



SELF CONCEPT OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT *Individuals who are blind or have low-vision must face the constant challenge of psychologically and socially adjusting to their disability. An important aspect of psychosocial adjustment is the development of a positive self-concept. Self-concept can be defined as a set of attitudes individuals hold about themselves that help shape their identity, self-image, and esteem. Self-concept is a condition where our expectations, motivates and our behavior has an important implications on our personal, professional and social lives. A positive self-concept is usually associated with the ability to cope and overcome the consequences of a disability. It gives an individual a positive outlook on life, satisfaction and commitment. Thus self concept plays a vital role and there is a need to study the self concept of visually impaired children. Descriptive research design was used in this study and simple random sampling method was used to select samples from 172 visually impaired children. 105 samples were selected and data was collected by interview schedule method. Data was analyzed and the conclusion of the study is most of the children with visually impairment have high level of self concept.*

Introduction

The eye is a very important sensory organ, which accounts for a very large fraction of the total information's available to a person through his senses. Thus, lack of sight makes the individual aloof from the physical world. This sensory, social and physical isolation creates more psychological problems in the personality of blind subjects in the society. Though the government and many NGOs run institutes for the visually impaired children but in the age of science, this world is a place of competition and complexities. Individual with all the sense organs intact also have to face lot of problems of adjustment, which become hurdle in the achievement of their goals. This further creates shades of anxiety in them. The condition of the individual becomes more deplorable and serious when she/he suffers from visual impairment. Since, visually impaired children also have to live in society; it may affect their psychological processes.

One's self-concept is a collection of beliefs about oneself. Self-concept is important element of a human being. This element play important role in the proper growth and development of Visually Impaired children. A very primitive aspect of self-concept involves perceptions of the poor self. This important initial core of early development of self concept as well as self-confidence continues throughout the life span. The degree to which one's body is found serviceable and reliable to oneself, as well as attractive to others influences to content of self concept. Lopez – Justicia et al. (2005) in which children with congenital low vision (N = 17) scored lower than their normal vision peers in the aspect of self – concept. Thus it is necessary to find out the self concept of children with visually impaired in school.

Methods & Materials

Aim: To study self concept of children with visual impairment.

Objectives

- To study socio demographic factors of the children with visual impairment.
- To measure the self concept of the children with visual impairment.
- To study the difference and association between socio

demographic factors and self concept of children with visual impairment.

Research design: Researcher adopted Descriptive research design to describe the variables.

Hypothesis: Socio demographic factors of the students do not differ with regard to their self concept.

Operational definition

Self concept: It refers to the opinion of children with visual impairment studying in the Indian Association for Blind School has of themselves.

Visually impaired children: It refers to the children with loss of vision studying in the Indian Association for Blind School.

Pilot study: It is the process of knowing the feasibility of conducting a research study in the field chosen. The researcher met the headmistress and explained the purpose of the study and got permission. Then researcher checked whether adequate samples are available in the school. The researcher got the opportunity to meet the children with Visually Impairment and explain the purpose of the study. Initially with the help of the teacher, the researcher built rapport with children and interacted with them. Thus researcher satisfied that the study can be conducted in this school.

Universe of the study: All the children with Visual Impairment studying in Indian Association for Blind school at Sundarajanpatti, Madurai. It constitutes 172 children.

Inclusion

- Who are studying from 6th standard to 12th Standard at Indian Association for Blind school.

Exclusion

- Who are not willing for the data collection

Sampling method

Researcher has drawn the samples randomly based on inclusion and exclusion criteria from the school using lottery method in simple random sampling method. Inclusion and exclusion criteria are mainly used to make the sample homogenous population so that generalization would be possible. Thus 105 samples were drawn from the total of 172 children using lottery method. Tools of data collection

Researcher prepared semi structured interview schedule to collect the socio demographic details of the children.

- Lewis P.Ripsitt scale (1958) was used to measure the level of self concept of the children with visually impairment.

It consists of 22 items and it is a five point rating scale.

Pre test

It is a process of verification of the tool selected for the study. The researcher did pre test with 5 respondents. From the pre test researcher add some questions which is needed and neglect some questions which is not suitable for the research.

Method of data collection

The researcher visited the school and collected data by interview method. Researcher asked the question one by one to the children with Visual Impairment and made them to understand the question and collected the appropriate answers.

Results & Discussion

Distribution of respondents by their level of self concept

S.no	Level of self concept	No	Percentage
1	Low	36	34.3
2	High	69	65.7
	Total	105	100.0

With regard to the table majority (65.7%) of the respondents have high level of self concept whereas 34.3 percent of them have low level of self concept.

Findings

- Vast number (85.7%) of the respondents have partial visual impairment
- Vast number (85.7%) of the respondents have 100 percent of disability
- Above one third (39%) of the respondents get rank from 1 to 5
- All (100%) the respondents are staying in hostel.
- One third (33.3%) of the respondents are first child
- Vast number of the respondents (84.8%) fall with income category as Rs.(1000-5000)
- More than half (52.4%) of the respondents belong to the consanguineous type of marriage
- Vast number (86.7%) of the respondents have family history of visually impairment
- Majority (66.7%) of the respondents had chickenpox in their childhood stage
- Almost all the respondents (97.1%) like to become teacher
- Two third (63.8%) of the respondent's family members are worry about their children
- Majority (66%) of the respondents have high level of self concept

Suggestions

Nearly one third of the children are having low level of self concept. There are a number of sources for improving the self concept. The first is individual psychotherapy, in which children with counselor, explore ways of correcting the irrational thinking, distorted feelings and aberrant behaviors to help children positive self-concept grow. Acceptance of who they are; the recognition that other people see them as worthy individuals who have a unique set of personality characteristics, skills, abilities and competencies that make them special. Acceptance enables people to develop relationships with others yet maintain healthy boundaries of individuality within themselves.

Conclusion

In this study most of the children with visually impairment have high level of self concept and this has to be continued in their life span.

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