

SELF CONCEPT OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND SIGHTED STUDENTS OF BARHAMPUR BLOCK OF NAGAON DISTRICT OF ASSAM

-A CASE STUDY

Anju Moni Sarma

Research scholar, Department of Education

Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankardeva Viswavidyalaya, Nagaon, Assam

Abstract: *The research study entitled 'Self concept of visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam-A case study' has been conducted to find out the difference in self concept of visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with the objective to know the difference of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept. The researcher had used Dr. Raj kumar Saraswat's Self Concept Questionnaire obtained from National Psychological Corporation, Agra, India. The scale consists of 48 items of 6 self concept dimensions-physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual. As it is a case study, the entire populations were considered as sample. Same numbers of sighted students were taken as sample. To find out the difference of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students z test was implied and found that there existed significant difference between Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam.*

Keywords: Self concept, Visually Impaired, Sighted Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education, all the way through life, is based on the four key pillars: "learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be", which all together shape an individual as a whole (International Commission on Education for Twenty-first Century - UNESCO, 1996). So all individual learn to know, to do, to live together and to be in the

process of education. Education shapes our mind. Education is a life-long process by which an individual shapes himself/herself gradually and gracefully to the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual dimensions of life. Hence, in the process of education, one should be careful enough to shape himself/herself so that they can contribute something to the society. Each individual should try to know themselves rather than others by scrutinizing through SWOC analysis, (Henzi, 2007 and Gordon, 2000) i.e. the feeling that 'who am I' the secret of self concept.

A visually handicapped child may be defined as an individual whose vision is of no use for the purpose of education or normal learning processes (Paul, 1978).

Sighted adolescents are those who are free from any physical deficiencies with regard to eye sight and continue their studies, co-curricular activities and day to activities with sound physique and mind.

II. SELF CONCEPT

Self concept is the image that one has about himself/herself. In childhood, the self concept tends to be tied to concrete or physical things like looks, items and skill levels etc. As the child grows, they learn about things like intrinsic characteristics and psychological differences due to the fact that they now have a larger network or peers and mentors to compare themselves with. In later life (teenager-adulthood) the self concept changes into a more nebulous idea that is organized by what is relevant to the individual.

Rogers (1951) defined self-concept as 'An organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissible to awareness. It is compared of such elements as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities, the percepts and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment, the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects and the goals and ideals which are perceived as having positive or negative valence'.

Rogers (1951) believed that there were three different parts of self concept:

1. Self esteem: What one thinks about himself/herself.
2. Self Image: How one sees himself/herself.

3. Ideal self: Who we would like to be.

As the age group for the present study has been considered between 13 to 18 years a brief description on self concept of adolescent is presented here.

As a child reaches adolescence, interaction with members of a group helps the adolescent to clarify his self concept(Kakati 2012) By now the children are well aware of their good and bad traits and they appraise these in terms of similar traits in their friends. The changes an adolescent sees in his physical self and the new relationships he is now forming along with the changes in hormones plays a significant role in how he feels about himself.

III. VISUALLY IMPAIRED

‘Blindness’ refers to a condition where a person suffers from any of the following conditions, namely:

- a. Total absence of sight; or
- b. Visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (snellen) in the better eye with correcting lenses; or
- c. Limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of 20 degree or worse;

Person with low vision’ means a person with impairment of visual functioning even after treatment or standard refractive correction but who uses or is appropriate assistive device (Persons with Disabilities Act,1995).

Blindness, like most of the socio-economic problems of the country, is a problem of colossal magnitude. The World Health Organization defines blindness as visual acuity of less than 3/60, or a corresponding visual field loss to less than 10^0 , in the better eye with the best possible correction. Visual impairment includes both low vision and blindness (Vision 20-20, WHO).

From educational point of view blinds are those who can learn to read large print or regular print when magnified under special conditions or with the help of a magnifying glass (Sankar ,1976) . Chauhan, (1989) says, hereditary and development disorders in children are one of the major causes of visual impairment. Amongst the various causative factors

responsible for visual impairment, infections, injuries, malnutrition particularly vitamin A deficiency (Xerophthemia) and refractive anomalies including muscle imbalance are important.

