CHAPTER- I

INTRODUCTION
In the past, handicapped children were generally excluded from the purview of nominal experience. They have been treated as defective beings and believed that these children will not profit from regular schools and their facilities. The handicapped were viewed as the dregs in society or as awful persons who were prevented their participation in the activities necessary for survival. The handicapped students' way of thinking is greatly influenced by the mind-set and opinion of others, especially the family, the few school personnel and the peers with whom they interact. The attitude handicapped students hold to themselves can affect their social, psychological, emotional and academic growth and ultimately their functioning in society.

In the early nineteenth century, as the idea of democracy, individual freedom and egalitarianism swept in west, and advancement in learning theory and technology contributed to the emergence of optimistic attitude towards handicapped pupils. UNESCO envisaged the most positive response to this section of population in the year 1946. The Warnock committee (1978) reviewed a report on the educational provisions for the handicapped children and youth in England under the Act of Education for all handicapped children (U.S. Public Law, 94-142). These are the milestones in the care, welfare and education of the handicapped children.

In India educational provisions for handicapped children has become a priority as a result of the National Policy on Education 1986. This Policy came into existence just before the International Year for disabled persons 1987 and during the period of 1983-92, which is declared as the World Decade of Disabled Persons by UN General Assembly. The National Policy with its commencement possessed almost all the favourable ethos. All these
attempts brought the galore of publicity on the needs of the blind in the world and in India as well.

Estimates of the number of disabled vary greatly, depending on the definitions, the source, the methodology and the extent of use of scientific instruments in identifying and measuring the degree of visual disability. In 2002 there were 161 million visually impaired people in the world, of whom 124 million had low vision and 37 million were blind (10th revision of International Statistical Classification of Diseases, 2004). In India the need for the study of blind children arises from the fact that almost one-third of the world’s blind reside over here. A blind person in India lives under a curse. He or she is a burden on the family and is either abandoned or allowed to waste away. The disabled population in India is approximately over 90 million, of these 40.5 million are visually handicap in which 12 million are blind and 28.5 million are with low vision. Hence, blindness is a severe handicap. Blindness has a definite and distinctive effect upon the development of the individual’s personality because at least 75 to 80 percent of all impression that the sighted ones get are registered through the sense of sight. Visually handicapped children suffer in a number of ways in which affectionate deprivation is the most acute and all pervasive. Affectionate deprivation comprises of unsympathetic behaviour, less attention, insecurity and maladjustment, aggression and several other problems.

Handicap is generally the repercussions of impairment and disability. An individual does not easily recognize impairments until they obstruct in the performance of ones daily activities. Impairment refers to any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or
function, for example the loss of a little finger is impairment. On the other hand disability means any restriction or lack (resulting from impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner, a normal person does. Disability is a functional inability of an individual as a result of impairment. But it does not always be a consequence of impairment. For example, a person who has lost his/her little finger (impairment) may not be experiencing any disability when compare to another individual who has lost his/her upper limbs. Handicap is the result or the consequence of impairment as well as disability. It is the manifest limitation that prevents fulfilment of the social role expected for the age, sex, or cultural background of an individual (WHO, 1980). A person may lose a limb and still not face any impediments at ones job. Thus, he/she is physically impaired but not handicapped. The concept of handicap is subjective, situational and a matter of social perception. Hence, we can say that a person with disability may or may not be handicapped, and a person who is handicapped may or may not have a disability.

A handicapped person is the one who is challenged by emotional, physical, mental, and social or age hurdles. Handicap is an inability that leaves one at a comparative disadvantage. So conceived, a handicap is a special case of inability. In other words, we can say it is a barrier imposed by society, the environment, or the attitudes that prevent a person with a disability from performing a role, which is normal for that particular person.

Different psychologists and organizations have given various definitions of handicap.

English and English (1958) defined handicap in term of reduced “aptitude” in performing the ordinary tasks of life or a particular vocation,
thus distinguishing a handicap from crippling condition which they associate with inability to perform a certain kind of task. Their distinction (which they correctly state is not always observed) is in the same direction as ours but somewhat less comprehensive.

Whitten (1974) described handicapped person as “one who has severe physical or mental disability which seriously limits his functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, work tolerance or work skills) in term of employability”.

Thompson (1974) defined handicapped children as “one who, because of his physical, mental or emotional problems or a combination of such problems; needs educational, social, psychological and medical services beyond those which have been offered traditional programmes, to minimize his full potential for useful and meaningful participation in society and for self-fulfilment”.

