

Health and Diseases among Women working with “Pattiwork” Handicraft (A Study in Aligarh City, U.P., India)

Dr.Saba Khan*, Rashmi Singh**

*Sr. Asst. Prof., Department of Home Science, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (U.P), India

** Research Scholar, Department of Home Science, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (U.P), India

Abstract:

Introduction: Health and work are intimately linked. Women work in entirely different niche. Working and earning makes women independent and increases family income but many diseases and health problem have emerged. Each stage of women’s life-cycle has specific health related aspects. The present study focuses on exploring the health problems and disease that the women working with “Pattiwork” handicraft making are suffering from. “Pattiwork” is traditional embroidery (a type of appliqué work) of Aligarh district in U.P. India and is often referred to as “Aligarh work”.

Methods: The study was carried out in the Aligarh City. In the absence of structured list, snowball sampling method was used. Total sample size was 100 respondents. A checklist was implemented during the survey for the collection of the data. The data collected was subjected to analysis with frequency and percentile method.

Result: The study explored that majority of the women were suffering from either one or more of the following health problems - headache (98%), back problems (96%), pain in eyes (99%), sunken eyes (67%), gastric problem (64%), fatigue (57%), neck pain (92%), shoulder pain (54%), and knee pain (62%). Numbness in the tips of pointing finger (98%), bloating body (87%), and pain in palm (78%) and wrist pain (89%) was also prevalent. The percentages above indicated that one women worker was suffering with more than one health problem.

Discussion: Persistence of these problems had deteriorating effect on their health and handicraft making. It was found that the health problems suffered were linked to the kind of job performed during “Pattiwork” making. Further, low awareness level and lack of consideration about their own health made the workers more vulnerable to above health problems. Moreover, it was observed that urbanisation and increase demands has promoted the “Pattiwork” enterprise while putting more physical pressure on the women engaged in craft making.

Keywords: Health and Diseases, “Pattiwork” Handicraft, Women Workers.

I. Introduction

The intersection of health and working women is the subject of innovative research during the 21st century and has continued to be a hot public policy issue. Women work in entirely different niche from men. Each stage of women’s life-cycle has specific health related aspects, like during pregnancy, menstruation, contraception, maternal morbidity and infertility, etc. Although, working and earning makes women independent and increases family income but because of many diseases and health problem have emerged.

“Pattiwork” is a traditional embroidery a type of appliqué work, originated from Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh and is also referred to as “Aligarh work” sometimes⁽¹⁾. Data emerging from the NSSO survey for 2004-05, suggested that there were just under 15 million women workers in the unorganised sector, and more than half of them are women involved in home-based work in different types of industry, dominantly on a piece-rate basis. This included Zari, Charkha, or Other Handloom Work, Bindi, Sticking, Stitching Labels, Handicraft making and embroidery work etc. A large number of women are engaged in the “Pattiwork” (home based enterprise (HBEs) in Aligarh⁽²⁾.

1) Usmani F. Phool-Patti Ka Kaam: Reviving Traditional Indian Applique Embroidery, Brief History of Phool Patti Ka Kaam, Posted by Farah Usmani, Thursday, July 9, 2009. Available from: <http://phool-patti.blogspot.in/>. Accessed August 13, 2014.

2) Usmani F. Phool-Patti Ka Kaam: Reviving a Traditional Indian Applique Embroidery, Phool-patti artisans from Aligarh, Posted by Farah Usmani, Tuesday, October 30, 2012. Available from: <http://phool-patti.blogspot.in/>. Accessed August 13, 2014.

HBEs are criticised on grounds of poor working conditions and exploitation, but this is mainly focused on home working enterprises⁽³⁻⁷⁾ rather than the full array of HBEs. Morbidities seen among the embroidery workers has been attributed to their poor social status, long working hours, poor lighting and ventilation, continuous awkward postures and lack of system for periodic health check-up⁽⁸⁾. This becomes more rigorous as they have to sit in one posture continuously and this itself has lot of problems in different areas like eyes, spine, neck, arm, shoulder, tip of fingers etc. Awkward postures can make tasks more physically demanding. The most common of which are musculoskeletal disorders⁽⁹⁾ including upper backache, lower backache and neck pain. Alternating periods of activity and rest, thereby introducing postural change, further boosts the fluid exchange, helping to nourish the discs⁽¹⁰⁾ on the other hand women who are involved in embroidery work have prolonged static sitting, resulting pain of different part of the body. Shape and prolonged static sitting is frequently accompanied by discomfort and musculoskeletal complications that result from sustained immobility⁽¹¹⁾. India has vast reservoirs of traditional craftsmanship. Most of these crafts are practiced by people on regional basis. With the prosperous history and enriched development of the town, many women are engaged in the craft of “Pattiwork” making, and this occupation is conducted in the aangansand verandahsof the homes in Aligarh. The present study focuses on exploring the health problems and disease that the women working with “Pattiwork” handicraft making are suffering from.

II. Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in the Aligarh City of Uttar-Pradesh. It is at a distance of 130km from Delhi and has a good connectivity of roads and railways. Along with being the centre of academic excellence, it reverberates with various business activities like lock, carpet, bakery, “Pattiwork” and other enterprises⁽¹²⁾. In the absence of structured list, snowball sampling technique was used to select the sample size. A pool of 100 respondents was made with the help of convenient sampling. Survey method was adopted to collect the information from the target group. A self-prepared check list was used to collect the data with the focus of studying the health problems and diseases among Women working with “Pattiwork” Handicraft. The data collected was subjected to analysis with frequency and percentile method.

III. Result and Discussion

The study explored that the majority of the women performed more than one type of job such as cutting Patties, folding fabric, stitching sitara, and stitching Patties on the fabric, whereas only 7% of women were engaged in transportation of material as shown in Table 1.

It also examined that majority of women were suffering from either one or more of the following health problems (Table 2) such as headache (98%), back pain (96%), pain in eyes (99%), sunken eyes (67%), gastric problem (64%), fatigue (57%), neck pain (92%), shoulder pain (54%), and knee pain (62%). Numbness in the tips of pointing finger (98%), bloating body (87%), pain in palm (78%), wrist pain (89%) are also prevalent. The percentages above indicated that one woman worker was suffering with more than one health problem.

Persistence of these problems had deteriorating effect on Pattiworker’s health and their handicraft making. The cause of deteriorating health could be lack of awareness and poor working conditions. Long working hours, poor lighting and ventilation etc. is causing eyes pain, and headaches. “Pattiwork” women followed prolonged static sitting that was resulting in back pain, neck pain, shoulder pain, knee pain etc. During the study it was found that the health problems suffered were linked to the kind of job performed during “Pattiwork” making.

-
- 3) Eileen Boris and Elisabeth M. prugl, 1996, *Homeworkers in global perspective: invisible no more*. New York, Routledge.
 - 4) E. M. Cinar, 1994, *Unskilled urban migrant women and disguised employment: home working women in Istanbul, Turkey*, *World Development* vol. 22 (3), pp369-80.
 - 5) Z. Ghvamshahidi, 1995, *The linkage between Iranian Patriarchy and the informal economy in maintaining women's subordinate roles in home-based carpet production.* *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 18(2), pp135-151.
 - 6) M. Mies, 1982, *The Lacemakers of Narsapur: Indian Housewives Produce for the World Market*. London, Zed Press.
 - 7) S. Mehotra, M. Biggeri, 2002, *Social protection in the informal economy: home based women workers in outsourced manufacturing in Asia: Innocenti Working Papers No. 97*. Florence, UNICEF.
 - 8) BhuwanShama and Hemant Mahajan, May 2013, *Assessment of health profile of zari workers with special reference to musculoskeletal disorders in an urban slum of Mumbai, India*. *International Journal of General Medicine and Pharmacy*, Vol. 2(2), pp 47-54
 - 9) A. Nag, 1983, *Occupational stresses on women engaged in making beedies*. *Journal of occupational Medicine*, pp130:36
 - 10) M.A.Adams, 1983, *The effect of posture on the fluid content of lumbar intervertebral discs*. *Spine*, Vol 8, pp 665-71
 - 11) M. Eklund, 1967, *Prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders in office work*, *Socialmedicinsk*, vol 6, pp 328-336.
 - 12) Saba Khan 2003, *Dynamics of Pattiwork and the emergence of Women Entrepreneurship- A Study in Aligarh, U.P.* Ph.D thesis. Unpublished thesis, CRM & E Dept. D.U.

As emphasized by Adams M.A in his work that postural changes boosts the fluid exchange, women who transported the raw material or carry finished products to the whole sellers or shopkeepers and performs more than one kind of job along with handicraft making had comparatively less health problems and diseases like knee pain, back pain, neck pain, and numbness in the tip of fingers, gastric problem and bloating body, as compared to those who were engaged only in handicraft making.

IV. Materials and Methods

The study was carried out in the Aligarh City of Uttar-Pradesh. It is at a distance of 130km from Delhi and has a good connectivity of roads and railways. Along with being the centre of academic excellence, it reverberates with various business activities like lock, carpet, bakery, “Pattiwork” and other enterprises⁽¹²⁾. In the absence of structured list, snowball sampling technique was used to select the sample size. A pool of 100 respondents was made with the help of convenient sampling. Survey method was adopted to collect the information from the target group. A self-prepared check list was used to collect the data with the focus of studying the health problems and diseases among Women working with “Pattiwork” Handicraft. The data collected was subjected to analysis with frequency and percentile method.

