

A Study On The Self-Esteem And Social Relations Of Adolescents With Learning Disability

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ABSTRACT

This study is intended to explore the characteristic influence the self-esteem and social relation of children with learning disability in alternative schools and the role of peers, teachers and parents. And to provide necessary information to policy makers of the country to modify the education polices, by bringing in policies that addresses the concerns of children and parents of children with learning disability. Healthy self-esteem is important to be successful and happy throughout one's life. The literature review opines that through there are various studies on learning disability but only few studies based on self-esteem and its relation with social relations, specifically in Indian context. There is no specific law or policy addressing the concerns of parents and children with learning disability. Also a standardized methodology or programs, is yet to be designed. The present study indicates that adolescents with learning disability with better social relationship will have high self-esteem. Realizing the importance of self-esteem and its relationship with social relation, parents, teachers, educationists, social workers and doctors should co-ordinate in finalizing the strategy required for the intervention in building self- esteem and teaching learning disabled child. Schools should develop specific programs to build self-esteem and better the social relations of a child. So that the learning disabled child can be mainstreamed without much difficulty.

Keywords: Self-Esteem, Social Relations, Learning Disability.

INTRODUCTION:

The study on self-esteem and social relationship of adolescents with learning disability is based in alternative schools in Rohtak, India. The sample consisted of 50 adolescents between the age group of 11 to 18 years with learning disability and was selected based on purposive sampling. The sample was selected into two groups 11- 14 as pre-adolescents and 15 to 18 as adolescents. The tools used in the study were Rosern Bergrs

10 item Likert scale with Cronbach's alpha value 0.7, and thirty other self-structured questionnaires for specific objective on variables like peers, teachers and parents. A pilot study was conducted to study the effectiveness of the study covering 10% of the sample size, and necessary modifications in the study was made based on the pilot study. This was followed by data collection, interpretation of results and concluding the research finding. Scientific methodology was used to systematically solve the research problem.

SELF-ESTEEM

The relationship between a student's scholastic performance or achievement and her/ his sense of personal worth or self-esteem is likely to be mediated by a number of factors such as personal and familial aspirations, peer accomplishments and teachers and school expectations. Self-esteem can be defined as an individual's judgment of his or her self-worth (Rosenberg 1965). Self-esteem is generally considered the evaluative component of the self-concept, a broader representation of the self that includes cognitive and behavioral aspects as well as evaluative or affective ones (Tomaka & Blascovich, 1991). Environment of acceptance and success raises self-esteem, while environment of failures lower it. Studies suggest that for children of age seven to adolescents, school frequently represents the first occasion in which they act on their own and measure themselves against others. Thus school represents an initial proving ground. Adolescents with learning difficulty have trouble expressing their feelings, calming themselves down, and reading non-verbal cues which can lead to difficulty in the classroom and with their peers. Usually, as early as in Kindergarten children with learning disability are smart enough to figure out that their peers are able to recognize letters and play with symbols successfully and they are not

RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

India approximately 13 to 14 per cent of all school children suffer from learning disorders. And most of these cases are not diagnosed, due to various reasons like lack of resources, awareness, over populated class rooms etc.. Thus the researcher by this study hopes to throw some light to educators, parents and education.

This study is intended to explore the characteristic influence the self-esteem and social relation of children with learning disability in alternative schools and the role of peers, teachers and parents. And to provide necessary information to policy makers of the country to modify the education policies, by bringing in policies that addresses the concerns of children and parents of children with learning disability.

This study is motivated primarily by the need to address the role of self-esteem in children with Learning Disability. Healthy self-esteem is important to be successful and happy throughout one's life. Knowing that learning disabilities often pose formidable hurdles to positive self-esteem and in turn, contribute to a hard to break cycle of self-doubt, frustration and failure.

AIM OF THE STUDY:

To study the self esteem and social relations of adolescents with learning disability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH:

- To study the socio demographic background of adolescents.
- To study the self-esteem of adolescents with Learning Disability in Alternative school
- To understand the relationship of adolescents with learning disability with their peers.
- To understand the relationship of Adolescents with learning disability with their teachers.
- To understand the relationship of adolescents with learning disability with their parents.
- To find out the relationship between self-esteem and social relations of adolescents with learning disability.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

Adolescents with learning disability with better social relationship will have high self-esteem.

OPERATIONAL DEFINATION:

Adolescents: A person who is between the age group of 11 to 18 years.

Alternative Schools:

An alternative school is an educational setting designed to accommodate educational, behavioral, and/or medical needs of children and adolescents that cannot be adequately addressed in a traditional school environment.