According to the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1994), the term handicap means, “The loss or limitations of opportunities to take part in the life of the community on an equal level with others. It describes the encounter between the person with a disability and the environment. The purpose of this term is to emphasize the focus on the shortcomings in the environment and in many organized activities in society, for example, information communication and education, which prevent persons with disabilities from participating on equal terms”. Handicap is therefore, a function of the relationship between handicap person and his/her environment. It occurs when they encounter cultural, physical, or social barriers that prevent them to take part in the life of community on an equal level with others.
According to WHO (1976), “A handicap is a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from impairment or disability, that limits or prevents the fulfilment of a role that is considered normal depending on age, sex, social and cultural factors for that individual”. The roles so defined must be universal and include the capacities to position oneself within one’s environment and respond to environmental stimuli. It is for an independent existence in a normal fashion according to sex, age and culture to maintain social relationships, and preserve self-sufficiency. Thus, handicap is a result of health condition and is related to factors such as individual resources and the collective environment. It is made up of situations that put individuals at a disadvantage from the perspective of societal norms.

Various types of handicap occur in human beings that impede them in their societal activities. They are the following-

1. Physical / Loco motor handicaps
2. Visual handicaps
3. Hearing handicap
4. Mental handicaps
5. Learning handicaps
6. Multiple handicaps.

**Visual Handicap**

Individual whose normal learning and development is impaired by visual conditions and who therefore, need specific conditions and related services in order to develop their abilities can be identified as visually handicapped (Whitmore, 1981). American Foundation for the Blind (1961) has given two sets of definition of visually handicapped. The first one is based
on the concept of measurably diminished vision and the second one is based on educational needs, which draw distinction between children with visual handicap into categories of a blind and partially sighted. Apparently these two definitions are interconnected. For educators the second definition which focussing on educational needs is preferred because it explains the characteristics that are useful in determining suitable programming (Whitmer & Maker, 1985).

The Census of India (2001) defines visually disable as “a person who cannot see at all or has blurred vision even with the help of spectacles. A person with proper vision in one eye will also be treated as visually disabled. A person may have blurred vision and had no occasion to test whether his or her eye sight would improve by using spectacles would be treated as visually disabled”.

On the other hand, National Sample Survey Organization (2002) defines visually disabled person as the “loss or lack of ability to execute tasks requiring adequate visual acuity. Visual disabled include (a) those who did not have any light perception-both eyes taken together and (b) those who had light perception but could not correctly count the fingers of hand (with spectacles/contact lenses if he/she used spectacles/contact lenses) from a distance of 3 meters in good day light with both eyes open. Night blindness was not considered as visual disability”.

Visual handicap includes-

- Partially sighted
- Low vision
• Legally blind

• Totally blind

**Partially Sighted**

One, who after the best possible adjustments and ocular corrections uses remaining vision for learning is called partially sighted. Partially sighted person has visual acuity of 20/70 or less after best possible correction. It means that a person with normal 20/20 vision will correctly identify an object from 200 feet, while partially sighted person will need to be as close as 70 feet to identify the same object. In educational context, the term partially sightedness is generally used to explain a visual impairment that requires special educational services. The partially sighted students face the challenge of disability in much the similar as a totally blind student. Accommodations for partially sighted students include the use of readers, audio taped text, and raised line drawings. They may be able to use large print books and a closed circuit TV or other magnifying device.

**Low Vision**

WHO consultation has suggested “a person with low vision is one who has impairment of visual functioning even after treatment and/or refractive correction, and has a visual acuity of less than 6/18 to light perception, or a visual field of less than 10 from the point of view of fixation, but who uses, or is potentially able to use, vision for the planning and/or execution of task”. The term low vision used to describe several levels of very limited sight, which interfere with a person’s daily routine activities. Low vision applies to all individuals with sight who are unable to read the newspaper at a normal viewing distance, even with the aid of eyeglasses, or contact lenses. However,
a person with low vision may benefit from any of a variety of available optical devices, such as electronic magnifying glasses or eyeglass mounted telescope, special software developed for computer users with low vision, which can display type in large size or read text aloud.

**Legal Blindness**

In order to decide, which people may require special education and assistance because of their visual disabilities, various governmental jurisdictions developed more complex definitions referred to as legal blindness. According to Rehabilitation Services Administration U.S., “legal blindness refers to central visual acuity 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction or widest diameter of visual field subtending on angle of no greater than 20 degree”. By this definition, we can conclude that a legally blind person would have to stand 20 feet from an object to see it with the same degree of clarity as a normally sighted person could from 200 feet.

**Total Blindness**

Total blindness refers to the complete lack of form and light perception and is clinically recorded as “NLP”, an abbreviation for No Light Perception. Total blindness is the inability to distinguish light from dark. A person suffering from total blindness needs Braille, raised-line drawings, audio recordings, and/or other non-visual media as an accommodation for accessing the content of visually presented materials (National Dissemination Centre for Children with Disability).

