**Specially Abled College Going Students - Their Learning Style, Self Concept and Study Habits.**

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**Abstract**

*The present investigation has been carried out by following the objectives to study the learning styles, self concept and study habits of specially abled students viz. visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going s students. The investigators have selected 200 specially abled students (100 visually impaired and other 100 orthopedically challenged) students from various govt. degree colleges in Kashmir province. The data was collected by using Dunn and Dunn learning style inventory, Sagar Sharma self concept inventory and Palsane Sharma Study habit inventory by following purposive sampling. The collected data was analyzed by using some statistical techniques. Some of the major findings have been drawn from the present study that there is significant difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on their learning styles, self concept and study habits.*

**Key Words: *Specially abled students, visually impaired, orthopedically challenged, learning style, self concept, study habits.***

**Introduction**

Education should be given to every individual as per interests, desires, capacities and abilities by which he will find his place and use that place to shape both himself and the society towards nobler end on the basis of co-operation, tolerance, mutual respect and fellow feeling. In democratic set-up every individual, whether normal or disabled has birth right to live, to work, to have property and to get education. Education of normal students is a routine based work however education of disabled students does not fall within this category, It calls for an extra-ordinary methodology , approach and the allied techniques which will help them not only full fill their needs and necessities but by and large endorse their overall growth and development. Since the dawn of manhood, education has always assumed prime importance in every society regardless of caste, creed, gender and even religion. It acquired different forms, modes, streams and disciplines adding value and much to the delight and comforts of the people all over the world. It has been realized that education of the person with disabilities is critical for their development and independent living. However unwell advisedly in our country due to lack of health facilities a large number of children suffers from various physical disabilities, which becomes a hurdle in the path of their standard of living, prosperity and security. All children are not alike in relation to their mental and physical attributes, some are gifted while others are less talented, some have physical disabilities like blindness or low vision, deafness, speech disorders, nonfunctional limbs; several are retarded in intellectual development; some are suffering from complications like epilepsy; others are emotionally disturbed or are unable to make a proper adjustment in educational institutions, or some have learning disabilities. The deviations are perceptible that it makes them as exceptional and needed special attention.

The students having physically impairments such as visual impairment and hearing impairment are required to be in special institutions for a special care. We have become conscious of the importance of the bodily health, but only a small number of people realize that the health has a great importance. Many people lead unhappy lives on account of physical and mental disorders. If the body is not properly exercised and scientifically fed, it deteriorates. Discomfort and unhappiness are natural consequences on the neglect of the body. In our country although some remarkable progress has been done by way of creating an awareness regarding educability of students with varying nature and degree of handicaps. The general aim of teaching is to enable students to make the most effective use of their abilities at every stage of their development. They should learn to make extensive use of their skills and gain a wide range of experience as a basis for a clear understanding of the world in which they live. Teaching methods are adapted to the age and maturity of the children, and if they are handicapped further adaptation need to be made in order to avoid obstacles to learning and to meet special needs as and when they arise. Well adopted teaching plans should allow the damaging effects of a handicap to be kept to a minimum, but remain sufficiently flexible to deal with problems which were not managed successfully at an earlier age. Together experience means to gain information from the environments by observation, manipulation and experimentation. Past experience is a decisive factor and information and meaning as closely bound up with each other. The available information changes and increases as skills develop because more can be used by the child. The environment becomes enriched because the capacity of the child is extended. For normally developing children, progress perpetuates itself. The various obstacles to the development of skills of handicapped children delay such progress; so that the effective expression of the environment is slowed down. The students having physical impairments are required to be in special institutions for a special care, and to set up special conditions for the handicapped students for a period when they have matured beyond their existing skill, when their level of output is inadequate for their goals.

Learning styles pertain to the person as an individual and that differentiate him from someone else. The ways in which an individual characteristically acquires, retains and retrieves information are collectively termed the individuals learning styles (Felder and Henrique’s 1995). It is generally assumed that learning styles refer to beliefs, preferences and behaviors used by individuals to add their learning in a given situation (Brown, 2000). There are individuals who learn very fast and others who do not learn very fast/ but with reasonable teaching- learning impute can learn prescribed tasks and may be over a relatively longer time segment. The learning style possessed by an individual is significantly related to the self-concept. Since the dawn of the human history, human beings get birth with the most capacious thing known as mind. This mind is associated with five sense organs. The co-ordination of mind and five sense organs of the body gives man a special highness among all the living creatures of the earth. After the birth of an individual, these sense organs are continuously stimulated either by external stimuli or by internal stimuli, mind reacts to these stimuli and thereby comes into existence the core of the personality known as self. As we look towards the world, we find different people performing different tasks. We find some people happy and some sullen, some are satisfied with life and work and some are disappointed with life and work, some are moving towards progress and some are still idle. All these activities are dependent on their self - concept. Whatever human beings do, they do it, according to their self concept. Study habits are an important factor in learning, it becomes necessary to investigate in to its nature whether it bears any relationship with achievement? Good or poor study habits may be the results of set common factors. It might be related to certain aspects of adjustment such as physical, health, home, emotional and social adjustment. It might be related to such personality traits as extroversion or introversion. It might be related to certain background and environmental conditions of study.

