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A study to understand the contribution of type of house and socioeconomic status towards elderly friendly living room

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Abstract

The physical and psychological health of an aged people can be influenced by the house in which they live in, furniture and equipment provided and also the surroundings of the house predominantly to the people who spend much of their time in the home. Living room is one such place in the houses where elderly people spends much of their time to entertain guests, to perform various activities. The study aimed to understand the contribution of type of house and socio economic status towards elderly friendly living room. The study was carried out in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. Sixty elderly women aged 60 and above were taken as sample for the study from the selected localities. Kuppuswamy socio-economic status scale was used in the study. Type of house and Socio economic status were the independent variables whereas existing living room design conditions was selected as dependent variable. The existing living room design was evaluated in terms of standard design guidelines proposed by researchers and organizations. Analysis of variance and Regression were the statistical analysis used in the study. The results revealed that majority of the houses may not facilitate elderly to age in place. Type of the house followed by socio economic status of the family were found to be the major contributing factors towards the design of living room as per the recommended design guidelines.

Keywords: type of house, socio economic status, existing living room design

1. Introduction

According to “India Ageing Report 2017” given by the United Nations Population Fund, 2017 [8] the share of population over the age of 60 could increase from 8 percent in 2015 to 19 percent in 2050. As people get older they strongly aspire to have their own place (Abramsson and Andersson, 2012) [1]. This phenomenon is called “Ageing in Place”. Aging in place among elderly people is also affected by the physical home environment. The most important decisions elderly people make is their choice of housing because their future comfort, safety depends on the careful considerations of all the housing options available to them. A study by Abramsson and Andersson (2016) [2] specified that people tend to change from their own large houses to small rental houses as they age. The elderly people tends to have a house that is built ergonomically with all provisions that suits their aging. The living room is one of the important room in elderly housing which plays a versatile role in the home, where people entertain guests and it is where elderly people tend to spend the most of their at-home time together after the kitchen. In addition, elderly people tend to move to more comfortable houses that need less maintenance (Abramsson *et al.*, 2014., Abramsson and Nedomysl, 2008) [3, 4]. This is achievable only when the environment provided has ample opportunities for fulfilling their day to day needs.

2. Materials and Methods

Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh state was selected purposively. Sixty elderly women in the age of sixty and above were selected as sample. Purposive sampling method was adopted to draw the sample. Thirteen standard design guidelines that enable the senior citizens to use the living room without any difficulty were proposed by various researchers and organisations. These guidelines served as a base to identify the existing living room conditions. Type of house and Socio economic status were the independent variables and existing living room was the dependent variable for the study. The living room of the respondent was evaluated in terms of these standard guidelines. To quantify the responses, Score 3 was given in case the existing feature was ‘above the recommended guidelines, score 2 was given in case the existing feature

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was ‘exactly as per the recommended guidelines’ and score 1 was given in case the existing features was ‘below the recommended guidelines’.

The socio economic scale “Modified Kuppaswamy scale updated for year 2018” by Saleem (2018) [7] was adopted to study the socioeconomic status of the respondent. Based upon the marks gained, the respondents were categorized as ‘upper’, ‘upper middle’, ‘lower middle’ and ‘upper lower’ socio economic class. Analysis of variance was used to test the relationship between existing living room design and type of house, socio economic status. Regression was used to know the percentage contribution of type of house and Socio economic status towards Living room design.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Existing living room design

Thirteen standard design guidelines were identified to assess

the design of living room in elderly housing. Parker (1987) [6] and Welfare housing policies for senior citizens (2007) [9] had given guidelines for designing living room in elderly housing. Living room width in two thirds of the houses was above the recommended guidelines and in 30 % of the houses was exactly as per the guidelines. All the houses had privacy from the front door. The preferred shape for a living room was rectangle. Huge majority (86.67%) of the respondents had rectangle shaped living room.

With reference to clearance spaces to accommodate wheelchair users 65 per cent of the houses had no sufficient space. Same trend was observed in case of minimum distance between television set and seating, between facing seats, space for group conversation and space for use of a desk.

All the houses had comfortable chairs, direct and indirect access to entrance, private and personal spaces within the houses.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by existing living room design features n=60

Recommended Design guidelines	Status of existing design features against the guidelines						Total	
	Above the recommended guidelines		Exactly as per the recommended guidelines		Below the recommended guidelines			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Minimum 12 feet width for a living area	40	66.67	18	30	2	3.33	60	100
Rectangular shape	30	50	22	36.67	8	13.33	60	100
Privacy from front door	45	75	15	25	0	0	60	100
Provision for inter and intra space circulation	34	56.67	21	35	5	8.33	60	100
Minimum 2 feet 6 inches space between furniture for secondary circulation	18	30	21	35	21	35	60	100
3 feet minimum clearance space for main traffic points to accommodate wheelchair users	6	10	15	25	39	65	60	100
5 feet minimum distance between Television set and seating	8	13.33	20	33.33	32	53.33	60	100
5 feet minimum clearance space between facing seating	7	11.67	15	25	38	63.33	60	100
Minimum 10 feet diameter space for small conversation gatherings	4	6.67	8	13.33	48	80	60	100
Minimum 2 feet 6 inches clearance space for use of a desk	6	10	24	40	30	50	60	100
Chairs with armrests	22	36.67	38	63.33	0	0	60	100
Direct accessibility to entrance, private outdoor, dining area	52	86.67	8	13.33	0	0	60	100
Indirect accessibility between food preparation, personal hygiene, Storage/utility, sleeping/dressing	56	93.33	4	6.67	0	0	60	100

Majority of the houses may not facilitate elderly to age in place. Adequate circulation is essential when people become older. Hence, provisions should be made to age in place for elderly people. Similar findings were found in the study conducted by Jaspers (2017) [5] regarding the minimum width of living room.