**Causes of Visual Impairment**

Blindness can be resulted due to many causes. It may be an outcome of environmental factors that acted before, during or after birth, or it may be a
genetic cause manifested as either a congenital or adventitious. The classification of the causes of visual impairment is given below:

I. Genetic causes of visual impairment
   (i) Mulifactorial inheritance
       (a) Buphthalmos
       (b) Colobama & Myopia
   (ii) Autosomal Recessive Inheritance
       (a) Retinal aplasia
       (b) Retinal degeneration with primary muscular involvement
       (c) Albinism
       (d) Others
   (iii) Autosomal Dominant Inheritance
       (a) Retinoblastoma
       (b) Congenital and infantile cataract
       (c) Aniridia
       (d) Others
   (iv) Chromosomes-linked Inheritance
       (a) Pseadoglioma and congenital of infantile cataract
       (b) Others, including choroideraemia

II. Acquired causes of visual impairment
   (i) Parental e.g., cataract due to rubella
   (ii) Postnatal e.g., opticatrophy due to meningitis
   (iii) Perinatal e.g., retrolenal fibrophalasia
Psychological and Behavioural Characteristics of Blind Children

The blind are in minority in the world. They differ in their characteristics, requirements, achievements and behaviours from those of the sighted. All these characteristics assign the sighted a leading position in social situation. The blind deal of speculation exists regarding the characteristics of the blind. Mental potentialities were supposed to be normal in this medical anomaly. Several people believe that blindness is a handicap not only because it decreases mobility, but also it is accompanied by the lack of initiative and spontaneity. Mickell (1953) observed that the blind pre-school child has its own unique pattern of growth. It takes longer for him to progress in walking, talking and also in motor coordination, as the typical eye-hand coordination in his case has been substitute by ear-hand coordination.

The blind children show various problems in case of behaviour, learning, placement and social adjustment. Some children suffer from other sensory difficulties. The objects of learning are also sometimes too large or not easily accessible for them in order to enable them to touch, taste, smell, or listen to them. Like any other physically challenged children, the visually handicapped children also vary with respect to creativity. This may be attributed to several factors.

Since the beginning of civilization, man has experienced the greatest pleasure and bliss by adopting creative values in his life. Creative imagination of man has played an immensely important role in the development of society. It is essential for leading a happy life. In addition, the future of our civilization depends upon the quality of the creative imagination of the next generation. In teaching, all students should be provided with opportunities for
creative expression so that they turned into contended, balanced and happy citizens (Torrance, 1962).

Torrance (1965) further outlines, “Creative thinking is indeed a powerful force. It has given us the alphabet, printing, radio, television, computers, spacecraft, great art, architecture, music and literature. It has given us our great advances in scientific discovery and medicine. It has also given us war plunder, crime and smashed atom”.

Creativity is essentially a human phenomenon. It is a process in man, which helps him to achieve dignity and meaning in life. Bruner (1962) argues that the creative act may bring man to a new dignity. Toynbee (1964) considers creativity as man greatest asset. Creativity is an innate and the most valued human quality that can never be overlooked. It is an intuitive genius present in human as a distinct potential, unique gift, which is spontaneous, but not common amongst all the individuals. Creativity, with its many definitions has been known for a long time to have its influence on human activity in almost all spheres-scientific, technical, literature, and artistic.

Taylor (1964) realized that “creative acts affect enormously not only scientific progress, but society in general. Those nations who learn best in their people may find themselves in very advantageous positions”. It can also be said that it is the creativity that has made life so easy and luxurious. The progress and potential of a country is measured in terms of its great thinkers, artists and scientists etc. So the importance of creativity is something that cannot be ignored.

The concept of creativity has a wide range. The way in which different societies have understood the concept of creativity has changed throughout

The ancient Greeks believed that the muses were the source of all inspiration; in reality has no similar term “to create” or “creator”. The expression “poiein” (to make) sufficed. The sole exception was poetry to the Greek view. The poet was seen as making new things — bringing to life new world-while the artist only imitate. In Rome these Greek views was modified, and Horace wrote that not only poets but also painters were entitled to the freedom of daring whatever they wished. Unlike Greek, Latin had a term for “creating” (“creatio”) and for “creator”, and had two expressions for “to make” — “facere” and “creare”.

An essential change comes in the Christian period: “creatio” came to designate God’s act of “creation from nothing”. “Creatio” thus took on a different meaning than “facere” (“to make”), and ceased to apply to human functions. The ancient view that art is not a domain of creativity persisted in this period. Another shift occurred in more modern times. Renaissance men had a sense of their own independence, freedom and creativity, and sought to give voice to this sense of independence and creativity. Baltasar Gracian (1601-1958) wrote, “Art is the completion of nature, as it were a second creator...” By the 18th Century and the Age of Enlightenment, the concept of creativity was appearing more often in art theory, and was linked with the concept of imagination.

In the 19th century only art was regarded as creativity. At the turn of the 20th century, there began to be discussion of creativity in the science and in nature. The formal starting point of the scientific study of creativity is
sometimes considered to be Guilford’s address to the American psychological association in 1950, which helped to popularize the topic. Since then the researchers from a variety of fields have studied the nature of creativity from a scientific point of view.

Creativity is a highly complex cognitive ability that involves the generation of new concept or ideas, or new associations between existing concepts or ideas. Scientifically, the products of creative thought are usually considered to have both originality and appropriateness. In other words, the ability to make something original, to imagine things that do not exist, and to come up with new ideas is called creativity. Creativity can make common things special and special things common! Creativity is essentially a form of problem solving that involves problems for which there are no easy answers: that is problem for which popular or conventional responses do not work.

