CHAPTER – I
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
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1- INTRODUCTION

Communication is the means of existence of all living organisms. Deprived of communication one cannot locate food and water and cannot protect itself from destruction. Absence of communication cannot establish conjugal relationship between two sexes. An individual has in him the unconscious socio- personal motives like self esteem, security, knowledge, pleasure and rest he communicates to and his fellow beings continuously to fulfill these motives. Thus, communication involving interaction with physical, biological and social environment is indispensable to one’s existence and continuance. (1)

Communication is a basic life skill, as important as the skills by which you make your way through school or earn a living. Your ability to communicate largely determines your personal happiness. When you communicate effectively you make and keep friends. You are valued at work. Your children respect you and trust you. If you are less effective at communicating you will find your life deficient in one or more areas. (2)

Every human being is blessed with five sense organs i.e eyes to see, ears to hear, nose to smell, tongue to taste and skin to feel; that helps an individual to understand the surroundings and the environment. These senses help in our motor development, physical and social development. From the very beginning when a child is born, he tries to make the exploration of world around him through his eyes.

Even research says that the first systematic exploration of the environment is made with the eyes and not the hands. So our sense to visualize is an important factor which helps in our motor ability. The child who is blind by birth is slow in leaning the motor activity and faces many problems as compared to his sighted peers. If a person is disabled then his other senses should be developed and made his strength so that he can try to overcome the problems.
The doctrine of sensory compensation holds that if one sense avenue, such as vision, is deficient, other sense will be automatically strengthened. It was believed for some time that blind have the capacity to hear better and have better memories than do sighted individuals. The accumulation of research studies on cognitive development suggests that the ability of visually impaired children to hear and to be able to communicate orally with others has allowed them to develop their intellectual abilities sufficiently to perform in the normal range on standard tests. (3)

The loss of eye or impairment possesses a very serious threat to the social and economic security of the individual. It is one of the most important senses. We see the things and this is how our learning starts. Vision is inside one’s thoughts and imagination like when we dream we see; in our imagination we see. So is the case with blinds. Though they are deprived of sight but their vision to understand the world is the area where this study would like to focus.

The world of any individual consists of the people the person is surrounded with. And we make relations with others through communication; be it through silence, words, understanding, empathizing, showing anger, frustration all are the forms which are present in relationship. So, the study would elaborate on the patterns of communication adopted by this particular section and the way they perceive about them so that the problem areas can be focused and the solutions can be worked out.

According to Census 2001 more than 21 million people in India or in other words 2.1% of the population in India are suffering from one or the other kind of disability. Among these, 1.6 million are males and 9.3 million are females.

Among the five types of disabilities on which the data has been collected, disability in seeing at 48.5% emerges as the top category. Others descending orders are: movement (27.9%), Mental (10.3%), in speech (7.5%), and in hearing (5.8%). The disabled by sex follow a similar pattern. (4)
TABLE : NUMBER OF DISABLED POPULATION AND TYPE OF DISABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>1,028,610,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total disabled population</td>
<td>21,906,769</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disability rate (per lakh population)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) In seeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) In speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) In hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) In movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Mental</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source : Census of India 2001.

So, from the above data it is clear that out of 2.1% of disabled population in India, 1% is visually impaired and the rest of the disabilities are 1%.

As per the media report in year 2007, India is now a home for the world's largest number of blind people. Of the 37 million people across the globe who are blind, over 15 million people are from India. (5)

1.1 KEY FACTS AS PER WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO)

- 285 million people are estimated to be visually impaired worldwide: 39 million are blind and 246 have low vision.
- About 90% of the world's visually impaired live in developing countries.
Conceptual Framework

- 82% of people living with blindness are aged 50 and above.
- Globally, uncorrected refractive errors are the main cause of visual impairment; cataracts remain the leading cause of blindness in middle- and low-income countries.
- The number of people visually impaired from infectious diseases has greatly reduced in the last 20 years.
- 80% of all visual impairment can be avoided or cured. (6)

1.2 ACCORDING TO CENSUS OF THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

According to the Census of India, around 15% of the world’s population, estimated around 1 billion, is living with disability.

Census 2011 did not release data on the disabled population in India. The disability population is difficult to enumerate in India since people often hide their disabilities because of social stigma. According to the Ministry of Social Justice, as of 2001, 21 million people are said to be suffering from some form of disability in India. Incidentally, the total population between Census 2001 and 2011 increased by 180 million to 1.2 billion.

