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“Awareness about rights of older adults, attitude and perception towards ageism among the college students of Udupi district: A descriptive cross-sectional study”

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"ABSTRACT

A research study entitled: "Awareness about rights of older adults, attitude and perception towards ageism among the college students of Udupi district: A descriptive cross-sectional study."

Ageing is an unavoidable and irreversible biological process which has its own advancements beyond the human control. Globally the ratio of the elderly population is growing rapidly, because of the medical advancements and decreased fertility ratio. It is important to protect the rights of the older adults to reduce the mistreatment against them.

The objectives of the study were to determine the awareness level of the college students on the rights of the older adults as measured by a questionnaire on awareness of older adults' rights, identify the attitude towards ageism among the college students as measured by the Ageism Attitude scale, assess the perception towards ageism among the college students as measured by the Ageism Perception scale, find the correlation between the awareness level about the rights of the older adults and the attitude towards ageism, and to find the correlation between the awareness level about the rights of the older adults and the perception towards ageism among the college students.

The conceptual frame work of the study was based on the planned behaviour theory by Icek and Ajzan (2006).

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A descriptive cross-sectional study design was used for the study and the samples were the college students from Udupi district. Probability Proportional to Size sampling technique with multi stage sampling was used for selecting the degree/undergraduate colleges of Udupi district. Four taluks were selected out of the seven taluks from Udupi district for data collection by random method (a chit method). The remaining three taluks used for pre-testing, reliability and pilot study.

The data collection instruments used for the study were a Demographic Proforma, a questionnaire on awareness of older adults' rights, Ageism Attitude Scale (Standardized tool) (Duygu V, 2011), and Ageism Perception Scale. To establish the content validity, the tools were submitted to seven experts along with the criteria check list. Pre-testing of the tool was done among five subjects from Brahmavara taluk. The feasibility of the study design was revealed when the reliability of the tools was established by administering the questionnaires to 25 college students from Brahmavara taluk.

The administrative formal Permissions were obtained from the Dean, Manipal College of Nursing, MAHE, Manipal, Institutional Research Committee, Institutional Ethical Committee (IEC:903/2019), Permission from the Principal of each college, and obtained the CTRI Approval (CTRI/2020/02/023468). The data were collected from 700 students of various colleges from Udupi district. Purpose of the study was explained and received the informed consents from those who were willing to participate in the study.

For the interpretation, the data were plotted and summarized in a master data sheet and analysed based on the objectives of the study using inferential statistics and

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descriptive statistics. The SPSS 16.0 version was used for the analysis of the data. The results of the study showed that the awareness level of college students about the rights of older adults were poor (mean score 10.5 ± 2.688) as measured by the questionnaire on awareness regarding the rights of the older adults. The mean attitude score by ageism attitude scale was 73.64 ± 8.315 , which shows a positive attitude and a favourable perception towards ageism (mean score 56.31 ± 6.914) by ageism perception scale.

The study revealed a weak negative correlation between the awareness about the rights of the older adults and the attitude towards ageism ($r = -0.178$, $p=0.01$). Similarly, a weak negative correlation between the awareness about rights of the older adults and the perception towards ageism ($r = -0.108$, $p=0.01$).

Keywords: Ageism, Rights of older adults, Perception, Attitude, College students."