Apart from above discussed concepts the true nature of creativity has not been fully understood as yet. Its nature is so complex that it still remains shrouded in mystery. On the whole, it has been noted that creativity as a concept is not easy to be defined. Various popular as well as highly technical definitions have been put forward in support of the nature of creativity.

Fromm (1959) stated two broad meanings of creativity. First, it refers to the production of something novel and further it may refer to the attitude which may persist even when nothing new created. Oldham and Cummings (1996) defined creativity as useful novelty—not novelty for its own sake, but novelty that can be applied and add value to organization’s products and services. Weisberg (1986) proposed that creativity is the novel use of tools to solve problems or novel problem solving.
Brunnelle (1970) has viewed creativity as a process through which some novel ideas or an object is produced in a new fashion or arrangement. In the absence of this process there cannot be any product and ultimately no creativity. Kunt (1982) has also regarded creativity as consisting of various processes like framing, probing, exploring, affirming and realizing. Wallas (1926) has also considered creativity as a process leading to some new idea or object.

Goldner (1962) has explained that creativity is an organized comprehensive activity of brain toward an original outcome. So, it is an innovative and not a reproductive activity. Mendick (1964) considered creative thinking in the light of framing new combination of associative elements, which either meet specified requirement or is found to be useful in some way. The more mutual remote elements of the new combination, the more creative is the process. But according to Barron (1961) creativity does not simply mean exploration, invention, or discovery of some new things or relations rather it refers to making new combinations out of existing objects and elements.

Celye (1962) recognized one more dimension of creativity and states that it leads to generation of new interpretations. These interpretations emphasize that creativity involves the combination of old ideas or products into new forms, but the old extends the base for new ideas. Guilford (1968) considered creativity as a scientific kind of thinking and labelled it as divergent thinking. Divergent thinking makes deviation from the common and obvious thought and action. It helps an individual in examining various possible solutions to a problem and not centring around single correct
solution. Divergent thinking enables the individual to be more flexible and fluent, involving richer flow of ideas and resulting in some novel and creative solution. In convergent thinking the person follows the prevailing mode of thought, information and action to arrive at one right answer that could be attain by other individual also.

Getzels and Jackson (1962) have also considered creativity as a specific type of cognitive ability, which has its reflexion in the performance of the subjects on verbal test of creativity. Creativity, he claims, depends upon novel and varied responses on the test. Torrance (1965) examined creativity as a process through which a creative individual manifests sensitivity to the problem, deficiencies, missing elements and irregularities. He is very much anxious for the correct solution by way of formulating hypothesis about deficiencies, testing and retesting in the light of various modifications and ultimately achieves solution of the problem.

Sternberg (1999) explained creativity as the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e., useful, adaptive concerning task constraints). In his view creativity is the topic of wide scope that is important at both individual and societal levels for a wide range of task domains. At an individual level creativity is relevant, for example, when one is solving problems on the job and in daily life. At a societal level, creativity can lead to new scientific findings, new movements in art, new inventions, and new social programs. Smith (2005) in his article has mentioned Simon’s view of creativity. Simon says “we judge thought to be creative when it produces something that is both novel and interesting and valuable”.

Cassado and Simonton (2003) explained the nature of creativity and said that the creativity entails three essential and product-focused criteria: novelty, adaptiveness or appropriateness to the problem at hand, and completeness. Pesut (1990) presented a model that conceptualizes creative thinking as a self-regulatory process in which creative technologies are reframed as meta cognitive strategies. The model has heuristic value for those interested in the dynamics of self-regulated creative thought, which is viewed as a function of attention/awareness deployment. Plucker, Beghetto and Dow (2004) said that the construct of creativity has a great deal to offer educational psychology. Creativity appears to be an important component of problem solving and other cognitive abilities, healthy social and emotional wellbeing and scholastic and adult success.

Vygotsky (1990) distinguished between two forms of the inner world or construction of the mind, one is reproductive, which is closely connected with memory, and the second is the combinatory or creative which is related to the ability to deal with change and the creation of new forms or activity. At an early age children’s creative processes are expressed in their play. Psychological analysis reveals that creative combining (a) slowly develops in to more complex forms at each age level of childhood and (b) does not appear but itself in the behaviour of the child but emerges through other forms of activity and through accumulation of experience.

Mumford, Olsen and James (1989) studied the influence of age on creativity and argue that the creation of new understandings is most likely to occur in the earlier phases of people’s careers. Daccy (1989) examined the evidence in support of the theory that there are certain critical periods in life
during which creative ability can be cultivated most effectively. These six periods are 0-5 yrs, 10-14 yrs, 18-20 yrs, 28-30 yrs, 40-45 yrs and 60-65 yrs. El-Murad and West (2004) mentioned that creativity is arguably the most important element in advertising success.

