

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 SELF-CONCEPT:

The self-concept is the accumulation of knowledge about the self, such as beliefs regarding personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles. Beginning in infancy, children acquire and organize information about them as a way to enable them to understand the relation between the self and their social world. This developmental process is a direct consequence of children's emerging cognitive skills and their social relationships with both family and peers. In childhood and adolescence, the self-concept becomes more abstract, complex, and hierarchically organized into cognitive mental representations or self-schemas, which direct the processing of self-relevant information.

Self-concept is one of the most important variables (Núñez, Pienda González-García, González-Pumariega, Rods, Alvarez and González Torre, 1998) in the field of Psychology. As noted by Malo, Bataller, Houses, Gras and Gonzalez (2011), the self is a psychological construct studied from almost all areas of psychology (Gergen, 1984). Thus, Sanchez (2009) believes that the self is responsible for many successes and failures, as it promotes a positive self-esteem, promoting safety and personal trust to develop skills. It is believed that self concept is much related to one's over all well being thus pronouncing its significance in the promotion of healthy feelings. In other words mental

health which is a component of overall well being is affected by the self concept one has.

The attention of psychologists and educators for quite some time has been attracted to study the 'Self' and 'Self-concept'. It has been recommended that the on the whole performance of a teacher in the class-room is largely dependent on his self-concept. Accordingly it has been stressed that the total effectiveness in work is to a very considerable degree influenced by the self-concept. An insightful person can correct his faulty 'self-concept' through self-evaluation, constant watch and observation upon his own behaviour, self-discipline, intellectual-discipline, suggestions from others and by twittering into his own self images for sensible evaluation. It needs hardly any stating that a realistic 'self-concept' helps a person to grow professionally and also helps in proper emotional adjustment with his environment.

The concept of self in educational research has not yet been extensively or intensively explored by the investigators or even psychologists. The formation of 'self-concept' is a continuous and life long process and it is related fundamentally to the problem of thinking. The ways one thinks about oneself and constructs an image of oneself that gets projected are vital in this regard. The role perception of an individual through image building influences the concept of 'self' very much.

Human behaviour is a very composite phenomenon and as such is very difficult to understand and predict. But 'self-concept' has to be inclined to become an important means in the recent years to interpret, understand

and predict it. Rogers believed that 'self' is a basic factor in the formation of personality and in determining behaviour but according to him it had entered the field of psychology as a problem of research in the later quarter of 19th century. As early as 1890 William James, developed the notion of 'self' around which he could construct a grand picture of mental life. Such a notion of self gave way to concepts such as 'personality traits' and the dimensions of personality, which eventually led towards statistical formulations, objective measurement and assessment in quantitative terms.

Now a days, 'self-concept' has been recognized as a powerful means for making a profound study of personality as it helps in understanding human behaviour. It is now believed that self is a main controlling agent, which shapes human fortune. In reality, 'self' is viewed by the majority of self-psychologists as the nucleus of human body. Thus, the self is not only related to motivational activity alone, but acts as a regulating and coordinating factor in perceiving, learning, remembering, planning, risk taking, judging and in decision taking substances or situations. While solving a problem or in undertaking some work, the level of performance is determined not only by the difficulty or ease of the problem, but also by the image one has built about oneself in general. When one grows, one learns about one's reciprocities with others as high, low, friendly or unfriendly, dominant or subordinate.

Self-concept is the perception that individuals have of their own worth. This includes a composite of their feelings, a generalized view of their social acceptance, and their personal feelings about themselves. High self-esteem

was a appreciating oneself and acknowledging self-worth, self-control, and competence, with a corresponding positive attitude and high self-evaluations, opposite to this, self-criticism, and feelings of hopelessness. Both self-concept and self-esteem are fluid through a child's development and can be influenced by positive parental involvement.

Self-concept develops as a result of one's experiences with the environment and one's evaluations of these experiences. Additionally, opinions of significant others, causal attributions, and concrete feedback play a crucial role in the process of self-concept development (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). The formative middle-school years of a child's life are an important time for the child to develop a positive self-concept. Self-concept is important because it contributes too many different facets of a person's life, from childhood to adulthood.

During the past decades there has been a greater emphasis on the study of self-concept for understanding and predicting the many factors of human behaviour, which is a vital component in the process of education, since it has been observed that these are intricately and closely related to each other. Self-concept is one of the most dominating factors intricately the individual behaviour, on the other hand life experience too effect the self-concept. Successes and other pleasurable events in life lead to the enhancement of self-concept while failure, frustration and other denigrating experiences tend to lower the concept of oneself.

Self-concept which originally was considered to be the keystone in non- directive counseling by Rogers, is now taken as of major importance in the field of education also, because it is observed that self-concept has close connections with some personal aspects like learning, motivation, attitudes, perception and adjustment which determine the academic and other successes of the individual in and out of the school. Self-concept is considered to be the most significant factor in human life as everyone is continuously striving toward self-actualization, self-realization and self-enhancement, and is constantly wishing to avoid self-condemnation and self-lowering experience. In every action, self in different covert and overt forms emerges as the governing component amongst the forces determining the action (Deo, 1998).

