

Assessment of health status and ergonomic parameters of farm women involved in weeding through traditional and improved method

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Received April 15, 2017 and Accepted July 5, 2017

ABSTRACT : Rural farm women are involved in various activities related to agricultural and allied enterprises. In peak agricultural seasons, weeding operation is a major problem for farm women. The traditional tool is khurpi used by them for weeding. It results in occupational fatigue and hazards due to traditional tool used by them in carrying out this activity. It also reduces efficiency and effectiveness in performing the task in household cores and animal husbandry domain. Hence, the present investigation was carried out to assess the health status of rural farm women involved in weeding activity, to measure the ergonomic parameters of weeding activity and to disseminate the same following On Farm Trial (OFT). The trial was conducted in Morena district of Madhya Pradesh by selecting farm women's practice (khurpi) and improved tool (twin wheel hoe) developed by CIAE, Bhopal. To carry out the experiments, five replications were taken to each type of treatment. The results indicated a significant difference in heart rate (8.1%), energy expenditure (17.9%) and physiological cost of work (43.95%) with the use of improved method over the traditional method. Production per unit and coverage of land under operation were significantly increased with the use of new improved tool. Significant reduction in body pains was observed. while working with twin wheel hoe. The preference was shown by the 75% of farm women towards twin wheel hoe and 25% of the women farmers towards the khurpi traditionally used by them. Therefore the use of improved tool like twin wheel hoe for weeding is useful for farm women for their better health status and increased work production.

Key Words: Farm women, weeding, twin wheel hoe, drudgery, physiological cost.