Plucker (2004) focussed on a question that whether creativity is content general or content specific is one of the most controversial issues in contemporary creativity research. Recent studies provide support for both positions, but the results of these investigations may be influenced by several factors, including the presence of a method affect. This study investigates the method effect by analyzing quantity of creative achievement simultaneously using structural equation modelling.

Kurtzberg (2005) explored objectivity measured creative fluency and subjectively perceived creativity in cognitive diverse team. Findings present that creativity as a complex multidimensional construct and cognitive diversity as an important predictor of both team emotions and outcomes. Creativity, achievement and intelligence are sometimes used interchangeably but achievement particularly academic achievement is actually the result of intelligence and creativity.

During the past several decades, continual efforts have been made to develop a feasible system of education. Education is the most important instrument for human resource development. It is the key to national prosperity and welfare. No investment is likely to yield greater returns than the investment in human resources of which the education is the most important part. Modern societies cannot attain their aim of economic growth and higher cultural standards without making the effective use of the talents
of their citizens. This necessitates that education should be provided according to capabilities and potentialities of the learners. Students with a very wide variety of capabilities and potentialities seek admissions to the schools. Our school should, therefore, offer diversity of educational programmes suited to the varying aptitudes, interests and talents of the students’. Through this we can improve academic achievement of students in the class.

Academic achievement has great importance in the present socio-economic and cultural context. Obviously in schools great emphasis is placed on formal education. The effectiveness of any educational system is gauged to the extent of the student achievement whether be it in cognitive, affective or psychomotor domain. Academic means the field of English, Foreign Languages, History, Economics, Mathematics and Science. And the achievement means accomplishing whatever goals one set for him/her self.

The concept of academic achievement refers to the achievement by the individual, of objectives related to various types of knowledge and skills. These objectives are socially established, based on the age, prior learning and capacity of individuals with regard to education, socialization and qualification. Studies conducted on academic achievement notably focus on student progress and individual, institutional and organizational factors of achievement, along with social relationship interactions that determine, facilitate or hinder academic achievement. Academic achievement is related to the acquisition of principles, generalization, capacity to perform efficiently and certain manipulations of objects, symbols and ideas. Two types of measurements are often used as indicators of academic achievement; these are grades and standardized test scores.
According to Good (1973) academic achievement is the “knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects, are usually designed by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers or by both”. Academic achievement is the successful accomplishment or performance in particular subjects, areas, or courses, usually by reasons of skills, hard work and interest typically summarized in various types of grades, marks, scores or descriptive commentary (Gene 1983).

Academic achievement can also be called as academic attainment, academic performance, scholastic performance and academic aspiration. Academic achievement can be defined as the combination of knowledge and skills that a child acquires after a course of instructions and it can be measured in term of marks obtained in a given area of knowledge.

According to Remmers and Gage (1955) scholastic achievement is the degree to which the pupil has moved towards the objectives of the school. From this definition it is clear that the academic performance measures the extent to which individuals have acquired certain knowledge, skills, concepts and abilities as a result of instructions and training received at the school or college. Verma and Upadhayay (1981) described academic achievement as the attainment or the accomplishment of a student in some area or particular branch of knowledge, after certain period of training.

Academic achievement means earning a grade point average of 3.0 or more, based on a 4.0 grade point system, or the equivalent, based upon the most recent cumulative grade point average. An assessment of Academic achievement can also be done on the basis of the ability to perform well in academic education. Superior academic achievement normally indicates a
grade point average of 3.5 or higher on the four-point scale or standing in the upper 10% of the class.

Academic performance is defined as the percent of eligible (non-exempt) public school students in grade 3 and 8 scoring at the satisfactory or excellent level on curriculum-based assessments in six content areas: reading, writing, language usage, mathematics, science and social studies. In other words academic performance really means three things: the ability to study and remember facts, being able to study effectively, and see how facts fits together and form larger pattern of knowledge and being able to think for oneself in relation to facts and thirdly being able to communicate knowledge verbally or down on paper.

Students academic achievement can be influenced by his intelligence, interest, aptitude, hard labour, method of learning, socio-economic status, family inference, home environment, parental aspiration and reward, personality characteristics, sex differences, quality of teaching, school environment and peer influence (Peterson, 1984). Since self-esteem of an individual is a sense of his or her worth and value, it may be determined by one’s creativity and achievement.

Over the past few decades, self-esteem has been the theme of numerous conferences and the subject of many books. The topic has huge exposure. Parents and teachers have been endlessly instructed about how important it is to build a child’s self-esteem. Self-esteem is a widely used concept both in popular language and in psychology. It refers to an individual’s sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991).
The most broad and commonly cited definition of self-esteem in psychology is Rosenberg's (1965) who explained it as a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the self. Self-esteem is usually dealt with the evaluative component of the self-concept, a broader representation of the self that includes cognitive and behavioural aspects as well as evaluative or affective ones (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). While the construct is most often used to refer to a global sense of self-worth, narrower concepts such as self-confidence or body-esteem are used to imply a sense of self-esteem in more specific areas. It is also extensively assumed those self-esteem functions as a trait; that is, it is stable across time within individuals. Self-esteem is an extremely popular construct within psychology, and has been related to virtually every other psychological concept or field, including personality (e.g., shyness), behavioural (e.g., task performance), cognitive (e.g., attribution bias), and clinical concepts (e.g., anxiety and depression). While some researchers have been particularly concerned with understanding the nuances of the self-esteem construct, others have focussed on the adaptive and self-protective functions of self-esteem (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991).

