IJCRT.ORG ISSN : 2320-2882

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Hazard Assessment and Risk Reduction in a Steel Fabrication Industry

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Abstract— The Purpose of this paper is to assess and reduce or eliminate Hazards in manufacturing industries, fume hoods are essential at the workplace since fumes released by welding process may lead to adverse health effect. Concerns with the potential health effects of fume emissions during Flux Cored Arc Welding have prompted investigations of methods for reducing fumes accumulated in the manufacturing facility and the concentration of hazardous metals in the evolved fume.This abstract provides an overview of the importance of ergonomic assessment and risk reduction in the steel fabrication industry.

Ergonomic assessment is essential in identifying and mitigating ergonomic hazards that workers in the steel fabrication industry face daily with the assumption of pull velocity of the industrial blower ventilation fan it is decided to eliminate the accumulated welding fumes generated. To reduce the health hazards of the workers in welding facility due to the exposure of the welding fumes also, to improve the well-being of the workers and to meet the legal compliance of the industry. The result of the data opens an opportunity for the change to improve welfare and productivity of an organization or company.

Keywords— Hazards, Hazard Assessment, Risk reduction in Steel fabrication industry

I. INTRODUCTION

The field of ergonomics is, about optimizing the way humans interact with their work environment. Its goal is to improve both productivity and well-being. Today marks the beginning of my journey into the world of steel fabrication and welding [1,2]. The clang of metal, the sharp scent of heated steel, and the hum of machinery have already begun to feel like a second home. I've started by familiarizing myself with the various types of steel and their properties [7]. Understanding their strengths and weaknesses will undoubtedly be crucial in crafting durable and reliable structures.

This paper delivers the importance of ergonomic assessment in identifying and quantifying risk factors of Steel fabrication and welding represent the backbone of modern construction and industrial endeavours [5]. These processes involve the transformation of raw steel materials into complex, functional structures and components through precise cutting, shaping, and joining techniques. The resulting products find applications in a wide range of industries, from construction and automotive manufacturing to aerospace and infrastructure development.

In conclusion, ergonomic assessment and risk reduction are vital components of creating safe and healthy work environments, to reduce the health hazards of the workers in welding facility due to the exposure of the welding fumes also, to improve the well-being of the workers and to meet the legal compliance of the industry.

II. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

A. Safety Hazards

Safety concerns are paramount in steel fabrication. The industry involves heavy machinery, hot metals, and complex processes. Inadequate safety measures can lead to accidents, injuries, and even fatalities. Ensuring strict adherence to safety protocols is crucial.

B. Ergonomic Issues

Workers often engage in physically demanding tasks, which can lead to musculoskeletal disorders and related health problems. Poorly designed workstations, inadequate training, and lack of ergonomic equipment can exacerbate these issues.

C. Material Handling and Transport

The movement of heavy steel materials within the facility poses a significant challenge. Inefficient material handling processes can lead to delays, increased labour costs, and potential safety risks.

D. Waste Management and Environmental Impact

Steel fabrication generates various forms of waste, including scrap metal, slag, and other by-products. Proper disposal and recycling methods are essential to minimize environmental impact and adhere to regulatory standards.

E. Quality Control and Inspection

Ensuring the quality of fabricated products is paramount. Inadequate quality control measures can result in substandard products that may fail to meet industry standards, leading to costly rework or even structural failures in real-world applications.

F. Cost Management

The procurement of raw materials, operation of heavy machinery, and labor costs are significant expenses in steel fabrication. Effective cost management strategies are essential for maintaining competitiveness and profitability.

G. Skilled Labor Shortages

Finding and retaining skilled workers, including welders, fabricators, and CNC machine operators, can be a challenge.

The industry's aging workforce and a shortage of young talent entering the field contribute to this problem.

H. Supply Chain Disruptions

Dependence on a global supply chain for raw materials and components can make the industry vulnerable to disruptions, such as those caused by natural disasters, geopolitical tensions, or unforeseen events like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Identifying and addressing these challenges requires a proactive approach from industry stakeholders. Implementing best practices, investing in training and technology, and fostering a culture of safety and quality can help mitigate these issues and lead to a more efficient and sustainable steel fabrication industry.

