

“Eye Care and Blindness Literacy”: The Need for Defining a New Construct

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Globally, at least 2.2 billion people experience near or distant vision problems, or blindness. This includes people with long term vision impairment, issues related to at least one billion of them could either have been prevented or have not been addressed. Lack of awareness about eye health, blindness, and the life led by the sightless contribute much to this regrettable situation. Having recognized the knowledge gap in literacy and social research, a comprehensive research study was carried out to characterize a new construct called ‘Eye Care and Blindness Literacy’. As the first step, this paper establishes the need for characterizing such a new construct. It argues that components of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF model) of the World Health Organization could be successfully adapted to conceptualise this multidimensional construct. The characterisation of this ‘Eye Care and Blindness Literacy’ construct would help to improve public awareness on the issue. Thereby, the eye health and wellbeing of sighted people in general would be improved. This also could be used to promote social inclusion of this vulnerable community, which would in turn make a substantial contribution towards enhancing the quality of life of people with visual impairment and blindness.

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