

Self-Concept and Its Relation to Academic Achievement

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Abstract:

Self Concept is the perception of one-selves involving his/her attitudes, feelings and knowledge about skills, abilities, appearance and social acceptability. Self concept is considered as one of the important and influential factors that closely related with people's behaviours and various emotional and cognitive outcomes. In this regard, the present study aimed to find out the relationship between the self concept and the academic achievement of school going children from Delhi city, India. Information in this regard collected using self-concept Inventory by Saraswat (1984) and Academic Achievement Need scale developed by Tanwar & Amalnerkar (2010). The present study was conducted with a total of (N=60) school going students subdividing into 30 learning disabled and 30 skilled learners. A single case design was followed for the present study where each participant's data were collected at the natural setting at both home and school setting. Before the collection of data each individual's consent and permission from the appropriate authorities and parent were taken to satisfy the ethical guidelines of the research. The data analysis of the study was followed both descriptive and inferential statistics, the data analysis was done using SPSS 16.0. The result of the present study revealed that children with learning disabled were poor in their self concept compare to the skilled learners and as a result the children with learning disabled also poor in their academic performance than to their counterparts.

Keywords: *Self Concept, Academic performance, Skilled readers, Learning Disabled, Cognitive outcomes.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Generally academic achievement meant the classroom performance of a student. In other words it can be said that the academic achievement refers to the level of schooling one has successfully completed and the ability to attain success in your studies. In some cases the term of academic performance and learning abilities like term is also used in this regard. Broadly academic achievement in school system is categorised as good performer and poor performer. Good performers are considered as skilled learner whereas poor performers are considered as learning disabled or they need some special attention in their day to day learning activities. Further it can be said that children with learning disabilities performed poor in their reading, writing and mathematical scores either in one or in the whole than to their peers those are good in these classroom performances. The causes of learning disabilities are different from one child to other. In this regard it is important to define who is disabled in learning?

Concept of Learning Disabilities:

Children with learning disabilities are at a disadvantaged position when compared with children who can cope with the normal learning system. These children have difficulty in learning due to specific breakdown in the learning process involving listening, thinking, perceiving, memory and expression. As this condition does not have visible disability, many such children are considered lazy, unresponsive or uninterested in studies and are subjected to scolding and punishment by teachers and are the butt of teasing by

schoolmates. These children usually tend to drop out of school or the school system rejects them, causing concern for the parents.

Further learning disabilities means persistent difficulties in reading, writing, arithmetic, or mathematical reasoning skills during formal years of schooling. Symptoms may include inaccurate or slow and effortful reading, poor written expression that lacks clarity, difficulties remembering number facts, or inaccurate mathematical reasoning. Current academic skills must be well below the average range of scores in culturally and linguistically appropriate tests of reading, writing, or mathematics. The individual's difficulties must not be better explained by developmental, neurological, sensory (vision or hearing), or motor disorders and must significantly interfere with academic achievement, occupational performance, or activities of daily living. Specific learning disorder is diagnosed through a clinical review of the individual's developmental, medical, educational, and family history, reports of test scores and teacher observations, and response to academic interventions. From most of the studies in India (e.g Mahakud, 2013; Mahakud & Jena 2012) and abroad it is found that, in most of the cases of learning disabled, the poor performances in classroom setting is related to different cognitive factors such as attention, listening, thinking, perceiving, memory, expression and some of the factors like low self esteem and self identification.

Self concept: Self concept is very simply stated the perception of one about himself/herself. On the other hand it can be said that self-Concept Self-concept is the perception of us involving our attitudes, feelings, and knowledge about our skills, abilities, appearance, and social acceptability (Byrne, 1984). Before the 1970s, most research reported on the relationship between self-concept and school achievement used instruments that measured a wide range of perception. In this regard it can be said that in worldwide especially in India, there is very few researches conducted in the areas of self concept and its relation to different psychological attributes. Therefore it can be suggested that self-concept research would be improved if it was more "molecular" in its approach. Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) attempted to improve the utility of the construct by proposing a multifaceted model of self-concept. They argued that self-concept could be divided into various facets. Self-concept of ability should be more closely related to academic achievement than to ability in social and physical situations.

Self concept can be as the synonym of one's self-concept (also called self-construction, self-identity, or self-perspective). It is also the collection of beliefs about oneself that includes elements such as academic performance, gender roles and sexuality, and racial identity. It is common to say that there is still confusion between self concept and self esteem. In this it can be said that these two concepts are totally different from each other. Self-concept is a cognitive or descriptive component of one's self where as self esteem is a motivational component of human psychology. The main difference between Self-Concept and Self-Esteem is that the addition of feelings whereas self-concept is simply the informational side of things, where we know facts about what we are like. Self-esteem is how we feel about those things we know, like whether we enjoy the fact that we are talkative at parties (high self-esteem) or we think that we are annoying and need to learn to shut up sometimes (low self-esteem). There are a variety of self-esteem effects that can come from the self-concept. Self concept is made up of one's self-schemas, and interacts with self-esteem, self-knowledge, and the social self to form the self as whole. It includes the past, present, and future selves, where future selves (or possible selves) represent individuals' ideas of what they might become.