Self-esteem is considered as one of the oldest concepts in Psychology. American psychologist and philosopher William James first coined it in 1980. The term self-esteem comes from a Greek word meaning “reverence for self”. Murk (1995) has described six major contributors of the development of the concept of self-esteem.

William James (1890) was an American psychologist and the first contributor of the development of self-esteem. He described self-esteem as an affective phenomenon which lived as a feeling or an emotion. It is a dynamic
process affected by success and failures and thus opens to enhancement. James observed a connection between self-esteem, values, success and competence.

Another contributor to the development of the self-esteem was Robert White (1963). He has given the psychodynamic approach to self-esteem. He perceives self-esteem as a developmental phenomenon. Self-esteem develops gradually being affected by and in turn effecting experience and behaviour. Self-esteem has two sources: an internal source i.e., our own accomplishments and external source i.e., affirmations from others. The concept of competence is central to this approach.

Morris Rosenberg (1965) was another contributor to the development of the concept of self-esteem. Rosenberg has given socio cultural approach to self-esteem. He defined self-esteem as an attitude (either positive or negative) that people have about themselves. He said that self-esteem is a product of the influences of culture, society, family and interpersonal relationships. The amount of self-esteem, an individual has in proportional to the degree to which they positively measure up to a core set of self-values. Rosenberg relates self-esteem to anxiety and depression. Feelings/beliefs of worthiness about oneself are central to this approach.

Stanley Coopersmith (1967) was also a famous contributor to the development of the concept of self-esteem. Coopersmith gives importance to the behavioural perspective of self-esteem. He explains that self-esteem is an attitude and expression of worthiness. Coopersmith includes success as well as self worth as a sign of self-esteem. He sees self-esteem as a construct or acquired trait, that is, an individual learns how worthy they are initially from
parents. This is reinforced others. The children model the respect and worthiness of self that they see in their parents.

Nathaniel Branden (1969) gave a humanistic view of self-esteem. He defined self-esteem as “the experience of being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and being worthy of happiness”. According to him self-esteem is dynamic in nature. It is related to our ability to live in such a way as to honour our view of ourselves. He gives importance to competence, sense of personal worth, self-confidence and self-respect. He says self-esteem is a basic human need and lack of it has serious negative consequences like suicide, anxiety, substance abuse and depression.

Seymour Epstein (1985) has given a cognitive experiential view to self-esteem. He considered self-esteem as basic need of a person that motivates him consciously and unconsciously. It is a consequence of an individual’s understanding of the world and others and how others related to them.

Self-esteem has recently been defined by Silverstone (1992) as, “the sense of contentment and self acceptance that stems from persons appraisal of their own worth, significance, attractiveness, competence and ability to satisfy their aspirations”.

Bailey (2003) explained that self-esteem is a simplistic term for varied and complex mental stages pertaining to how one views oneself. Pyszczynski and Cox (2004) proposed that self-esteem derived from self-determined standard of value may reduce defensiveness, closed-mindedness, and indifference to others as well as promote personal growth, but they acknowledge the daunting barriers to the attainment of such self-determination is based on self-worth.
Brace, Gary and Emma (2004) defined self-esteem is a function of multiple indexes of how a person stands in relation to those around him or her. Self-esteem can also be defined as the collection of beliefs or feelings that we have about ourselves, or our “self perceptions”. How do we judge ourselves influences our behaviours, motivations, and attitudes and affect our emotional adjustment.

Self-esteem reflects the intrinsic beliefs in the self, i.e. the overall opinion and value of a person-how a person honestly feels about and values himself/herself. Possessing a healthy aptitude for good self-esteem involves self-respect, self-acceptance and an appreciation of self-worth that embraces both strengths and limitations. People with good self-esteem feel good about themselves and see their selves as worthwhile. People with chronic self-esteem give little value on their opinions and ideas and constantly think that they are not good enough.

Robins and Trzesniewiski (2005) explain the way self-esteem develops across the life span. On an average, self-esteem is relatively high in childhood, drops during adolescence (particularly for girls), and then declines sharply in old age.

Self-esteem begins to develop in childhood, but it solidifies and gains momentum during the trying years of adolescence. The teenage years tend to be a crucial “make it or break it” period when it comes to self-esteem because at this very moment the youngsters are searching for an identity. If this process goes awry, the teen is likely to have negative feelings about the self, leading to low self-esteem. Self-esteem fluctuates with child growth. It is frequently changed and fine-tuned, because it is affected by child’s
experiences and new perceptions. As child grows, he confronted with many situations that affect his level of self-esteem. By these situations either he develop high self-esteem or low self-esteem.