![Highest Forms of Disability (In Mn)](image)

According to the pie chart of highest form of disability in census, visual impairment have the highest prevalence of 10 million followed by locomotor disability at 6 million in India followed by mental disability (2.2 million people) and hearing disability. (7)
Estimated 10 percent of the world’s population, some 600 million people, experience some form of impairment or disability. About 80 percent of people with disabilities live in developing countries (WHO, 2002). The majority of disabled persons is poor and experience difficulties in accessing basic health services, including rehabilitation services. This causes immobility, isolation, dependency, inequality, often premature death and increased poverty. In India, total population of persons with disabilities is around 2.1 percent of the total population by the Census (2001). (8)

1.3 FACTS AS PER NATIONAL SAMPLE SURVEY ORGANISATION

The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) which collects data on the incidence and prevalence of disability at every 10 years intervals in 1991 quoted the percentage of persons with disability as 1.9 percent and the latest 2002 NSSO estimates 1.98 percent of the population having one or the other disability. Singh (2006) concluded that considering that one source of data is a sample survey and the other is through census, the variation is not too marked. Thus one could assume that people with disabilities constitute approximately 2 percent of the population.

A little over 25 percent of the total population of the blind people in the whole world seems to be found in India. The recent estimates indicate that there are 12 million people in India who suffer from blindness in one form or another.

Twelve million is a little over one percent of the total population of India. Also, according to Census of India (2001) among the disabled persons, the largest number was accounted for by the totally blind (10,634,881) followed by the totally crippled and totally dumb. (8)

1.4 AS PER NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR CONTROL OF BLINDNESS (NPCB)

According to surveys on the magnitude and causes of blindness, and surgical outcomes of cataract carried out in 1999-2002 and in 2003 by National Programme for Control of Blindness, the estimated prevalence of blindness was found to be 1.1 percent in the major states and 1.38 percent in the north-eastern States. Females were found to have a higher prevalence of blindness as compared to men, and rural respondents as compared to urban respondents. Cataract was the commonest cause of blindness (62.6 percent) followed by
uncorrected refractive errors (19.7 percent); 16.6 percent individuals went blind after cataract surgery. Visual outcomes after cataract surgery were poorer among females, rural residents and those who underwent surgery at an older age (more than 70 years)(8)

1.5 DEFINITION OF BLIND ADOPTED IN INDIAN CONTEXT

DEFINITION OF VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

The definition of visual impairment adopted in India in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 as well as under the National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) is given below:

1.5.1 Blindness: refers to a condition where a person suffers from any of the following conditions, namely:

- Total absence of sight; or
- Visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (Snellen) in the better eye even with correction lenses; or
- Limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of 20 degree or worse.

For deciding the blindness, the visual acuity as well as field of vision has been considered.

1.5.2 Low Vision: The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 also recognizes low vision as a category of disability and defines it as follows:

“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”.

This definition is incomplete as it inadvertently omits quantification of the acuity as well as the field of vision as is done in the case of the WHO definition. It is desirable to modify this definition and the following quantification should be added:
“Low vision are those who suffer visual acuity between 20/200 to 70/200 (Snellen) or 6/18 to 6/60 in the better eye after the best possible correction or a Field of Vision between 20 to 30 degrees”.

The WHO working definition of Low Vision (WHO, 1992) is as follows:

“A person with low vision is one who has impairment of visual functioning even after treatment, and/or standard refractive correction, and has a visual acuity of less than 6/18 to light perception or a visual field of less than 10 degrees from the point of fixation, but who uses, or is potentially able to use, vision for the planning and/or execution of a task”.

The points emphasized are that there is significantly reduced vision, visual performance is affected but that there still is vision that can be used. This last point is very important: if there is usable vision, training to use that vision might be possible. In addition, this person is not labeled blind.(9)

1.6 EXPLANATION OF VARIOUS TERMS

In defining visual impairment, three aspects of vision namely visual acuity, field of vision and visual functioning are considered simultaneously. In a broad sense, visual defects result into loss of clear vision, central vision or peripheral vision. All these losses are considered by measuring visual acuity, field of vision and level of visual functioning.