For the present study the following objectives have been formulated.

1. To find out specially abled students viz. visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students in Kashmir province.
2. To study learning style, self concept and study habits of visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students.
3. To compare visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on their learning styles.
4. To compare visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on their self concept.
5. To compare visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on their study habits.

**Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present investigation

1. Visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students do no differ on their learning styles.
2. Visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students do no differ on their self concept.
3. Visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students do not differ on their study habits.

**Methods and procedures**

Any piece of research is incomplete without a proper plan of action. A research is designed to enable the researcher to arrive at a valid, objective and accurate solution of the given problem as possible. Research design is thus, a detailed plan of how the goals of research will be achieved.

**Sample**

The investigators have selected 200 specially abled students (100 visually impaired and 100 orthopedically challenged college going students from various govt. degree colleges in Kashmir province. The data was collected by using purposive sampling.

**Tools**

For the present study the investigators have used Dunn and Dunn learning style inventory and Sagar and Sharma self concept inventory and Palsane and Sharma study habits inventory for collection of data.

**Statistical analysis**

The collected data has been analyzed by using some statistical techniques such as

Mean, S.D, t-value.

**Analysis and interpretation of data :**

 In order to test the hypotheses formulated for the present study, the data collated through the administration of the selected tool was statistically analyzed by employing t-test. As a result of this the visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students were compared on learning style, self concept and study habits.

**Table 4.1: Showing the mean comparison between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged on various dimensions of Learning Styles**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dimension** | **Group** | **N** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** | **t-value** | **Level of Sig.** |
| Environmental Stimulus | VisualImpaired | 100 | 45.60 | 6.454 | 5.269 | Sig. at .01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 50.10 | 5.557 |
| Emotional Stimulus | Visual Impaired | 100 | 35.80 | 4.678 | 5.705 | Sig. at .01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 39.60 | 4.761 |
| Sociological Stimulus | Visual Impaired | 100 | 48.80 | 5.661 | 4.075 | Sig. at .01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 52.15 | 5.980 |
| PhysicalStimulus | Visual Impaired | 100 | 44.00 | 4.457 | 5.371 | Sig. at .01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 47.25 | 4.112 |

**Fig. 4.1: Showing the mean comparison between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged on various dimensions of Learning Styles.**

Table 4.1: showing the mean comparison of visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on environmental stimulus, emotional stimulus, sociological stimulus and physical stimulus dimensions of learning style. The results of the table reveal that significant mean difference was found at .01 level between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on ***environmental stimulus*** dimension of learning style. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which means that orthopedically challenges students show good response towards sound, light, temperature and seating design. Orthopedically challenged students prefer to learn even if there is noise and need a normal light in a room. The temperature hardly affects their learning any activity and prefers to learn either in well arranged seating design or informal seating arrangement. While as visually impaired students show good response towards sound, light, temperature and seating design. The visual acuity of visually impaired students restricts their learning styles and gets easily irritated and disturbed by high sound and dark light. They prefer to learn in pin drop silence and bright rooms with normal temperature. They also prefer to learn in well seating design.