IV. SIGHTED STUDENTS

Sighted people have the ability to see. This word is usually used to contrast people who can see with people who are blind. Thus in the present study the word 'sighted students' is used to refer the students who do not have anomalies with regard to eye sight.

Sighted students are those who are free from any physical deficiencies with regard to eye sight and continue their studies, co-curricular activities and day to day activities with sound physique and mind. For the purpose of present study the students from class VIII to class IX whose eye sight is normal for their academic, co-curricular and day to day the activities are considered as sighted students.

V SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Self Concept is an important aspect of human development which is very essential in personality development and to know how one feels about themselves. In case of Visually Impaired development of proper Self Concept is not so easy and parents and peers should help them in developing Self Concept. There are some differences in Self-Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students (Gromno and Augestad 2000 , Halder and Datta 2012 , Mishra and Singh 2012, Rosenblum 2000).

In this regard investigator has reviewed some related literature to know about theoretical framework of the subject matter and to know what has been done and what is yet to be done in this field. For that, investigator has reviewed some study conducted by Bharathi (1984) , Kef (2002) , Prasad (1982) , Sarswat (1982) , Bhagyavathy (1983) Lifshiz (2007) , Basavanna

(1976) , Kalita (2011) etc and observed that not many studies have been conducted to study the difference between visually impaired and sighted with regard to self concept in physical, psychological, social, temperamental, educational, moral and Intellectual dimensions. The inconsistencies in the results of different studies were also noticed.

Here arises the significance of a study in this aspect which is very important to build an individual's personality. These days the attitude towards children with special needs is also changing a lot. They are no longer considered as dependent, helpless and inferior (Parvin, 2015). The typical stereotype which was very predominant in the previous days has really been changed and so investigator wants to observe how these changes influence their self concept. Further, the investigator has not found any such studies in the Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam.

VI. Statement Of The Problem

Hence to study about the said problem, the investigator decided to entitle the study as 'Self Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam- A Case Study.'

VII. OBJECTIVE

Objective of the study is to know the difference of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

VIII. Hypothesis

Hypothesis of the study is there is no significant difference of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

IX. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Self Concept

For the purpose of present study self-concept is defined as individual's perceptions about physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual dimensions of the students of Barhampur S.S.I. Higher Secondary School and Barhampur Girls' High School.

Visually Impaired Students

For the purpose of present study visually impaired students are those whose vision is of no use for the purpose of academic, co-curricular and normal day to day life activities whose age is of 13-18 years and who are studying in Srimanta Sankar Mission Andha Vidyalaya, Barhampur ,Nagaon.

Sighted Students

For the purpose of present study Sighted Students are those whose vision is worth for academic, co-curricular and normal learning processes and other day to day activities, whose age is between 13-18 years and who are studying in Barhampur SSIHS School and Barhampur Girls' High School.

X. DELIMITAION OF THE STUDY

There are various aspects of cognitive, conative and affective domain with regard to Visually Impaired children about which investigator can do extensive study. But due to time constraint, the present study is delimited to assess only Self Concept apart from the other aspects of human behaviour. The study is delimited to only one Blind School of Barhampur block of Nagaon District of Assam and that too to the students of age group between 13 to 18 years.

XI. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Self concept of visually impaired children are not much available and thus investigator felt the need to do extensive study in this field .Yet the investigator collected and reviewed some literature relevant to the topic. Many studies have been carried out on visual

impairment, but few studies have been done on self concept on visually impaired and sighted students.

In this regard investigator has reviewed some studies carried out by Obiakor (1990), Huurre (1998) , kef (2002) , Shapiro (2005), Al-Zyouidi(2007), Lifshiz (2007) , Bowen(2010a),Kalita (2011), Dhull and Choudhury(2011), Bolat (2011), Santoshi Halder and Dutta(2012) , Mishra and Singh(2012), etc . From the research studies it was found that-

Majority of the adolescent had high self esteem who were generally happy did not feel lonely and most of them had accepted the complications of their impairment. Sighted and visually impaired adolescent exhibit similar self concept profile although the scores of the participant with visual impairment were higher in all domains except their father's conception towards them. The self concepts of normal and visually impaired adolescent students do not differ and the normal and visually impaired adolescent boys and girls are also same with respect to self concept. Majority of visually impaired students has high level of self concept which was followed by low level of self concept. In contrary to this another finding showed that a large number of visually impaired students were found to have low self concept which was followed by poor self concept and high self concept respectively. Totally visually challenged female adolescent are found to be better on adjustment as compared to totally visually challenged male adolescent . Difference in self concept scores for normally sighted and visually impaired students were small and provided little support for the notion that visually impaired students have lower self concept than sighted peers.