High self-esteem means that individuals appreciate their inherent worth and themselves. It means persons with a positive attitude, evaluate themselves highly, they are convinced of their abilities and they see themselves powerful and competent-in control of their own lives and able to do what they want (Smelser & Vasconcellos, 1989). Children with high self-esteem enjoy interacting with others. They are comfortable in social setting and get pleasure from group activities. They are able to work towards finding solutions when challenges arise. Children with high self-esteem know their weaknesses, and accept them. High self-esteem raises a sense of optimism that is very important aspect of life. When someone has high level of self-esteem he/she must be confident, happy and sure of oneself. He/she will be highly motivated and has the attitude to succeed. Self-esteem is therefore very crucial to one and is a cornerstone of a positive attitude towards living.

Positive self-esteem is important because when people experience it, they feel good and look good, they are effective and productive, and they respond to other people and themselves in healthy, positive and growing ways. People who have positive self-esteem know that they are lovable and capable, and they care about themselves and other people. They do not have to build themselves up by tearing other people down or by patronising less competent people. The people with solid self-esteem are better equipped to cope with troubles that arise in their careers or in their personal life. The quicker they pick themselves up after a fall; the more energy they have to
begin anew. The higher the self-esteem, the more ambitious the people tend to be, not necessarily in a career or financial sense, but in terms of what they hope to experience in life—emotionally, romantically, intellectually, creatively, and spiritually. The lower their self-esteem, the less they aspire to, and the less they are likely to achieve.

Since the beginning of civilization, the low self-esteem syndrome has been unintentionally passed from parent to child, teacher to child, and generation to generation. In recent times low self-esteem has been one of the most popular and frequently invoked psychological explanations for behavioural and social problems. The vast majority of society suffers from the emotionally crippling disease known as low self-esteem. Low self-esteem is a lack of self-regard and admiration. Many persons who have low self-esteem avoid seeking new jobs, initiating relationships, or learning new skills for fear of negative response or failure. Several other persons avoid social settings and refrain from sharing their views for the same reasons. Some isolate, become people pleasers, and remain passive. Others get aggressive and cause chaos in their relationships. The people with low self-esteem disrupt their lives to some degree.

A child who has low self-esteem may not want to try new things. He/she may frequently speak negative about his or her self. They may exhibit a low tolerance for frustration, giving up easily or waiting for somebody else to take over. Children with low self-esteem tend to be overly critical of and easily disappointed. Kids with low self-esteem see temporary setbacks as permanent intolerable conditions. This propels a sense of pessimism which predominates among those people who have low self-esteem. Common
elements of low self-esteem include: negative thoughts and beliefs about self, devaluing of self-worth, poor opinion of self, self doubt and condemnation, self criticism, propensity for depressive thinking and hopelessness and distorted world view. Low self-esteem usually develops from early life messages about being unacceptable in some way. This unacceptable attitude of the surroundings becomes strengthen over time which develops a sense of low self-worth.

There are some negative consequences of low self-esteem to ones life-style like,

- Insecurity about who they are and lack of belief in themselves.
- Inability to open oneself to others and inability to trust others.
- Inability to make decisions because of confusion and fear of making mistakes or to disappoint others and
- Inability toward oneself for one’s own goodness and accomplishment.

Everyone’s self-esteem is influenced by many factors (Osborn, 1997). Factors that constantly shape and influence our self-esteem include our own thoughts and perception, other people, school experiences, sports experiences, work experiences, illness, disability or injury, culture, religion and role and status in society. Self-esteem is the product of two internal assessments or judgements, the global judgement and one’s self worth. The key to self-esteem is that the amount of discrepancy between what a person desires and what that person believes, he/she has achieved and the overall sense of support that person feels from people around him/her (Rosenberg, 1965).
Hence self-esteem is very important for the individual’s growth and development. Importance of self-esteem can be considered from several perspectives. First, it is important to normal psychological development. To adequately cope with the challenges of growth and development, persons need to believe that they have the capacity to achieve what they need and want and they deserve of happiness and joy in life. Lacking a belief in either of the above, they may be productive in an external sense, but are probably less effective and creative. On the other hand if they possess high self-esteem they may be more creative and effective. The effects of self-esteem may also be seen in career planning and decision-making.

Registering for advanced placement classes or applying to a highly competitive college may also challenge the self-esteem of an individual. Many people can attest the experienced times when they were on top, when they were at their “peak performance”. These “peaks” in their performance curve show that when people believe in them and believe that they can achieve almost anything, they are expressing a self-esteem, which motivates, excites and empowers them. Like self-esteem the emotional stability and the personality pattern of an individual may be affected by his level of creativity and academic achievement.

