

Impact of Computer Workstation Design on Health of the Users

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ABSTRACT Computer has become a familiar and much talked about technology these days. Today, no aspect like business, leisure, health education etc. has been left untouched by the computer revolution. There has been an increased frequency of ergonomic injuries and illness in the computer work station. Hence the present study was undertaken with the following objectives (i) To assess the workstation design of VDT in selected organizations as per principles of ergonomics related to human and machine interface. (ii) To take feed back of computer workers on health problems related to VDT workstation design. A sample of 30 computer operators was selected purposively from private and public sector organization, involved in data entry work. A checklist was used to assess the computer workstation design for VDT users and to assess health of the workers. Overall and Localized Body Discomfort was also assessed. Assessment of computer workstation design revealed that 36.6 percent of VDT workers used chairs with low seat height which was not proper. Chairs with adjustable seat height were used only by one half of the VDT users. The distance from acromion to edge of desk was in average range and 56.7 percent of the users were having pull out extra leaf for keeping keyboard while only 13.3 percent respondents were using the extra leaf for keeping the mouse. It was revealed that none of the respondents kept the screen straight ahead which is the most appropriate position. The work place of the VDT users elicited that in 43.3 percent workstations there was glare and reflection of light falling on computer screens. A vast majority reported that they suffered from shoulder pain, headache, eyestrain, back pain and felt discomfort during computer work. Ninety percent of workstations were found in 'Average' category. Assessment of Body Discomfort revealed that after 4 hour of work 40 percent of the workers felt 'Moderate' discomfort while 10 percent expressed feeling of 'Severe' discomfort. Assessment of Localized Body Discomfort elicited that the respondents felt discomfort in right shoulder, in eyes and pain in neck.