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A STUDY OF SELF-REGULATION IN RELATION TO HAPPINESS AMONG SIGHTED AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to study the relationship between self-regulation and happiness of secondary school students. It also purports to find out difference between sighted and visually impaired students in terms of self-regulation and happiness. The purposive sample consists of 300 students (sighted=150 and visually impaired=150) selected from secondary schools of Haryana, Punjab, Uttrakhand and Chandigarh. Data analysis involved the use of product-moment method of correlation and 't' test. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between self-regulation and happiness. Sighted and visually impaired students did not differ significantly with regard to self-regulation. However, significant difference was found in sighted and visually impaired students in terms of happiness. Sighted students were found happier than their visually impaired counterparts. It suggests that impairment adversely affects happiness.

Keywords: Self-regulation, Happiness, Secondary school students.

INTRODUCTION

When people are asked what makes them happy, they often mention their life-goals and plans (Delle Fave, Brdar, Freire, vella-Brodrick & Wissing,2010). Happiness of a person is determined by accomplishing important goals, needs and wishes (Emmons, 2003) and self-regulation is all about accomplishing goals. A self-regulated individual effectively manages perceptions of oneself and one's social surroundings and thus behaves in ways consistent with his goals. Self-regulation is vital in all life domains such as personal, social and as school life is an essential aspect of human existence, in the academics. It is not surprising today that a number of students find many problems to achieving a happy school life as they experience pressure, stress and anxiety originated from academics and students with visual impairment may experience even greater problems while having fewer strategies to deal with it. They are often at an even greater disadvantage and they appear to be under high stress which may impact their happiness. Many factors are responsible for a student's satisfying, happy school life and self-regulation appears to be central to effective functioning in a number of ways -- e.g., in impulse control, time management, coping with stress and emotions and leading a positive and happy life.

HAPPINESS

Happines/subjective well-being have recently received increased attention from researchers. The term 'happiness' captures a huge variety of positive emotional responses, including such things as cheerfulness, serenity, optimism, and joy. Argyle

(2001) states that happiness consists of three basic components: "positive affection, "life satisfaction" and "Negative affection". In her book, *The How of Happiness*(2007), Lyubomirsky elaborates, describing happiness as "the experience of joy, contentment, or positive well being combined with a sense that one's life is good, meaningful and worthwhile". Michalos(1991,pp.20-28) summarized the profile of a happy person as one who is likely to have low levels of fear, hostility, tension, anxiety, guilt and anger, high degrees of energy, vitality and activity, a high level of self-esteem and an emotionally stable personality, a strong social orientation, healthy, satisfying, warm love and social relationships, an actively lifestyle with meaningful work ; and to be relatively optimistic, worry-free, present-oriented and well-directed. Thus it's obvious that a happy person is one who has meaningful well-directed life with specific goals and self-regulation is the ability to regulate behaviour towards the attainment of those specific goals.

SELF-REGULATION

Self-regulation is a person's self control of behaviour, emotions and thoughts. In other words, it is an active way of managing behaviour to achieve a goal. Scholars define self-regulation as a systematic process of human thoughts that involves setting personal goals and steering oneself toward the achievements of those goals. Self regulation is a central feature of social cognition and important in goal setting, work motivation, learning and education . Acc. to Zimmerman, self regulation is the process whereby students activate and sustain cognitions, behaviours and affects that are systematically oriented toward the attainment of goals. According to Baumeister & Voh's *Handbook of Self-Regulation*(2014), people with high level of self-regulation have the ability

1. To attain, maintain and change one's level of arousal appropriately for a task or situation.
2. To control one's emotions.
3. To formulate a goal, monitor goal-progress, adjust one's behaviors
4. To manage social interactions, to co-regulate.
5. To be aware of one's academic strengths and weaknesses, and have a repertoire of strategies to tackle day-to-day challenges of academic tasks.

Studies on self-regulation reveal that self-regulation (used as self-control in some studies) has been linked to many positive outcomes, but there are only few studies about its relationship with subjective well-being/happiness. e.g. studies by Peterson et al., 2007; Wrosch, Scheier, Miller, Schulz, & Carver, 2003 point to the positive relationship between the two. Self-regulation might have a mediating role between life goals and subjective well-being.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The study of school students' happiness is important because in this period of life different events and transitions may influence their development and happiness. Happiness is probably a result of full engagement and optimal performance in the existential challenges of life (Ryan & Deci,2001). During school life, daily problems seem to be equally stressful experiences as major life events.