Learning Disability: (L.D)

Learning Disability is defined as a condition when a child's achievement is substantially below what one might expect for that child. Learning disabilities do not include problems that are primarily the result of intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, or visual, hearing, emotional or intellectual disabilities.

Types of Learning Disability:

- LD in Reading, Dyslexia
- LD in Writing, Dysgraphia
- LD in Math, Dyscalculia
- LD in Language and communication

THE RESEARCH DESIGN:

Descriptive research methodology was used in this study to get an overview of social relationship of pre-adolescents and adolescents with learning disability in alternative schools with respect to their self-esteem. It is valid design to understand the percentage of units in the specified population of adolescents with learning disability.

It is an effective design to understand the socio demographic details, self-esteem and social relation in a specific population.

Hence it helps to get the statistical result without really affecting the respondent's day to day activity. The results gathered would be accurate as the respondents answers the questions. Also descriptive research design helps the researcher gain lot of insight on the subject thus forming a "base" for further research. . Here the results can predict certain facts on the relationship of adolescents with learning disability with parents, teachers and peers.

❖ **Population of the Study:**

The universe of study constitutes all the Adolescents with Learning Disability, in an alternative school in Rohtak.

❖ **Sample size:**

For the study a sample of 50 children were taken which includes both genders. The school follows National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) curriculum and is dedicated to teach children with learning difficulties.

❖ **Sample design:**

The sample design used for the study is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used as the desired population for the study in the given time was very difficult to get access with. The respondents who met the inclusion criteria were selected for the study.

❖ **Inclusion criteria:**

Adolescents with learning disability of the age group 11 to 18 years, studying alternative school in Rohtak

TOOLS OF THE DATA COLLECTION:

- Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg 1965) (Appendix 2)
- Semi-structured questionnaire: (Appendix 1)

PILOT STUDY:

The researcher conducted a pre-test to detect the discrepancies that might have crept in and to remove them and make necessary modifications in the questionnaire. The researcher conducted the pre-testing on six respondents (4 boys and 2 girls), covering 10% of the sample size. All the respondents were students of alternative school.

After the pilot study the researcher made few modifications in the designing the questionnaire, like increasing the font size, with enough space to answer the questions, and delete few questions from the socio-demographic session which were found irrelevant.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**Table****Distribution of the respondents by their gender**

S.No	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	31	62
2	Female	19	38
	Total	50	100

Table**Distribution of the respondents by their age**

S.No	Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage
1	11 to 15	24	48.0
2	16 to 19	26	52.0
	Total	50	100

Table**Distribution of the respondents by their family income**

S.No	INCOME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	<15,000	14	28
2	>15,000	36	72
	TOTAL	50	100

Table**Distribution of respondents by self-esteem**

S. No	Self-esteem	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	10	20
2	High	40	80
	Total	50	100

The table depicts that majority of the respondents, about 80% of the have high self-esteem and about 20 % of the respondents fall under low self-esteem category, according to Rosenbergs Self-esteem scale. From the above table it is observed that adolescents in alternative school have a higher self-esteem. The awareness among the parents with regard to importance of self-esteem and alternative schooling for children with learning disabilities should be encouraged.

Table**Comparison of self-esteem and social relation with respect to Income**

Variables	<15,000/-	>15,000/-	P -value
	N=14	N=36	

	Mean $\pm$ SD		
Self-esteem	17.21 $\pm$ 2.72	17.64 $\pm$ 6.2	.739 (NS)
Parental	27.64 $\pm$ 7.01	28.36 $\pm$ 6.81	.741 (NS)
Peers	20.14 $\pm$ 3.23	19.53 $\pm$ 6.20	.650 (NS)
Teachers	30.21 $\pm$ 5.162	31.33 $\pm$ 3.59	.466 (NS)

- There is no much significance, in self-esteem and social relation in comparison with income.
- The p value 0.739 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the self-esteem of the respondents with Income of the respondents.
- The p value 0.741 indicates that there is no significant relationship between the parental relationships of the respondents with Income of the respondents.
- The p value 0.650 testifies that there is no significant relationship between the peer relationships of the respondents with Income of the respondents.
- The p value 0.466 shows that there is no significant relationship between the teachers' relationships of the respondents with Income of the respondents.

