ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted with an aim to study the perceptions of today's Youth towards the Elderly. The study also attempts to promote the interaction between the Youth and the Elderly through the development of a module.

The study was carried out in Old Age Homes and Day Care Centres for the elderly all over Mumbai. The sample consisted of 50 Youth volunteers. The module was implemented on all the 50 Youth volunteers. 6 sessions were administered. The duration of each session was approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes. Besides these formal 6 sessions, the Youth were also instructed to spend approximately 15 hours with Elderly in their own families or in their societies.

The tools used in the study were Pretests and Posttests and the Module. Pretest was administered to study the perception of the Youth towards the Elderly and to study the pattern of interaction between them prior to the implementation of the module. The perceptions of the Youth towards the Elderly were then compared with the scores in the Posttest forms that were administered after the implementation of the module. Data was analyzed using Mean scores, Standard Deviation scores and z-test.

Before the implementation of the module, it was studied that the Youth did not have a very positive attitude towards the Elderly. This was also apparent by their initial hesitation in becoming a part of the study. Their views were based on their personal minimal interaction with the Elderly. Findings revealed that the module had a positive impact on the overall perceptions of the Youth towards the Elderly. The Youth volunteers were able to shed their prejudices against the Elderly and
were keener on increasing their interaction with them. The number of respondents having a positive attitude towards the Elderly increased by 23.37 % and those having a negative attitude decreased by 11.93 %. It was also noticed that the number of respondents who were initially unsure of taking a positive or a negative stand became more confident of themselves.

In each aspect of the questionnaire, an improvement of the attitudes of the Youth could be seen clearly. The Youth themselves stated that after working with the Elderly, they were able to understand that the negative feelings and stereotypes they had for the Elderly were only due to the reason that they had limited or no contact with the Elderly and their views were purely based on hearsay.

Overall, the module was useful both for the Youth and the Elderly and also for the institutions where the module was carried out.