

A Comparative Assessment of Emotional Intelligences and Happiness Index Among Visually Impaired Students

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Abstract

ision is a vital mean of obtaining information from the environment, and lack of sight can severely limit a person's experience; thus, visual impairment is a distressing physical condition with profound social and emotional implications, the consequences of which affect not only the personage but also the family and the community. Education is the primary need of an individual .It helps to express inner potential ,acquire knowledge ,develop skills, shape habits, attitudes ,values, belief etc. along with providing strengths and resilience to people to changing situations and allowing them to develop all those capacities which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities. "The meaning and aims of education have been changing at different ages and stages in the process of evolution"(Roy,1982).Unlike early period, now education is the right of not only some specific group of people but also that of every individual. The discrimination of caste, creed, sex, economic status, physical and mental status exist no more in education.

Keywords: Emotional, Intelligence, Adjustment, Visually Impaired Students

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a crucial developmental period characterized by marked physical, emotional, and intellectual changes, as well as changes in social roles, relationships, and expectations, all of which are important for the development of the individual and provide the foundation for functioning as an adult (Buckingham, 2008). It is the most vulnerable age for development, and the child entering in this stage requires intensive readjustment to school, social, and family life. However, many adolescents experience anxiety, unpleasant, or strange feelings (Nair and Anuradha, 2014). Adolescence represents a great source of anxiety for visually impaired (VI) adolescents as they face not only the usual developmental challenges but also the added strain of his or her physical handicap (Huurre and Aro, 2000). Education is an attempt on the part of the adult members of the human society to shape the development of the coming generation in accordance with its own ideals of life. Man is capable of making necessary adaptation, education helps him to alter his behavior and acquire new skills according to the demands of the new situations. Educating the child is directing the child's capacities ,attitudes ,interest, urges, and needs into the most desirable channels. Education is the key to national prosperity and welfare.

We educate students with one main objective in mind, i.e. their success. What is the measure of success? Is it only a strong scientific mind? No, it was in the past but now some fundamental new theories have been introduced, namely the

- * Multiple intelligence theory (Gardner, 1983)
- * Emotional intelligence theory (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1990)

We are at the beginning of the new century and now a day emotional intelligence is considered more important than intelligence in the success of a person. Thus we can say that success depends on several intelligences and on the control of emotions too. Emotional Intelligence, like general intelligence is the product one's heredity and its interaction with his environmental forces. Two American University professors, John Mayer and Peters Salovey introduced this term in their attempt to develop a scientific measure for knowing the difference in people's ability in the area of emotions. "Emotional Intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to regulate emotions so as to promote intellectual growth"(Mayer & Salovey 1997). A well adjusted person is one "who maintains a balanced orientation towards reality. His life is like a sturdy ship riding the waves. He may be swayed this way or that way by wind and water but returns to the even keel". In other words we can say that a well adjusted person has inner security, self confidence, self control and self satisfaction. Adjustment is a two way process, which influences our environment as well as

being influenced by it. Adjustment is the process of finding and adopting modes of behavior suitable to environment or to the changes in the environment.

MEANING OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education can be defined from many different perspectives-legal, administrative and social. Special education is different from regular education. Special education means specially designed instruction that meets the unique needs of an exceptional child. "Special education is those additional services, over and above the regular school programme, that are provided for exceptional children to assist in the development of their potentialities and for the amelioration of their disabilities."(Kirk and Gallagher,1979). The education of special needs children has moved from isolated institution into the regular schools. In such settings in classrooms children who are markedly different from most children in many ways they may be intellectually challenged, visually impaired, hearing impaired emotionally disturbed and gifted, thus it becomes difficult for the classroom teachers to respond fully to the special needs of all children without some assistance. Special education is the individually planned and systematically monitored arrangement of physical settings, special equipments, teaching procedure and other intervention designed to help the exceptional children achieve greatest possible self-sufficiency and academic success.(Heward and Orlansky,1984).

