

FRIENDSHIP MOTIVATION AMONG SPECIAL CHILDREN

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Abstract

This paper aims at finding out the friendship motivation of early adolescents with hearing impairment and challenge in visual ability. The sample for the present study constitutes 200 randomly selected special children, out of which, 75 of them are visually challenged and 125 of them are hearing impaired. The Friendship Motivation Questionnaire prepared and validated by Anbu Selvi and Michael J Leo (2014) was employed. The results revealed that the special children staying at hostel showed better friendship motivation than the day-scholars. The visually challenged children recorded better score in getting inspiration from friends than the children with hearing impairment.

Introduction

Education is an experience of sharing knowledge and getting knowledge about experience. It is a cooperative venture by nature. It helps to acquire future oriented visions. Educational institutions play a vital role in shaping the citizens of a nation by adopting formal and informal sharing of experience, knowledge and skills. These tasks are materialized through the stakeholders of educational institutions like teachers, peer groups, administrators and other supportive staff members. Dominantly, the peer influence plays a vital role in the execution of the curriculum and its transaction. Especially, in the special schools, increasing the participation of special children in culture, curricula, classroom activities and community participation like everyone else and making them feel confident is a challenging task. It may not be achieved without the help of the peers and friendship motivation.

Significance of the study

Friends are cognitive and affective resources, who foster self-esteem, develop motivation and expand the horizon of well-being. Motivation is the art of stimulating interest on a specific task in the classroom of a special school. Friends motivate one another that increase their chances of having successful outcomes in future, support in handling the stress and boost the level of self-esteem. In a classroom, the sociogram pattern may be helpful to identify the friendship motivation of students.

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Friendship can be motivated by pleasure (delectable), by usefulness (utile) and by virtue. In the first two friend's identity as a person is less important than pleasure and usefulness. Regarding the third mutual respect and admiration are more powerful and the friendship is enduring.

But in a classroom which consists of different students with a wide range of intelligence, emotional and social maturity, the special children invite certain limitations. The nature and severity of these limitations depend upon the type and degree of their challenges physically and mentally. Naturally, these limitations cause changes in behaviours. The special children feel that they are different from others. This feeling hampers the growth and development of their personality. An individual who is continually in conflict with and dissatisfied with self, may not be matured enough to play his role in life satisfactorily. Here, the dissatisfaction could be converted into satisfaction and happiness by availing a healthy classroom environment which is possible through better friendship initiatives and motivation among the peers. So, this study aims at finding out the friendship motivation of children with hearing and visually challenged.

Definition of the Terms

Friendship Motivation

By the term 'friendship motivation' the investigators mean obtaining and maintaining relationship with the students of same age and class in order to achieve the academic goal, academic help-seeking, self-disclosure, learning social competence and experiencing positive life events by the special children. It includes the dimensions namely sharing, help and inspiration.

Special Children

By the term special children the investigators mean early adolescents studying in IX and X classes at special schools with hearing impairment and visually challenged.

Objectives

- i. To find out the level of the friendship motivation of early adolescent children with hearing impairment and visually challenged;
- ii. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the early adolescent special children who are day-scholars and hostlers in their friendship motivation and its dimensions; and
- iii. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the children with hearing impairment and visually challenged in their friendship motivation and its dimensions.

Null Hypotheses

- i. There is no significant difference between the special children who are day-scholars and hostlers in their friendship motivation and its dimensions.

- ii. There is no significant difference between the children with hearing impairment and visual challenge in their friendship motivation and its dimensions.

Method and Tool Used

The population for the present study consists of children studying in special schools of Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari revenue districts of Tamil Nadu. The sample for the present study constitutes 200 randomly selected special children with hearing impairment and visually challenged. Out of which, 75 are visually challenged and 125 are hearing impaired. The Friendship Motivation Questionnaire prepared and validated by Anbu Selvi and Michael J Leo (2014) was employed to measure the Friendship motivation of special children with hearing impairment and visually challenged.

Findings

Objective 1: To find out the level of the friendship motivation of early adolescent children with hearing impairment and visually challenged.

Table 1

Level of the friendship motivation of early adolescent children with hearing impairment and visually challenged.

Friendship Motivation & its Dimensions	Category	Low		Moderate		High	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Sharing	Visually Challenged	11	14.7	60	80.0	4	5.3
	Hearing Impaired	26	21.0	84	66.9	15	12.1
Help	Visually Challenged	7	9.3	59	78.7	9	12.0
	Hearing Impaired	22	17.7	96	76.6	7	5.6
Inspiration	Visually Challenged	9	12.0	51	68.0	15	20.0
	Hearing Impaired	25	20.2	95	75.8	5	4.0
Friendship Motivation	Visually Challenged	6	8.0	52	69.3	17	22.7
	Hearing Impaired	23	18.5	94	75.0	8	6.5

The above table shows that among the visually challenged 8% have low, 69.3% have moderate and 22.7% have high level of friendship motivation. Regarding the hearing impaired 18.5% have low, 75% have moderate and 6.5% have high level of friendship motivation.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the special children who are day-scholars and hostlers in their friendship motivation and its dimensions.

Table 2

Mean difference between the special children who are day-scholars and hostlers in their friendship motivation and its dimensions.

Friendship Motivation & its Dimensions	Day Scholar (N=56)		Hosteller (N=144)		Calculated 't' value	Remark at 5% level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Sharing	31.46	3.273	32.73	3.811	2.348	S
Help	45.47	5.482	48.89	5.379	3.983	S
Inspiration	33.60	3.598	35.25	3.719	2.879	S
Friendship Motivation	110.53	10.478	116.88	10.552	3.833	S

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is a significant difference between the special children who are day-scholars and hostlers in their friendship motivation and its dimensions namely sharing, help and inspiration. While comparing the mean values the special children staying at hostel are better than the day-scholars in their sharing, help, inspiration and friendship motivation.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the children with hearing impairment and visually challenged in their friendship motivation and its dimensions.

Table 3

Mean difference between the children with hearing impairment and visually challenged in their friendship motivation and its dimensions.

Friendship Motivation & its Dimensions	Visually Challenged (N=75)		Hearing Impaired (N=125)		Calculated 't' value	Remark at 5% level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Sharing	31.93	3.164	31.75	3.655	0.360	NS
Help	47.12	5.425	46.02	5.771	1.337	NS
Inspiration	35.12	3.665	33.43	3.584	3.201	S
Friendship Motivation	114.17	10.32	111.19	11.06	1.889	NS

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the above table that there is no significant difference between the children with hearing impairment and visually challenged in their friendship motivation and its dimensions namely sharing and help. But there is a significant difference between the

children with hearing impairment and visually challenged in their friendship motivation and its dimension inspiration. While comparing the mean values of the children with hearing impairment and visually challenged, the visually challenged children are better than their counter parts in the dimension of inspiration.

Interpretation and Recommendations

The interpretations are made based on the findings from the above tables:

- a. The percentage analysis shows that the majority of the special children express moderate level of friendship motivation. This may be due to fact that the special children face constrains and hurdles in understanding their peers. Their gateway of knowledge challenge them to develop friendship.
- b. The special children staying at hostel show better friendship motivation than the day-scholars. This may be due to the attitude of the special children towards the hostel. They consider hostel as their primary place to interact with the peer group available throughout the day to cherish, share, help, reflect and inspire friends.
- c. The visually challenged children show better score in getting inspiration from friends than the children with hearing impairment. This may be due to the fact that the visually challenged children possess the oral or auditory input clear than the other type of inputs. So they may get inspired while chatting, sharing and exchange of knowledge in academics with friends.

The following are the recommendations given by the investigators based on the findings of the study.

- a. The residential facility in special schools may enhance friendship motivation and peer cooperation among the special children.
- b. The constructive classroom environment may be helpful for special children to interact with one another smoothly.
- c. The group activities and collaborative ventures could be thought of in special schools which may enhance their friendship motivation and to be successful in life.
- d. The life skill development and training programmes may be organized for the special children which may pave the way to practice the skills in the academic premises.
- e. The Individual Programme Plan (IPP) could be implemented which may help in bringing out the individual's academic, psychological and social needs.

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