Self-concept is a system of attitudes towards oneself. Self-concept consists of all the perceptions, feeling, attitudes, aspirations and values of oneself concerning oneself (Deo, 1998). Self-concept is best conceived as a system of attitudes towards oneself. A person as a result of experiences forms attitudes which he or she organizes into a self-consistent system and defends against threats and attacks, so the person also forms attitudes toward himself. Self-concept consists of all the perceptions, feelings, attitudes, aspirations and values of oneself concerning oneself (Deo, 1998).

Self-concept refers to the way a person thinks about their abilities in a variety of facets of life, including academics, athletics and social interactions. Self-concept is related to self-esteem, but the terms are not synonymous. A person's self-concept affects their self esteem. In other words, self concept

refers to a broader understanding of self than self esteem. In addition, self-esteem is based on an evaluation of one's own abilities, which self concept is less judgmental in nature.

It appears that a person is not born with a self-concept but gradually forms one as a result of his interaction with the environment. The development of self-concept involves a slow process of differentiation in which the child gradually emerges into focus out of his total world of awareness and defines progressively more clearly just who are what he is and his position in relation to his environment. Underlying the development of self-concept are the person's assets and liabilities in relation to his environment. The adequacy of the development of self-concept is to a large extent is a result of the early parent-child relationship (Deo, 1998).

1.2 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

Emotional intelligence (EI) is ability, skill or, a self-perceived ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of oneself, of others, and of groups. In recent years, emotional intelligence has attracted the interest of researchers (Bar-On, 2006, Goleman, 1995). As pointed out by Goleman (1995, 1998), emotional intelligence can understand the ability to recognize feelings in themselves and others, and have enough ability to handle satisfactorily. Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2000) argue that it is the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotions and regulating emotions of oneself and also of others. For Goleman (1995) emotional intelligence is reflected in the way people interact with the

world. In this sense, emotionally intelligent people take into account their own feelings and those of others. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, are reflective and self-assured, among other things. Besides, emotional intelligence has some relation with regard to mental health of individuals since emotions play major role with regard to maintenance of mental health.

Emotional intelligence has been defined as the ability to adaptively recognize, understand, manage, harness emotions both in self and others (Mayer and Salovey, 1995) and to use emotion to facilitate cognitive processing (Mayer et al., 2002). Emotional intelligence has been conceptualized in the literature both as a relatively enduring trait and as ability (Mayer et al., 2002). Self esteem of the same individual cannot be overlooked (Carmeli et al., 2007).

Mayer et al. (2002) argue that emotional intelligence is not a single trait or ability rather it is a composite of distinct emotion reasoning abilities. Perceiving emotions consist of recognizing and interpreting the meaning of various emotional states, as well as their relations to other sensory experiences. Understanding emotions involve understanding of how basic emotions are blended to form complex emotions. Regulating emotions encompasses the control of emotions in oneself and in others. An individual's emotional intelligence is an indicator of how an individual perceives, understands and regulates emotions that are essential features of good mental health.

Emotional intelligence is essential to succeed. The idea of emotional intelligence has inspired research and curriculum development throughout these facilities. Researchers have concluded that people who manage their own feelings well and deal effectively with others, are more likely to live content lives. Happy people are more apt to retain information and do so more effectively than dissatisfied people.

Building one's emotional intelligence has a lifelong impact. Many parents and educators, alarmed by increasing levels of conflict in young school children from low self-esteem to early drug and alcohol use to depression, are rushing to teach students the skills necessary for emotional intelligence. And in corporations, the inclusion of emotional intelligence in training programs has helped employees cooperate better and motivate more, thereby increasing productivity and profits.

Emotional intelligence is a powerful and at times more powerful than intelligence quotient which contributes only about 20% of success in life, the other forces contribute the rest. Unlike intelligence quotient emotional intelligence may be the best predictor of success in life.

Adolescent is the period of rapid changes in terms of physical, emotional and social aspects of life. One of the major and serious problems of adolescents is of aggression which forces them to do destructive things like, taking drugs, homicidal and suicidal tendencies. The source of such acts is emotional disturbance, lack of good interpersonal relationship, unhappy,

relationship with parents, family and school. Therefore, it was thought to study emotional intelligence of the teenage groups.

On aspect of adolescents is their emotions, and within schools and society as a whole, this aspect has often been overlooked. Students are measured in terms of their performance and grades. They are assessed on how well they can play, act, draw, sing, and so forth. However, an intrinsic aspect of students as well as all of us, and one that is usually not assessed, is what has been defined as emotional intelligence. Mayer and Salovey (1993), define emotional intelligence as “a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions”. Emotional intelligence is now considered by many as being essential for successful living (Goleman, 1995). Teaching students about their emotions and how they deal with others as well as their own actions can be very helpful in their daily struggles. Furthermore, in order to encourage a smooth transition from student to adulthood, a good understanding of emotion for students is important in deterring their mental health and self-concept.

