

Research Paper :

Convenience of work places for housing senior citizens

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ABSTRACT

Senior citizens face many problems and do not always adjust well to retirement. Hence, the study was conducted to evaluate the household furniture and work places used at residence and old age home, problems faced and suggestions given by the senior citizens to overcome the problems. Data were collected from three main areas of the Parbhani city. Total 50 senior citizens were randomly selected and information was collected through structured interview schedule. Measurement of standard furniture and standard working heights for elderly were calculated as per the standard methods. Results indicated that the furniture (cot, table and chair) used by the senior citizens was not comfortable to them nor it was as per the standards. Significant differences were observed between existing working heights and standard working heights. They faced many problems due to insufficient lighting, unsuitable staircases and inconvenient height of working counters, storage places and problems due to traditional toilet seats.

Key words : Senior citizens, Work places, Convenience

The principle enemies of the retired persons are loneliness, lack of socially useful occupation and physical inactivity resulting in harmful change in the rhythm of life.

Senior citizens do not always adjust well to retirement. Their vigour diminishes and long periods of inactivity develop into an ailment. Once these problems are solved the individual is able to enjoy active longevity (Menon, 1980).

Work place is a major part of the team that is needed to accomplish household tasks. The quality and design of work place in terms of the requirement of the task and of the worker has an important effect on the ease with which the action is accomplished.

Problems like unsuitable entrances, stair cases, slippery floor surfaces, lack of sufficient lighting and ventilation, non-availability of English seats, grab rails and non-slip mats in bath rooms, unsuitable heights, depths and widths of working counters and storage cases in kitchens particularly for female respondents, improper furnishings etc lead to bodily problems like joint pains, tiredness, breathlessness, difficulty in working in the house, reading, writing and working in the kitchen (Kaur, 1996). The senior citizen paradoxically faces these problems at times in his life when his capacity and adaptability have become minimum. He is called upon to adjust to these sweeping changes in his living conditions. As one of the goals for the senior citizens is to maintain maximum independence, it becomes important to know specific

needs of the senior citizens. The poorly planned interior may mean that such persons are unable to function successfully within their own homes and their surroundings.

Hence, it is necessary to study the present conditions of work places used by the senior citizens and problems faced by them. So, the present study was carried out with the following objectives to study the household furniture and work places used by the senior citizens at residence and old age home and comparing it with standards, to study the problems faced by the senior citizens while performing day-to-day activities while using existing furniture and to record the suggestions given by the senior citizens.

METHODOLOGY

In order to meet the objectives of the study, three areas of the Parbhani city namely- Bhagya laxmi Nagar, Sharda Nagar and Old age home were selected for the data collection. A total sample of 50 senior citizens (above 60 years) was randomly selected.

The data were collected through survey method with the help of structured interview schedule. Measurements of standard furniture and standard working heights for elderly were calculated as per the method suggested by Robert (1960) and Grandjean (1988).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Depicts the comparison between existing