The curriculum in special education depends on the child's potentialities and limitation. Liberman (1995)reported, "in regular education, school system dictates the curriculum but in special education the individual need of the child dictate the curriculum". The methods of teaching are modified according to the individuals needs. Special education can be delivered in a variety of settings, depending on the needs of the special child. Special education in regular classroom is provided with consultator, itinerant teacher ,resource teacher ,hospital and home bound institution, special day school. The current trends in special education are early intervention ,to provide least restrictive environment and school to adult life transition.

SPECIAL GROUP OF CHILDREN

Individual differences show that no two learners are exactly alike. They differ in variety of ways that influence how well they learn. They vary in the activity of their eye sight and hearing, in their intelligence ,interest, strength of motivation, energy level, in emotional stability, in family background .They differ from the norms to such extent that they require special education, special equipments, and related services if they are to realize their full human potential(i.e. to achieve personal self-sufficiency & academic success).

An exceptional learner is an individual who, because of uniqueness in sensory, physical ,neurological, temperamental, or intellectual capacity and in the nature or range of previous experience, requires an adaptation of the regular school programmed in order to maximize his or her functioning level. Hence the term includes both the children who are handicapped and who are gifted. These children are markedly different from most children in many ways. For example in mental characteristics, sensory abilities, physical characteristics, communication abilities, and in their behavior. The special needs of disabled children create obstacles in obtaining education properly. It has been estimated that ten to fifteen percent of children worldwide have a mental or physical disability and may thus have difficulty in maximizing their potential and learning in educational program and system established for the non-disabled (US children's fund, 1980).Special group of children are divided into gifted and talented, disabled, children with multicultural heritages. In simple terms we can say the exceptional children have problems or talents in seeing, hearing, speaking, thinking and moving.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Present study deals with the visually impaired children. Visual Impairment seems to evoke more awkwardness than any other disability. The Ancient Indian Ages, while enlisting the importance of each of the five senses, ranked the sense of sight to be the most important of all .There are several classifications of visual handicaps. There is a legal

definition that distinguishes the blind and partially sighted or low vision children on the basis of tests of visual acuity.

* A child who is legally blind can only see at 20/200 or less with all possible correction in the better eye or whose field of vision is so narrowed that its widest diameter subtends and angular distance no greater than 20. This means that the child can only see at 20 feet what someone with normal sight can see at 200 feet.

*A child who scores between 20/70 and 20/200 on the test of visual acuity, with correction is legally partially sighted or low vision.

It is visible as Visual Impaired Children have variety of symbols, white cane, thick or darkened glasses, guide, etc. Blindness has many misconceptions. The dictionary meaning of the word blind is absence of sight or who can't see but a large number of visually impaired person have light perception or remaining eyesight. As education is fundamental right of everyone, so there should be equal opportunity for visually impaired also. There should not be any discrimination on the basis of their disability, caste, religion, sex. Visual impairment is a disorder or dysfunction of the sense of sight varying in degree from mild to severe or profound.

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN In Abroad

Scientific, formal and systematic special education started in Western and European countries. The first school for blind was established in Paris in 1784. After this schools for blind was established in England in 1791. In 1832, first school at New England Asylum and at New York Institution for blind was established. Ohio established first state residential school for blind in America in 1837. Recognition of the unique needs of partially seeing children occurred first with the opening of the Myope school in London, England in 1908.