V. Result and Discussion

The study explored that the majority of the women performed more than one type of job such as cutting Patties, folding fabric, stitching sitara, and stitching Patties on the fabric, whereas only 7% of women were engaged in transportation of material as shown in Table 1.

It also examined that majority of women were suffering from either one or more of the following health problems (Table 2) such as headache (98%), back pain (96%), pain in eyes (99%), sunken eyes (67%), gastric problem (64%), fatigue (57%), neck pain (92%), shoulder pain (54%), and knee pain (62%). Numbness in the tips of pointing finger (98%), bloating body (87%), pain in palm (78%), wrist pain (89%) are also prevalent. The percentages above indicated that one women worker was suffering with more than one health problem.

Persistence of these problems had deteriorating effect on Pattiworker’s health and their handicraft making. The cause of deteriorating health could be lack of awareness and poor working conditions. Long working hours, poor lighting and ventilation etc. is causing eyes pain, and headaches. “Pattiwork” women followed prolonged static sitting that was resulting in back pain, neck pain, shoulder pain, knee pain etc. During the study it was found that the health problems suffered were linked to the kind of job performed during “Pattiwork” making. As emphasized by Adams M.A in his work that postural changes boosts the fluid exchange, women who transported the raw material or carry finished products to the whole sellers or shopkeepers and performs more than one kind of job along with handicraft making had comparatively less health problems and diseases like knee pain, back pain, neck pain, and numbness in the tip of fingers, gastric problem and bloating body, as compared to those who were engaged only in handicraft making.

VI. Conclusion

It has been concluded that low awareness level and lack of consideration about their working environment and their own health, made the workers more vulnerable to above health problems.

It was observed that urbanisation and increase demands has promoted the “Pattiwork” enterprise while putting more physical pressure on the women engaged in craft making. Moreover, Pattiworkers who performed, who were engaged in variety of job have less health problem as compared to Pattiworkers who performed only one type of work.

Acknowledgement

We would to thank all Patti workers to give up our precious time and for their support.

Reference

- [1]. Usmani F. Phool-Patti Ka Kaam: Reviving a traditional Indian Applique Embroidery, Brief History of Phool Patti Ka Kaam, Posted by Farah Usmani, Thursday, July 9, 2009. Available from: <http://phool-patti.blogspot.in/> accessed August 13, 2014.
- [2]. Usmani F. Phool-Patti Ka Kaam: Reviving a traditional Indian Applique Embroidery, Phool-patti artisans from Aligarh, Posted by Farah Usmani, Tuesday, October 30, 2012. Available from: <http://phool-patti.blogspot.in/> accessed August 13, 2014.
- [3]. Prugl E. and Boris E. Homeworkers in global perspective: invisible no more. New York, Routledge. 1996.
- [4]. Cinar E.M. Unskilled Urban Migrant Women and Disguised Employment: Home- working Women in Istanbul, Turkey. World Development.1994; 22(3):369-80.
- [5]. Ghvamshahidi Z. The linkage between Iranian Patriarchy and the informal economy in maintaining women's subordinate roles in home-based carpet production. Women's Studies International Forum 1995; 18(2): 135-151.
- [6]. Mies, M. The Lacemakers of Narsapur: Indian Housewives Produce for the World Market. London, Zed Press.1982.
- [7]. Mehrotra S. and Biggeri M. Social protection in the informal economy: home based women workers and outsourced manufacturing in Asia: Innocenti Working Papers No. 97. Florence, UNICEF.2002.
- [8]. Shama B, Mahajan M. Assessment of health profile of Zari workers with special reference to musculoskeletal disorders in an urban slum of Mumbai, India”. International Journal of General Medicine and Pharmacy. May 2013; 2 (2): 47-54

- [9]. Nag A. “Occupational stresses on women engaged in making beedies”. Journal of occupational Medicine; 1986, 130:36.
- [10]. Adams MA, Hutton WC. The effect of posture on the fluid content of lumbar intervertebral discs. Spine 1983; 8:665-71.
- [11]. Eklund M. Prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders in office work, Socialmedicinsk, 1967; 6:328-336.
- [12]. Khan S. Dynamics of Pattiwork and the emergence of Women Entrepreneurship- a Study in Aligarh, U.P. Ph.D thesis. Unpublished thesis, CRM&E Dept D.U. 2003.