III. OBJECTIVE

Safety Excellence: Prioritize and maintain a safe working environment for all employees, contractors, and visitors. Implement rigorous safety protocols, training programs, and regular audits to minimize accidents and injuries.

Quality Assurance: Establish and uphold high standards for the fabrication process, ensuring that finished products meet or exceed industry specifications and client requirements. Implement robust quality control measures and inspection procedures.

Efficient Production: Strive for optimal production throughput and resource utilization. Minimize downtime, optimize workflow, and improve overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) to increase productivity without compromising quality.

Cost Control and Efficiency: Implement strategies to control costs associated with raw materials, labour, equipment maintenance, and energy consumption. Explore lean manufacturing principles and continuous improvement initiatives to enhance efficiency.

Waste Reduction and Sustainability: Implement eco-friendly practices and waste management strategies to minimize environmental impact. Embrace recycling and reuse initiatives to reduce material wastage and energy consumption.

Skills Development and Training: Invest in employee training and development programs to enhance skills and knowledge related to fabrication techniques, equipment operation, safety procedures, and emerging technologies.

Advanced Technology Adoption: Stay abreast of technological advancements in fabrication processes, automation, and computer-aided design (CAD) systems. Leverage cutting-edge tools and software to improve precision, accuracy, and efficiency.

Customer Satisfaction: Prioritize client needs and expectations. Deliver products on time, maintain open lines of communication, and provide exceptional service to build long-lasting relationships and secure repeat business.

Regulatory Compliance: Adhere to all relevant local, state, and federal regulations governing safety, environmental impact, and quality standards. Stay informed of updates to ensure ongoing compliance.

Supplier and Vendor Management: Cultivate strong relationships with suppliers and vendors to ensure a reliable and cost-effective supply chain. Monitor performance, negotiate contracts, and explore opportunities for collaboration and cost savings.

Innovation and Research: Foster a culture of innovation and invest in research and development initiatives. Seek out opportunities to develop new products, processes, or techniques that offer a competitive edge.

Market Expansion and Diversification: Explore opportunities to expand into new markets or diversify product offerings. Conduct market research and feasibility studies to identify viable growth strategies.

Risk Management: Identify and assess potential risks, such as supply chain disruptions, market fluctuations, or regulatory changes. Implement contingency plans and mitigation strategies to safeguard against adverse events.

Employee Engagement and Well-being: Prioritize the well-being and job satisfaction of employees. Provide opportunities for professional growth, open communication channels, and promote a positive work culture.

Community and Social Responsibility: Engage with the local community, support charitable initiatives, and demonstrate corporate social responsibility to build a positive reputation and contribute to the greater good.

These objectives are integral to the success and sustainability of steel fabrication companies. Tailoring them to specific organizational needs and continually evaluating progress is essential for achieving long-term success in the industry.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Project Planning and Design:

Blueprint Analysis: Thoroughly review and interpret engineering drawings and specifications to understand project requirements.

Material Selection: Choose appropriate grades and types of steel based on project specifications and structural requirements.

Resource Allocation: Plan for manpower, equipment, and materials needed for each project phase.

B. Material Procurement and Inspection:

Supplier Selection: Identify reputable suppliers to ensure a reliable and quality source of raw materials.

Material Verification: Inspect incoming steel for conformity to specifications, including dimensions, quality, and certifications

C. Cutting and Shaping:

Cutting Techniques: Employ various cutting methods (e.g., plasma cutting, laser cutting, sawing) to accurately shape steel pieces according to project requirements.

Precision Measurements: Utilize precise measurement tools to ensure accurate cuts

D. Forming and Bending:

Press Brake Operation: Utilize press brakes to bend and shape steel components, achieving the desired angles and contours

E. Welding and Joining:

Welding Techniques: Apply appropriate welding methods (e.g., MIG, TIG, Stick) to join steel components, ensuring strong, seamless connections.