Finally it can be said that self concept is our idea or picture of us, often in relation to others. This is because how we act and communicate with others is closely related to this. If you have a high level of self esteem, we will need to have a positive view of yourself and vice versa. A negative self view will lower our self esteem because we will focus on your failings and insecurities, leading to a low level of self confidence.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is widely held that self-concept is centrally involved in the learning process, either as a contributing cause or an important outcome (Scheirer & Kraut, 1979; Wylie, 1979). Beliefs about the role of self-concept in learning are supported by studies that have investigated the relationship between self-concept and school achievement (see reviews by Beane & Lipka, 1984; Burns, 1982; Byrne, 1984; Purkey, 1970; Wylie, 1979).

There appears to be a moderate relationship between self-concept and measures of achievement, with correlations increasing where specific school-related self-concepts are examined (Burs, 1982; Byrne, 1984). In essence, a student's self-concept is seen as influencing achievement outcomes through its effect on motivation. Most educators and researchers agree that the relationship between self concept and learning performance is at a least reciprocal. They focused the persistent relationship between self-concept and achievement, and the role of self-concept in motivation. It is not surprising that research attention has focused on the self-concepts of students grouped according to specific achievement characteristics.

One such group, learning disabled (LD) children, has been the subject of considerable research in terms of self-concept, particularly since the mid- 1970s. Indeed, Deci and Chandler (1986) claim that emotional and motivational variables, including self-concept, "are central to some (if not all) learning disabilities" either as initial causes or as factors that compound the source of the learning problems. The effects on Learning Disabled students of persistent failure are seen as negative and long-lasting, particularly in terms of affective and social-emotional development.

Low achieving students are frequently judged in relation to higher achievers, feelings of inferiority, lack of motivation, and inter-personal hostility often result. The negative effects of social comparison are likely to be exacerbated in situations where teachers view the poor performance of LD students as being caused by pervasive and permanently low levels of ability. Some of the important studies (e.g. Rogers et al., 1978; Smith, Zingale, & Coleman, 1978; Strang et al., 1978) reported the comparisons between Learning Disabled and non-learning disabled students. Significantly lower scores for Learning Disabled students compared to were found.

More consistent findings were obtained where specific school-related rather than global measure for self-concept were used. This implies that the average Learning Disabled student has an academic self-concept score that is 81% of LD students have lower academic self-concepts than the average NLD students. Further it can be stated that self-concept enhancement is seen as a central goal of education and an important vehicle for addressing social inequities experienced by disadvantaged groups (see Marsh & Craven, 2006). In their model of effective schools, Brookover and Lezotte (1979) emphasized that maximizing academic self-concept (ASC), self-reliance, and academic achievement should be the major outcome goals of schooling outcome goals of schooling.

Self concept is motivational factors which influence the performance of people in every sector. In this regard it can be said that, the self concepts of children in school setting influence the learning/academic performance. In the western culture numbers of research studies proved the persistent relationship between self-concept and academic achievement, and the role of self-concept in increase the motivational level of children in school settings. Since the mid 1970s numbers of research studies proved that low self concept among the children with learning disabilities is a major cause of poor academic performance in school setting.

Only a few studies have done in the related areas, most of them are related to reading problems. This is a neglected area not much work is done in this area, some studies are done in abroad but not in India. Something which can be fruitful for the learning disabled students should be done, so they can be helped in academics, and adjustments in various aspects of life, according to the results the strategies of teaching can be modified. The purpose of the research and is to contribute to the improvement of cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional outcomes of children with learning disabilities or to provide the early intervention.

III. METHOD

Objectives:

1. To find out whether self concept has any effect on the academic performances of children with learning disorders and skilled learners.
2. To examine the level of self concept of children with learning disorders compare to skilled learners.

Hypotheses:

following the objectives and empirical studies conducted in the areas of concern, the following hypotheses were formulated.

- Children with learning disorders have poor self concept than to the skilled learners.
- Skilled learner's academic performances are better than to the children with learning disorders.
- Children suffering poor self concept have poor academic performances in their respective classroom situation.

Materials:

1. The data related to self concept from the participants were collected using self concept questionnaire, developed by Kumar, R (1981). The present questionnaire contents 48 items having 5 point rating scale. The questionnaire was highly standardized with correlation coefficient of ($r=0.91$) for the total self concept measure and reliability coefficients of its various dimensions varies from 0.67 to 0.88.
2. Academic Achievement Need Scale Developed by Tanwar & Ambedkar, (2010) was used to diagnose the academic achievement of participants. The test was also standardized in Indian population with reliability coefficient of 0.81 and 0.82.

Sample:

A total of 60 school going children ($n_1=30$ children with Learning Disorders and $n_2=30$ skilled learners) were participated in the present study. All the participants were selected from secondary school settings. A purposive random sampling was followed in the entire study. All the participants of the study were selected from the school setting following the scientific diagnostic procedure of Bocian et al (1999). The inclusion criterion such as (i) Average or above average I.Q., (ii) Difficulties in reading, writing, communication despite the conventional instruction, (iii) Slow learner or learn painfully, (iv) Low academic performance and the exclusion criterion defined by The Education for all Handicapped

Children Act of 1971, P-L94142, Federal Register 1977, p. 65083* were followed during the time of selection of participants.

Procedure:

Initially the researchers made a good rapport with the parent and especially with the participants of the present study. Then after taking the consent from the participants and the permission from parent and the authorities the researchers instructed the participants to fill the questionnaire for both Self Concept and the Need for Academic Achievement scale. All participants (both skilled learners and the children with Learning disabilities) were initially assessed their need for academic achievement scale and then after a rest interval of 10 minutes the self concept questionnaire were also assessed. Both the materials for the present study were assessed individually. The entire data for the present study were collected at both the school and natural home setting of the participants according to their availability and leisure time. The entire study followed a single case research design in which each and every child was treated individually. The data analysis of the present study was followed both the descriptive and inferential statistics. For the comparison of data of self concept and academic performance of children with learning disorders and skilled learners was followed students's t test, ANOVA and other relevant parametric statistics.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the present study based on academic achievement and self concept of children with learning disorders ($N_1=30$) and skilled learners ($n_2=30$) indicate that, a total number of 20 male (66.67%) and 10 female (33.33%) participants of children with learning disorders participated in the present study. Further, out of 30 skilled learners participated in the present study 16 (53.33%) male and 14 (46.67%) female participants participated in the present study. The descriptive results of the present study revealed that there is a more male participant in continuing their education in primary and secondary school system in Delhi metro (Table-1).

Children with Learning Disorders		
Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
Male	20	66.67
Female	10	33.33
Total	30	100
Skilled Learners		
Male	16	53.33
Female	14	46.67
Total	30	100

Table-1: Gender wise Distribution

The age wise distribution of the present study indicates that, out of 30 participants of children with learning disorders, most of them are from the age of 13years (20, 66.67%) followed by the age of 14 years (9, 30%) participants of children with learning disorders participated in the present study. Only 1 (3.33%) of children with learning disorder participant was from the age of 12 years. Further, from the skilled learner’s point of view, it is found that, a most of the skilled learner participants were from the age of 13 years (19, 63.33%) followed by 10 skilled learner were from the age of 14 years (10, 33.34%). Only 1 (3.33%) of skilled learner participant was from the age of 12 years (Table-2).

Children with Learning Disorders		
Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
12 years	1	3.33
13 years	20	66.67
14 years	9	30.00
Total	30	100
Skilled Learners		
12 years	1	3.33
13 years	19	63.33
14 years	10	33.34
Total	30	100

Table-2: Age wise Distribution

The inter-correlation matrixes results of all the High need of achievement sub test of children with learning disorders with Low need of achievement was (r=0.436*) followed by high need of achievement with total achievement was (r=0.869**) and high need of achievement with self concept was (r= -0.077). The inter-correlation between total achievement with self concept was (r=0.081). Which indicates that children with learning disorders have very poor self concept and they need more achievement need compare to the low need of academic achievement. Further it is also found that the inter-correlation between low need of achievement and total achievement was (r=0.824**) and the correlation of low need of achievement with self concept was (r=0.235).

The result indicate that children with learning disorders having low need of achievement need more desire for more achievement and they are have good self concept. The cause might be that self concept is an attribute which help learner to develop their desire to achievement and those have good self concept need low achievement than to their counterparts (Table-3).

Table-3: Inter-correlation Matrixes of Variables of Children with Learning Disorders (N=30)

Variables	High Need of Academic Achievement	Low Need of Academic Achievement	Total Academic Achievement	Self Concept
High Need of Academic Achievement	1	0.436*	0.869**	-0.077
Low Need of Academic Achievement		1	0.824**	0.235
Total Academic Achievement			1	0.081
Self Concept				1

Note: *significant at 0.05 level of significance; **significant at 0.01 level of significance

The inter-correlation matrixes results of all the High need of achievement sub test of skilled learner with Low need of achievement was (r=0.819**) followed by high need of achievement with total achievement was (r=0.959**) and high need of achievement with self concept was (r= 0.102). The inter-correlation between total achievement and self concept of skilled learners was (r=0.154). The result indicates that although skilled learners have good self concept but it is not significant and they are also more interested for total achievement. Further it is also found that the inter-correlation between low need of achievement and total achievement was (r=0.948**) and the correlation of low need of achievement with self concept was (r=0.199). The result indicate that skilled learner having low need of achievement need more desire for more achievement and they are good in self concept. The cause might be that self concept is an attribute which help learner to develop their desire to achievement and those have good self concept need low achievement than to their counterparts (Table-4).

Table-4: Inter-correlation Matrixes of Variables of Skilled Learner (N=30)

Variables	High Need of Academic Achievement	Low Need of Academic Achievement	Total Academic Achievement	Self Concept
High Need of Academic Achievement	1	.819**	.959**	.102
Low Need of Academic Achievement		1	.948**	.199
Total Academic Achievement			1	.154
Self Concept				1

Note: *significant at 0.05 level of significance; **significant at 0.01 level of significance

The comparison results of high need of achievement of children with learning disorders and skilled learners indicate the mean average score of high need of achievement score of children with learning disorders was (34.72±14.54) which was (73.89±18.01). In this regard it is found that in high need of achievement skilled readers are comparatively better than to their counter parts, children with learning disorders (t=9.27, P=0.000, df=58). Similarly the mean average score of low need of achievement score of children with learning disorders was (42.18±11.71). The mean average score of low need of achievement score of skilled readers was (71.67±14.69). The low need of achievement score of children with learning disorders are quite poor than to skilled learners (t=8.60, P=0.000, df=58). The mean average score of total need for achievement score of children with learning disorders was (38.60±11.08). The mean average score of total need for achievement score skilled learners was (72.73±15.53). The result also indicates a significant difference of total achievement score of children with learning disorders and skilled learners (t=9.80, P=0.000, df=58).

Finally, from the comparison score of self concept of children with learning disorders and skilled learners stated that, the mean average score of self concept of children with learning disorders was (57.33±11.45). The mean average score of self concept of skilled learners was (81.56±6.62). The results indicates a significant difference of self concept of children with learning disorders and skilled learners (t=10.03, P=0.000, df=58). Table-5 depicts the same. In other words in it can be said that the skilled readers have better self concept score than to children with learning disorders. In this regard it can be said that low self concept of the children with learning disorder might be the cause that children with learning disorder do poor performance in academic related task than to their counter parts, skilled learners.

Table-5: Comparison of Academic Achievement and Self Concept and Self Concept between LD and Skilled Learner

Categories	Point	Mean	SD	t=Value	P=Value
High Need Academic Achievement	Children Learning Disorders	34.72	14.54	9.27	0.000
	Skilled Learner	73.89	18.01		
Low Need Academic Achievement	Children Learning Disorders	42.18	11.71	8.60	0.000
	Skilled Learner	71.67	14.69		
Total Academic Achievement	Children Learning Disorders	38.60	11.08	9.80	0.000
	Skilled Learner	72.73	15.53		
Self Concept	Children Learning Disorders	57.33	11.45	10.03	0.000

Categories	Point	Mean	SD	t=Value	P=Value
High Need Academic Achievement	Children Learning Disorders	34.72	14.54	9.27	0.000
	Skilled Learner	73.89	18.01		
Low Need Academic Achievement	Children Learning Disorders	42.18	11.71	8.60	0.000
	Skilled Learner	71.67	14.69		
Total Academic Achievement	Children Learning Disorders	38.60	11.08	9.80	0.000
	Skilled Learner	72.73	15.53		
Self Concept	Children Learning Disorders	57.33	11.45	10.03	0.000
	Skilled Learner	81.56	6.62		

V. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the study it was concluded that mostly the self concept lies in the average category about 60 % of the students were found to have average self concept. The self concept of the learning disabled students was found average in most of the cases (60 %) are having average self concept, 23 % above average, 7% high self concept and 10 % below average. It is found that the students with learning disabilities generally has average self concept, but some of them have above average and high self concept. It seems that there are other factors also which affect self concept, like socio economic status, family background, teacher’s support etc. As the study was done in inclusive school .The children coming here are from good socio status and parental and teachers support, these factors are helpful in boosting the confidence and maintaining their self concept. The academic performance is effected by self concept and vice versa, that too not always as the child performance is good in academics his/herself concept will be increased and the child who has average or above average self concept generally able to perfume well in studies

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