The occurrence of various forms of psychopathology, including affective and behavioural disorders increases dramatically during school life. In a secondary school student's life, happiness is related to positive outcomes in multiple life domains, such as academics, health and relationship with parents, teachers and peers. The joyful environment will affect learning and glorifying of talents among students and will double their energy. Research findings reveal that happy individuals are less likely to experience mental health problems.

Self-regulation is considered as an important concept in the dynamics of human behavior and has been seen as the predictor of happiness. Students high in self-regulation are at their best when they can maintain a high level of involvement in ensuring the excellence of activities under their coordination or control. Self-regulation is likely to be positively related to happiness, thus findings of the study will assist in enhancing happiness.

Review of literature reveals that relationship between self-regulation and happiness has not been satisfactorily explored especially with reference to disability. Impairment may affect self-regulation and happiness with reference to students with visual impairment. The present study will be helpful in better understanding of such students. Keeping these facts in view, the investigator has decided to undertake this study.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the relationship of self-regulation with happiness
2. To study the difference between sighted and visually impaired secondary school students in terms of self-regulation
3. To study the difference between sighted and visually impaired secondary school students in terms of happiness

HYPOTHESES

In order to verify the above-said objectives, the researcher made the following hypotheses:

1. Self-regulation is likely to be positively related with happiness of secondary school students.
2. Sighted secondary school students are likely to be found better than the students with visual impairment in terms of self-regulation.
3. Sighted secondary school students are likely to be found better than the students with visual impairment in terms of happiness.

RESEARCH METHOD

In the present investigation, descriptive research method was used. It attempts to study the relationship between self-regulation and happiness of secondary school students. It also purports to find out the difference between sighted students and students with visual impairment in terms of self-regulation and happiness.

SAMPLE

A purposive sample of 150 sighted and 150 visually impaired secondary school students was selected from four special and three general schools situated in Panipat(Haryana), Ludhiana(Punjab), Dehradun(Uttarakhand) and Chandigarh.

RESEARCH TOOLS

- i) Self regulation Questionnaire (SRQ) developed by Ryan and Connell in 1998
- ii) Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) developed by Argyle in 2001

COLLECTION OF DATA

The investigator visited the selected schools personally for the collection of necessary data for the study. The investigator took the prior permission of the principals of the schools for data collection. The scales were administered in group on sighted students whereas the investigator administered the scales on visually impaired students on individual basis and recorded the responses herself. Product- moment method of correlation technique was used to find out the relationship between self-regulation and happiness.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

- i) Product-moment method of correlation technique was used to find out the relationship between self-regulation and happiness
- ii) To find out the difference between mean scores of self-regulation and happiness with reference to sighted and visually impaired students, 't' test was used.

RESULTS

The results of the study are divided into two sections.

Section-I relates to correlation between self-regulation and happiness.

Section-II deals with the difference between sighted and visually impaired students on self-regulation and happiness.

Table 1: Relationship Between Self-Regulation And Happiness

S. No.	Variable and its dimensions	'r'	Significance
1.	Self-regulation (total) vs Happiness (total)	.346	Significant
2.	Self-regulation (total) vs Life-satisfaction	.295	Significant
3.	Self-regulation (total) vs Joy	.353	Significant
4.	Self-regulation (total) vs Self-esteem	.349	Significant
5.	Self-regulation (total) vs Calm	.243	Significant
6.	Self-regulation(total) vs Control	.266	Significant
7.	Self-regulation(total) vs Efficacy	.228	Significant
8.	Academic self-regulation vs Happiness(total)	.328	Significant
9.	Friendship self-regulation vs Happiness(total)	.307	Significant
10.	Religious self-regulation vs Happiness(total)	.273	Significant
11.	Prosocial self-regulation vs Happiness(total)	.219	Significant

N=300, df=298

Table value=0.093 Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 1 reveals that the obtained values of 'r' for total self-regulation and happiness along with its all the dimensions and vice-versa exceed the critical value at .05 level of significance i.e. 0.093. Therefore, concerned null hypotheses are refuted and the research hypotheses are retained. It means that there is a positive and significant relationship between self-regulation and happiness. Hence, it can be suggested that a student having higher self-regulation is likely to be happier.