Various studies have been done on self concept of sighted students in different aspect by Basavana (1976) , Chouhan (1982) Prasad (1982) Saraswat (1982) , Bhagyavatry (1983) , Kulashreshtha (1983), Kling (1999), Vorbach (2002) , Zakriski (2005), Rose(2007), De Goede (2009), Lawler (2011), Al-Bahrani (2013) etc. conducted several studies on self concept of sighted students in different dimensions. An overview of the reviewed literature is given below:

Persons who perceived themselves as having his self confidence had higher general mental ability than those who perceived themselves as low self Confidence. There is no

relationship between the factors of self concept and the dimension of sociometric structure and the factors which influence the stability of self concept are anxiety, insecurity, self role incongruence and self satisfaction. Boys self concept was positively and significantly related to political and religious values and girls' self concept was positively and significantly related to home , health , social , emotional , school as well as total adjustment. Global self concept of boys was significantly different from that of girls. In total self concept boys and girls differed significantly and girls were found to be higher in physical, social and moral dimension. In a study to investigate different level of self actualization among post graduate students who perceived themselves as belonging to a high level of self actualization were directed by more internal than by external reinforcement in comparison to those who perceived themselves as belonging to low level of self actualization. Value orientation affected the concept of self in adolescent, value orientation had a positive affinity with self concept among female adolescent under different level of interest and interest played an important role in the growth of self concept among adolescent. There is no age difference in self concept with respect to adjustment and no significant age differences were found in personal, social & orientation aspect of self concept in the real self concept. Academic achievement, home background had significant effect on self concept. Academic achievement and school background had not significant relationship with feeling of interiority. Females have a higher use of isolation, self-blame, wishful thinking, rumination and crying, while males rely on physical activity and higher use of aggression. Girls scored significantly higher than males on body dissatisfaction, with 80.8% of the girls reporting a desire to alter their body size.

The researcher had used Dr.Raj kumar Saraswat's Self Concept Questionnaire obtained from National Psychological Corporation, Agra, India. The scale consists of 48 items of 6 self concept dimensions-physical, social, temperamental, educational, moral and intellectual. In each category total 8 items are included and each item is provided with five alternatives. The five items are provided with 5, 4, 3,2 and 1 marks respectively from first alternative. The summated score provides the total self concept ranging from high self concept to low self concept including 5 levels. As it is a case study, the entire populations were considered as sample. Same numbers of students were taken as sample. In case of sighted students sample was selected by adopting purposive random sampling method. Altogether 90 students were

selected with 45 visually impaired and 45 sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam.

The analysis and interpretation of data was done by testing the formulated hypotheses. In order to analyze the objective the central tendencies like mean, median, mode, divergence from normality like skewness and kurtosis scores and dispersion like standard deviation were used to know the level of self concept of visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam. To find out the difference of visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference of visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept.

In order to investigate the objective of the study, the central tendencies like mean, median, mode, divergence from normality like skewness and kurtosis scores and dispersion like standard deviation of self concept of visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam were used to as shown in table no 4.5,1

Table 4.5.1

Self Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur block Nagaon district of Assam

| Gender | N | Mean | Median | Mode | Skewnwss | Kurtosis | Standard Deviation |
|----------------------------|----|------|--------|------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Visually Impaired Students | 45 | 162 | 165 | 162 | -.784 | -.113 | 17.80 |
| Sighted Students | 45 | 169 | 173 | 176 | -1.14 | 1.28 | 19.38 |

Source: Field Survey, 2018

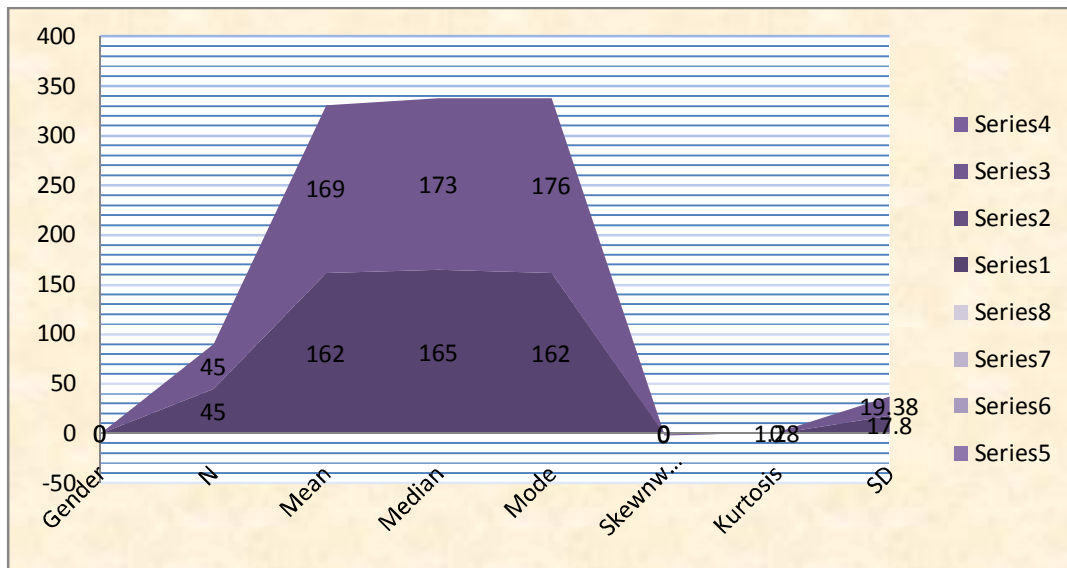


Figure 4.5.1 Self Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur block
 Nagaon district of Assam

The table 4.5.1 and figure 4.5.1 depict that the mean, median, mode, skewness, kurtosis and standard deviation of scores of self concepts of visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam are found to be 162, 165, 130, -.784, -.113 and 17.80. The above table 4.1.8 shows that the value of skewness was -.784. Thus score shows that the distribution of visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam is negatively skewed and majority of visually impaired students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam scored high in SPSS 14 scale. Again the value of kurtosis for the sample was -.113 which was lower than the normal curve (.263). It indicates that the distribution was leptokurtic in nature i.e. More peaked than the normal curve.

The table 4.5.1 and figure 4.5.1 also show that the mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis and standard deviation of scores of self concepts of sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam are found to be 169, 173, 176, -1.14, 1.28 and 16.67. The above table 4.1.8 shows that the value of skewness was -1.14. Thus score shows that the distribution of sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam is negatively skewed and majority of sighted students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam scored high in SPSS 14 scale. Again the value of kurtosis for the sample was 1.28 which was

higher than the normal curve (.263). It indicates that the distribution was platykurtic in nature i.e. more flattened than the normal curve in SPSS 14 scale.

Table 4.5.2

Difference of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept

| Group | No of students | Mean | Standard Deviation | z Value | Critical value at 0.05 level | Remark |
|-------------------|----------------|------|--------------------|---------|------------------------------|--------|
| Visually Impaired | 45 | 162 | 17.80 | 2.36 | 1.96 | S |
| Sighted | 45 | 169 | 19.38 | | | |

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Note: - S indicates significant

Table 4.5.2 reveals the z value to find out the gender differences of visually impaired and sighted students Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam. It was observed that the calculated z value is 2.36 which is more than the table value 1.96 in .05 level of confidence interval. Hence the null hypothesis that "There is no significant gender difference of visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to Self Concept." was rejected and thus z value was found to be significant at 5% level of significance. Hence it can be concluded that there is significant difference of visually impaired and sighted students with respect to self concept.

