

Relation ship between profession practice of
working with groups and support of some
attitudes of students with special need towards
activity practice

Summary

Problem of the Study:

Caring for people with special needs in general, and blind people in particular a critical and primary demand and a goal, has been asserted by heaven and religious laws, and also by the local, national and international codes. Hence, all possible efforts are exerted for caring for this category. They have formed a category that can never be neglected. Much attention has been paid to their welfare, rehabilitation, personality development, and benefiting- as possible- from their capacities and possibilities that can be invested so that they may become reliable to build and develop their societies, especially in developing countries which- for their progress and development- depend on human resources, where, human resources are more available than material ones.

When a handicap happens to someone, he/she losses many social roles. This drives him to depression, and feelings of powerlessness and inferiority. This affects his social status and behavior. Hence, he rejects people around him and they reject him too. For a blind person, the visual disability makes him unable to practice his normal life and roles in the family or society, which leads the blind person to alienation from others or to introversion and isolation.

One's disability of sight affects his different kinds of behavior, and the standard of experiences he gains from the external world. He depends - in gaining experiences and knowledge - on the rest four senses. This shows the importance of care and help provided to the blind people to be able to remedy all weaknesses resulted from their loss of sight.

Several studies have proved that visually impaired person- because of blindness- becomes unable to share a lot of activities with his/her peers. He tends to isolation and introversion, and avoids social relationships as a

way to take himself away from shame and embarrassment. This affects his normal growth and the extent of participation in different developmental processes.

The educational system is one of the systems that are interested in the blind welfare, and seeks the preparation, development, and rehabilitation of students with visual impairments. This is done through scientifically sophisticated programs specially designed for them to be able to acquire several experiences, information, and knowledge required for future and everyday life. Those programs attempts to utilize their capacities and possibilities that can be developed and invested in a way that achieve the development of their personality and making them positive persons in the society. Hence, they become able to participate effectively in facing and their society's and their own challenges. In this way, the school serves as a social institution and as a normal expansion of family's function of socialization. So, the school plays an important role in developing their personalities, providing them with welfare, meeting their needs, and treating their problems. The family alone has become unable to provide their children with the newly emerging experiences, skills, and specialization in different areas. Therefore, the school works on the rehabilitation of visually impaired student and the formation of their personalities through programs and activities- provided by schools- which integrally contributes in building different aspects of their personalities (physical, social, psychological, mental, and recreational...etc.).

Hence, it is evident to what extent the activities are important to train visually impaired students' senses, to make them acquire various experiences and skills, and to develop their abilities and possibilities in a way that achieves the effective building of their personalities and contributes in enhancing their performance and functioning. In addition,

these activities should meet their needs, wants, and leisure needs in a way that maximizes their enjoyment and recreation.

Moreover, activities may alleviate effects of visual impairments, remedy all deficits resulted from disability, decrease the blind student's isolation and introversion, and increase his/her ability to make good and successful social relationships, which makes him/her restore his/her self-confidence and trust in surrounding people and community.

Therefore, along with negative attitudes related to their social context, there are some factors that make the blind students refrain from participating in practicing the activities.

Therefore, blind students may become, in general, having negative attitudes towards themselves, surrounding people, and community; and particularly, towards practicing activities. This is because they are affected by painful, unpleasant experiences and situations; and the wrong familial and environmental attitudes.

Hence, working with groups is a very important method which aims to attempt to integrate persons with visual impairments into group life through a climate characterized by love, appreciation, respect and acceptance. Group work can provide them with real opportunities to develop their skills, to improve their performance, to be trained on group life, to assume responsibilities, to make decision within social context in which members can express themselves freely and spontaneously. They can express their opinions, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes in a way that helps to promote and support positives, and reject and modify negatives.

The reality asserts the findings of scientific studies and research. These findings point out that visually impaired persons have some negative attitudes whether towards themselves, people around them, or their community. They also have negative attitudes towards activities practice.

