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CHAPTER - I

1.1 Introduction:

Theorists of the second half of twentieth century have focused their searching attention upon what has come to be known as the self. Generally speaking the self have two distinct sets of meaning. One set has to do with people's attitudes about themselves, their picture of the way they look and act, the impact they make on others, their traits and abilities, and their weaknesses. This set includes what is known as the self concept or self image. The second set of meaning relates to the psychological processes, the process by which the individual manages and copes, thinks, remembers, perceives and plans. These two meaning, self as object and self as process, are seen in most theories which employ any kind of self-construct.

Socio-cultural interaction contributes a great deal to the development of concepts utilized by an individual to understand himself and others, to direct his own behaviour. Understanding of the self is enhanced by social comparison or the ability to evaluate the self in relation to others. In other words one has to compare his own attitudes and beliefs to those of others, thus obtaining a means or measuring stick for assessing the validity of his own position.

Self-concept is a highly complex component of behaviour, composed of both cognitive and affective dimensions, and has at least four orientations : the real self, the perceived self, the ideal self and the self as perceived by others. The flexibility of these orientations of the self offers many possibilities with regard to exploring situational-specific behaviour within the sport frame-work.

Further, attitude, real or perceived, can be obtained from a variety of perspectives from both the athletes and others.\(^2\)

According to Alderman\(^3\) self-awareness means how a person perceives himself, what he thinks of himself, how he values himself and how he attempts through various action to enhance himself.

Rainer Martens\(^4\) opines that self-esteem pertains to an inner conviction about our competency and worth as human beings. Too often those of us in the sport world base our self-esteem on our wins and losses in competition. We esteem ourselves by diminishing someone else's esteem, by displaying we are more competent in a contest. Genuine self-esteem, however, is not competitive or comparative. Positive self-esteem is viewing oneself as a competent and worthy person and feeling good about that. Self-esteem is not achieved by defeating others, but by living up to one's own standards.

Singer\(^5\) postulates that self-concept is learned by an individual's inference from his unique experiences. The individual's perceptions of the feelings of others towards him strongly influence his self image. In turn, self-concept may prove the most powerful motivation for specific behaviour. As the type of behaviour depends upon what one feels, one is capable of, and appropriate to his need. Thus self-concept and unique behaviour pattern of an individual resembles the relationship between egg and chick.

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Out of many outcomes of physical education visualized by professional leaders, motor fitness and self-concept are those vital ones which physical education is capable of promoting.

Through physical movements children express themselves, become creative, develop a positive self-concept which includes the personality traits and thus gain a better understanding of their physical selves. It is through movement experiences that young children explore, develop and grow in a meaningful manner. Proficiency leads to increased success in physical task which is valued in one's group. The kind of physical education programme that leads to improved physical and social fitness and health is vital to education and academic achievement of every boy and girl.

1.2 Scholastic Achievement and Self-Concept

The process of acquiring certain academic character find support in educational literature. Moderately higher academic achievement reflects people's attitudes and abilities, their appearances and actions.

The progress that a child shows in school examination as measured by scores on theoretical tests, promotion, ranks etc., refers to scholastic achievement. The intellectual ability plays a prominent role in this aspect.

Relationships between intellectual and physical functions were also explored by many psychologists. It seemed logical to some of the early psychologists to determine whether basic measures were in some way predictive of so-called other intellectual functions. They were aided in their search by Karl Pearson, a young student of Galtones, and others who began to develop and refine basic statistical tools. Observing the obvious motor incoordination in many retarded children, these early experimental psychologists sought to determine whether basic motor and sensory measures could predict the degree to academic and cognitive abilities possessed by individuals at several points along the scale of intelligence.

1.3 Motor Fitness and Self-concept

One of the acknowledged consequences of regular movement in sport or physical activity is increased fitness level and a feeling of physical well-being. Fitness may have psychological consequences, because enhanced fitness level often has a positive effect on one's body image. Since a positive relationship generally exists between body image and self-concept. One could hypothesize that improving one's fitness through sport would increase his/her positive feelings about his/her body and enhance his/her self-concept through positive experiences in body oriented activities, indirectly the person (self) can be changed.

Participation in physical education activities, besides developing physique, contributes to building up self-confidence, reduction of anxiety level and outgoing tendency or extroversion. As such, proficiency leads to increased success in physical task which is valued in one's group. Success in sports activities in childhood and adolescence enhance self-esteem, whereas physical inaptitude leads to feeling of inferiority. The process of acquiring motor skills and using them in sports also develops conceptual propensities and help acquiring certain academic character which find support in educational literature. Some adolescents and adults engage in muscle building activities to bolster their personality structure whereas obese individual who have neither proper prospect of success in physical activities nor will-power avoid physical activities especially vigorous ones and become socially withdrawn.

Adjustment, academic achievement and general behaviour are among the developmental feature of an individual which are subject to the influence of his self-concept. Consequently, many researchers are concerned with determining means for improving and chanelising the self-concept of the individual in desirable direction. For all this, measurement of self-concept is the starting point. Here self-concept means those perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and feelings which the individual views as parts of characteristics of himself.

Humphrey found that motor activities are beneficial in developing skills and concepts in reading, mathematics and science. He indicates that if an academic skill or concept is practiced during a physical education activity, that skill or concept is learned faster. For example, children can be taught the science concept of the complete circuit by participating in a simple activity such as the straddle ball relay. In this activity children standing in files one behind the other, legs outstretched, roll a ball between their legs; the ball is considered the electric current and the children are the circuit. When the ball goes outside one of the student's leg, the teacher can impress on the students the fact that the circuit is broken. Students can get an insight into the meaning of the concept being taught. Humphrey further indicates that many advanced academic skills and concept can be introduced to children at an early age through the use of motor activities as a vehicle for learning.

It is evident that the child's first learnings accrue from interaction with the environment both physical and social. Physical action provides the experience to clarify and make meaningful concepts of size, shape, direction and other characteristics. In addition, through physical activities the child experiences sensations, has new feelings and develops new interests as well as satisfies old curiosities, and thereby improves positive self-image.

1.4 Statement of The Problem

It has been a longtime interest among curious investigators as regards how far intellectual and physical functions are inter-related, as also the mutual predictability between basic motor abilities and the degree of cognitive abilities.

It is also evident from the discussion presented in earlier pages that motor fitness as well as academic achievement might have influence upon self-concept. And in this context influence of gender and age factor, locality or habitation status and regional culture possibly may also creep in.

The researcher therefore formulated this study to make an attempt to find out "Influence of Scholastic Achievement and Motor Fitness and Self-concept among Adolescents in respect of Sex, Locality and Regional Culture".

1.5 Delimitation

(a) The study was delimited to a population of students who passed the Madhyamik Examination of 1993, under the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education and got admitted in Higher Secondary Course.

(b) It was further delimited to the eleventh standard students, both male and female, studying in rural and urban Higher Secondary Schools in the State of West Bengal.

(c) The delimitation to only four specific and distinctly diverse regions of the state of West Bengal, representing Central Gangetic Valley, Western Table Land, Southern Sea-Coast and Northern Hill Area was a necessary step to explore distinct regional-cultural influence.

1.6 Limitation

(a) The study was conducted in areas distinctly diverse, specified on the basis of topographical characteristics and climatic conditions. The inhabitants belonged to different ethnic communities having heterogeneous sects, religious beliefs, caste distinctions etc., leading to diverse ways of living, interest, attitude, behaviour and customs reflecting diversified regional cultures.
Such diverse culture might naturally have cast influence on the populace resulting in possible differences in the development of self-concept and motor fitness amongst the population of this study.

Since there was little scope for directly measuring cultural influence as such in the absence of suitable techniques being available to the researcher, the study centered round observing the differences, if any in the exposition of the selected parameters. This lack might be construed a limitation, if one may think so.

(b) The subjects selected for the study were both hostellers and day-scholars; so influence of residence, if any, could not be controlled.

1.7 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was:

(a) To assess the influence of regional culture on scholastic achievement, motor fitness and self-concept.

(b) To assess the influence of locality or habitation status (i.e., rural and urban influence) on scholastic achievement, motor fitness and self-concept.

(c) To assess the influence of gender factor on scholastic achievement, motor fitness and self-concept.

(d) To assess the influence of scholastic achievement on self-concept.

(e) To assess the influence of motor fitness on self-concept.
To find out in this context the relationship between scholastic achievement, motor fitness and self-concept.

1.8 Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that there will be difference in scholastic achievement, motor fitness and self-concept among adolescents under the influence of sex factor, locality or habitation status and regional culture.

1.9 Significance of the Study

Self-concept is a complex image pertaining to an inner conviction about one's competency and worth as a human being. Very often in the sports world we tend to base our self-concept on our wins and losses in competition. The psychological aspect of sport is gaining attention among the sports administrators and coaches who can communicate efficiently with athletes and can provide an environment that is conducive to motivate performance and develop favourable self-concept.

Genuine self-concept is neither competitive nor comparative. Positive self-concept is viewing oneself as a competent and worthy person and feeling good about that. Self-concept is not achieved by defeating others but by living up to one's own standards.

The study will enable one to find out whether self-concept is influenced by specific achievements of an individual or it is a comprehensive psychological phenomenon of self-awareness.
The study may reveal whether self-concept develops differently amongst males and females, and also if there be any influence of locality or regional culture on the development of self-concept.

The relationship, as proposed in the study, between scholastic achievement, motor fitness and self-concept might present interesting profile of an individual's personality.

1.10 Definition and Explanation of Terms

Scholastic Achievement:

By Scholastic Achievement the researcher denotes the marks scored by the subjects in the Madhyamik Examination conducted by west Bengal Board of Secondary Education.

Academic Achievement refers to the progress a child makes in school as measured by scores on achievement tests; grade-point averages, promotion from grade to grade, and the development of proper attitudes. As any experienced teacher knows, academic achievement requires more than intellectual capacity. Nonintellectual factors, such as the will to achieve, health and self-concept are almost certain to play an important part in a student's ability to achieve academically.

Motor Fitness

Motor fitness is a limited phase of general motor ability, with emphasis placed on the underlying elements of vigorous physical activity but does not include the primary elements of coordination and skill.


Motor Fitness is a readiness or preparedness for performance with special regard for big muscle activity without undue fatigue.11

For the purpose of the present study the second definition against the backdrop of the first definition is considered more appropriate.

Self Concept:

Self-concept is the totality of attitudes, judgements and values of an individual relating to his behaviour, abilities and qualities. Self-concept embraces awareness of these variables and their evaluation.12