Figure-1

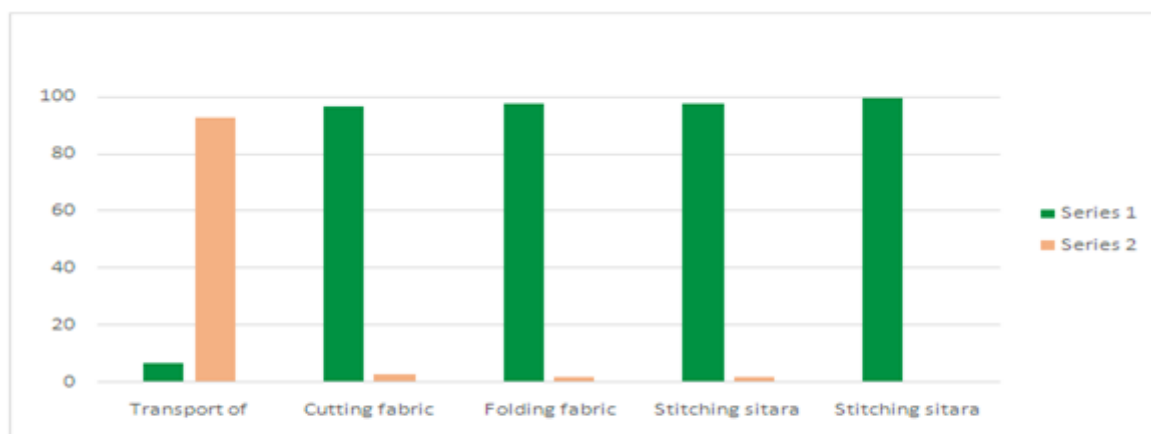


Fig.1: Job performed by Women Pattiworker

Figure-2

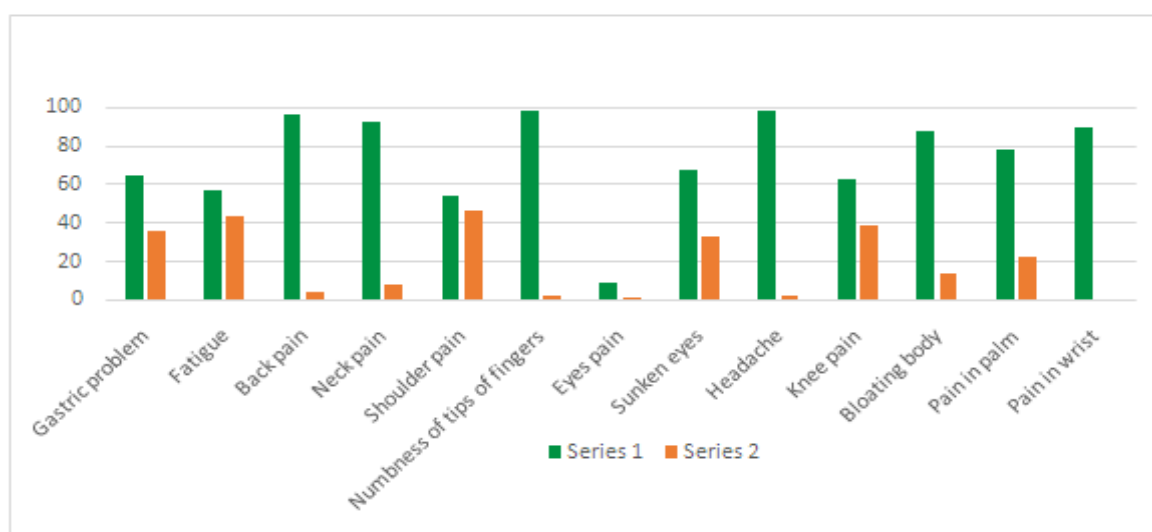


Fig.2: Health and Diseases among Women working with “Pattiwork” Handicraft

Table-1

S. No.	Types of Job	Yes	No
1.	Transport of material	7%	93%
2.	Cutting fabric for making Patti	97%	3%
3.	Folding fabric for given shape to Patti	98%	2%
4.	Stitching sitara in the Patti	98%	2%
5.	Stitching Patties on the fabric	100%	0%

Table 1: Job performed by Women Pattiworkers

Table-2

S. No.	Disease/ health problems	Yes	No
1.	Gastric problem	64%	36%
2.	Fatigue	57%	43%
3.	Back pain	96%	4%
4.	Neck pain	92%	8%
5.	Shoulder pain	54%	46%
6.	Numbness of tip of fingers	98%	2%
7.	Eyes pain	99%	1%
8.	Sunken eyes	67%	33%
9.	Headache	98%	2%
10.	Knee pin	62%	38%
11.	Bloating body	87%	13%
12.	Pain in palm	78%	22%
13.	Pain in wrist	89%	11%

Table 2: Health and Diseases among Women working with “Pattiwork” Handicraft