This is due to several factors. Of those factors are the consequences of the handicap, family's wrong attitudes towards the disability, and societal negative attitudes towards it.

From the point of view of some people, Social work profession, in general, and social group work, in particular, is a science of changing attitudes of individuals and groups. This is based upon the scientific fact that individuals are changeable if the appropriate opportunity for change that achieves their goals and wants is available.

Social group work method seeks to help group members to achieve their goals through meeting their wants and needs, and to help them to change through utilizing group with its relations and interactions during group practice of different activities. Those activities result in collective experiences during those interactions. This- in turn - has some impact on members' pinions, thoughts, and attitudes, which leads to changes in a member personality. One can say that social group work method has the appropriate means, techniques, strategies, and models, which can be used effectively by social workers according to this method's scientific and theoretical bases. This depends on social worker's skills and experiences of utilizing these strategies, means, and models in an effective way to achieve group goals.

In the light of professional practice of social group work, this practice can contribute to the development and support of the blind members' attitudes towards activity practice.

This has led the researcher to choose this study about developing and supporting the blind members' attitudes towards activity practice, modifying their negative attitudes towards it, reducing factors that have led to refrain from participating in activity practice, and helping to provide the suitable climate that can lead to the increase of members' rate of

participation in activity practice, taking into consideration that the attitude is the primary motive of behavior. This can be done through professional practice of social group work and using the program and the group for achieving group's objectives.

Accordingly, the problem of the study can be stated in the question ***"To what extent the professional practice of social group work can affect the support of members' attitudes towards activity practice"***.

Goals of the Study:

The study attempts to achieve the main goal which is **"supporting the blind members' attitudes towards activity practice"**.

From this main goal, some sub-goals stem as the following:

- 1- Increasing members' awareness of the importance of activities.
- 2- Changing members' negative situation towards activity practice.
- 3- Increasing members' rate of participation in activity practice.

Concepts and terminology:

The study deals with the following concepts:

- 1- The concept of professional practice of social group work.
- 2- The concept of the blind.
- 3- The concept of attitude.
- 4- The concept of activity.

Hypotheses of the Study:

The starting point of the study is its main hypothesis, which is, **"There is a statistically significant positive relationship between professional practice of social group work and supporting the blind students' attitudes towards activity practice"**.

The following sub-hypotheses stem from the main hypothesis:

- 1- There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the professional practice of social group work and developing the blind students' awareness of the importance of activities.
- 2- There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the professional practice of social group work and changing the blind students' negative situation towards activity practice.
- 3- There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the professional practice of social group work and developing the blind students' rate of participation in activity practice.

Methodological procedures:

- 1- *Type of the study:* quasi-experimental
- 2- *The Method used:* experimental method
- 3- *Tools of the study:*
 - a. Scale for students' attitudes towards activity practice,
 - b. Content analysis of periodic reports,
 - c. Periodic meetings,
 - d. Individual interviews,
 - e. Participant observation.

Fields of the Study:

- **Place:** The study was conducted at El-Nour school for the Blind
- **Sample:** all students in the secondary stage at El-Nour School for the Blind, who are of permanent residence in the residential department. They are 10 students.
- **Time:** in the period from 15th Oct. 2002 to 28th April 2003, which is the period of conducting the experiment.

Statistical Processing:

- 1- percentages
- 2- mathematical means
- 3- standard deviation
- 4- Pearson's correlation coefficient
- 5- Tests

Results of the Study:

The study proved the following results:

- ***The main hypothesis was verified:*** that "There is a statistically significant relationship between professional practice of social group work and supporting the blind students' attitudes towards activity practice"
- ***The following sub-hypotheses were proved to be true:***
 - 1- There is a statistically significant relationship between the professional practice of social group work and developing the blind students' awareness of the importance of activities.
 - 2- There is a statistically significant relationship between the professional practice of social group work and changing the blind students' negative situation towards activity practice.
 - 3- There is a statistically significant relationship between the professional practice of social group work and developing the blind students' rate of participation in activity practice.