head position which is one of the most common causes of neck, head and shoulder tension and pain. This can result injuries like sprain and strain of the neck leading to weak neck muscle. In ideal scenario the elbow, arm and hand should be maintained at 90 degree angle while working. Additionally the work area should be large enough to accommodate the worker, allowing the full range of motions involved in performing required tasks and provide room for the equipment and materials that make up the workstation, but this type of work place is a distinct dream for the workers in the units that they are working, as they are working in their houses and space is very much cramped to have any space for the proper movement of either hand or shoulders. Workers should constantly work with their arms above shoulder level; work above the shoulders increases the use of shoulder muscles. With this constant use muscles do not have time to rest and thus tire more rapidly.

Keywords: chikankari workers; family craft; Musculoskeletal disorders; forward bending; long hours posture; risk and injury; spinal cord

1. Introduction
India is a land of craftsmen of hand and muscle power. Craft traditions have withstood the change in time and still epitomize the Indian industrial culture in the world. In small workshops men beat iron to make knives, cut wood for furniture and leather for shoes, mould molten brass in small furnaces, weave silks, cottons and carpets on handlooms. Craft sector is the second largest employment sector in India. There are 23 million crafts people in India. Many agricultural and pastoral communities depend on their craft skills as a secondary source of income. The inherent skills in embroidery, weaving, basketry etc. are means to social and economic independence. Textiles are decorated by various techniques, of which embroidery is only one. In India there are many popular embroidery groups such as Chikankari of Lucknow, Kantha of Bengal, Fulkari of Punjab, Kutch of Gujarat and Kashidakari of Kashmir. Each style of embroidery is different from the other and has its own beauty and significant value.
The city of Lucknow has a prominent place in the history of India particularly for its art, historical monuments and rich cultural heritage. Lucknow is also known around the world over for its many fine handicrafts. Some of the most popular names in the list are chikankari, hand-block, textile printing, zari, zardozi, ivory or bone carving, terracotta and many others that are

practised by various artisans of Lucknow. Chikankari is considered to be the most popular amongst these and is recognized worldwide. It is a fine art of embroidery made with untwisted yarn with the help of the needle on a fine cloth.

The state Uttar Pradesh especially the city of Lucknow is considered to be the hub of chikankari embroidery. Chikankari is derived from chakeen that means elegant pattern on the fabric which is a Persian word. Earlier it was done with white thread on muslin clothes. However, now it is been done on various types of fabric like cotton, linen, nylon, georgette, chiffon and synthetic fabrics. Apart from wearable garment, it is also done on various other things like curtains, bed sheets, table cloths, pillow covers and cushion covers.

Posture is the position of body while performing work activities. Awkward posture is deviation from ideal working posture of arms at the side of tosses, elbows front, with wrists straight. Awkward posture typically includes reaching behind, twisting, working overhead, kneeling forward or backward bending and squatting. If the posture is awkward during work, there is an increased risk for injury. More the joints depart from the natural position greater the likelihood of injury. Repetition is how frequently we complete the same motion or exertion during a task. The severity of risk depends on the frequency of repetition, speed of movement or action, the number of muscle group involved and the force required. The effect is more because of no change in their posture as they have very little space to move and they are doing embroidery with the frame at 0 degree and no support for their back while sitting on the floor which further aggravates the situation. When the lady is bending forward to do the embroidery work it leads to further complication because a lot of place she has to crane her neck to do justice to the intricacies in embroidery involved. Poor neck posture leads to a forward head position which is one of the most common causes of neck, head and shoulder tension and pain. This can result injuries like sprain and strain of the neck leading to weak neck muscle.

2. Objectives

1. To study the health problems of workers involved in chikankari industry.
2. To study the constraints faced by workers.
3. To study the musculoskeletal pain among the workers.

3. Material and Methods

A descriptive cum experimental research design will be used for the present study. For selection of locality for center based workers Self Employed Women Association Chikan Office in Aminabad will be contacted and two centers A.K. Chikan Industry Chowk, Nath Chikan center Sitapur road, will be selected from the list. For this list will be prepared about the total centers exist in lucknow city. The unit of enquiry will be centers of chikankari and key informents will be center based workers. For random selection of workers, lists will be obtained from four selected from each centers of chikankari. Hence to reach to total sample 20 workers from each list comprised of total workers will be obtained. The total sample size comprised of 40 workers.