Table

Comparison of self-esteem and social relation with respect to age between 11- 15 Years and 16 -19 years

Variables	11- 15 N=24	16 - 19 N=26	P -value
	Mean $\pm$ SD		
Self-esteem	14.42 $\pm$ 4.90	20.38 $\pm$ 4.23	0.001
Parental	25.75 $\pm$ 6.84	30.38 $\pm$ 6.08	0.015

Peers	18.13 $\pm$ 5.54	21.15 $\pm$ 5.16	.05
Teachers	29.79 $\pm$ 4.35	32.15 $\pm$ 3.49	.039

The p-value .001 denotes that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16- 19 years have a higher self-esteem than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years

- The p-value 0.015 shows that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16- 19 years have a better parental relationship than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years
- The p-value 0.05 indicates that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16- 19 years have a better relationship with the peers than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years.
- The p-value 0.039 testifies that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16- 19 years have a better relationship with teachers than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years.
- The above table represents that there is significant difference in children with learning disability with respect to age. That is post- adolescents have higher self-esteem with respect to pre adolescents which means that as age increases their self-esteem also increases. The table also represents that post-adolescents have better relationship with parents, peers and teachers.

Table

Comparison of self-esteem and social relation with respect to gender

Variables	Male	female	P -value
	N=31	N=19	
	Mean $\pm$ SD		
Self-esteem	17.55 $\pm$ 6.021	17.47 $\pm$ 4.46	.963

Parental	28.29± 7.240	27.95 ± 6.22	.865
Peers	20.48± 5.215	18.42± 5.881	.202
Teachers	30.35 ±4.378	32.11 ± 3.332	.141

- In the above table the P-value 0.963 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the self-esteem with respect to respondents' gender.
- In the above table the P-value 0.865 testifies that there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with parents with respect to respondents' gender.
- In the above table the P-value 0.202 depicts that there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with peers with respect to respondents' gender.
- In the above table the P-value 0.202 shows that there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with teachers with respect to respondents' gender.
- The above table represents that there is no significant relationship of gender with respect to self-esteem, parental, peer and teacher relationship.

Table

Comparison of social relations between low self-esteem and high self-esteem

Variables	Self-esteem Low	Self-esteem high	P -value
	Mean ± SD		
Parental	21 ±6.11	29.95±5.76	0.0001
Peers	16.4 ±7.61	20.53 ±4.613	.130
Teachers	28.2 ± 4.185	31.73 ± 3.769	.013

- In the above table the P-value 0.0001 denotes that, statically there is a significant relationship between the respondents relationship with parents with respect to respondents self-esteem.
- In the above table the P-value 0.130 reveals that, statically there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with peers with respect to respondents self-esteem.
- In the above table the P-value 0.013 indicates that, statically there is a significant relationship between the respondents relationship with teachers with respect to respondents self-esteem.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

The study examines the self-esteem and social relation of adolescents with learning disability who studies in alternative schools in rohtak. This study attempts to study the impact of social relation, which includes the respondents' relationship with their peers, teachers and parents in building self-esteem of adolescents with learning disability in alternative schools.

The study aims to find the correlation of self-esteem, social relation with respect to the respondents' age, gender and income. The study is a descriptive study. The researcher has used Rosenberg 10-item scale, with 4-point Likert scale as tool to measure the self-esteem of the respondents and further self-structured closed ended questionnaire was used to measure the social relation and socio-demographic details. The data was analyzed by using SPSS software Statistical Package for Social Science and various other statistical measures. The result of the study prove the hypothesis i.e, adolescents with learning disability with better social relationship will have high self-esteem.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Among the total respondents, 62.0 percent of them are male respondents and 38.0 percent are female respondents.
- Among the respondents, majority (52.0%) of them belongs to the age group of 16 to 19 years.
- Of the total respondents 72 percent of respondents' family income is more than 15,000

per month and remaining 28 percent earn less than 15,000 per month.

- Study indicates that 48% of the respondents worry about the relationship they have with their parents.
- 56 percent of the respondents are being compared with their siblings by their parents.
- 66 percent of the respondents feel that they are blamed by their parents of no mistake of theirs.
- The study indicates that 44 percent of the respondents feel stressed due to parental pressure.
- The study shows that 26 percent of the respondents are not satisfied with the time their parents spend with them.
- From the study it is understood that, 78 percent of the respondents feel that they are being understood well by their friends.
- The study indicates that 48 percent of the respondents are not comfortable of sharing their problems with their friends.
- The study reveals that 32 percent of the respondents feel that they are being left out by friends because of their learning disability.
- Present study testifies that 56 percent of the respondents feel sad as they are misunderstood by their friends.
- The study shows that 100 percent of the respondents feel comfortable to clear their doubts with their teachers.
- From the study it is understood that 88 percent of the respondents feel their teachers know their interest and talent and encourage them.
- The research indicates that 82 percent of the respondents feel that they are understood better by parents because there is a good relationship between their parents and teachers.
- The study shows that 98 percent of the respondents trust their teachers.
- Present study testifies that there is no significant relationship between the self-esteem of the respondents with Income of the respondents.
- The study denotes that there is no significant relationship between the parental relationships of the respondents with Income of the respondents.
- The study reveals that there is no significant relationship between the peer relationships of the respondents with Income of the respondents.

