

STUDY RELATED TO THE EMPATHY AMONG YOUNG GENERATION

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Abstract

Problem Statement. This research proposes to highlight a well-known problem which does not receive a practical approach about the impact of volunteering and motric activity on the development of empathy.

Purpose of Study: The research was achieved at Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti on a group composed of 91 students (boys and girls). I mention that the group was aleatory selected. The only condition of selection was the attendance of the same university. Attending the same university concludes that most of students have a lot of interests, aspirations and hobbies in common.

Research Methods: The literature review method; The observation method; The sociological research (conversation, questionnaire etc.); The mathematical statistics method; The graphoanalytical method.

Findings: The research has started from the theory that young people are emotionally closed off and do not empathize enough with the others. Empathy is an essential emotion in the process of socialization and understanding human nature. It shows that empathy can be stimulated by sporting activities or volunteering.

Conclusions: To conclude, physical activities such as Physical Education (P.E) classes or team sports flourish empathy while volunteering is seen as a binding agent between motric activities and understanding the others.

Keywords: empathy: students, motric activities, volunteering.

Introduction

The empathy is essential in socialization and understanding human needs. The empathy means a variety of emotional states and is starting with the willingness to care of somebody, wishing to help them and it is continuing to the point you experience feelings which perfectly match with the others.

Therefore, it is believed that empathy is a vector among young people. When people decide to develop themselves and want to involve in social life, they search for activities which develop empathy such as volunteering. Whereas empathy signify a connection to community in order to feel its pulse and learn about emotions. The proof of community connection should be demonstrated by doing something big for the society! How can we proof that we really care about it? The only answer that crossed our minds is volunteering, a simple act at our fingertips. But how can we make an agreement between empathy and volunteering when empathy completely disappeared from this algorithm!? How can we bring them back together? Who can help us to unite them? Where is the best place to highly develop

“Since empathy involves understanding emotional states of other people, the way of categorize derives from the manner of understanding and use of the emotions.” (Brebeanu R., p.2).

these states? Which tool might help us and it is not harmful!? These are the questions that followed me from the beginning of this research. Why some of the subjects are involving in community work and others are not? Why are they extremely happy at physical education classes? What is the structure of these people? Which part of their personality determines the involving among volunteering work?! To lend a helping hand and raise his classmate from the ground. Then, I tried to find a place where the students feel free, without borders, rolls, marks, a place where they accept a debate about emotions without any kind of fear. Where can I talk face to face and spend a lot of time with them?! I found out (this was initially a supposition which becomes a revelation during my research) that there is no other better moment and

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place than the P.E (physical education) class. Here, it seems that they had the chance to learn about human limitations and the fact that these limits are not an obstacle, but a natural state. Over time, they understand that nobody ignores them and on the contrary, they are appreciated and encouraged to go forward for their own enjoyment, health and emotional transformation, to be accepted as they are

Aims of the research

We propose the following aims according to the topic:

- The conception and application of one questionnaire which provides meaningful details/connections about empathy during free-time activities and motric activities.
- The group observation and its compounds.

Description of research objectives:

- A randomized selection of the subjects for the application of questionnaire.
- The application of a questionnaire titled *Empathic aspects among young generation*.
- The identification of group structure.

Research hypothesis

The empathy is essential in socialization and understanding human nature. The research has started from the theory that young people are emotionally closed off and do not empathize enough with the others. Therefore, we believe that through

Operational approach and involved subjects

The research was achieved at Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti on a group composed of 91 students (boys and girls). I mention that the group

Research methods

1. The literature review method (the study of Romanian and foreign literature);

Presentation and interpretation of the results

Before starting the actual research, it is required to mention that this study is conclusive with a pilot opening. The research releases wide perspectives. In this study we started from the idea that young people are completely hermetically sealed and very little empathic about emotions. The empathy is an essential in socialization and

without being considered weak. All these things will lead the students to a final cognition or a revelation: the self-acceptance. The self-acceptance is the release of empathy because it is easier to accept and help the others after you had learned to love and accept yourself. From this point to the use of empathy in communication and socialization is just a small step.