4. Results and Discussion

Data in Table 1 represents that among physical constraints A.K. Chikan Industry workers experienced itching in eyes, backache and neck pain whereas Nath Chikan center workers experienced neck pain with highest mean value 3.0. Least important physical constraint as reported by A.K. Chikan Industry workers were finger pain and knee pain and Nath Chikan center worker reported for itching in eyes, watering in eyes, finger pain and knee pain.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of constraints faced

S. No	Physical Constraint	A.K. Chikan Industry Workers (n=20)	Nath Chikan center Workers (n=20)
		Mean	Mean
1	Itching in eyes	3.0	1.0
2	Inflammation in eyes	2.0	2.0
3	Watering in eyes	2.0	1.0
4	Backache	3.0	2.0
5	Shoulder pain	2.0	2.3
6	Leg pain	2.0	2.0
7	Hand pain	2.0	2.3
8	Neck pain	3.0	3.0
9	Elbow joint pain	2.0	2.0
10	Finger pain	1.0	1.0
11	Knee pain	1.0	1.0
12	Low back pain	2.0	2.1

Data in Table 2 showed the medical history of chikankari workers since last one year and the data regarding various illnesses are mentioned below. It was crucial to diagnose the occurrence of illness/sickness among different group of workers as it has an impact on their health status which in turn affects their working efficiency also. It was evident from the table 3 majority of the total workers i.e. 80.00 percent had reported body ache as the main common illness faced by them which was due to poor working posture for longer duration, and were least reported illness was cough, cold and fever i.e. nearly by 30 percent of workers.

Table 2: Health problems of Chikankari workers during last one year

S. No	Occurrence			
	Illness/ symptoms	A.K. Chikan Industry Workers (n=20)	Nath Chikan center Workers (n=20)	Total n=40
1.	Cough, cold, fever	15 (30.00)	10 (20.00)	25 (62.5)
2.	Headache	13 (26.00)	12 (24.00)	25 (62.5)
3.	Body-ache	16 (32.00)	16 (32.00)	32 (80.00)
4.	Back-pain	12 (24.00)	11 (22.00)	23 (57.5)
5.	Skin-rashes, Allergy	10 (20.00)	7 (14.00)	17 (42.5)
6.	Wounds	9 (18.00)	6 (12.00)	15 (37.5)

Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage

The work-related musculoskeletal problem and the body pain perceived by the workers were determined by administering questionnaire. All the selected A.K. Chikan Industry and Nath Chikan center workers had given their response which were analyzed.

Table-3 clearly envisages that half of the respondents were having knowledge about musculoskeletal pain/discomfort;

nearly 40 percent respondents reported that they prevented themselves from normal activities because of pain/discomfort and 35.00 percent said that they stay away from normal work activities because of pain/discomfort. When asked about the activities causing pain and discomfort 37.50 percent workers reported pain in inserting thread into the needle, whereas, 12.50 percent said that setting fabric on adda or frame caused pain and 50 percent respondents were suffering from pain due to tuff stitches.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on the basis of musculoskeletal pain/ discomfort

S. No.	Statement	A.K. Chikan Industry Workers (n=20)	Nath Chikan center Workers (n=20)	Total (n=40)
1	Know about musculoskeletal pain/discomfort	8 (40.00)	12 (60.00)	20 (50.00)
2	Prevented from normal work activities because of musculoskeletal pain/discomfort	9 (45.00)	7 (35.00)	16 (40.00)
3	Stay away from your normal activities because of the pain/ discomfort	8 (40.00)	6 (30.00)	14 (35.00)
4	Activities cause the pain/ discomfort			
A	Inserting thread into the needle	7 (35.00)	8 (40.00)	15 (37.50)
B	Setting fabric on adda or frame	3 (15.00)	2 (10.00)	5 (12.50)
C	Tuff stitches	9 (45.00)	11 (55.00)	20 (50.00)

Note: Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage

5. Action

To reduce the constraints, musculoskeletal pain suffered by the workers and taking into consideration the medical history of workers personal protective equipments was suggested to the workers to overcome with other problems. At the same time ergonomically sound environmental parameters especially the lighting at the place of work was also given due consideration.

Fig 1: Gloves to protect palm and finger

6. Conclusion

Research has proved that most back pain is caused by bad posture while sitting, even though bad posture may not cause any discomfort, continual poor posture will in the long term cause back pain. As the ladies have to sit in one posture and that to they have to bend forward in order to do their work. It leads spine adopting a forward c shape. Although the immediate effects are not visible but as the aging process starts the effects of long hours of wrong posture starts showing on the walking posture of majority of women when they walk slight stoop in their bodies.

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