Emotions are as important in the life of an individual as life itself. Life would be colourless without emotions. The term emotions refer to feelings, distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states and range of propensities to act (Goleman, 1995). Emotion is one of the dimensions of personal experience. There are eight innate, primary emotions. They are joy, anticipation, anger, disgust, sadness, surprise, fear and acceptance. A person
can be called emotionally stable if he/she is able to display his/her emotions in appropriate degree with reasonable control.

Emotional stability is one of the effective determinants of the personality patterns. It is helpful to control the growth of adolescent development. Stable emotional behaviour at any level reflects the fruits of the normal emotional development. An individual who is able to maintain his/her emotions stable and under control even in extreme circumstances, might still be emotionally stunned or be childish in his/her behaviour sometimes.

An emotionally stable individual has the capacity to withstand delay in satisfaction of needs, capability to tolerate a reasonable amount of frustration, belief in long term planning and is able of delaying or revising his/her expectations in terms of demands of the situations. A child who is emotionally stable has a capacity to make effective adjustments with himself/herself, members of the family, relatives and his peers in the school, society and culture. However, stability does not mean merely the capacity for such attitudes and functions, but also the ability to enjoy them fully. A number of characteristics like the capability of responding in gradation, ability to delay responses, especially negative emotions, freedom from unreasonable fears and the ability to commit mistakes without feeling disgraced etc. are found in an emotionally stable individual.

Emotional stability is considered as one of the important aspect of human life. Pupil must be able to control his or her emotions adequately and also express them appropriately. It is the ability to be stable emotionally. Emotional stability is the calm and peace in mind. In the state where a person facing a difficult situation and conflict, but remain rational or able to control
ones anger or emotion it means that person is emotionally stable. Emotional stability means one handle ones emotions well. If a person is doing a paper on a topic he/she should focus on how to handle stress, anger, happiness, or any other feelings that human have.

Pupil must be able to control his or her emotions adequately and also express them appropriately. According to Smitson (1974) emotional stability is the process in which the personality is continuously striving for greater sense of emotional health, both intra-physically and intra-personally. Scott (1968) opined that emotional stability is one of the seven important indicators of superior mental health. It also affects the learning of the pupils. Emotional control may impair performances in situations which require flexibility and adaptability on the part of the person or pupil. If the pupils have no or very little emotional control, it may lead to anxiety, feelings of inferiority and guilt (Frandsen, 1961). It has also been found that if the pupils want to be mentally healthy; these unhealthy feelings must be replaced by the feelings of self-respect, security and confidence which can be achieved only after a good sense of emotional stability emerges.

Emotional stability is a broad dimension of normal personality characterized by confidence and poise, at the high end and by a tendency to experience chronic negative emotions, at the low end. The construct is one of the most widely used and important magnitudes of adult personality and plays a central role in approximately every scheme of personality and in most explanations of both normal and abnormal behaviour. Factor-pure adjective for the negative pole of emotional stability are pinky, emotional, oversensitive, jumpy, and sentimental. The factor-pure adjectives for the
corresponding positive pole of emotional stability are sober, imperturbable, unshakeable, cool and resilient.

Emotional stability involves a person’s ability to remain stable and balanced. A person who has high emotional stability is even tempered, calm secure and somewhat resistant to stress. A person who has low emotional stability tends to be moody, anxious, depressed, insecure and very susceptible to stress. In most professions, a person who has high emotional stability is referred. Employees with low emotional stability are more likely to be distracted from work by stress, deadlines, or situations in their personal lives, whereas those with high levels of this trait are more able to control their emotions and feelings at work.

The big five personality traits classify person’s personality in to the categories of neuroticism, extroversion, agreeableness, consciousness and openness to experience. In these big five personality traits neuroticism is one of the most important traits. Neuroticism is the tendency to easily experience negative feelings and unpleasant emotions such as anger anxiety depression or vulnerability. There is an inverse relationship between neuroticism and emotional stability. Individuals who are high on neuroticism are more likely to experience negative feelings such as anxiety, anger, or depression and they are also emotionally reactive. People who are emotionally stable are less likely to experience negative feelings. They face difficult situations very easily. They do not react poorly to environmental stress and they are more likely to interpret threatening situations normally.

**Research Objectives:**

1. To find out whether creative experience and academic achievement predict self-esteem of visually handicapped students.
2. To find out whether creative experience and academic achievement predict emotional stability of visually handicapped students.

3. To find out whether creative experience and academic achievement predict self-esteem of sighted students.

4. To find out whether creative experience and academic achievement predict emotional stability of sighted students.

5. To find out whether visually handicapped students differ from sighted students with respect to creative experience, academic achievement, self-esteem and emotional stability.

6. To find out visually handicapped boys differ from visually handicapped girls with respect to creative experience, academic achievement, self-esteem and emotional stability.

7. To find out whether sighted boys and sighted girls differ with respect to creative experience, academic achievement, self-esteem and emotional stability.

8. To find out the relationship of creative experience, academic achievement, self-esteem and emotional stability of visually handicapped students.

9. To find out the relationship of creative experience, academic achievement, self-esteem and emotional stability of sighted students.