- The identification of possible differences occurred in our group of subjects.
- The identification of possible causes that lead to item differentiation in our group of subjects.

- The identification of the causes that lead to group layering.
- The hypothesis analysis where we find mentality differences regarding empathy.

short debates about empathy during physical education classes and motric activities, the mentality can be modified. The physical education classes initiate the awareness of emotional needs and a possible unblock.

was aleatory selected. The only condition of selection was the attendance of the same university. Attending the same university concludes that most of students have a lot of interests, aspirations and hobbies in common.

2. The observation method, the survey, the questionnaire titled *Empathic aspects among young generation*;

3. The mathematical statistics method;

4. The graphoanalytical method;

understanding the others. It is very important in human relations. We truly believe that empathy, which is absolutely vital for society, can be stimulated by physical activities or other actions that stimulate emotion. Why do we choose to talk about sports and motric activities!? I have selected this subject, the implication of sport and movement because this kind of education is based on fairplay, experiences, emotions and feelings. The bitter taste

of failure, a helping hand to your team-player showing empathy when is down generate human chemistry. To discover the important aspects of emotion I have decided to achieve a research at the level of student groups attending P.E (physical education) class. Based on a questionnaire I have tried to discover their interests, their emotional state and above all, their feelings related to the group belonging to. Considering those listed above, I have used a questionnaire by Alina Blagoi, a standardised survey in order to observe the level of empathy manifestation in relations with others. The survey was composed of 25 items. The first 20 items are those described by Alina Blagoi to which I have added 5 more recognition and characterisation items of the group and its subjects. As I already

The first five items receiving recognition signs (a,b,c,d) refer to: sport practice among youngsters between 5-19 years old; what students do in their free time; the affiliation to a student association; continued participation to P.E (physical education) classes; involvement in the social life.

The first 5 items are not scored while 20 items are scored from 1 to 10, where 1 (clearly doesn't fit me) and 10 (fits me the most). The first 5 items are not scored, they will be different and will be calculated in contrast with the 20 items. At the end of the quiz we will obtain a mark from 1 to 10. Depending on the type of question/utterance the scoring is different, 1 (clearly doesn't fit me) and 10 (fits me the most) (Blagoi A., 2016, p.1)

For questions (1,2,3,4,10,11,12,14,15,19,20) without asterix the scoring is from 1 to 10.

For utterances with asterix (5*,6*,7*,8*,9*,13*,16*,17*,18*), the scoring will be deducted from 11.

For example, if the item 18 obtained 8 points, the score that enters in the final calculation is 11-8=3.

The formula used to determine the results of this research according to Blagoi A. is:

$$1+2+3+4+(11-5)+(11-6)+(11-7)+(11-8)+(11-9)+10+11+12+(11-13)+14+15+(11-16)+(11-17)+(11-18)+19+20 = \text{final score}$$

mentioned, the survey was standardised, structured in the following way: 20 items specifically developed to highlight the aspects of empathy and its reflection among young people's personality. I have also added 5 items to found additional information about students interests of this research. Therefore, the survey had an essential triple stratification of the study in order to underline the results of empathy, its influence in the socio-emotional progress of young generation and their involvement in the community life: 11 items which highlight the evidence of empathy; other 9 items which describe the introvert side without empathy and are used to an equal extent as an instrument of checking the truthfulness of survey's answers; to all of these items I have added 5 recognition signs.

The research was realized step by step:

- 1st stage— or the investigation stage
- 2nd stage— questionnaire implementation;
- 3rd stage— scores, tables and the analysis and interpretation of scores;

1st stage- the investigation stage of the subjects and groups. I have accomplished this investigation in order to possess as many information as possible about the group. Thanks to this investigation, the subjects are well informed about the experiment. I have pleased the subjects to be sincere, I have also pointed out that this survey is not an intelligence test and the results are not recorded.