1.3 MENTAL HEALTH:

Mental health is an important aspect of one’s total health status and it is a basic factor that contributes to the maintenance of physical health and social effectiveness. It means the ability to balance feelings, desire, ambitions and ideals in one’s daily life. It is the ability to face and accept the realities of life.

Mental health has two important aspects-- individual and social-. Social forces are in constant flux. They are constantly moving and changing and therefore our mental health is affected by various stresses. Mental health is a process of adjustment, which involves compromise and adaptation, growth and continuity. Because of the significance of individual and social aspects, mental health is defined as ability of the individual to make personal and social adjustments.

Mental health is the capacity of an individual to form harmonious adjustments to one's social and physical environments. Menninger (1945) defined mental health as the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with a maximum of effectiveness and happiness. It is the ability to maintain an even temper, an alert intelligence, socially considerate behavior and a happy disposition. Mental health can be described as absence of symptoms of maladjustment, be they mild or severe. Mentally healthy person is free from all types of maladjustment (Klein, 1956). Jahoda (1958) has said that aspects of attitudes toward self, growth and development, self-actualization, integration of personality and mastery of the environment must be considered in judging whether a person is mentally healthy or not.

Bhatia (1982) considers mental health as the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily living. As part of one's overall health, mental and emotional health is a necessary condition to enable one to manage one's life successfully. Mental health is the emotional and spiritual

resilience that allows one to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering and disappointment.

The National Association for Mental Health describes some of the characteristics of people with good mental health: comfortable feelings about one's self, feeling of 'right' about other people and being able to meet the demands of life.

Mental health of the learner is very important for efficient learning and proper development of personality. A child is born in a home where he remains in the constant company of his mother in the formative years of his infancy. Traditionally, it is said the mother is equal to hundred teachers. The impressions and experiences which a child has in these formative years leave permanent and indelible

According to the World Health Organization, —Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community.

A healthy individual is not only physically healthy, but is also mentally healthy. The modern concept of health extends beyond the proper functioning of the body. It includes a sound, efficient mind and controlled emotions. Health is a state of being, sound or whole in body and mind'. It means that both body and mind are working efficiently and harmoniously. Man is an integrated psychosomatic unit, whose behaviour is determined by both physical and mental factors.

Mental health which today is recognized as an important aspect of one's total health status is a basic factor that contributes to the maintenance of physical health as well as social effectiveness.

It is the normal state of well-being, and in the words of Johns, Sutton and Webster, is a positive but relative quality of life. It is a condition which is characteristic of the average person who meets the demands of life on the basis of his own capacities and limitations. By the word relative it implied that the degree of mental health which an individual enjoys at a time is continuously changing.

It is not mere absence of mental illness that constitutes mental health. On the other hand, it is a positive, active quality of the individual's daily life. This quality of life is manifested in the behaviour of an individual whose body and mind are working together in the same direction. His thoughts, feelings and actions function harmoniously towards the common end. It means the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily living. It means the ability to face and accept the realities of life. It connotes such habits of work and attitudes towards people and things that bring maximum satisfaction and happiness to the individual. But the individual has to get this satisfaction and happiness without any friction with the social order or group to which he or she belongs.

From this, one can conclude that mental health has two important aspects. It is both individual and social. The individual aspect connotes that

the individual is internally adjusted. He is self-confident, adequate and free from internal conflicts and tensions or inconsistencies. He is skilful enough to be able to adapt to new situations. But he achieves this internal adjustment in a social setup. Society has certain value systems, customs and traditions by which it governs itself and promotes the general welfare of its members. It is within this social framework that the internal adjustment has to be built up. Only then, the individual becomes a person who is acceptable as a member of the society.

Mental health can and should be a live experience for student. The teacher's part is greater in mental health education than in physical health education because some of the mental health problems are caused by school situations and others are aggravated by school conditions. They can help to establish a therapeutic environment for children who have problems of living.

There are many who fail to realize the best of their potential, who find it impossible to be happy and who suffer from minor mental and psychosomatic disturbances.

Mental health may be defined as the adjustment of the individuals to themselves and the world at large with a maximum of effectiveness, satisfaction, cheerfulness and socially considerate behaviour and the ability of facing and accepting the realities of life, with minimum friction and tension.

The mentally healthy student accepts himself with his strong points and his shortcomings; he makes the best use of what he has and he does not

allow his personal weaknesses to interfere with his daily activities and his pursuit of long-range goals. The emotionally healthy student reaches a balance between his instincts and his conscience, coupled with the demands of his environment. His self concept and emotional intelligence have a role to play in determining his mental health status.

Therefore, an attempt is made in this study to assess the effect of self concept and emotional intelligence on mental health of students, especially those who are chosen from urban and rural dwelling along with their other demographic factor.