3.2 Relationship between existing living room design and Socio-economic status, Type of house of the elderly people

The null hypothesis formulated for the study included were

H₀ 1 There exists no significant relationship between existing living room conditions and type of the house

H₀ 2 There exists no significant relationship between existing living room conditions and Socio economic status

H₀ 1 There exists no significant relationship between existing living room conditions and type of the house

Significant variation was found between respondents with different types of the house and the existing design of living room

Table 2: Analysis of variation in existing living room with regard to type of the house

Existing housing conditions	Type of house	N	Mean	Std	F-Value
Living room	Independent house	23	27.04	4.73	0.0001*
	Independent double storied house	15	25.07	3.15	
	Apartment/flat	18	29.00	3.58	
	Duplex	4	36.25	4.27	

Note: * Significant ‘F’ value

Significant F-Value (0.0001) was found in the adoption of standard design guidelines while designing living room between different types of house. Based on the results of F

values, further t-test was computed to understand significant mean difference between different types of house of elderly. The results are presented in the table 3.

Table 3: Differences between mean scores on design of living room by type of house

Existing housing condition	Type of house comparison	Mean difference	t-value	Significance
Living room	Independent house Vs. Independent double storied house	1.98	1.48	ns
	Independent house Vs. Apartment/flat	-1.96	-1.55	ns
	Independent house Vs. Duplex	-9.21	-4.23	**
	Independent double storied house Vs. Apartment	-3.93	-2.80	**
	Independent double storied house Vs. Duplex	-11.18	-4.94	**
	Apartment Vs. Duplex	-7.25	-3.26	**

Note: **- Highly significant

Highly significant mean difference was found between (i) Independent house and duplex (ii) Independent double storied house and apartment/flat (iii) Independent double storied house and duplex (iv) Apartment/Flat and duplex with reference to the design of living room as per standard design guide lines.

Respondents with (i) Independent house differed significantly with duplex (ii) Independent double storied house differed with apartment/flat and duplex and (iii) Apartment /Flat differed with Duplex in the adoption of standard design guide lines in designing living room.

Type of house had influence on the design of living room. Independent double storied house, Independent houses and duplex were found with large living rooms. The size of living room was found to be restricted in apartments/flats. When the living room was relatively with more area the space needs for circulation and clearances were met.

Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected in case of living room H_0 2 There exists no significant relationship between existing living room conditions and Socio economic status Significant variation was found in the existing design of

living room.

Table 4: Analysis of variation in existing housing conditions with regard to socioeconomic status

Existing housing conditions	Socioeconomic status	N	Mean	Std	F-Value
Living room	Upper lower	5	24.00	1.41	0.0093*
	Lower middle	5	24.60	3.13	
	Upper middle	44	27.91	4.53	
	Upper	6	32.33	5.72	

Note: * Significant 'F' value Significant variation was found

(F-Value 0.0093) in the adoption of standard design guidelines while designing living room between different socio economic status groups. Based on the results of F values, further t- test was computed to understand the significant mean difference between respondents with different categories of socio economic status. The results are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Differences between mean scores design of living room by socio economic status

Existing housing condition	Socio economic status comparison	Mean difference	t-value	Significance
Living room	Upper lower Vs. Lower middle	-0.60	-0.21	ns
	Upper lower Vs. Upper middle	-3.91	-1.87	ns
	Upper lower Vs. Upper	-8.33	-3.11	**
	Lower middle Vs. Upper middle	-3.31	-1.59	ns
	Lower middle Vs. Upper	-7.73	-2.89	**
	Upper middle Vs. Upper	-4.42	-2.30	*

Note: **- highly significant

Significant mean difference regarding the design of living room was found in families belonged to (i)Upper lower and upper Socio economic status(ii) Lower middle and upper Socio economic status (iii) Upper middle and upper Socio economic status.

Respondents belonged to upper socio economic status differed significantly with the families that belonged to upper lower Socio economic status, Lower middle Socio economic status and Upper middle socio economic status in adoption of standard design guide lines while planning Living room.

Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected in case of living room.

3.3. Regression analysis was performed to estimate the contribution of type of house and Socio economic status towards existing living room

An attempt was made in the study to understand the major contribution of independent variable towards the adoption of standard design guidelines while designing living room.

Type of house was the major factor that contributed up to 37.25% towards the designing of living room as per the standard design guidelines where as 27.81 percent for socio economic status. Also Family monthly income, Occupation, Education, housing ownership and duration of stay in the house together holds a minor contribution.

Table 6: Percentage contribution of independent variables towards the design of existing living room

Existing housing condition	Variable	Estimate	StdErr	T value	Pr> t	Contribution of Sum of squares%	Rank
Living room	Type of the house	1.47	0.60	2.45	0.02	37.25	1
	Socio Economic status	2.24	0.92	2.44	0.02	27.81	2
	Family monthly Income	-0.01	0.26	-0.05	0.96	19.96	3
	Occupation	-0.23	0.47	-0.50	0.62	7.83	4
	Education	0.55	0.69	0.80	0.43	4.20	5
	Ownership of the house	-1.52	1.61	-0.94	0.35	2.94	6
	Duration of stay in the house	0.09	1.22	0.08	0.94	0.01	7

Type of the house followed by socio economic status of the were found to be the major contributing factors towards the design of living room as per the recommended design guidelines.

4. Conclusion

The families who could afford to build spacious houses due to their socio economic status were found designed their living room with sufficient space allowances for circulation and wheelchair use. When the living rooms were large enough, the essential distance between television set and seating and clearance space between facing seating were found as per the design guidelines.

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