2nd stage— questionnaire implementation:

After investigation and questionnaire implementation I have noticed major items differences among the group. The scores were centralised and were presented according to the first table:

- a number of 36 students, a rate of 39.57% have never practiced any kind of sports.
- a number of 55 students, a rate of 60.43% have practiced a team sport (basketball, handball, volleyball) when they were 5-19 years old.

Table no.1: Statistic scores recorded after implementing the questionnaire.

Questions for the group composed of 91 students:	Answers %	
	Yes	No
a. Have you ever practiced a sport when you were 5-19 years old? What sport?	36students- 39.56% Football, basketball, handball, volleyball	55students-60.44%
b. Do you often attend P.E (physical education) classes?	"Yes"-31 students answered with "yes"- a rate of 34.06%	"Not often"- 60 students chose this answer- a rate of 65.94%
c. Are you a member of Student's Association of U.P.G.?	35 students answered "Yes"-a rate of 38.46%	56 students are not involved in the Association- a rate of 61.54 %
d. What are your free-time activities ?	*31 students answered that they:go jogging, do exercises, play basketball, football, do volunteering work, go walking, listen to music, read a book etc- a rate of 34.06%	1*. 26 students answered that they- go for a walk, listen to music, sometimes go jogging in the park – a rate of 28.57% 2*.34 students answered that they: - play on the phone, play on the computer, watch TV, movies etc.- a rate of 37.37%
e. Are you involved in the community life?	30 students are volunteering- a rate of 32.96 %	61students answered that they are not involved- a rate of 67.04 %

The first stage was the investigation stage of the subjects and groups in order to obtain specific information about them. We consider that the 24 items questionnaire was pertinent for this research. We have included some tricky questions throughout survey. The tricky questions that confirmed the truthfulness of the answers are marked with the following numbers and asterixes (5*,6*,7*,8*,9*,13*,16*,17*,18*). These questions brought us a well-structured group in two typologies:

- Subjects that practiced sport when they were 5-19 years old. (a rate of 39.56%- 36 students);
- Subjects that never practiced any kind of sport. (a rate of 60.44% -55 students).

3rd stage– the stage of scores, tables and the analysis and interpretation of scores for the subjects divided in two separate groups. These two groups can be generically named:

- Active subjects(36 students -39.56%);
- Passive subjects, sedentary (55 students-60.44%).

As I will discover, the existence of two groups was a hazardous affirmation because after staging the scores I have noticed three different groups. This discovery was visible due to **question d.** and its answers from the questionnaire. These answers brought us a triple stratification of the group (for confirmation, please check the information found in table no.1&2, **question d.**- *Score staging and empathic typologies*):

Table no.2: Statistic scores recorded after implementing the questionnaire and empathic typologies

Scores between 141-200 points	Scores between 81-140 points	Scores between 20-80 points
25students	30 students	36 students

a rate of 27.47 %	a rate of 32.97 %	a rate of 39.56 %
Typology- <i>Emotional</i> empathy 27.47 %	Typology- <i>Compassionate</i> empathy 32.97 %	Typology- <i>Cognitive</i> empathy 39.56 %