Table 4.1 also reveals that there is significant mean difference at .01 level between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on ***emotional dimension*** of learning style. The results of the table reveal that mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which means that their emotional stimulus of learning style is better than visually impaired students. They are always enthusiastic, interested and motivated to learn and sustain their attention for long time and indicate their high level of persistence. Table 4.1 again depicts that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on ***sociological dimens*ion** of learning style and the difference is significant at .01 level. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which mean that they show good response towards sociological stimulus of learning style. They prefer to learn with peer groups and interacts with their class mats which helps them to concentrate while learn any school activity. While as visually impaired students show less response towards sociological stimulus of learning style. Table 4.1 reveals that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on ***physical dimension*** of learning style at 0.01 level of significance. The mean scores favors orthopedically challenged students which means that they shows good response towards physical stimulus of learning style. They show good perceptual preferences and having ability to use auditory and visual senses effectively while learning any activity. They prefer to use tactile mode of learning and using sense of touch and bodily movements. Whereas visually impaired students shows low level of physical stimulus of learning styles. They fail to use the perceptual preferences such as sense of vision effectively because their visual acuity restricts them to learn through sense to vision and impedes their tactile mode of learning. The results seem to be justified on the ground that visually impaired students are suffering from disability of vision which affects them in their learning styles. As sense of vision is the important gateway of learning and the students having visual impairment and their visual acuity restricts them to learn easily and fairly in an unfavorable conditions and situations which results in them poor learning styles. Whereas orthopedics is having low intensity of disability and the students having such type of disability shows good response to various situations to learn as they have good sense of vision and perceptual strength which results in them good learning styles.

**Table 4.2: Showing the mean comparison between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged on their Self Concept**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Self concept | **Group** | **N** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** | **t-value** | **Level of Sig.** |
| VisualImpaired | 100 | 167.70 | 22.955 | 6.408 | Sig. at 0.01Level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 189.97 | 26.103 |

**Fig. 4.2: Showing the mean comparison between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged on their Self Concept**

Table. 4.2. shows the mean comparison of visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on ***self concept***. The results of the table reveal that calculated t-value which is (6.408) exceeds the tabulated t-value at .01 level of significance which means that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on their self concept. While comparing both visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on self concept the mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which indicates that they shows better self concept than visually impaired students. The results reveal that orthopedically challenged college going students have good perception of their appearances, abilities and disabilities, values and aspirations. Further they have positive attitude towards their dealings and self involvement in any activities and knowledge towards their achievements. Orthopedically challenged college going students show good response towards sympathetic attitude, independence, obedience, sociability, inventiveness, determination, and are quite and disciplined. The results seem to be justified on the grounds that orthopedically challenged students have good sense of vision and they easily perceive the things and situation easily. They are not more dependent on other for support and supervision while dealing any activity and try to mange by themselves which develops in them a self confidence which result good self concept. Whereas visually impaired students are more dependent on other for support and supervision due to their restricted vision and visual acuity which causes in them cowardness, dependency and low confidence which results poor self concept.

**Table 4.3: Showing the mean comparison between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged on various dimensions of Study Habits**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Dimension** | **Group** | **N** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** | **t-value** | **Level of Sig.** |
| Budgeting | Visual Impaired | 100 | 6.30 | 2.234 | 3.719 | Sig. at 0.01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 8.10 | 4.323 |
| Physical | Visual Impaired | 100 | 4.20 | 3.113 | 4.572 | Sig. at 0.01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 6.15 | 3.987 |
| Reading | Visual Impaired | 100 | 5.15 | 3.987 | 3.064 | Sig. at 0.01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 6.90 | 4.120 |
| Note | Visual Impaired | 100 | 2.10 | 2.223 | 3.431 | Sig. at 0.01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 3.15 | 2.134 |
| Learning | Visual Impaired | 100 | 5.10 | 3.457 | 3.260 | Sig. at 0.05level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 6.90 | 4.321 |
| Memory | Visual Impaired | 100 | 4.40 | 3.965 | 2.707 | Sig. at 0.01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 5.90 | 3.896 |
| Taking Exam | Visual Impaired | 100 | 7.25 | 4.324 | 4.809 | Insignificant |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 10.15 | 4.257 |
| Health | Visual Impaired | 100 | 2.10 | 2.212 | 2.090 | Sig. at 0.01level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 2.75 | 2.234 |

**Fig. 4.3: Showing the mean comparison between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged on various dimensions of Study Habits**

Table 4.3: showing the mean comparison of visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college students on various dimensions of study habits viz. budgeting time, physical condition, reading ability, note taking, learning motivation, memory and health dimensions of study habits. While comparing both visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on ***budgeting time dimension*** significant mean difference was found at .01 level. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which means that they shows good response and are aware about time management and manages the time properly for study purpose whereas visually impaired students fail to manage the time properly. The results of the table also reveal that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on ***physical condition dimension*** and the difference is significant at .01 level. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which means that they prefer to study in good and favorable physical environment, like good seating arrangement, normal light and are not gets easily disturbed by surroundings whereas visually impaired students hardly matters for good physical conditions . Table 4.3 also depicts that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students which is significant at .01 level on their ***reading ability dimension*** and the mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which means that they read the lesson carefully and to check the mistakes done by them, consult and read the books in library and at home every day whereas visually impaired students show poor response to read the lesson carefully and checking mistakes. The results of the table also reveal that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on ***note taking dimension*** and the difference is significant at .01 level. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which describes that they show good response in considering print material for learning in a suitable manner and takes down the notes during class room and compare with the notebooks at home carefully as compared to visually impaired students. Table 4.3 depicts that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on ***learning motivation dimension*** and the difference is significant at .01 level. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which means that they show good motivation to learn and study the material in groups with the help of other students and prepares the lesson at home and read the books when ever gets time. The results of the table also reveal that significant mean difference was found between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on ***memory dimension*** at 0.01 level. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which means that they show good response in recalling the content whatever they read in classroom and have better memory to recapitulate and retention as compared to visually impaired.

