Structural Accessibility and Safety Assessment of An Aged Shelter in Kaski, Nepal

Kristin Baral
School of Engineering, Faculty of Science and Technology, Pokhara University, Pokhara 33700, Nepal

Tek Raj Gyawali
School of Engineering, Faculty of Science and Technology, Pokhara University, Pokhara 33700, Nepal

Abstract

Ensuring structural accessibility is crucial for the safety and comfort of elderly residents, as prescribed by established building codes and standards. This study assessed the accessibility and safety features of the Pokhara Aged Shelter in Kaski, Nepal to determine their adequacy for aged occupants. The parameters such as entrance door width, stair parameters, single bedroom size, ceiling height, fixtures and fittings, ventilation and light, cleanliness and maintenance, signage were found to conform to the prescribed standards, however, several features like corridor width, ramp slope, shared bedroom size, toilet size, switch and socket height were measured to be 1150mm, 3:32, 15.6m2, 2.4m2, 1300mm from floor whereas the standard values are ≥1500mm, Max 1:12, ≥20m2, ≥4m2 ;1500mm turning radius inside, 900-1200mm from floor, respectively. Furthermore, essential safety provisions such as cross-ventilation, emergency exits, and fire extinguishers were absent. These deficiencies may compromise the comfort, mobility, and safety of the elderly residents. These findings highlight the imperative for comprehensive retrofitting measures and enhanced regulatory oversight to ensure that aged care facilities in Nepal adhere to accessibility and safety standards, thereby promoting a secure and dignified living environment for elderly residents.

Keywords

Structural accessibility, Elderly residents, Safety, Building codes, Standards.