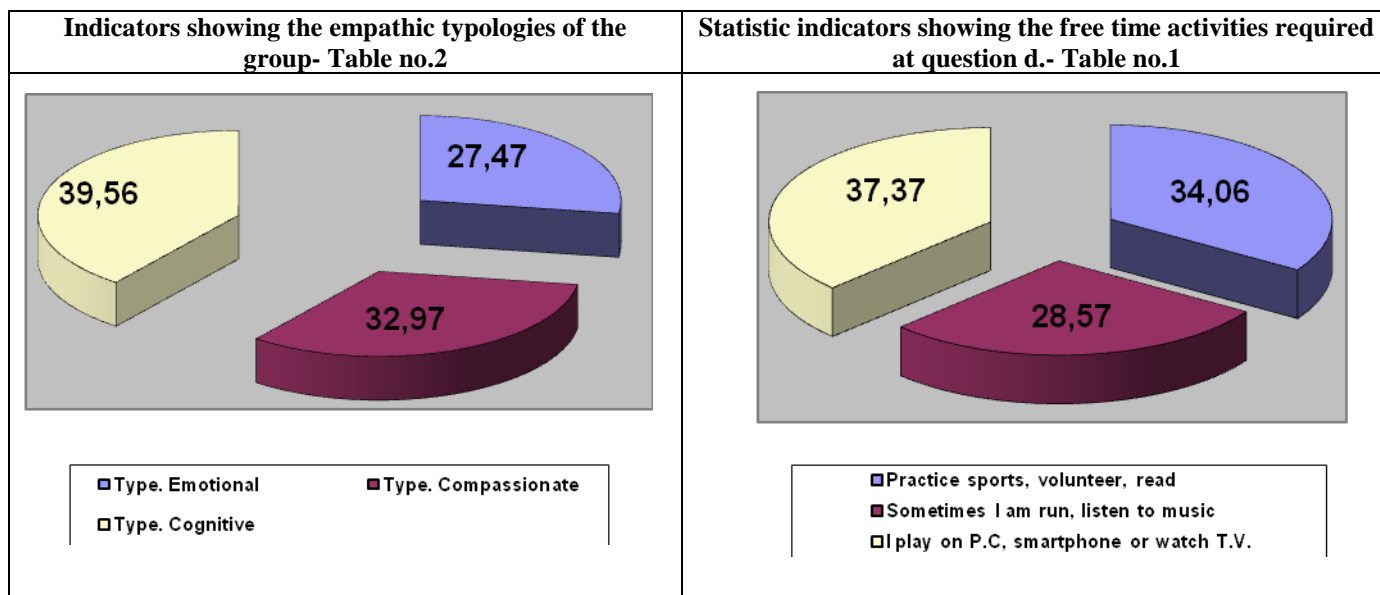


Chart no.1. The comparative presentation of indicators which define the group's triple stratification and empathic typologies according to data presented in table 1&2.

Thanks to the scores recorded and according to Popa E., (2019,p.2), we were able to identify the empathic typologies of our subjects. The research method developed by Blagoi A.(2016,p.2) helped us to classify the group. Based on the scores recorded, we obtained three distinct groups shown as in table no.2 and chart no.1. We analysed and interpreted the data through these results and we noticed that the group was divided in three levels with three distinct typologies, as it follows:

1st level- students who scored between 20 and 80 points, corresponding to *Cognitive* empathy (36 students- a rate of 39.56% of the total);
2nd level- students who scored between 81 and 140 points, corresponding to *Compassionate* empathy (30 students- a rate of 32.97% of the total);
3rd level- students who scored between 140 and 200 points, corresponding to *Emotional* empathy (25 students- a rate of 27.47% of the total);
 We described every typology according to each level for a better understanding of the empathic behaviour, the motivation of this behavior among young generation:

- **1st level- Cognitive empathy group-** the subjects who scored between 20 and 80pointsbelong to the Cognitiveempathy group. These subjects are described as reserved, resilient, cold, less empathic individuals who desire to express their opinion without thinking about the emotional consequences of their words. Their own goals are significant when

making a decision. This type of subjects are perceived as introverts and correspond to the *Cognitive* empathy typology, "...they understand somebody else's thoughts and emotions in a rational way rather than emotional" (Popa E., 2019, p.2). According to the answers at **question d.** the subjects of 2*group have chosen as free time activities the following: using the computer, the

