

Musculo-Skeletal Disorders of the Farm Women While Performing the Top Dressing of Fertilizer Activity*

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ABSTRACT Musculo-skeletal disorder is the leading cause of the occupational ill health. This risk of musculo-skeletal disorders may be higher in agricultural workers because of the longer working hours (O'Neill, 2004). Hence the research is aimed to study the postural stress and musculo-skeletal problems of the farm women while performing top dressing of fertilizer activity and to reduce their musculo-skeletal disorders by introducing an improved technology and ergonomically evaluate both the methods. Thirty subjects with normal health, without any major illness or cardio-vascular problems were selected for the study. The age range of the subjects was between the active working period i.e. 20-45 years. Care was taken to select the farm women who are non pregnant and perform the agricultural activities regularly. While performing the top dressing of fertilizer activity in traditional method majority of the women complained 'Very Severe' and 'Severe' pain in shoulder joint, upper arm, low back, wrist/hands and knees as they had to carry the basket filled with 4-5 kg of fertilizer either in hands or tie the fertilizer cloth bag around their waist. But reduction in the percentage of women complaining about the musculo-skeletal problems was observed with the use of improved fertilizer trolley. The percentage reduction in grip strength was also observed to be lower in improved method compared to traditional method. Development of such small improved agricultural tools can reduce the physiological workload and drudgery of farm women and increase the efficiency.