1.6.1 Visual Acuity: It refers to the ability of the eye to see details. The visual acuity for distance is measured as the maximum distance at which person can see a certain object, divided by the maximum distance at which a person with normal eyesight can see the same object. Thus a visual acuity of 6/60 means that the person examined cannot see, at a distance of 6 meters, the object which a person with normal eyesight would be able to see at 60 meters. If vision is so impaired that to see the biggest E of the E-chart, the person has to come within 6 meters or even nearer, he is considered blind. The simplest method of testing visual acuity is to see whether the person can count fingers at a distance of six meters.
1.6.2 Field of Vision: It refers to the field which both the eyes can easily see in the front. The normal field of vision is 180 degrees in front of eye. It is determined by the Confrontation Test in which mapping is done on a chart having concentric circles marked upon it. The simplest method of testing is to bring snapping finger from the side of the ear to the front, move it up and down, and mark the position where the person can see the finger.

1.6.3 Visual Functioning: It relates in part to the condition of the eye. It is determined by the experience, motivation, needs and expectation of each individual in relation to whatever visual capacity is available to satisfy curiosity and accomplishment activities for personal satisfaction. The visual functioning refers to the degree to which/ability of a person to use vision for all (daily) activities. (9)

1.7 WHO DISABILITY SEQUENCE

Generally various terms like impairment, disability and handicap are used interchangeably and at random. WHO has adopted a sequence underlying illness-related phenomenon as:

\[
\text{Disease} \rightarrow \text{Impairment} \rightarrow \text{Disability} \rightarrow \text{Handicap}
\]

The International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities & Handicaps (ICIDH-2) likely to be officially adopted in 2001 propose a common language of functioning and disability.

The new terms proposed are “Activity Limitation” for “Disability”; and “Participation Restriction” for “Handicap”. “Disability” will be used as an umbrella term covering all three terms:

Impairment, Activity Limitation and Participative Restriction.

In context of vision defects, a variety of terms viz. totally blind, stone blind, blind, partially blind, legally blind, economically blind, visually limited, low vision, partially sighted, visually handicapped, visually impaired etc. are being used.
The visually impaired is an umbrella term, used widely and understood in an educational context. This term is used to describe the total group of persons whose vision is affected by impairments in seeing, irrespective of the nature or extent of these. The term refers to all the persons where vision disadvantage has resulted from impairment as well as disabilities.

In case of persons who are completely without vision, or who have light perception only, it is desirable to use the term “blind”.

In all other cases of visual defects falling in the definition, the term “visually impaired” should preferably be used. For the persons who do not fall in the category of blindness as defined in the Act and whose visual acuity falls between 6/18 and 6/60 in the better eye after the best possible correction, the term “low vision” should be used.-(9)

After defining the term blind, it is desirable to work on the educational institutes for blind. As in this study the researcher wants to conduct survey in the institutions in Punjab for blind, so development education of the blinds is discussed henceforth:
1.8 MILESTONES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

1.8.1 Residential Schools

Stein traces the beginning of the education of the visually impaired to a letter written by Diderot during 1743 and published in a newspaper in Paris as “Letter about the blind for the use of those who can see”. Dr. Diderot, a physician by profession had two visually impaired friends who influenced his thinking.

It was only during 1784, that Mr. Valentin Huay established the first school for the visually impaired in Paris. Mr. Louis Braille, a student of this school later on went and invented the embossed six dot system of reading and writing, now popularly known as Braille.