In India

In pre-independent India, there were few rehabilitation programs for visually impaired person. A few schools trained adults in traditional trades like chair canning but music was the only profession open to blind persons (Advani, 1987). Visually Impaired persons in present day have established their identity both socially and economically by demonstrating their capabilities to find and hold jobs. Steps to set up services for Visually Impaired adults were initiated, to rehabilitate Indian military men blinded in World War II. Before this, the first school for blind was started in 1887 in Amritsar by Miss Annie Sharp which was moved to Dehradun in 1903 and was known as "Sharp Memorial School for the blind". In 1942 Sir Mactenzie was appointed by the British Govt. to review services for blind persons. This was followed by the establishment of St. Dunstan's Hotel at Dehradun for Indian blinded in the war. This laid the foundation for today's National Institution for Visually Handicapped (NIVH). The NIVH came into existence in 1979 and was made autonomous in 1982. A number of voluntary organizations also came into being in the post-independence era. The National Association for the Blind (NAB) was established in 1952.

Every country develops its systems of education to express and promote its unique sociocultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the times. Govt. of India announced national education policy in 1986 in order to derive the maximum benefits from the assets already created and to ensure that the fruits of change reach all sections. The National policy of education (NPE, 1986) and its revised programme of action (POA, 1992) envisages to integrate the physically and mentally disabled with the general community as equal partners, to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence.

CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

"Emotional Intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and to regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Although the concept of emotional intelligence is relatively new, there is still confusion about its exact definition. It was Salovey & Mayer who first gave this formal concept of emotional intelligence in 1990 in their model of emotional intelligence but the foundation for this model was already laid down by Gardner's (1983) concept of intrapersonal intelligence and interpersonal intelligence as well as Sternberg's (1988) triarchic theory of intelligence. Besides, the roots of emotional intelligence are available in social intelligence (Thorndike, 1920) and, even in the definition of intelligence given by Wechsler (1958) who defined intelligence as "the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with his/her environment". He pointed out that ability to be adaptive to different situations and coping with life situations successfully were included in this definition. But the intelligence tests that carry his name, that is, the Wechsler Scales of Intelligence, do not have separate entity of measurement of this social skill.

Emotional intelligence as conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990) consisted of three different categories of adaptive abilities. Firstly, it is appraisal and expression in the self as well as others. In the self there are verbal and non-verbal components. In the others there are non-verbal perception and empathy. Secondly, there is a regulation of emotion in the self and others. Thirdly, it is utilization of emotion that includes flexible planning, creative thinking, redirected attention and motivation. Goleman (1995) then subsumed this model with a lot of personality characteristics, which he believed would contribute positively to success in any domain of life. Mayer & Salovey (1997), however, revised their own original model stressing the cognitive components of emotional intelligence, because they felt former one "Omitted thinking about feelings". Emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotions; the ability to access and to generate feelings. When they facilitate thoughts; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Goleman gave a definition for the word Emotional Intelligence as "the ability in realizing one's own feelings as well as the feeling of others in order to build up self inducement, to manage personal emotions and the emotions occurred from various associations". Goleman also gave a meaning for the word 'Emotion' that- "It is the personal thoughts, the state of mind, the biology and propensity to express." These expressions are the anger, sorrow, fear, joy, love, revulsion, surprise, shame, etc. ground of forces and. Baron gave a definition for 'Emotional Intelligence' as "It is a series of competency, capability and effective domain which affect the ability to succeed in fighting with the demands and various pressures from circumstances." (Baron, 1997). In general, Emotional Intelligence is the accumulation of all noncognitive and non-physical capabilities, competencies and skills a person has, that help him/her to deal with the demands and pressures of every life.

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990) Emotional Intelligence is categorized into five domains:

1. **Self-awareness:** observing yourself and recognition of feelings as it happens.
2. **Managing Emotions:** Handling feelings so that they are appropriate to realized what is behind a feeling, finding ways to handle fears and anxieties, anger and sadness.
3. **Motivating Oneself:** Channeling emotions in the service of a goal; emotional self-control's delaying gratification and stifling impulses.
4. **Empathy:** Sensitivity to other's feelings and concerns and talking their perspective; appreciating the differences in how people feel about things.
5. **Handling Relationships:** Managing emotions in others, social competence and social skills.

IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The application of the principle of emotional intelligence to the work and everyday life would be most advantageous. These are as follows:

1. **Communication-**Able to express one's feelings and emotions in the appropriate occasion, with the understanding of the feeling of others. A person with EI knows how to smile? He

knows to listen patiently to other people's problems. He will not feel alienated from the people, the nature or from his own life.

2. **Operation** -The Emotional Intelligence sublimates the initiation it would conduce production which responds to the target; promote better coordination in the work.

3. **Administration**-Emotional Intelligence enhances the talent of artful leader in utilizing people and in capturing their hearts. It gives chance for the administrator to study and develop the staff. It can influence people to accomplish the required task.

4. **Service**-Emotional Intelligence conduces the good listening and the responding with loyalty.

5. **Understand one's own life as well as the others**-Emotional Intelligence gives the introspective insight before getting knowing others. The knowing of oneself and of others would induce interaction among themselves; whereby the potentiality can be used in full and the family life would be happy through the understanding of each other.

CONCEPT OF ADJUSTMENT

Adjustment is person's interaction with environment. Each person constantly strives to meet his needs and reach his goals. At the same time, he is under pressure from environment to behave in certain ways. Adjustment involved the reconciliation of personal and environmental demands (Arkaff, 1968). An individual's adjustment is adequate, wholesome or helpful to the extent that he has established harmonious relationship between himself and the conditions, situations and persons who comprise his social and physical environment. An individual who is rejected by the members of his group may become inadequately adjusted (Crow, 1974).

Education plays an important role in the process of adjustment. In school, an individual passes the stages of child, adolescence and the early adulthood. The long stay in school influences directly the behavior and the adjustment of the individual and makes him fit into the society which is the primary goal of education. "Adjustment is a process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influences the satisfaction of these needs." (L.S. Shaffer)

Type of Adjustment

The main types of adjustments are given below:

1. **Home adjustment:** - Home is the source of greatest satisfaction and security to its members. The relationship among the family members and their ways and behavior play leading role in the adjustment of a child. All problematic and delinquent behavior is the result of that adjustment and maladjustment, to a greater extent, is the product of faulty bearing and uncongenial atmosphere at home.

2. **Health Adjustment:** - One is said to be adjusted in regard to one's health and physical development. If a child's physical developments and abilities are in conformity with those of his age mates and he doesn't feel any difficulty in his physical organs, he enjoys full opportunity of being adjusted.

3. **Social Adjustment:** - How far one is adjusted can be ascertained by one? Social adjustment and adaptability to the social environment require the development of social qualities and virtues in an individual. It also requires that one should be social enough to live in harmony with his social-beings and feel responsibility and obligation towards his fellow-beings in addition to the society and the country.

4. **Emotional Adjustment:** - Emotions play a leading role in one's adjustment to self and his environment. An individual is said to be emotionally adjusted if he is able to express his emotions in a proper way at a proper time. It requires one's balanced emotional development and proper training in the outlet of emotions.

Conclusion

Most of the problems in true life, whether childhood problems, work situation problems, or political, regional or international problems are the results of misinterpretation of the involved sentiments and feelings and emotions of the concerned individuals, group of individuals, society and the nations. If proper efforts are made for training the emotions and developing the proper emotional intelligence among the people right from the childhood, then

it will surely help in bringing mutual emotional understanding empathy, accompanied with the right action and behavior on the part of individuals and group, to lead a better life in peace and cooperation. Such factors don't have its impact on only sighted pupils but they certainly affect visually impaired children. Visually Impaired pupils may be characterized in two groups: - those who attend regular schools and those who study in special schools. These children face the problem of adjustment to their environment. To progress and let others progress and to live and let others live are thus the ultimate goals of any education or training provided for developing one's potential of emotional intelligence. All these things will certainly lend a helping hand in the national development.

Education not only trains how to control emotions but also helps in the development of personality which leads to a better learning situation and better thinking capacities, in turn enhances adjustment and achievement along with a better perception of self.

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