

Effects of Seven Domains of Personal Well-being on Quality of Life of Persons with Visual Impairment and Blindness in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The quality of life (QoL) of people with disabilities is of interest to social researchers in most parts of the World. However, this is an area somewhat overlooked by society in general. It is obvious that the lifestyle of a person with visual disabilities may differ significantly compared to those who see the World with their own eyes. Additionally, persons with visual disabilities are known to experience specific challenges, unlike people who are sighted. Hence, the main objective of this study is to examine the extent to which the seven domains of the Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI), namely, the standard of living, achievements in life, community connectedness, close relationships, health, safety, and future security, impact the QoL of people with visual impairment and blindness. The sample of 64 participants, 34 blind and 30 visually impaired individuals, were obtained via purposive sampling from one among 25 districts, Hambanthota, in Southern Sri Lanka. Data collection was carried out through a tailored questionnaire, employed as a telephone survey, and through face-to-face interviews. The relationship between the seven domains of PWI and QoL was analyzed through standard statistical methods using SPSS. Further, demographic factors such as age and gender were also examined in the analysis. Results show that the majority of persons with visual impairment and blindness, in particular those in the age group 40-59, are satisfied with the seven domains of PWI. However, the PWI domain of 'future of security is of significant concern to this community. The results also assert that the 'community connectedness' and 'achievements in life' are two areas that need to be looked into by the policymakers for sustained QoL among persons with visual impairment and blindness.

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