Frampton (1953), however, maintains that in the United States, groups of visually impaired children were first taught in a residential school on 15 March, 1832 and in a public school (integrated education) on 17 September, 1900.(10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Miss Annie Sharp, a missionary, founded the first school for the visually impaired in India at Amritsar. It was shifted to Dehradun during 1903, now called the Sharp Memorial School for the Blind after its founder. Mr. Bihari Shah started Calcutta School for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>An institution for the visually impaired run by the Canadian Presbyterian Mission established at Indore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>A. K. Askwith established the Palayamkottai School for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Ms. O’Connor founded a class for the visually impaired at Ranchi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>The Canadian Presbyterian Mission started a class for the visually impaired at Ujjain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. No.</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Mukti Mission established a Home for the Blind at Kodgaon, Poona. Ms. Millard founded the American Mission School for the Blind which was subsequently renamed as the Dadar School for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Mr. M.M. Srinivas established the School for the Deaf and the Blind at Mysore.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>The Victoria Memorial School for the Blind established in Mumbai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>The Baroda State founded the Mehsana School for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>N.S.D. Industrial Home for the Blind established in Mumbai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>The Blind Relief Association founded in Mumbai which established centres at Chalisgaon, Valsad and Surat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Mr. B. N. Mitter founded Patna School for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Happy Home for the Blind founded in Mumbai. Mr. Sahabzada Aftab Ahmed Khan founded Ahmadi School for the Blind at Aligarh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Madras Association for the Blind founded. Dr. Kugelberg founded Tirpattur School for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>K. K. School and Home for the Blind founded at Bhavnagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Mr. V. H. Telang founded Poona School and Industrial Home for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. No.</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Govt. School for the Deaf and the Blind established at Hyderabad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Dr. Mary Scott started Kalimpong School for the Blind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Mr. Subhodh Chandra Ray founded All India Lighthouse for the Blind at Calcutta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>St. Dunstan of London established the St. Dunstan’s Hostel for Indian War Blinded at Dehradun. (The venue now accommodates the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>The Navrangpura School for the Blind established at Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Model School for the Blind established at Dehradun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Jagdish Patel established Blind People’s Association at Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>The National Association for the Blind established in Mumbai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Blind Boys Academy established at Narendrapur, West Bengal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Divine Light School for the Blind established at Whitefield, Bangalore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>A School for the Blind established at Bhubneshwar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sr. No.</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Andhra Blind Mission School established at Nasrapur.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Bharat Blind School established at Shahadara, Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Shree Ramna Maharishi Academy for the Blind established at Bangalore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>A large number of schools for the visually impaired established across the country as a part of observation of the International Year of Disabled Persons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 envisages promotion of all modes of education including residential education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>The Scheme of Assistance for the Promotion of Voluntary Education also supports establishment of special schools for visually impaired children with multiple disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>There are 300 schools for the visually impaired across the country covering 20,000 visually impaired children. This coverage is merely 3 percent of the population of the school age visually impaired children in the country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above mentioned data clearly states that number of visually impaired is increasing & India is home to the world’s largest number of blind. So there was a need that some work towards this section of society as country can progress only if all sections of society contribute towards its progress and development.

The first step in this direction would be to provide ample facilities to the disabled population so that they can also contribute towards the growth of the nation. Secondly there is a need to adopt a two way approach of communication with them. First approach
is that society should be trained and accustomed to accept them in society as a normal human being and second visually impaired people should be given such congenial and friendly environment where they can feel free to share their thoughts and feelings with the society at large.

As in this research, the researcher would focus on the most convenient form of communication as perceived by blinds, so the forms of communication should be discussed.

Levels of communication

- Intrapersonal communication (within one self)
- Interpersonal communication (within two persons)
- Group communication (may involve more than 2)
- Mass communication (receivers can’t be counted)

Intrapersonal communication involves sending and receiving the messages within one individual. It is the communication in which sender speaks to himself, it can be introspecting, day dreaming, planning for a party, deciding to dress up smartly, writing diary etc. where sender plays the role of both sender and receiver. The sender frames the message and our senses becomes the channel and brain receives the message. All elements of communication are present in this type of communication. In case of visually impaired students this type of communication assumes significance. So in this communication it can be analyzed and find out that whether they talk to themselves, their perception about the sighted, their mannerisms and their behavior.

Interpersonal communication usually happens between two individuals. Each participant plays two roles- speaker and listener. Sharing of meanings and emotions through essentially verbal and non verbal signs becomes reciprocal. Communication is personal, direct, intimate with maximum interaction and as such there is possibility of less misunderstanding. If one participant only listens and other only speaks, communication will soon break. In the interpersonal communication setting feedback is very instantaneous, very meaningful to each other and persuasive in outcome. Varied interpersonal relationship is occurring in everyday life- husband-wife, parent-child,
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student- teacher, interviewer- interviewee and messages of those dialogues and conversations have significant psychological impact on the participants. It is considered as the best form of communication as there is maximum feedback. Sender and receiver get a chance to interact face to face. So during interaction sender can see whether the information was well received by the receiver or not and noise is also minimum as they both can see and change the place as per their need and convenience. In case of visually impaired, interpersonal communication will be with their blind friend, parent, sighted friend, teachers. It can be seen that they visually impaired students feel more comfortable in which type of communication and they in this can be how often they communicate, the purpose of communication and then satisfaction that they get after interaction.

