

EXPERTS AND NON-PROFESIONAL'S VIEWS ON FURNITURE FASTENING AS AN EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITY.

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1. Introduction

Furniture fastening is perceived as the easiest and cheapest way of earthquake preparedness, however for some reasons not so many people do carry out furniture fastening. This study aims in characterization of the behaviours and attitudes toward furniture fastening among so called “professionals” and “non-professionals”. The technique employed for this study is Q-Method – Factor analysis based technique developed for the purpose of study subjectivity, attitudes and behaviours (Stephenson 1935, 1955).

2. Background and description of the analysis

According to the recent seismological forecasts a very powerful earthquake (Richter scale 8.0 – 8.3) is expected to strike with a 95 percent probability in the next 50 years in Tokai, Nankai regions of Japan. That is why the issue of community earthquake preparedness is so hot topic nowadays in the regions mentioned above.

Some of the actions are focused on educating of people's on how to fix furniture to the walls in order to prevent overturning them and killing people in times of earthquake. In spite of the fact that the furniture fastening seems to be a very easy action to perform, some people for unknown reasons do not undertake this action. This study aims to answer following questions:

1. What are the behaviours toward furniture fastening?
2. What are the attitudes underlying the behaviours?
3. Are the attitudes and behaviours toward furniture fastening different between professionals and non-professionals?

For this purpose the action like “furniture fastening” is a function of individual attitude based on subjective view. Because of the fact that professionals are in charge of education of the public and/or communicating risk to the public it is important to check weather the their point of view of why to (not) carry out furniture fastening is relevant to what non-professionals or not.

Keywords: Furniture fastening, participation, risk communication

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Recently the Q-Method was re-discovered and applied in many fields as participatory management and communication research. As an example it was applied to study of what experienced watershed management planners and activists perceive as proper way of involving the public in decision-making. (Webler, Tuler, 2001)

This study was conducted during the workshops organized by Prefectorial and Local Government and other organizations.

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