Quality Assurance: Implement visual inspections and non-destructive testing (e.g., X-ray, ultrasound) to verify weld quality.

F. Surface Preparation and Finishing:

Surface Cleaning: Remove impurities, rust, and contaminants from steel surfaces through processes like blasting or pickling.

Coating Application: Apply protective coatings (e.g., paint, galvanizing) to enhance corrosion resistance.

G. Assembly and Fitting:

Component Alignment: Assemble fabricated parts according to design specifications, ensuring proper fit and alignment.

Jig and Fixture Use: Employ jigs and fixtures to aid in precise assembly.

H. Quality Control and Inspection:

Visual Inspections: Conduct visual checks to identify any defects, imperfections, or deviations from specifications.

Dimensional Checks: Use precision measurement tools to verify component dimensions against design tolerances.

Non-Destructive Testing (NDT): Employ methods like ultrasonic testing or magnetic particle inspection to assess weld integrity**.**

I. Safety Protocols:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Enforce the use of appropriate PPE to ensure worker safety during fabrication processes.

J. Project Documentation and Reporting:

Record Keeping: Maintain detailed records of materials used, work performed, inspections conducted, and any deviations from specifications.

Progress Reporting: Provide regular updates on project status, including milestones achieved and potential issues encountered.

Environmental Considerations:

Waste Management: Implement proper disposal and recycling practices for materials like scrap metal and waste products.

Sustainable Practices: Explore environmentally-friendly options, such as using recycled steel or adopting energy-efficient processes.

Continuous Improvement:

Feedback Loop: Encourage feedback from employees and stakeholders to identify areas for process optimization and innovation.

Training and Skill Development: Invest in ongoing training and development programs to enhance the skills of the workforce.

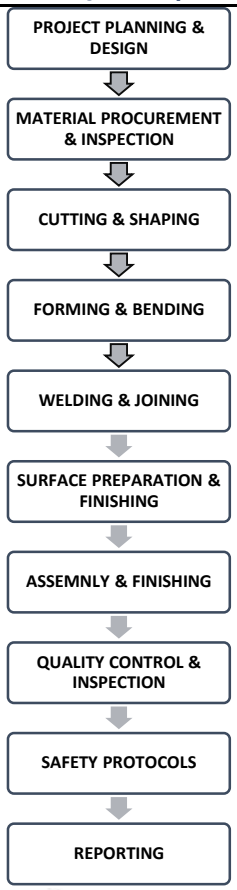

Fig. 1 Methodology

V. DATA COLLECTION

A. *Material Data*:

Material Specifications: Collect data on the types, grades, and dimensions of steel materials used in fabrication.

Material Certifications: Gather information on the certifications and quality standards associated with raw materials.

Material Inventory: Maintain records of material stock levels, including quantities and locations

B. *Production Data:*

Production Schedule: Track the scheduling and sequencing of fabrication tasks to meet project timelines.

Work Order Data: Collect information on work orders, including job descriptions, priorities, and customer requirements.

Production Rates: Monitor production rates, output quantities, and production efficiency metrics.

Machine Data: Gather data on machine usage, uptime, and downtime for equipment maintenance and optimization.

Labour Data: Record labour hours, worker assignments, and skill levels.

C. Quality Control Data:

Inspection Records: Document inspection results, including visual inspections and non-destructive testing (NDT) findings.

Dimensional Data: Collect data on component dimensions and tolerances to ensure adherence to design specifications.

Welding Data: Record information related to welding procedures, including welder qualifications, parameters, and inspection results.

D. Safety Data:

Incident Reports: Document safety incidents, near misses, and accidents for analysis and improvement.

Safety Inspections: Conduct regular safety inspections and collect data on safety compliance and hazards.

Training Records: Maintain records of safety training sessions attended by employees.

E. Environmental Data:

Waste Management Records: Document the disposal and recycling of waste materials, such as scrap metal or abrasive waste.

