Research Paper

Occurrence of accident among inmates of old age homes of Uttarakhand, India

■ S.N. KASHYAP

Author for Correspondence :
S.N. KASHYAP
Rajendra Agriculture
University, Pusa SAMASTIPUR
(BIHAR) INDIA
Email: kashypa_sn123@
yahoo.co.in

■ **ABSTRACT :** The purpose of the study was to appraise occurrence of accidents among inmates of old age homes. Purposive sampling design was chosen to select the samples because not much research work has been carried out. Hitherto, ergonomics have attempted to upgrade the industrial situation by improving the condition of work. But bathrooms and flooring in residential building, particularly in old age homes have been neglected to a great extent. Two regions of Uttarakhand State *i.e.* Kumaon and Garhwal were selected for the study. To assess the base line characteristics of the elderly and occurrence of accidents, interview method was adopted to collect the data. The Chi-square test of independence and per cent ratios was used for data analysis. The findings showed that the elderly people were between 60-70 years of age. The mean age was 72.5 year; the female sex ratio was greater than male. Elderly (53.3 %) usually led fallen between the age group of 70-80 years, out of which 75 per cent were females. It was proved that the occurrence of accidents depends on the age and sex. Causes of accident were slip followed by fall. Tripping was not a cause of any single accident in the studied group. "Skid Resistance Polycemtiles" which was developed by Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee (India), had been recommended for the old age homes. The ageing of the population had not only brought at the emerging and with it new and serious issues, but had also become a cause of concern for the aged at national and international level.

India, like many traditional societies, today faces a unique situation in providing care for its elderly as the existing old-age support structures in the form of family, kith and kin, are fast eroding and the elderly are ill-equipped to cope alone with their lives in the face of infirmity and disability. The onus of caring for the elderly is therefore now much more on the state than the family and will necessitate the creation of adequate institutional support. Elderly people living independently without any assistance and palliative measures should be considered for improving the safety within their homes, as elderly people are more prone to serious injuries and long-term disability if they fall. There is therefore an urgent need to examine the various aspects of this new and fast growing population to ensure the design of appropriate policy and programmes directed to meet the varied needs of this vulnerable and dependent group. Steel *et al.* (1995) noted that among the most fatal injuries amongst the elderly, a leading cause of death is due to falling, and the less percentage of falls (10-15%) resulted in fractures or serious injury. *Tinetti et al.* (1998) determined a group of risk factors for falls, which include the inability to safely maneuver the stairs, the overuse of sedatives, cognitive impairment, lower extremity disability, diminished vision and balance and gait abnormalities. Home injuries occur as a result of falls, poisonings and burns. Most of us regards home as a safe place, but accidents often occur in and around the home. Approximately 75 per cent of the domestic accidents to people aged 75 and above were due to falls (Wright, 1994). Accidents involving elderly people have been neglected in research for a number of years and there are insufficient data on the true prevalence of accidental injuries. Given that multiple falls have been found to be associated with negative outcomes, such as an increased risk of