



ASSESSING THE EMPATHY LEVEL OF THE YOUTH WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

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KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION:

Emotional intelligence or EI is the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions, and those of the people around them. People with a high degree of emotional intelligence know what they're feeling, what their emotions mean, and how these emotions can affect other people. In the field of Emotional Intelligence, there are four clusters of competencies and eighteen competencies. The four clusters are:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Social Awareness
4. Relationship Management

Empathy is one of an Emotional Intelligence (EI) competency.

In these clusters, Empathy falls under Social Awareness. This skill reflects a person's ability to connect with others and to relate to them which is an essential skill in building and managing healthy relationships.

In general, being empathic improves human interactions. Empathy involves self-awareness. Empathy is important because it helps one to understand how others are feeling so one can respond appropriately to the situation. It is typically associated with social behaviour.

Empathy is the missing link in families, in schools, in colleges and in workplaces. Every person should learn to be empathetic from their younger age which will build them into a positive human being. Empathy is one of the most important aspects of creating strong relationships, reducing stress, and enhancing emotional awareness. Empathy is more a sense that one can truly understand, relate to, or imagine the depth of another person's emotional state or situation. It implies feeling with a person, rather than feeling sorry for a person.

EMPATHY:

Empathy is the ability to emotionally understand what other people feel, see things from their point of view, and imagine oneself in their place. Essentially, it is putting oneself in someone else's position and feeling what they must be feeling.

The term "empathy" is used to describe a wide range of experiences. Emotion researchers generally define empathy as the ability to sense other people's emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling. Empathy seems to have deep roots in one's brains and bodies.

Developing empathy skill in the lives of all the human beings is very essential. In this study it mainly focus on youth, as it is the right age for learning value based skills for life.

Helping young people to develop a strong sense of empathy is beneficial because: It helps them to build a sense of security and stronger relationships with others, positioning them well for learning. It encourages tolerance and acceptance of others. It promotes good mental health.

The empathy skill is enabling all the individuals to be socially aware which enables to have positive relationship. This skill for youth with visual impairment will help them to be emotionally intelligent by enhancing their well being. By being more empathetic the youth with visual impairment can learn to understand others by being in their

position. It will bring in patience and tolerance which will be the greater support for leading the life with their disability in this society. It avoids misjudgement and misunderstanding with other people. Social awareness will help the youth with visual impairment to increase their social participation and social engagement in the society. This will bring in social inclusion.

A descriptive research study is conducted for assessing the empathy level of youth with visual impairment in Coimbatore district.

AIM OF THE STUDY:

The aim of this study is to assess the empathy level of the youth with visual impairment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

To assess the empathy level of youth with visual impairment.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

To understand the socio demographic profile of the youth with visual impairment.

To know the empathy level of youth with visual impairment.

To find the association between the empathy level and the selected socio demographic factors.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

What is the empathy level of the youth with visual impairment

Does the selected socio demographic factors have an association with empathy level

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

RESEARCH DESIGN:

The quantitative method of descriptive research design is used for this study.

This research design is used to know and understand the socio demographic factors of the youth with visual impairment in Coimbatore district. To know the empathy level of the youth with visual impairment.

UNIVERSE:

The universe selected for this study is youth with visual impairment in Coimbatore district.

SAMPLING:

38 respondents of the youth with visual impairment in the Coimbatore district within the age group of 18 to 24 years are taken as samples for this research study.

Non-Probability method of Purposive sampling is used for this research study. The respondents are selected from 3 main colleges in Coimbatore.

INCLUSIVE CRITERIA:

Youth with visual impairment from the age group of 18 to 24 years are selected.

Youth with visual impairment who are living and staying in Coimbatore are included.

Youth with visual impairment who are studying in selected colleges are selected.

EXCLUSIVE CRITERIA:

Differently abled youth of other categories are excluded.

Students below the age group of 18 years are excluded.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION:

Google form questionnaire method is used for the collection of data.

PART-1:

Socio demographic profile

In this part the researcher prepared certain number of structured questions to understand the socio demographic details of the youth with visual impairment.

PART-2:

The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire

This Questionnaire is used to assess the empathy level of the youth with visual impairment.

SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION:

PRIMARY DATA:

Primary data is collected from the youth with visual impairment through Google form questionnaire.

SECONDARY DATA:

Secondary data is collected through Review of literature ,Internet articles ,journals , newspapers .

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION AND TERMINOLOGY:

EMPATHY:

Empathy is the ability to perceive and interpret what another person is feeling or maybe even thinking. That is to say, it's a way of understanding and comprehending what another person is feeling. It means to put yourself in someone else's shoes.

In this study empathy level is assessed by using "The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire".

YOUTH:

YOUTH is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

In this study youth is selected from the age group of 18 to 24 years.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT:

A vision impairment refers to when one lose part or all of ability to see (vision). The impairment must persist even with the use of eyeglasses, contact lenses, medication, or surgery. In this study the visual impairment is considered as for both the group of youth who lost their full vision and part of their vision. This study focuses on both the blind and low vision group of youth.

RESULT:

The results of the study revealed the major findings as , 36.8 % of the respondents are between the age group of 23 to 24 years . Majority of the youth are male . In this study 47.4% of the respondent's education is at Under Graduation level . The majority 92.1% of the respondents belongs to nuclear family . 57.9% of the respondents are with full visual impairment . The majority 94.7% of the respondent's on set of visual impairment is from the age group of 0to 10 years . 81.6% of the respondents have one or two siblings . The majority 68.4% of the respondents have average level of empathy .

The computed Chi square value shows that there is association between empathy level and selected socio-demographic factors of the respondents viz, empathy and age , empathy and gender , empathy and type of family , empathy and type of visual impairment , empathy and on set of visual impairment , empathy and number of siblings .

This research study shows that majority of the youth with visual impairment have average level of empathy . This empathy level is based on the socio – demographic factors . It is also revealed that there lies association between empathy level and selected socio-demographic factors .

TABLE:

Empathy Level of the respondents		
	Frequency	Percent
Average Level	26	68.4
Valid high level	12	31.6
Total	38	100.0

From this table this indicates that the majority 68.4% have Average level of Empathy.

SUGGESTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

Through this research study it is evident that majority of the youth with visual impairment in Coimbatore district have average level of empathy .

The average level of empathy should be developed for reaching out to high level .

This can be done by conducting interventional training program on emotional and social intelligence

Knowledge and practice on emotional intelligence need to be inculcated at the education level .

Social workers should focus on developing emotional intelligence by conducting various activity based programs.

Awareness on the importance of emotional intelligence need to be created for persons with visual impairment .

Special educators and trainers should provide life skill learning for persons with visual impairment .

CONCLUSION:

Empathy is one of the main component of Emotional Intelligence . In today's period it is the most required skill for every individual as it strengthens the social relationship . The empathy for youth with visual impairment is essential one as it builds up social inclusion . This research study is conducted to assess the empathy level of youth with visual impairment and it is found that youth with visual impairment have average level of empathy . This research study brings out the need and importance of empathy and throws light on increasing the empathy level of the youth with visual impairment . Empathy provides psychosocial well being and it promotes the personality of the youth with visual impairment

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