Group communication involves more than two persons. Small group tends to be more informal; less structured and can function effectively without a designated leader. The degree of directness and intimacy between the individuals, therefore depends upon the size of the group, the place where it meets, as also relationship of the members of the group to one another and to the leader or the principal speaker. It can be a small group where 3-8 members are involved and they can talk about the local issue or the issue of concern to them or some general topic. And in case of big group where 8-25 members of concerned it can be classroom teaching where sender is delivering the lecture and receivers are receiving simultaneously. There is an opportunity with every receiver to clarify the point or participate but it is not necessary that everybody participates. There is feedback too. In case of visually impaired group communication can be seen as the one with their classmates. So it can be analyzed how they talk to one another and behave. Which form of teaching is most suitable for understanding.

Mass communication is the one in which the receivers are heterogeneous. It is not possible to make face to face contact with the receivers. Receivers may or may not know the sender. In order to communicate with a vast audience the sender has to rely on the mass media channels which are newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, internet, books. To choose the right media for the receiver is a complicated task.

The channels of mass media can be used effectively by teachers to teach. Even visually impaired students make use of media in their daily routine. People depend on media for
Information, entertainment, education. Mass Media means the mode with which we can communicate the information to large audience in a planned manner - it can be television, videos, music, films, magazines, comic books, newspaper, electronic games, computer games and internet.

1.9 NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Communication is the basic need of all human beings. According to Abraham Maslow there are five basic levels of human needs, arranged in hierarchy based on their importance.

1- Physiological – the basic level of primary needs for things required to sustain life, such as food, shelter, clothing and sex.
2- Safety- the need for security and safety from physical harm.
3- Social/love and belonging- the desire to have satisfying relationships with others and a feel of sense of love, affection, belonging and acceptance.
4- Esteem- the need to feel a sense of accomplishment and gain recognition, status and respect from others
5- Self –actualization- the need for fulfillment and a desire to realize one’s own potential. (11)

So every human being communicate first to fulfill his basic need and then he communicates for self esteem. They way we communicates with others determine our relationship with that person. In this study the motive would be to work how blinds perceive about the people they are surrounded with.

This study focuses on the communication patterns of blind students. Communication means to make common, to share, to impart or to transmit ideas, information, knowledge, feelings, emotions or attitude through certain signs and symbols. It is a process of meaningful interactions among human beings. It is a process by which meanings are perceived and understandings are reached among human beings - Dr Mefarland.(12)

Communication patterns are modes of communication that we use frequently in certain situations or with certain people. Some patterns may be prevalent, that is, appearing in most communication regardless of the situation, while many are situation specific, that is,
Conceptual Framework

used with certain people (friends, spouse, children, boss) or in certain situations (at work, in conflict, in fear). Communication pattern may include apologizing frequently, self criticism, criticism of others, complaining, self justification, blaming, praising, avoiding, judging, lecturing, questioning, insulting, supporting, gossiping, expressing emotions by yelling, crying, throwing things, banging doors etc. (13)

Patterns can be any way of communication or the way they communicate, the frequency of communication. So this study would be focussed on the way the blind students communicate with their self i.e. (intrapersonal), their parents, teachers, friends (both sighted and blind) i.e. (interpersonal, group). In this study researcher would focus on the perception of the visually impaired students who are studying in the institutes about their teachers, parents, their classmates, friends, institution mates and would also try to find out the difficulties as perceived by them in communicating because of their lack of vision or we can say partial vision. After having a careful investigation into the problems the researcher would try to locate some solutions to minimize them so that this particular group of special people are better understood and well accepted by the society. As media plays a very significant role in the lives of people and people rely on media for knowing about the happenings and mishappenings of the world around, so researcher would like to ascertain the role of media in the life of blind students. The way they use media, the reasons of their dependence and to find out that which medium is best suited to them for their educational and entertainment needs and also with the growing age of technology, are these blind students updated enough to use the latest technology.

Of all the sensory modalities- auditory, tactual, olfactory, gustatory, visual- the visual has been of the utmost concern to the field of learning disabilities. Associated with this interest in visual perception has been the great effort put forth toward the remediation of visual-motor deficits by professionals in the field of learning disabilities. The frequency with which we must co-ordinate our visual and motor systems in day-to-day activities no doubt accounts for the extensive interests in the problems of a visual-motor nature. In terms of the school-age child, for example, visual motor skill can be considered to be intimately connected with a wide gamut of everyday experiences- from using a pencil and paper to navigating one's way through a doorway.
Hence through this study the researcher would like to analyze that how without vision these students can communicate effectively.