- Research testifies that there is no significance relationship between the teachers' relationships of the respondents with Income of the respondents.
- The study shows that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16-19 years have a higher self-esteem than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years
- From the study its understood that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16-19 years have a better parental relationship than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years
- The study reveals that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16-19 years have a better relationship with the peers than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years.
- Research testifies that the respondents who fall under the age group of 16-19 years have a better relationship with teachers than the respondents who fall under the age group of 11-15 years.
- Present study shows that there is no significant relationship between the self- esteem with respect to respondents' gender.
- The study denotes that there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with parents with respect to respondents' gender.
- Research testifies that there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with peers with respect to respondents' gender.
- From the present study it's understood that there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with teachers with respect to respondents' gender.
- The study shows that, statically there is a significant relationship between the respondents relationship with parents with respect to respondents self-esteem.
- Research testifies that, statically there is no significant relationship between the respondents relationship with peers with respect to respondents self-esteem.
- Present study indicates that, statically there is a significant relationship between the respondents relationship with teachers with respect to respondents self-esteem.

Hypothesis proved:

There is a significant relationship between social relation and self-esteem of adolescents with learning disability.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Implications for social work practice-

- The results of this study suggest that the social relations of adolescents with learning disability have deep impact on the self-esteem of children with learning disability. Social workers interventions in the form of case work enhance children with learning disability to deal the issues of low self-esteem and enhance good social relationships.
- As family plays a major role in building self-esteem of an individual, social worker could set off an individual family based intervention which helps to understand the family dynamics and the relationship among the family members, especially the relationship of the parents and with the parents and among the siblings.
- Social worker could apply the group family based intervention and this helps the group enabled parents to identify the psychosocial problems generated in the family because of children's learning disability. The emotional aspects in the family can be effectively dealt with.
- The group facilitates the parents to understand the need of mutual emotional support to deal with the learning disability of the child. It also clarifies the inappropriate emotional reactions.
- Social worker can bring about awareness on the genetic and clinical features of the disorder, which would help the parents to get rid of their anxiety.
- The study implicates family counseling application.
- The results suggest the need of developing a specially designed program which would build positive peer relationships among the respondents.
- Specially designed programs to be included in the day to day curriculum to boost the self-esteem of children especially of 11-15 years of age as they tend to show low self-esteem.
- A reward system to be developed in the school, which will motivate and reinforce self-confidence and build more positive behavior with others.

Implications for Social work education-

- The social workers can be trained to deal with various issues concerned with learning disability.

- The study also necessitated social worker's theoretical knowledge about children with learning disability and children without learning disability.
- The study has major implications to enhance the social workers approaches to assess the behavior of adolescents. This helps in better understanding of the purpose and effect of the behavior(s) of concerns and provides information that is useful in the development of effective interventions.
- The curriculum can be framed giving importance also to ecological perspective. The perspective of the interaction of the child and family and their environment. Important concepts include adaptation, transaction, goodness to fit between the students and their educated environments, reciprocity and mutuality.

Implications for social work research–

- Keeping this research as a base, more researches on different types of learning disability and its relationship with self esteem can be done in different mainstream schools and alternative schools.
- A research can be done focusing on psycho-social problems of children with Learning disability and also with regard to their parents.
- The focus of the study on peer relationship and self-esteem before and after the diagnosis of learning disability, would give a better knowledge about the importance of peer relationship.
- The effectiveness of various interventions like casework, group work, individual, group or family counseling or therapy; community organizations; crisis interventions; staff training can be studied in depth.

CONCLUSION:

Learning disability is a disorder which can be remedied using appropriate instructional strategies. The early diagnosis of the problem is very important in remedial teaching and building self-esteem, as at later stage it is very difficult to correct a child. The present study indicates that adolescents with learning disability with better social relationship will have high self-esteem. Realizing the importance of self-esteem and its relationship with social relation, parents, teachers, educationists, social workers and doctors should co-ordinate in finalizing the strategy required for the intervention in building self- esteem and teaching

learning disabled child. Schools should develop specific programs to build self-esteem and better the social relations of a child. So that the learning disabled child can be mainstreamed without much difficulty.

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