Table 4.3 also reveals that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and Orthopedically challenged students on their ***taking exams dimension*** and the mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which is significant at .01 level. The results of the table show that orthopedically challenged students showed good response towards their exams and are not feeling tense at the time of examination and are preparing notes for exams and manage the time given for exams as compared to their counter parts. The results of the table also reveal that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students which is significant at .05 level on ***health dimension*** of study habits. The mean score favors orthopedically challenged students which mean that they are well aware about their health conditions and are desirous for regular checkup for their health as compared to visually impaired students.

**Table 4.4: Showing the mean comparison of visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on composite score of Study Habits**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Study habits** | **Group** | **N** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** | **t-value** | **Level of significance** |
| Composite Score | VisualImpaired | 100 | 36.60 | 7.897 | 11.14 | Sig. at 0.01Level |
| Orthopedically Challenged | 100 | 49.30 | 8.234 |

**Fig. 4.4: Showing the mean comparison of visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on composite score of Study Habits**

Table 4.4: reflects the mean comparison of visually impaired and orthopedically challenged college going students on composite score of study habits. The table reveals that the higher mean score (49.30) favors orthopedically challenged college going students which is significant at .01 level. The results of the table describe that orthopedically challenged students shows better study habits as compared to visually impaired college going students which means that they show good response to time management and manage the time properly for their studies. Prefer good environment like good temperature, suitable light, good sound and well seating arrangements. They show good interest in taking exams consults books and other printed material for recapitulation and retention, try to memories the lesson properly and always prefer a better health conditions. The results seems to be justified on the grounds that visually impaired students are facing sever disability as compared to orthopedically challenged students as sense of sight is more important which strengths the perceptual power of a person. The visual acuity of a student restricts their participation in various school activities and fails to read the study material properly and fairly and consequently effects studies which results poor study habits

**Major findings**

1. It was found that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on environmental stimulus dimension of learning style. Orthopedically challenged students show better response towards pin drop silence and light, suitable temperature, well seating design, learning alone or with peer groups, and learning in different ways while learning the study material. While as visually impaired students shows poor response towards environmental conditions for learning any activity.
2. Significant mean difference was found between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on emotional stimulus dimension of learning style. Orthopedically challenged students show better emotional stability and persistence and responsibility while learning any school activity. While as visually impaired students show less emotional stability and gets easily irritated and disturbed.
3. It has been again found that there is significant mean difference between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on sociological stimulus dimension of learning style. Orthopedically challenged students show better response towards sociological stimulus dimension of learning style. They like and prefer to learn with peer groups and participate in group activities and like to learn with the help of other friends and class mats. While as visually impaired students show poor response towards sociological stimulus.
4. Significant mean difference was found between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged student on physical stimulus dimension of learning style. orthopedically challenged students show good response toward physical stimulus dimension of learning style and like perceptual preferences, sense of hearing and vision, tactile mode of learning, particular timing of learning and change of posture and location while learning any activity as compared to visually impaired students
5. Significant mean difference was found between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on their self concept. Orthopedically challenged students show good response towards their own self and holds positive view about their self and are confident, obedient, disciplined, self controlled, cheerful, honest, resourceful, noble and affectionate as compared to their counter parts.
6. Significant mean difference has been found between visually impaired and orthopedically challenged students on various dimensions of study habits. Orthopedically challenged students show better response towards time management, good physical conditions, reading abilities, consultation of notes and books, motivation towards learning, memory for recapitulation and retention, awareness and preparations for examination and good health and hygiene. While as visually impaired students show poor response towards time management, memory, motivation to learn, awareness about preparation of examination, consultation of books and notes and good health and hygiene.
7. On composite score it has been found that orthopedically challenged students shows better study habits while as visually impaired students shows poor study habits.

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