Table 2: Difference Between Sighted And Visually Impaired Students With Regard To Self-Regulation

S. No	Variable/ dimensions	M ₁	M ₂	S.D ₁	S.D ₂	't' ratio	Significance
1.	Self-regulation	272.51	271.06	35.83	27.10	0.02	Insignificant
2.	Academic self-regulation	99.41	98.69	14.51	13.95	0.44	Insignificant
3.	Friendship self-regulation	61.17	62.45	10.36	8.96	1.15	Insignificant
4.	Religious self-regulation	36.80	35.97	6.31	5.14	1.24	Insignificant
5.	Prosocial self-regulation	75.13	75.46	12.96	9.61	0.25	Insignificant

N₁=150, N₂=150

Table value of 't' at 0.05 level of significance=1.96

Table 2 reveals that the 't' value for self-regulation is 0.02 which does not exceed the table value at 0.05 level of significance i.e. 1.96. Therefore concerned null hypothesis is accepted. Hence sighted students and students with visual impairment do not differ significantly with regard to self-regulation.

Table 3: Difference Between Sighted And Visually Impaired Students With Regard To Happiness

S. No	Variable/ dimensions	M ₁	M ₂	S.D ₁	S.D ₂	't' ratio	Significance
1.	Happiness	99.10	89.04	18.67	17.02	4.88	Significant
2.	Life-satisfaction	28.43	26.06	5.84	5.10	3.74	Significant
3.	Joy	27.71	25.59	5.94	5.09	3.32	Significant
4.	Self-esteem	16.70	14.99	3.99	3.26	4.07	Significant
5.	calm	10.09	8.92	2.58	2.08	4.34	Significant
6.	control	12.97	11.69	2.95	2.69	3.91	Significant
7.	efficacy	3.22	2.55	1.35	1.05	4.82	Significant

N₁-150 N₂-150

Table Value of 't' at 0.05 level of Significance =1.96

Table 3 shows that the observed 't' values for happiness and all its dimensions exceed the critical value at 0.05 level of significance i.e. 1.96. Thus all the concerned null hypotheses are refuted and research hypotheses are accepted. It is further seen from the table that mean happiness scores of sighted students are more than those of visually impaired students. It leads to the conclusion that sighted students are happier than their visually impaired counterparts.

CONCLUSION

1. There exists a positive significant relationship between self-regulation and happiness.
2. Sighted and visually impaired students do not differ significantly in terms of self-regulation.
3. Sighted students are found happier than their visually impaired counterparts. It means impairment adversely affects happiness.

The findings with regard to self regulation and happiness revealed that self-regulation is positively correlated to happiness and all its dimensions viz. life satisfaction, joy, self-esteem, calm, control and efficacy. It can be said that a student with more self-regulation is likely to be happier than the one with less self-regulation. Results seem logical as to be self-regulated is to be goal-directed and students who value goals in life are happier to those students who live empty lives without any life-goals and self regulation. Thus findings of this study are consistent with the results of the study by Anic and Tonicic (2013) that the participants who live full lives with goals have the highest subjective well-being. Thus, it can be concluded that people with higher self-regulation are more satisfied with their lives, and experience more positive and less negative emotions.

Further results of the study reveal that sighted and visually impaired students do not differ significantly in terms of self-regulation but significant difference was found in terms of happiness. Visually impaired students are less happy than their sighted counterparts. The results seem logical as while attending school, besides the challenges that every student faces, students with v.i. have to face many new challenges such as learning orientation to the new place and creating a support network. The main problem of visually impaired students is finding accessible learning materials e.g. Braille booklets, and using the library. This might be perceived as threatening for them. Students with V.I. have many difficulties in the social – emotional field. Many skills which are necessary for social interaction are based on visual cues. Loss of sight influences the ability to recognize people or social situations. Thus, impairment effects influence the lives of people with V.I. and their happiness may get suppressed.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of present study have ample implications for school administrators, teachers, parents, special educators and other professionals working in the field of disability. As self-regulation is positively and significantly correlated with happiness, so it's obvious if we will develop self regulation skills of students, they will be happier. Self-regulation is considered as one of the important developmental skills, students should learn through their adolescent years.

Further the findings revealed that visually impaired students are less happy than sighted school students. In view of the findings, school authorities, special educators, teachers and clinical psychologists are required to take appropriate measures to enhance happiness of visually impaired students. A struggle against the disabling physical and social environment will teach them mostly about their internal resources, which finally lead them into growth. Students should be taught to transfer from independence to interdependence, learn the skill of asking for help without having to reduce their sense of self, develop social

relationships and even be socialization agents for others, come out of the disability closet, and reveal their internal forces. A conducive environment with supportive services and academic facilities will serve the needs of visually impaired students, will create conditions for their substantial equalization with the other sighted students and will reduce stress and improve their over all happiness.

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