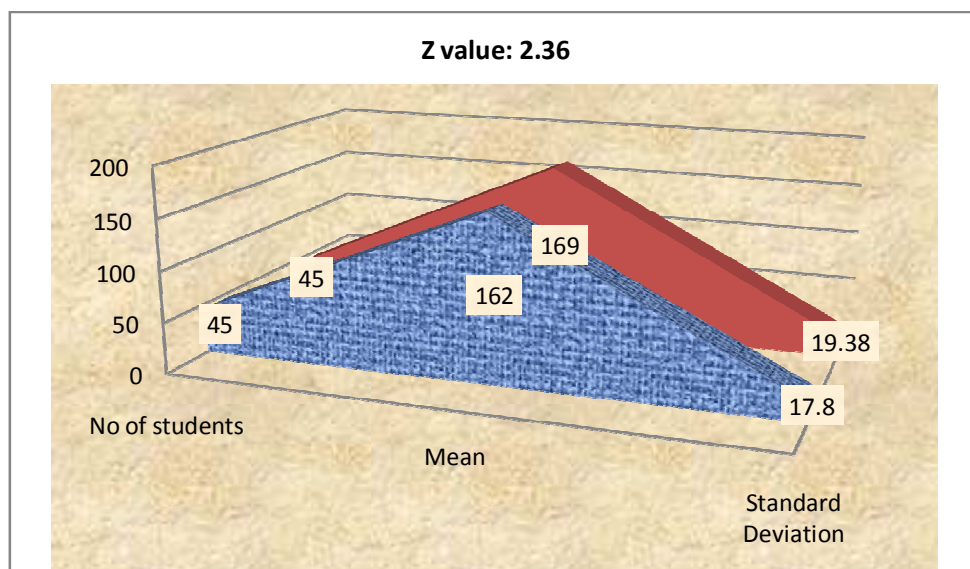


Figure 4.5.2 Difference of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur block of Nagaon district of Assam with regard to Self Concept

XII. DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY:

It was found that there is difference in self concept of visually impaired and sighted students. In this regard the previous studies showed some similarities and contradiction as follows Five studies showed that children and young adults with visual impairment scored lower on self-concept and self-esteem than the children without visual impairment (Gromno and Augestad, 2000 ; Halder and Datta, 2012 ; Lopez-Justica, Pichardo, Amezcua and Fenandez, 2001; Mishra and Singh, 2012; Rosenblum, 2000). On the other hand seven studies did not find these differences (Bolat, Dogangun, Yavuz, Demir, and Kayaalp, 2011; Gagaigordobil and Benaras, 2009; Griffin-Shirley and Nes, 2005; Huurre et al., 1999; Konarska, 2007; Lifshitz, Hen, and Weisse, 2007; Pinquart and Pfeiffer, 2013). However, Kef (2002) found that adolescents with visually impairment reported slightly higher levels of self-esteem than the sighted adloscents. Shapiro, Moffett, Liberman and Dummer 2008 reported that children with visually impairment had moderately high ratings of global self-worth.

The difference between visually impaired sighted students with respect to self concept may be due to the fact that the children with visual impairment may have fewer opportunities to

make friends than sighted children and they may face more social isolation. Moreover they may develop emotional and communication problem unlike the sighted children (Kef2002). Sometimes they are over protected by their parents which could result them feeling less attractive and competent unlike the sighted children. Sometimes they may experience frustration and emotional and behavioural problems due to their disability unlike the sighted children. Unlike the sighted children they have limited leisure time activities also which may influence in their self-concept (Huurre2000).

XIII. CONCLUSION

The result of the present study was quite satisfactory and consistent with the previous studies in the related field. Though there is difference in self concept of visually impaired and sighted students, their level of self concept was quite satisfactory.

More than 50% of the students are found above average category with regard to self concept. During the visit to school it was observed that there are recreational facilities and modern teaching aids like mobile, talking books etc. for them and they get involved in different activities by using mobile and other appliances. Most of them have strong interest in music.. They can sign by using Karaoke and all and so feel cheerful and happy. Majority of the sighted students were found to be with above average self concept which was followed by average self concept and high self concept respectively. In the below average and low self concept no student was found in case of both the visually impaired and sighted students. It was found that there was significant difference between visually impaired and sighted students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam with regard to self concept.

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