



## SELF-ESTEEM IN PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED AND TYPICALLY GROWING SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN IN SRINAGAR (J&K)

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the self esteem in 180 physically challenged and 180 normal school going children selected from various private and government schools of rural and urban areas of four districts of Kashmir viz., Srinagar, Anantnag, Budgam and Kulgam. The urban samples were collected from Srinagar and Budgam districts and the rural samples were drawn from the districts Anantnag and Kulgam. Physically challenged school going children were categorized into three main classes i.e., visually impaired, hearing impaired and orthopedically crippled. The Cooper Smith Self-esteem inventory was selected to measure the self-esteem of the sample. Mean, Standard Deviation (SD) and t-test for significance of difference between means were the statistical measures used to draw the logical inferences from the analysis. The results indicated that physically challenged children had low self esteem than their typical participants. The rural physically challenged school going children and their typical participants had no significant difference ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) with respect to their self esteem. Urban physically challenged school going children reflected more self esteem than normal school going children. It was significant to conduct the present investigation because no similar research has been conducted internationally so far.

**Keywords:** physically challenged, school going children, self esteem, rural, urban.

### INTRODUCTION

Over the years it has been realized that self esteem is an important component to be enhanced in a growing child's personality irrespective of the physical difference if any in the early years when self esteem is influenced profoundly by the parental roles [1]. As believed by all intellectuals academicians and parents there is a dearth to develop physically challenged and normal people with healthy self esteem characterized by tolerance and empathy for others, acknowledge their responsibilities, have solidarity, be proud of their achievements no matter a few, be willing to take risks, healthy attitude to handle criticism, appreciating and appreciable and to take control of their lives. Hence, there is a need to help enrich and enhance the development of individuals with high self-esteem as they trust their own selves to be constructive, reliable and responsible [2]. Experiences in a person's life is a major source of how self esteem develops [3]. Love and care is all that a child needs in the beginning of his life. And the unconditional love of parents goes a long way in developing a stable sense of being cared for [4]. As the child grows older, the feeling of love and care paves the way to the development of trust in the children towards their parents and towards the world. As is rightly stated by Erikson in his psycho-social theory as well [5]. The experiences of childhood that contribute to high self esteem include being listened to, being spoken to, receiving appropriate attention, having accomplishments recognized and failures acknowledged. Experiences that lead to low self esteem include: being criticized often, physically, sexually or emotionally abused, ignored, teased and expecting perfectionism [6]. Cooper Smith [7] defines self esteem as the person's self evaluation. This evaluation indicates approval or disapproval and reflects the degree to which the person perceives himself/herself as competitive, valuable, important and successful. In an environment that is conducive and

supportive children tend to develop and maintain positive self esteem. The feelings of adequacy, self efficacy are optimized in them. [8; 7]. Nair and Starlet [9] found that self esteem was significantly lower in physically handicapped students compared to their healthy controls. By contrast Dr. Chandrakant Jamadar [10] established that the physically challenged students reflect higher self esteem as compared to the normal. People with low self esteem, have less comprehended self conceptions, poor thinking and unrealistic goals [11]. People with high self esteem have a clear idea of their qualities, have appropriate goals, use feedback mechanism to enhance themselves and they gain successfully with difficult situation [12].

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To study and compare the self-esteem of physically challenged and physically normal school going children in rural and urban areas of various districts of Kashmir valley viz., Srinagar, Anantnag, Budgam and Kulgam.

### MATERIALS AND METHOD

The present study was conducted on 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> standard physically challenged and normal boys and girls selected from various private and government schools of rural and urban areas of Srinagar, Anantnag, Budgam and Kulgam districts. Srinagar and Budgam were included in the urban areas and district Anantnag and Kulgam were included in the rural areas. The size of the sample was 360 (180 physically challenged and 180 normal school going children). The physically challenged school going children were categorized into three main classes i.e., visually impaired, hearing impaired and orthopedically crippled.

**TOOL USED**

The Cooper Smith Self-esteem inventory was selected to measure the self-esteem of the sample. (Self-esteem Inventory, 1967).It consists of 25 statements which measures evaluative attitudes of the respondents towards self in various domains.

**STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED**

To analyze the data following statistical techniques were used:  
Mean and Standard Deviation (SD)

T-test for significance of difference between means

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

To determine the significance in mean self-esteem scores of physically challenged and normal school going children t-test was computed. Details have been presented in **Table 1**.

Groups	Mean ±SD	t-value	Level of Significance
P.C	11.28±2.67	2.04	p≤0.05
Nrml	11.83±2.42		

P.C = Physically Challenged  
Nrml = Normal

The mean, SD and t-value comparison of physically challenged and typically growing school children with N=180 in each case on self esteem is shown in Table 1. The results depict a significant difference (p≤0.05) between the two groups i.e., physically challenged and typically growing school children on self esteem, with physically challenged school going children scoring less than their typically developing peers. More specifically the results indicated that the physically challenged school going children were shy, sensitive, had too many parental expectations, felt discouraged at school and home and had a feeling that most people are better liked than them. Whereas the typically growing children were confident, easy going, independent, least bothered, and friendly with parents.

The finding confirms the results of the studies that have found that the physically challenged children possessed a low score on self esteem as compared to their typical peers. Nair and Starlet [9] in their study proved that the self esteem was significantly lower in physically challenged children compared to their healthy controls. Fotiadou et al., [13] studied the self esteem of children and adolescents with visual impairment using Cooper Smith’s[1967] Self esteem Inventory and found that visually impaired children scored less on self esteem as compared to their typical peers. The finding of Narimani and Mousazadeh [14] based on the data collection using Cooper Smith’s Self esteem Inventory indicated a better self esteem in

individuals with normal vision as compared to the visually impaired subjects. Soulis and Christodoulous [15] found that visually impaired children attained a low score on self esteem as compared to their typical participants. Stephanic et al [16] revealed that hearing impaired school going children had lower levels of self esteem than their normal controls.

**Table 2: Mean Comparison Of Physically Challenged and Normal School Going Children of Rural Areas on Self esteem (N=90 each)**

Groups	Mean± SD	t-value	Level of Significance
P.C	11.22±2.23	0.77	p ≥ 0.05
Nrml	11.50±2.57		

P.C =Physically Challenged  
Nrml =Normal

The mean and S.D and t-value comparison of physically challenged and normal school children of rural areas with N=90 in each case is shown in Table 2. The results indicated no significant difference in the two groups i.e., physically challenged and normal school going children on self esteem. More specifically the results revealed that the physically challenged and normal school children from rural areas were sensitive, less confident, dependent, discouraged at school and home and felt that most people are better liked than them. Whereas, the normal children were easy going, confident, independent, least bothered and friendly with parents.

**Table 3: Mean Comparison Of Physically Challenged and Normal School Going Children of Urban Areas on Self esteem (N=90 each)**

Groups	Mean± SD	t-value	Level of Significance
P.C	11.32±2.61	2.05	p≤ 0.01
Nrml	12.16±2.74		

P.C =Physically Challenged  
Nrml =Normal

The mean, S.D and t-value comparison of physically challenged and normal school going children of urban areas with N=90 in each case on self esteem is shown in Table 3. The findings revealed a significant difference (p≤ 0.01) in the two groups i.e., physically challenged and normal school going children, with physically challenged school going children scoring less than their normal peers.

More specifically the findings convey that the physically challenged children in comparison to their normal peers were shy, sensitive, dependent, upset, easily bothered, believed that

most people are better liked than them, had too many parental expectations, suffered a lack of understanding with parents and felt discouraged at school and home whereas, the normal children were confident, easy going, independent, least bothered and friendly with parents.

## CONCLUSION

The development of positive self esteem is of primary importance for all individuals. Physically challenged persons can develop a positive attitude towards their life if they possess a positive self esteem. Their level of independence, degree of adequacy of adaptive behavior and quality of life may be enhanced. In order to develop the positive self esteem in physically challenged school going children, they must be prepared to manage their disability from the inception of it, so that the restrictions arising from the disability may be minimized. As per the results of the present investigation, the physically challenged children had low self esteem than their typical participants. The rural physically challenged school going children and their typical counter parts had no significant difference with respect to their self esteem. Urban physically challenged school going children reflected more self esteem than normal school going children.

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