SUMMARY

0.1 INTRODUCTION

Every individual in democracy has a fundamental right to receive education. Teachers, social workers and general public should not only be concerned with the education of able bodied but also with the differently abled. Students with special needs have a right to live and participate fully in settings and programmes in school, at home, in workplace and in the community. Individuals with special needs have the right to become independent, contributing members of the society and a better human resource.

Special education aims at helping children and adults with special needs learn how to increase the level of decision-making, their functioning and self-concept, to achieve their goals and to have control over their own lives.

For the purpose of education, students with special needs are a heterogeneous group. They may learn quickly and easily or with great difficulty. Some have sensory or physical disabilities others may have mental, speech, physical, language or behavioral problems. Despite their special needs such students do learn? The students who have mild learning needs can be benefited from participation in regular classrooms. However, they require suitable teaching methods, material and adaptations to succeed in the mainstream.

Education of the visually impaired is one of the oldest fields of special education, perhaps because blindness is apparent and provokes strong emotions. In most of the countries special facilities and programmes for the blind were established before those for other groups of disabled individuals. Students with
visual impairment may be blind or partially sighted. Also, vision impairments can be congenital or adventitious.

Since students with visual impairments form a disadvantaged lot in terms of their information and awareness due to their visual perceptual loss. Their limited experience and lack of environmental stimulation has a direct bearing on their self-concept, adjustment, social skills and emotional intelligence.

**Self-Concept**

Self-concept is an individual’s evaluation of his or her own abilities and attributes. It includes all aspects of an individual’s personality of which she/he is aware. Although some authors have drawn distinctions between self-concept and self-esteem (Damon and Hart, 1982), the terms are frequently used interchangeably. Several theoretical models of self-concept exist in the literature e.g. Harter (1982) found that self-concept can be broken down into three specific components i.e. cognitive, social and physical competence, and a general self-worth factor.

Children with a positive self-concept are described as imaginative, confident in their own judgments and abilities, assertive, able to assume leadership roles, less preoccupied with themselves and able to devote more time to others and to external activities. On the other hand, children with a negative self-concept are described as quiet unobtrusive, unoriginal, lacking initiative, maladjusted, withdrawn and doubtful about themselves (Coppersmith, 1967).

**Adjustment**

Adjustment is psychological as well as biological concept. The biologists use the term adaptability is for the physical demand of the environment; by psychologist employ the term adjustment for varying situation, social, economic or
inter-personal relations in the society. Life presents the continuous chain of struggle for existence and survival.

Adjustment is the process of finding and adopting modes of behaviour suitable to environment or change in the environment. The favourable, neutral and unfavourable adaptation of an organ to external and internal stimulation and the process by which individual or group accept, compromise the social forces and one another (Good 1959).

The Dictionary of Education defines adjustment as ‘the process of finding and adopting modes of behaviour suitable to the environment to the change in the environment.’

Adjustment refers to an individual’s characteristics, understanding of reaction to and manner of solving problematic situation, which he experiences. Degree of adjustment may arrange from exceptionally adequate behaviour to maladjustment. According to popular usage, however, an adjusted person is one who confirms to culturally accepted norms, customs and general ways of life. A person is considered to be maladjusted if he is unable or unwilling to adopt one or more aspects of his behaviour to confirm to the so-called normal behaviour.

**Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence as conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990) consisted of three different categories of adaptive abilities. Firstly, it is appraisal and expression in the self as well as others. In the self there are verbal and non-verbal components. In the others, there are non-verbal perception and empathy. Secondly, there is a regulation of emotion in the self and others. Thirdly, it is utilization of emotion that includes flexible planning, creative thinking, redirected attention and motivation. Goleman (1995) defined that
emotional intelligence is the ability in realizing one’s own feelings as well as the feelings of others in order to build up self inducement, to manage personal emotions and the emotions occurred from various associations.

**Social Skills**

Social skills are the skills that are used by human beings to interact and communicate with others to assist status in the social structure and other motivations. Social rules and social relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and non-verbal ways creating social complexity useful in identifying outsiders and intelligent breeding partners. The process of learning these skills is called socialization.

The development of social skills constitutes a major area of child development. Deficits, delays or disturbance in social behaviours may either be the cause or consequence of developmental disabilities in toddlers and young children. Their linguistic, pre-academic and/or academic failures distance them from their age peers in many social-play situations. It may be that their social-play skills are deficient, thereby leading to non-acceptance by their peers, or it may be that other children are not accommodating to their vagaries in social situations.

**0.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

Vision is the most actively used sense by man. Cognition depends upon one’s visual experiences to a great extent. Impairment imposes basic limitations on the individual. Visually impaired children are deprived in terms of range and variety of experiences. They are unable to control their own environment and themselves in relation to it. Although social attitudes are changing towards the visually impaired yet there are certain stereotypes which are reflected in terms of
their attitudes and responses. People still believe that visually challenged person is nothing and can do nothing.

Among various disabilities, visual impairment is perhaps one of the oldest categories identified for special education, perhaps because visual impairment is apparent and provokes strong emotions. In most of the countries special facilities and programmes for the visually challenged were established before those for other groups of disabled individuals. The objective of a good educational programme for children with visual impairment is the all-round development of the child, and realization of their full human potential i.e. good academic performance, psychosocial adjustment, integration with the community as equal partners, rehabilitation, high aspiration, and development of a healthy self-concept, emotional intelligence and social skills.

The self-concept and emotional intelligence are the influential part of the personality and influence an individual goals, achievements, aspirations, motivation and adjustment. Individual behaviour is always goal oriented and these goals can be met only in the environment and in day-to-day life. To develop the innate powers of an individual certain external forces are quite responsible. Self-concept and emotional intelligence play an important role in realizing the objectives/goals of an individual. Thus, an understanding of them becomes necessary.

Self-concept is an important element of growth and developmental process for individual human beings. Learners need assistance in probing their inner selves to be able to move ahead in their lives because realistic self-concept is important for proper adjustment of an individual.
Psychologists use the term adjustment for varying conditions of social or inter-personal relations in the society. Thus we see that adjustment means reaction to the demands and pressures of social environment imposed upon the individual. The demand may be internal or external to whom the individual has to react. The conflict between varying needs make the adjustment a complicated process. If we gratify one of the conflicting needs, the needs which are not gratified, will produce frustration and leads sometime to abnormal behavior. Adjustment is a continued process by which a person varies his behavior to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment. Ability of a person to adjust oneself with his/her social environment depends upon one’s emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior. In general ‘Emotional Intelligence’ is the accumulation of all non-cognitive and non-physical capabilities, competencies and skills a person has, that help him/her to deal with the demands and pressures of everyday life. Emotional intelligence of a person increases his confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self control, capacity to communicate and ability to cooperate (Goleman, 1995). Deficit in emotional intelligence can create serious problems in our relationship and influence our physical health. Individual who are not aware of their own feeling cannot make intelligent choices and are often low in expressiveness which may lead to lower level of self-concept and poor adjustment.

For children with special needs, the social component of school is as important as the academic aspect. Skills as getting along with others, making friends, and developing a pleasant personality are lifelong endeavors for many students. Some students have a lot of difficulty following rules, remembering
rules, and even being aware that rules exist in certain situations. While most children may breeze through social situations with a minimum of instruction, special children typically lack some of these social skills.

Social skills are extremely important if one is to get along at school, home, in the work place, social functions and other places outside the family unit. Social skills are arguably most important set of abilities, a person can have. Human beings are social animals and lack of good social skills can lead to a lonely life, contributing to anxiety and depression. It has been found that children who are identified as deficient in social skills are unpopular with their peers and are more likely to be unhappy and maladjusted. A life without social skills is filled with frustration, rejection, and low self-worth.

A brief discussion on self-concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence and social skills in the preceding paragraphs underlines their importance. It also suggests that self-concept and adjustment of the students are likely to be influenced by emotional intelligence and social skills.

Researchers attempted to discover different correlates of self-concept such as gender, academic achievement, level of aspirations, adjustment, sex role, quality of friendship, empathy, participation in co-curricular activities, emotional intelligence etc. (Pushpa and Yeshodhara, 2014; Jakhar, 2012; Borse, 2012; Abbas and Haq, 2011; Sameer, 2008, Rajkonwar, Soni and Dutta, 2014; Eugenia, 2010; Sharma and Aqshim, 2010; Saraswat, 1982, and Yarworth, 1978).

A number of studies were also carried out to explore the relationship of adjustment with other variables such as scholastic achievement, social intelligence level, self concept, academic stress, mental health, emotional intelligence, achievement etc. (Pal, 2009; Hussain, 2008; Nayak, 2005; Kaur, 2001; Singh,
Review of literature revealed a dearth of studies to answer the research question i.e. “Whether self-concept and adjustment are related to emotional intelligence and social skills of school students”? It led the investigator to plan and conduct the present study with its focus to find the relationship of self-concept and adjustment with emotional intelligence and social skills of school students. Visual impairment influences various psycho-social aspects of the individuals including self-concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence and social skills.

Garaigordobil and Bernaras (2009), Lifshitz, hen and Izhaz (2007), Naseema and Usha (2007), Griffin-Shirley and Nes (2005), Shaw and Edwards (1997) and others conducted studies to find out the difference between visually impaired and sighted school students with regard to self-concept. Nagra (2014), Yau, Hon Keung (2014), Chauhan (2013), Nyamayaro and Saravanan (2013), Abdullah (2009) and others attempted to study the impact of visual impairment on adjustment. Few researchers also explored the difference between visually impaired and sighted student on emotional intelligence such as Gupta (2012) and Rambir (2007). Sharma (2002), Hasselt et. al. (1990) and Hasselt, Hersen and Kazdin (1985) compared the visually impaired and sighted school students with respect to social skills.

It was observed that not many studies have been conducted to study the difference between visually impaired and sighted school students with regard to self-concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence and social skills. The inconsistencies in the results of different studies were also noticed. In view of these facts researcher also decided to explore the difference between visually impaired and sighted school students in terms of self-concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence and social skills such an exploration will be helpful in enhancing their
self-concept, better adjustment and also evaluating social skills and emotional intelligence, so that, they can cope up with mainstream population. Further, the findings of the study will be helpful in designing appropriate strategies, educational programmes and intervention for increasing their strength and abilities, skills and competencies to live an independent and happy life. Therefore, the present study is an endeavor in this direction.

0.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

SELF-CONCEPT AND ADJUSTMENT IN RELATION TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SOCIAL SKILLS OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED AND SIGHTED SCHOOL STUDENTS

0.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS USED

Self-Concept

Self-concept is an individual’s evaluation of his or her own abilities and attributes. It includes different aspects of an individual’s personality i.e. social, personal, emotional etc. of which he/she is aware. In the present study Self-concept refers to scores obtained by students on Children’s Self-Concept Scale developed by Ahluwalia (2002).

Adjustment

Adjustment is the process of finding and adopting modes of behaviour suitable to environment or change in the environment. The favourable, neutral and unfavourable adaptation of an organism to external and internal stimulation and the process by which individual or group accept, compromise the social forces and one another (Good, 1959). The adjustment inventory used in the present study has three dimensions viz. emotional, social and educational. In the present study

**Emotional Intelligence**

Salovey, Mayer (2000) have stated that emotional intelligence, ‘refers to the ability to process emotion - laden information competently and to use it to guide cognitive activities like problem solving and to focus energy on required behaviors. In the present study emotional intelligence refers to scores obtained by students on Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2000).

**Social Skills**

Social skills are defined as interpersonal behaviors that help the individual in society. In the present study social skills refer to the scores obtained by students on Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters (MESSY).

**Visual Impairment**

In the present study visual impairment refers to two conditions i.e. blindness and low vision.

‘**Blindness**’ refers to a condition where a person suffers from any of the following conditions, namely: -

a. Total absence of sight; or

b. Visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (snellen) in the better eye with correcting lenses; or

c. Limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of 20 degree or worse;

‘**Person with low vision**’ means a person with impairment of visual functioning even after treatment or standard refractive correction but who uses
or is potentially capable of using vision for the planning or execution of a task with appropriate assistive device (Persons with Disabilities Act,1995).’

0.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present investigation are to study:

1. The relationship of self-concept with emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.
2. The relationship of self-concept with social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.
3. The relationship of adjustment with emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.
4. The relationship of adjustment with social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.
5. The contribution of emotional intelligence and social skills to self-concept of visually impaired and sighted school students.
6. The contribution of emotional intelligence and social skills to adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students.
7. The difference between self-concept of visually impaired and sighted school students.
8. The difference between adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students.
9. The difference between emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.
10. The difference between social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.
11. The difference between male and female school students with regards to self concept of visually impaired and sighted school students.
12. The difference between male and female school students with regards to adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students.
13. The difference between male and female school students with regards to Emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.
14. The difference between male and female school students with regards to social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.

0.6 HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses are formulated on the basis of available evidences:

1. There exists a positive correlation between self-concept and emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.
2. There exists a positive correlation between self-concept and social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.
3. There exists a positive correlation between adjustment and emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.
4. There exists a positive correlation between adjustment and social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.
5. Emotional intelligence and social skills contribute to self concept of visually impaired and sighted school students.
6. Emotional intelligence and social skills contribute to adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students.
7. Sighted school students are better than visually impaired students with regard to self-concept.
8. Sighted school students are better than visually impaired students with regard to adjustment.
9. Sighted school students are better than visually impaired students with regard to emotional intelligence.

10. Sighted school students are better than visually impaired students with regard to social skills.

11. Male and female school students are similar with respect to self concept.

12. Male and female school students are similar with respect to adjustment.

13. Male and female school students are similar with respect to emotional intelligence.

14. Male and female school students are similar with respect to social skills.

0.7 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Present study is delimited to the following:

1. The study is restricted to one disability area i.e. visual impairment only.

2. The study is confined to a sample of 150 visually impaired and 150 sighted students studying in IX, X, XI and XII standard only.

3. The study is delimited to the schools situated in Delhi, Uttrakhand, Chandigarh (U.T.) and state of Haryana.

0.8 RESEARCH METHOD

The focus of the present study is-

- To find out the relationship of emotional intelligence and social skills with self-concept and adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students.

- To study the difference between visually impaired and sighted school students with regard to their self-concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence
and social skills. Similarly the differences were also investigated on the basis of gender with regard to the said variables.

The nature of this investigation led to the use of descriptive research method.

0.9 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The target population for the study is visually impaired and sighted students studying in Senior Secondary Schools situated in Delhi, Dehradun, Chandigarh (U.T.) and state of Haryana.

A purposive sample of 300 students (150 visually impaired and 150 sighted students) studying in IX, X, XI and XII standard was selected from the schools situated in Delhi, Dehradun, Chandigarh (U.T.) and state of Haryana.

0.10 TOOLS USED

Keeping in view the purpose of the study the following research tools were used to collect the data:

1. **Children’s Self-Concept Scale** by Ahluwalia (2002).
3. **Emotional Intelligence Scale** by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2000).

0.11 DATA COLLECTION

First of all, the investigator selected samples of school students with visual impairment and normal vision. Then concerned authorities were contacted by the investigator to seek permission for administering relevant
tools on students. Investigator established rapport with the students before actual administration of different research tools namely, Children’s Self-Concept Tool, Adjustment Inventory for Students, Emotional Intelligence Scale and adapted Hindi version of MESSY. Investigator explained briefly but distinctly the purpose of the study and asked students to fill up general information’s given in a separate Performa. He also requested them to read general instructions given on the title page of each research tool. After the instructions, each tool was administered personally on group basis on sighted school students and was requested them to record the responses for each item given in different tools. The researcher administered all the tools on visually impaired students himself. Investigator read each item of different scales for the students with visual impairment and recorded himself the responses given by them.

The respondents were assured that their responses would be kept confidential. Due care was taken that the respondents did not leave any item unmarked. Scoring was done according to instructions given in the respective manual.

0.12 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

Following statistical techniques were used to analyses the data:

i. Descriptive statistics such as mean, median and standard deviation were worked out to study the general nature of data pertaining to the variables self concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence and social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.

ii. Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlation (r) was employed to find out the relationship of self-concept and adjustment with emotional intelligence and social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.
iii. Multiple correlation (Rs) was computed to find out the combine contribution to emotional intelligence and social skills on the self concept and adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students.

iv. t-test was applied to find out significance of difference between different groups with respect to self-concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence and social skills.

0.13 MAIN FINDINGS

Results based on correlation analysis

1. There was no significant relationship between self-concept and emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.

   a) No significant relationship was found between self-concept total and emotional intelligence total along with its dimensions.

   b) No significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence total and self-concept total along with its dimensions viz. behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity and happiness and satisfaction, of visually impaired and sighted school students.

2. There existed no significant relationship between self-concept and social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.

   a) No significant relationship was found between self-concept total and social skills total along with its dimensions viz. appropriate social skill, inappropriate assertiveness, overconfident, loneliness and jealous, of visually impaired and sighted school students.
b) No significant relationship was found between Social skills total and self-concept total along with its dimensions viz. behavior, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, popularity and happiness and satisfaction, of visually impaired and sighted school students.

3. There was no significant relationship between adjustment and emotional intelligence of visually impaired and sighted school students.

   a) No significant relationship was found between adjustment total and emotional intelligence total along with its dimensions viz. self awareness, empathy, self motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self development, value orientation, commitment and altruistic behaviour, of visually impaired and sighted school students.

   b) No significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence total and adjustment total along with its dimensions viz. emotional, social and educational, of visually impaired and sighted school students.

4. There was a significant and positive relationship between adjustment and social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students.

   a) Significant and positive relationship was found between adjustment total and social skill total along with its dimensions viz. appropriate social skill, inappropriate assertiveness, overconfident, loneliness and jealous, of visually impaired and sighted school students.

   b) Significant and positive relationship was found between social skill total and adjustment total along with its dimensions viz. emotional, social and educational, of visually impaired and sighted school students.
5. No significant relationship of emotional intelligence and social skills with self-concept was found. Hence, emotional intelligence and social skills did not contribute to self-concept of visually impaired and sighted school students.

6. Emotional intelligence and social skills were significantly and positively related with adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students, therefore, emotional intelligence and social skills significantly contribute to adjustment of visually impaired and sighted school students.

**Results based on differential analysis**

*Difference between visually impaired and sighted school students*

7. Visually impaired school students were found better than their sighted counterparts on self-concept total and its two dimensions viz. ‘popularity’ and ‘happiness and satisfaction’. However, both the groups of students were found similar on four dimensions of self-concept viz. behaviour, intellectual and school status, physical appearance and attribute and anxiety.

8. No significant difference was found between visually impaired and sighted school students with respect to emotional intelligence total and its all the ten dimensions viz. self awareness, empathy, self motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self development, value orientation, commitment and altruistic behavior.

9. Sighted school students had higher level of overall adjustment alongwith its dimensions viz. social, emotional and educational, in comparison to their visually impaired counterparts.
10. Sighted school students were found better than their visually impaired counterparts on social skills total and its all the dimensions viz. appropriate social skill, inappropriate assertiveness, overconfident, loneliness and jealous.

*Difference between male and female school students*

11. Male and female students were found similar on self concept and its all the dimensions except one i.e. anxiety. Female schools students were found more anxious than their male counterparts.

12. Male and female school students were found similar on adjustment and its dimensions viz. social, emotional and educational.

13. No significant difference was found between male and female school students with respect to emotional intelligence and its all dimensions viz. appropriate social skill, inappropriate assertiveness, overconfident, loneliness and jealous, of visually impaired and sighted school students.

14. No significance difference was found between male and female school students with respect to social skills and its all dimensions viz. appropriate social skill, inappropriate assertiveness, overconfident, loneliness and jealous, of visually impaired and sighted school students.

**0.14 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. The primary objective of the study was to find out the relationship of self-concept and adjustment with emotional intelligence and social skills of visually impaired and sighted school students. As social skills and
adjustment were positively and significantly related, so if social skills of students with visual impairment is developed then they are likely to be more adjusted.

The investigator also studied the difference between visually impaired and sighted school students with regard to self-concept, adjustment, emotional intelligence and social skills. The findings revealed that sighted school students are better than their visually impaired counterparts on social skills and adjustment. It implies that visual impairment adversely affect social skills and adjustment of school students with visual impairment. In light of the findings of the present study school authorities, school educators, teachers and clinical psychologists are required to take appropriate measures to develop social skills and improve the level of adjustment among students with visual impairment. It is important to mention the implications of the present study for the education of visually impaired. The plus curriculum of students with visual impairment should be restructured in order to include social skills as its important component. Special and regular teachers should adopt appropriate strategies to develop social skills among students with visual impairment.

Teachers and families can facilitate the development of social language in young children with visual impairments through hands-on experiences, auditory modeling of reciprocal expression, turn tasking and auditory descriptions of actions and activities performed by others. To promote social communication activities for a young child with visual impairment, Kekelis and Sacks (1992) suggested doing the following:

- Begin by making certain that the child with a visual impairment understands what other children are doing. Describe the children who are present and the activities in which they are engaged.
• Remind the child to take a moment to listen to a group at play before he or she jumps in with a question or comment that disrupts the group.

• Remind the child that he or she is expected to answer questions and respond to comments made by friends. Point out that listening and taking task will help the child make and keep friends.

• Help the child to find alternate ways other than questions to keep in touch with a play partner.

It is observed that generally students with visual impairment have few friends. Promoting and sustaining friendship is an important social skill. Sacks and Siberman (2009) suggested the following strategies for students with visual impairment to use to and promote friendships:

• Display positive orientation skills (smile, orient towards the speaker, pay attention to what the speaker says, and do not refocus attention on yourself or insignificant details).

• Demonstrate reciprocity (give and take). Share in activities and conversations. Wait for responses from others without dominating the interaction.

• Communicate openly and honestly, but with sensitivity toward others. Recognize and be attentive to the wishes of others. Demonstrate flexibility when selecting an activity or game.

• Reinforce others when they demonstrate positive interactions. Use words that express praise and compliments.
• Initiate thoughtful interactions. Compliment others or share something special with them (such as food, cards or a small gift).

• Be a good listener

• Share feelings and belongings.

• Select peers who have similar likes and dislikes.

• Pay attention to the effect of your behavior on others. Be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

• Consider others’ feelings, values and interests. Be open minded in trying new foods, activities or experiences.

• Be trustworthy and loyal. Keep information told in confidence to yourself.

• Understand your peer culture (dress, language and customs).

• Be prepared to related an array of experiences and share them with others.

• Find opportunities to experience new activities that foster interaction with peers or enhance the peer culture.

• Be willing to try new experiences. Take risks.

• Show a positive attitude toward yourself and the impact of visually impairment on your behavior and abilities.

Sacks and Siberman (2009) also suggested the following strategies for students with visual impairment for structured social skill intervention:
a) Teacher based Structured social skill training

It uses direct teaching based on behavioural techniques, including the teacher’s modeling of the skill and providing opportunities to practice the skills and feedback on the student’s use of the skills. This strategy is particularly useful for students with visual impairment and additional disabilities.

b) Peer-mediated social skill training

In this strategy, a small-age sighted peer is recruited to provide the intervention. With the help of a teacher, the sighted peer identifies the social skill to teach the student who is visually impaired. The sighted peer receives initial instructions from the teacher and the student’s visual impairment and his or her visual functioning. The peer and the teacher brainstorm about activities the two students can do together. The teacher reminds the peer that the relationship is an equal one and that the activities are to be mutually determined. The teacher demonstrates the targeted behavior to the sighted peer and offers a variety of prompt and feedback strategies to help the students with the visual impairment learn the skill. The two students meet at least three times a week for thirty minutes. During a session, they select a social activity that can engaged in together. During the activity, the sighted peer works with the students with a visual impairment by providing positive, and sometimes honest, feedback about the student’s use of the targeted social skills. The peer may model the desired behavior. After each session, the teacher works with the sighted peer to provide suggestions.

c) Peer-Support social skills strategy

Peer-support strategy enlist a sighted classmate to help the student with a visual impairment engage in positive social encounters in the classroom, at recess,
and at lunch, peer support can take three forms: (1) help with interpreting or doing assignments or reminding the students to use appropriate social behavior, (2) assistance with equipment and materials in the classroom, and (3) assistance in engaging in social games or activities on the playground or with conversations while eating with a group at lunch.

d) Cognitive social skills interventions

This strategy uses role playing and stories to promote thinking, self-evaluation, and planning by the students. For students to evaluate their own behavior, they must understand and internalize the specified rules of using the behavior correctly.

e) Audiovisual approaches to teaching social skills

This approach uses audiotaped or videotaped social interactions as the basis of promoting self-evaluation and planning by the students with visual impairment. It encourages the students to listen to and analyze audiotape conversation with peers, paying special attention to the tone and quality of the voices and analyzing the length of the exchanges.

f) Use of adult role model to practice social skills

Adults who are blind or have low vision act as role models by demonstrating effective social skills and answering the students’ questions. It provides a natural way to promote social exchanges and encourage dialogue related to social competence. Also encourage the students to ask questions related to typical social encounters, such as interviews and interpreting non-verbal behavior.

In view of the findings of present study and strategies available for developing social skills among students with visual impairment, these should be
included as an important component of plus curriculum for such students, therefore, these skills should also find place in practical curricula of pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes for special teacher of student with visual impairment. Seminar/workshops should also be organized for special teachers of students with visual impairment to equip them with appropriate knowledge and skills required to develop social skills among students with visual impairment.

0.15 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. A large sample of school students from different states may be undertaken with the same set of variables.

2. Similar study may be undertaken on college students to build up a clear understanding about the field.

3. The similar study may be undertaken on college/schools students of different streams.

4. Similar study may be conducted on students with other disabilities like hearing impairment, learning disabled etc.

5. Experimental studies may be undertaken to study the effect of social skills training programme on adjustment and self-concept of school students.

6. Other statistical like ANNOVA and MANOVA may be used to analyze data.