smartphone or watching the TV (as shown

- **2nd level- Compassionate empathy group** -the subjects who scored between 81-140 points belong to the Compassionate empathy group. These individuals are described by Blagoi A. as good listeners. They are able to develop close relations and they can easily identify others emotions and feelings. These subjects manage information in a way that helps establishing a favorable climate not only for communication, but also for reaching their goals (they have good group management skills in a positive manner). This category of people are seen as thoughtful, nice, capable of a kind, but firm sustenance of their opinion. Another characteristic of this group is the elegance in expressing their thoughts taking into account the impact of their words.They are considered to have an analytical behaviour and they identify with one's difficulties and needs (this could be a weak spot of the compassionate empathy group). It is obvious that these subjects perfectly match with the Compassionate empathy group, they "...help the others to deal with the situation and emotions, they mediate and take action" (Popa E., 2019, p.2). This means that the subjects are not passive, they are good listeners and develop close relations with the others. Focusing on the indicators analysis shown in tables 1&2 and chart no.1, we observe that at the question d. (What are your free-time activities ?) the subjects replied that they go jogging, do exercises, play basketball,
- **3rd level- Emotional empathy group-** the subjects who scored between 141 and 200 points belong to the Emotional empathy group. These subjects are described by Blagoi A., as "intelligent, delicate, caring individuals who are in a strong relation with the others with whom they easily connect and communicate." Sometimes, these features are a drawback, especially when the self confidence barely exists.This category of subjects are seen as being immature "...they are feeling someone else's emotion" (Popa E., 2019, p.2). The drawbacks of this category attract the denial of their goals. It is known that the subjects of the Emotional empathy group express naivity in their relation with other people.

in Table no.1).

football, do volunteering work, go walking, listen to music, read a book. This percentage of subjects who answered as above is close to the percentage of subjects who replied to question a. (No, I never ever have practiced sports when I was 5-19 years old). We can understand that practicing sports and games requiring rules, discipline and fairplay educate children to respect and help the others. Later, these children will become empathic adults ready to give a helping hand to people in need. These type of people will most likely to enroll as volunteers.We also demonstrated there is a strong connection between motric activities, as sports games which develop the team spirit, empathy and volunteering work. Based on the discipline formed by a team sport (item d*) young people establish networking, communication, helping the others,aspects which activate children's empathic feelings. Determined by these feelings the adult will help the others without any benefits. Something happens on the inside, a maturity feeling of "emotional fairplay" is the key of the research.Thanks to the discussions about empathyduring P.E (physical education) classes and early motric activities (*playing sports games between 5-19 years old) we have the chance to change mentalities and pay attention to the emotional need. An eventual empathy release can be materialised in volunteering activities.

My advice for this type of subjects is to detach themselves from someone else's feelings, be more mature because the empathy is essential in the socialisation process and in the understanding human needs. Empathy is aided by the interaction between the emotional brain (limbic system) and the cognitive one (the cortex). The main target of our research is to present how students can be stimulated to get involved in different actions and spend quality time in order to develop themselves.The research has started from the hypothesis that young people are emotionally closed off and do not empathize enough with the others, but generating constructive dialogues about

empathy during P.E (physical education) classes and by practicing team sports since childhood, the mentality will be modified (*this change we have already seen in the case of students who practiced team sports between 5-19 years old). These kind of activities had a major impact on our group, they unlock emotions and initiate the emotional awareness as normal aspects of

their lives. Based on all of these studies and researches, we intended to develop a stimulation and motivation strategy for students in order to enroll in volunteering activities.

This research is still opened for researchers with the possibility of interfering and adding innovations.

Conclusions

The empathy is essential in socialization and understanding human needs;

The empathy means a variety of emotional states;

The research has started from the theory that young people are emotionally closed off and do not empathize enough with the others;

The main objective of the research is to find different ways to encourage students to be volunteer and to spend quality time in order to develop themselves.

The research has started from the hypothesis that young people are emotionally closed off and do not empathize enough with the others, but generating constructive dialogues about empathy

Physical activities as Physical Education (P.E) classes or team sports flourish empathy while

during P.E (physical education) classes and by practicing team sports since childhood, the mentality will be modified (*this change we have already seen in the case of students who practiced team sports between 5-19 years old, as shown in table 1&2 and chart no.1). These kind of activities had a major impact on our group, they unlock emotions and initiate the emotional awareness as normal aspects of their lives, confirming the research hypothesis.

We intend to develop a stimulation and motivation strategy for students in order to enroll them in volunteering activities.

This research is still opened for researchers with the possibility of interfering and adding innovations.

volunteering is seen as a binding agent between motric activities and understanding the others.

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