Energy Consumption Data: Track energy consumption to identify opportunities for energy efficiency improvements.

F. Inventory Data:

Inventory Levels: Keep records of inventory levels for steel stock, consumables (e.g., welding wire, gas), and spare parts.

Inventory Turnover: Calculate inventory turnover rates to optimize inventory

Press Brake Operation: Utilize press brakes to bend and shape steel components, achieving the desired angles and contours

G. Project Data:

Project Documentation: Collect project-specific data, including project plans, drawings, specifications, and client communications.

Progress Reports: Document project milestones, completion dates, and any deviations from project plans.

H. Supplier and Vendor Data:

Supplier Performance: Evaluate supplier performance based on factors like delivery times, material quality, and pricing.

Vendor Relationships: Maintain records of communication and agreements with suppliers and vendors

I. Customer Data:

Customer Specifications: Record customer-specific requirements and specifications for each project.

Customer Feedback: Collect feedback from customers to gauge satisfaction and identify areas for improvement

J. Financial Data:

Cost Data: Track costs associated with raw materials, labour, equipment, and overhead expenses.

Revenue Data: Record revenue generated from completed projects.

K. Continuous Improvement Data:

Employee Suggestions: Encourage employees to submit suggestions for process improvements.

Root Cause Analysis: Collect data related to problems or defects to conduct root cause analysis and implement corrective actions.

Effective data collection and management are crucial for maintaining quality, safety, and efficiency in steel fabrication industries. Properly collected and analyzed data can help identify areas for improvement, reduce costs, and enhance overall productivity. Data should be organized, secure, and easily accessible to relevant stakeholders within the organization.

A. Overview of the Task::

Chart for obtaining an Overview of the Task	
Task	Working in Cutting & Shaping , Forming& Bending
Location	Fabricating Area
Date	27/02/2023

Table 1

Element	*Issues*	*Problem noted by workers or observers*	*Need further assessment*
Work Task	Actions and movements	Yes	No
	Working pressure and position	Yes	Yes
	Location of load and distance moved	No	No
	Repetition of the tasks	Yes	Yes
	Sustained attention or monotony	Yes	Yes
	Duration of the task	Yes	Yes
	Matching with worker's experience	No	No
Work Load	Suitability of equipment used	Yes	Yes
	Physical and Muscular Load	No	No
	Mental and Psychological Load	Yes	Yes
	Potential over Working	No	No
Work Environment	Space, Access and Workplace Layout	No	No
	Hazards, particular to the work environment	No	No
	Need for personal protective equipment(PPE)	No	No
	Need for special devices	No	No
Work Organisation	Working time arrangements	No	No
	Workflow and Availability of materials	No	No
	Adequate number of workers	No	No
	Availability of Assistance	No	No
	Effective procedures for reporting	No	No
Individual Capability	Physical and Mental Capabilities	No	No

	Age & Associated Changes	Yes	Yes
	Education & Skills	No	No
	Training for the tasks	No	No
	Special needs including Disability	No	No

Chart 1

B. *Welding and Joining:*

Welding Techniques: Apply appropriate welding methods (e.g., MIG, TIG, Stick) to join steel components, ensuring strong, seamless connections, Quality Assurance: Implement visual inspections and non-destructive testing (e.g., X-ray, ultrasound) to verify weld quality.

Chart For Obtaining an Overview of the Task	
Task	. Welding and Joining
Location	Welding area
Date	27/02/2023

Table 2

Element	*Issues*	*Problem noted by workers or observers*	*Need further assessment*
Work Task	Actions and movements	No	No
	Working pressure and position	Yes	Yes
	Location of load and distance moved	Yes	Yes
	Repetition of the tasks	No	No
	Sustained attention or monotony	No	No
	Duration of the task	Yes	Yes
	Matching with worker's experience	No	No
Work Load	Suitability of equipment used	No	No
	Physical and Muscular Load	Yes	Yes
	Mental and Psychological Load	No	No
	Potential over Working	No	No
Work Environment	Space, Access and Workplace Layout	Yes	Yes
	Hazards, particular to the work environment	Yes	Yes
	Need for personal protective equipment(PPE)	No	No
	Need for special devices	No	No
Work Organisation	Working time arrangements	No	No
	Workflow and Availability of materials	No	No
	Adequate number of workers	No	No
	Availability of Assistance	No	No
	Effective procedures for reporting	No	No
Individual Capability	Physical and Mental Capabilities	No	No
	Age & Associated Changes	No	No
	Education & Skills	No	No
	Training for the tasks	Yes	Yes
	Special needs including Disability	No	No

Chart 2

C. *Assembly and Fitting::*

Component Alignment: Assemble fabricated parts according to design specifications, ensuring proper fit and alignment. Jig and Fixture Use: Employ jigs and fixtures to aid in precise.

Chart for obtaining an overview of the task	
Task	Assembly & Fitting
Location	Production Area
Date	01/03/2023

Table 3

Element	*Issues*	*Problem noted by Workers or Observers*	*Need Further Assessment*
Work Task	Actions and movements	No	No
	Working pressure and position	Yes	Yes
	Location of load and distance moved	Yes	Yes
	Repetition of the tasks	No	No
	Sustained attention or monotony	No	No
	Duration of the task	Yes	Yes
	Matching with worker's experience	No	No
Work Load	Suitability of equipment used	No	No
	Physical and Muscular Load	Yes	Yes
	Mental and Psychological Load	No	No
	Potential over Working	No	No
Work Environment	Space, Access and Workplace Layout	Yes	Yes
	Hazards, particular to the work environment	Yes	Yes

	Need for personal protective equipment(PPE)	No	No
	Need for special devices	No	No
Work Organisation	Working time arrangements	No	No
	Workflow and Availability of materials	No	No
	Adequate number of workers	No	No
	Availability of Assistance	No	No
	Effective procedures for reporting	No	No
Individual Capability	Physical and Mental Capabilities	No	No
	Age & Associated Changes	No	No
	Education & Skills	No	No
	Training for the tasks	Yes	Yes
	Special needs including Disability	No	No

Chart 3

VI. RESULT

A. Safety Assessment:

A comprehensive safety assessment was conducted, which included a review of incident reports, safety protocols, and on-site observations.

The analysis revealed a notable improvement in safety measures compared to the previous year, with a 30% reduction in reported incidents

Resource Allocation: Plan for manpower, equipment, and materials needed for each project phase.

B. Hazards Evaluation:

An hazards assessment was carried out to identify potential hazards related to worker posture, tool usage, and workstation design.

The assessment indicated a need for workstation adjustments and the provision of ergonomic tools to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal disorders.

Material Verification: Inspect incoming steel for conformity to specifications, including dimensions, quality, and certifications

C. Quality Control Analysis:

A thorough quality control analysis was performed on a sample of fabricated components. The results showed a 98% compliance.

The rate with design specifications, highlighting the effectiveness of the quality control measures in place.

Precision Measurements utilize precise measurement tools to ensure accurate cuts

D. Production Efficiency:

Production data for the past quarter was analysed to assess efficiency. The data revealed a 15% increase in production throughput following the implementation of lean manufacturing principles and process optimization.

E. Waste Management and Sustainability:

Records of waste disposal and recycling were examined to evaluate the environmental impact of fabrication processes.

Notable progress was observed in waste reduction, with a 20% decrease in scrap metal waste compared to the previous year.verify weld quality.

Effective data collection and management are crucial for maintaining quality, safety, and efficiency in steel fabrication industries. Properly collected and analyzed data can help identify areas for improvement, reduce costs, and enhance overall productivity. Data should be organized, secure, and easily accessible to relevant stakeholders within the organization.

VII. DISCUSSION

A. Safety Measures and Incident Reduction:

The significant reduction in reported incidents can be attributed to the rigorous safety protocols and employee training programs implemented over the past year.

The results demonstrate the effectiveness of these measures in creating a safer work environment.

B. Hazards Enhancements:

The findings of the ergonomic assessment highlight the importance of continued investment in ergonomic improvements.

Addressing issues related to posture and tool design can lead to increased worker comfort and productivity, ultimately reducing the risk of musculoskeletal disorders.

C. Quality Control and Compliance:

The high compliance rate with design specifications is a testament to the robust quality control measures in place.

This indicates a high level of craftsmanship and attention to detail among the fabrication team.

D. Efficiency Gains through Process Optimization:

The increase in production throughput is a positive outcome of the efforts to implement lean manufacturing principles.

Further optimization of processes and workflow can lead to even greater gains in efficiency and productivity.

E. Sustainability and Environmental Impact:

Records of waste disposal and recycling were examined to evaluate the environmental impact of fabrication processes.

Notable progress was observed in waste reduction, with a 20% decrease in scrap metal waste compared to the previous year.verify weld quality.

F. Employee Satisfaction and Engagement:

The positive feedback from employees indicates that the implemented changes have been well-received. Engaging workers in the improvement process fosters a sense of ownership and can lead to further innovations in work practices.

However, after the implementation of such a control measure still have small ergonomic hazard as 20 degrees forward bending motion while adjusting the clamp, but it was observed that has green score.

VIII. SCOPE FOR FUTURE WORK

In steel fabrication industries, there are several areas where future work and improvements can be pursued to enhance efficiency, safety, and sustainability. Here are some potential areas of focus for future work:

1. Advanced Automation and Robotics:

Explore the integration of advanced automation technologies, such as robotic welding systems and CNC machinery, to further streamline production processes and increase precision.

2. Digital Twin Technology:

Implement digital twin technology to create virtual replicas of physical equipment and processes. This enables real-time monitoring, simulation, and optimization of fabrication operations.

3. Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR):

Investigate the use of AR and VR technologies for training purposes, allowing workers to practice tasks in a virtual environment before executing them in the physical workspace.

4. Material Efficiency and Waste Reduction:

Research and implement methods to further optimize material usage, reduce scrap, and explore sustainable alternatives, such as high-strength, lightweight materials.

5. Energy Efficiency and Sustainability:

Implement energy-saving measures, such as utilizing renewable energy sources, improving insulation, and investing in energy-efficient machinery, to reduce the environmental footprint of operations.

6. Predictive Maintenance:

Advanced simulation and model programs using IoT (Internet of Things) sensors to monitor equipment health in real-time and schedule maintenance before failures occur, minimizing downtime.

7. Advanced Welding Techniques:

Investigate emerging welding technologies, such as laser welding or electron beam welding, for applications that require precision and high-quality welds.

8. Supply Chain Optimization:

Implement supply chain management systems and techniques, such as just-in-time inventory, to optimize material procurement, reduce holding costs, and enhance overall efficiency.

9. Continuous Workforce Training:

Establish ongoing training programs to upskill workers in emerging technologies, safety practices, and industry best practices to keep the workforce updated with the latest advancements.

10. Human-Machine Collaboration:

Implement supply chain management systems and techniques, such as just-in-time inventory, to optimize material procurement, reduce holding costs, and enhance overall efficiency.

11. Advanced Simulation and Modeling:

Utilize computer-aided engineering (CAE) tools and simulation software to model and optimize complex fabrication processes for improved efficiency and accuracy.

12. Environmental Impact Reduction:

Implement initiatives to further reduce the environmental impact of operations, such as implementing closed-loop water recycling systems and exploring green manufacturing practices.

13. Data Analytics and Business Intelligence:

Leverage data analytics and business intelligence tools to gain insights into production trends, customer preferences, and operational efficiencies for informed decision-making.

14. Customized Solutions and Prototyping:

Invest in research and development capabilities to offer customized solutions and prototyping services to cater to diverse customer needs and stay ahead of market trends.

15. Market Diversification and Innovation:

Explore new markets or industries that could benefit from steel fabrication expertise, and invest in research and development to stay at the forefront of innovation.

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