

Body discomfort perceived by handloom weavers

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Handloom weavers constitute the largest workforce, next to the agricultural community in India in its ability to provide employment to a large number of persons with far less average capital employed per worker compared to the other segments of the textile industry. Women from lower economic status dominate these sectors and their health status is found to be poor. In Manipur, handloom is a cottage industry with decentralised set-up and loom was an integral part of their furniture. One of the special features of the industry is that women are the only weavers in Manipur. Keeping the above issues in mind, the present study was planned to find out the rate of body discomfort perceived by the women handloom weavers. Imphal- East and Imphal -West districts of Manipur were selected for the study. A sample of 42 women (14 from each group using the three type of looms) were chosen adopting purposive sampling. Body part discomfort Scale (Corlett and Bishop, 1976) technique for measuring postural discomfort was used for the study. The result revealed that the mean cumulative score for body discomfort while weaving on the three looms enabled identifying the body parts involved in weaving operations and the stress inflicted on them. Neck, shoulder, upper and lower arm were the most affected body parts while weaving. Computing work time against mean cumulative body discomfort score highlighted loin loom weavers to suffer the most.

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