After carefully going through the literature, it became clear that the institutes that are providing education to this particular section of the society are residential schools. Residential schools mean that the blind students will study in the school and will be provided accommodation and food free of cost.

Blind students in this study means that all those children who are studying in special schools-residential or integrated.

According to Frampton & Kerney (1953), residential school for the visually impaired may be defined as: "A boarding school offering education and care to blind children from ages three to twenty-one, or from pre-school through the high school. Educationally speaking, these schools attempt to provide complete education and care for the blind children. These services include medical, academic, musical, social, vocational courses, placement, and follow-up." (14)

Tuttle (1986) also confirms that the oldest, the most comprehensive and the most expensive delivery model is the residential school. It provides basic array of services:

- Instructional services including classroom, educational materials and equipment, offices and storage, teachers, aides and other specialists;
- Food services including fully equipped kitchen, dining room, cooks, and other personnel;
- Residential services including furnished rooms, linen, laundry, house-parents, and other personnel;
- Extracurricular and recreational services, both on the campus and the community;
- Health-care services including clinic and medical staff;
- Main enance and administrative services.

The entire campus of the residential school is designed, equipped and staffed specifically to meet the needs of the visually impaired children. In addition to the classroom teachers, there may be other specialists in physical education, orientation & mobility, activities of daily living, music, craft teaching, occupational therapy, career counselling, vocational counselling, social work and...
psychology. The educational materials, educational and mobility devices and specialized equipment are accessible to all the students throughout the campus. (14)

Gideon, John and others (1992) have defined residential school as:

“A school in which the pupils are provided dormitory accommodation and live apart from normal family environment other than holidays and week ends.”

Generally, a residential school avails grant-in-aid from the State Department of Social Welfare or such other department. It avails and mobilizes public support as donations, endowments, sponsorship of meals or special events. The residential schools are symbols of public charity, pity and compassion for the visually impaired children. Most schools are managed by public charitable organizations and supported by the State Departments of Social Welfare. Under this system of education, the visually impaired children are provided residential accommodation, meals and clothes and they attend special schools. Most of these schools follow the regular academic curriculum. The students are also imparted training in various crafts, orientation & mobility and activities of daily living.

**Advantages of Residential Schools**

- Availability of specialized trained teachers.
- Access to a wide range of special equipment.
- As the size of each class is small, generally limited to 10 students it is possible to pay individual attention to each student.
- Teacher has adequate time for each student.
- Excellent system for the poor children as boarding and lodging is generally free.
- Well organized and clean environment.
- A shelter for abandoned or abused visually impaired children.
- Excellent facilities for the development of other skills i.e. music, chair caning, weaving etc.
- Adequate emphasis on plus curriculum i.e. Braille, activities of daily living and orientation and mobility. (14)
So in case a child is blind his senses of touch, smell, taste, proxemics or spatial cognition should be enhanced and given training at right time. This training can be given initially at home by parents and then later on in the residential schools.

1.10 RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The rationale of the study is that as it is clear from the data collected from the government site that India will become home to largest number of blinds so through this study researcher would like to focus on the communication of this particular section of the society with their friends, parents patterns and the problems being faced by this sect on while communicating with different sections of the society. And this study would also try to find out solutions that can minimize the barriers in their communication so that this section can also contribute effectively towards progress of the society on the whole.

1.11 FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Communication patterns of visually impaired- A survey based study in Punjab.

1.12 OBJECTIVES

The objectives was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- To find out pattern of communication of blind student with their self/teacher/blind student/sighted friend/siblings/stranger/parents/neighborhood/relatives;
- To find out the most convenient and effective medium of communication as perceived by respondents;
- To find out whether respondents are dependent on media and to find out the reasons for their dependence;
- To identify the problems or barriers that visually impaired students are facing in communication and to find out ways that can minimize barriers;
- To identify and examine the problems faced by the trainers/teachers of blind students.
1.13 DELIMITATIONS

- As the respondents were visually impaired, the researcher had to fill the questionnaire. On average it took one and a half hour to extract the information and in few cases it took longer. Few young respondents were tough to tackle as they became emotional and started crying while replying the questions.
- In a few cases, the questions has to be repeated two three times to make respondents understand it properly.
- The present study is confined to the institutes for blinds in Punjab only.
- The study was confined to the perception of blinds only
- It was very tough to make rapport with the respondents.

References:


