

Postures difficulties faced by women while performing kitchen storage activities

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The homemaker is the predominant figure in the home and household work is the an indispensable part of the homemaker. The homemakers often work in awkward postures for long duration as some of the kitchen activities consist of repetitive work in a single position like storing and restoring of various kitchen items. They seldom realize the cost of energy and other physiological costs incurred due to wrong posture. Poor posture increases the physiological cost of work and energy expenditure. The static muscular efforts and incorrect posture if sustained for a long period of time can give rise to various types of health and musculo-skeletal problems Working posture becomes an important factor while designing ergonomically sound tools, equipment and workstation. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to find out various postures adopted by rural and urban homemakers of Ludhiana District while performing kitchen storage activities and to assess the difficulty score for each adopted posture. Results showed that while performing kitchen storage activities, the most difficult and frequently used posture adopted by both rural and urban respondents was forward and side bending. Therefore, some modifications were suggested for proper organization of existing storage units to reduce postural discomfort of respondents.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Working posture, Musculo-skeletal problems, Functional area, Workstation, Postural difficulty

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The kitchen is the hub of any home, therefore, it is important that a kitchen is well planned, adequately organized and maximizes all the useable storage space to perform the kitchen tasks successfully of the specialized spaces of the home. The kitchen is the one that can most obviously be treated as a functional working area. The basic components of kitchen working area are the work surface, storage and major appliances. Working posture becomes an important factor while designing ergonomically sound tools, equipment and workstation. So, the need for assessing reduction of muscular stress on the women worker with the use of improved tools and implements was felt so that the women can be persuaded to use the effective improved equipment to ensure right work posture for the selected activities and can have least fatigue and discomfort to the body. Poor posture increases the physiological cost of work and energy expenditure. The static muscular efforts and

incorrect posture if sustained for a long period of time can give rise to various types of health and musculo-skeletal problems (Saha, 1999). Organization of work surface or storage space is considered important for decreasing cost of work. With a faulty design of kitchen storage shelves, even the normal person without primary anatomical or physical defects may develop degenerative tissue changes and decreased output with maximum input (Kumari and Dayal, 2009).

Objectives :

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- To know the various postures adopted by rural and urban respondents while performing kitchen storage activities.
- To assess the difficulty score of each posture adopted by respondents during kitchen storage activities.
- To suggest modifications for proper organization of