

NON- VERBAL COMMUNICATION PATTERNS AMONG VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS AGED 3-26 YEARS

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***Abstract_Objectives:** This study investigated non- verbal communication patterns produced by visually impaired individuals aged 3-26 years, and the extent of being influenced by chronological age, the age in which visual impairment had occurred, and the visual impairment severity variables.*

***Procedures :** In order to achieve study's objectives; 94 participants of parents and teachers of visually impaired students responded to Non-verbal Communication Patterns Scale, as well as, a video recording was taken to (36) visually impaired students aged 3-26 years. Means and standard deviations of parent and teacher responses were calculated along with One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Video recorded sessions were analyzed and coded in observation forms by two neutral raters.*

***Results:** The results of conducted ANOVA revealed the presence of statistically significant differences in the visually impaired participants' production of non-verbal communication patterns on two variables: Face expressions of emotions and Para language sounds due to chronological age, while there were no statistically significant differences on body language variable. Results of Schaffe's Test revealed that 6-12 years age category had the most production of face expressions of emotions and Para language sounds, while 3-5 years age category had the least production in these domains. The video recorded analysis results revealed the presence of differences in production means of visually impaired students of non-verbal communication patterns due to the age in which visual impairment had occurred, and to the severity of visual impairment variables; thus, those with low vision and acquired visual impairment had more production of non- verbal communication patterns in comparison to those with blindness and congenital visual impairment. Study results were discussed; recommendations for further studies were expressed.*

***Key words:** Visual impairment, face expressions, body language, para language sounds.*