ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT AND BLIND AND LOW-VISION STUDENTS' LIFE SATISFACTION AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

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Abstract

Regarding the point that most scholars agree sight has a major role in acquiring environmental information and the person's behavior, the present study aims at investigating the relationship between perceived social support and blind and low vision students' life satisfaction and self -confidence.

This study adopts a correlational method and uses the following instruments: Taft Life Satisfaction Questionnaire, Flimeng Social Support Questionnaire, and Aizeng Self -confidence Questionnaire. The subjects are 100 blind and low-visioned students in Zabol, who are selected randomly. All the data are analysed by SPSS software package. The findings based on Pearson correlation showed that there is a significant correlation between general social support and life satisfaction (d=0.01). Also there's a positive significant correlation between life satisfaction and family, classmates. And friends' support (d=0.01). In addition between self-confidence and students' social support and life satisfaction, as well as between socio-economic and life satisfaction positive significant correlation was proved. Our results suggest that social support from blind and low visioned students can have high influence on their life satisfaction and self-confidence.

Key words: social support, life satisfaction, self confidence

INTRODUCTION

People get in contact with their environment through different means, and in order to satisfy their needs, and improve their connections, at first they should get to know their environment. Therefore obtaining any information relies on the use of different and healthy senses, one of which is surely vision, since it makes the most profound connection of human with his/her environment. Vision system provides instant and quick information from outer world such as depth, toughness, brightness, stability and color. In case of vision impairment, the person has to compensate by getting information from other senses like touch and hearing. This disability effects the person's perceptual, transferal, cognitive, social and interpersonal evolution (Ahmad panah, 1385). Generally, visually impaired children are classified into two major groups: blind and low vision. Although in the past, for defining blind children only the degree of vision was taken into account, today more emphasis is given to the way the child makes use of his/her vision. In other words, though these criteria are important, there is a great deal of tendency in assigning the effects of sight limitations on acquiring basic skills such as reading and writing (Naraghi&Naderi, 1388).

Barga (1967) believes those children are blind that have no perception of light and therefore in order to learn reading they should be taught braille or similar methods which use no sense of sight .Furthermore , he defines low vision us those children who have problem in recognizing distant object, but have not much problem in recognizing object which are in less than 6 0 cm distance.

National Agency for the prevention of Blindness (1996) defines blindness as having visual acuity of 20/200 or less. This definition include people who are able to perceive light but are unable to find their way . The number of people who are borne with vision impairment are few , but the causes of this impairment can be so heterogeneous , Therefore, those children with vision impairment need special guidance and experiences to reach the understanding similar to their peers. In articular they have an urgent need to play with the objects around then and reach to a certain degree of capability and self- confidence to act logically and accurately in their surrounding, In order to achieve this point, the word health is considered, in the few last decades , as a human right and a social goal, has changed its traditional meaning as 'fulfillment of basic need and improving the quality of life' to a broader sense which is life satisfaction. Satisfaction with one's life implies a contentment

with or acceptance of one's life status or doing what the person wishes or the fulfillment of the needs as a whole (Kimbel et . al. 1994) cited in susa&lyubumiriky, 2001) . genes, personality, gender geographical factors age, job and economic factors are among the features that influence life satisfaction. Based on a research titled 'A survey on life satisfaction between male and female student' ,Ghahramn (1384) found that female students, had a higher level of life satisfaction than male students. In fact life satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of the quality of one's life. Angos et.al(1974, Cited in Susa and lyubumirky, 2001) Observe life satisfaction as the difference between what a person whishes (ideal) and what really is (reality). One important factor effecting life satisfaction is social support This concept means one is loved and valued by others and that people are ready to help when needed and be an emotional support (Sarason&sarason, 1992) .

Anyone who belongs to social network has an experience of social support Research Proves that students with visual impairment are less initiative of social interaction, than their healthy Peers(Kef 2002). Loo (1997) believes that social support reduce, stress making events and leads to positive emotional experiences , Therefore , social support has a positive correlation with happiness and emotional health . Eftekhar& et all (1389) in a research titled 'Asurvey on life quality of blind students and their peers, showed that there is no significant difference between the two groups in quality of life , but only in stimulus of life quality there was significant difference , In addition, parent education of blind students was significantly higher than that of healthy students.

Ratus believes social support reduces adverse impacts of stress through five levels:
1. Emotional care: includes listening to others problems expressing feelings and empathy.
2. Companion ship: mean providing support which leads to conformity
3.   Information : providing guidance and recommendation to improve the coping abilities,
4. Assessment: getting geed back from others for the quality of performance which leads to correction of behavior
5. Sociability: receiving social support is usually by means of sociability

Research has proved the determining role of social on support on stress and life satisfaction (Fleming and et.al., 1982) Since social interaction play a major role in human life, Life we can mention adolescence as a sensitive period in social interaction . One of the issues that influence social interaction is self-confidence. It means having confidence on one's own. In other words, it is related to the person's feelings towards his/her 'ego'. Based on Stank's (1972) research, mutual relationship was confirmed between one's self confidence and the feelings about one's abilities in this view, if self-confidence is boosted feelings of capability and value is revived. Madadi and et.al. (1386) performed a research fitted the effected on playing games on blind students' self-esteem between 6-11 years old and fond that playing games significantly increase blind students' self-esteem. Most scholars regard self-confidence as the basic and central issue in social and emotional adjustment. This emotional-social worthiness which derive from positive self-evaluation, can act as shield or power in dealing with future problems Based on the foregoing issues, child blindness is considered as a crucial disability which has a great pressure on families. Sometimes these families need help in coping whit the problems but unfortunately in most cases they suffer lack of social support. Regarding to the point that visually impaired people need social support more than other handicapped groups, and according to tell and et.al (1995) social support, as one of the opposing mechanisms of emotion- oriented ness, has a potential power of influencing quality of life, and in case of high social support, the degree of satisfaction will increase as will increase as well. In addition, Self-confidence is an internal -variable which is derived from self-reflect and the degree of confidence on one's self, which is it-self rooted in the degree of support one receives. Therefore, we can conclude since visually impaired people have problem in communicating with others, they initially receive less social support, owing to the fact that self-confidence flows from feelings of social support, self-confidence will be lower in such people. Despite that little agreement exist in the area of self-confidence and its growth in people with usual impairment, in case of its increase, feelings of depression and melancholy will decline in adolescents and as a result the person will be less vulnerable in facing with the future problems. So social support with the aim of removing numerous problems, can have a major role in their life satisfaction and self-confidence. Hence, the result of this study with the mentioned aims and proposed hypotheses can have a great influence on family and school education in order to support these handicapped people. Finally, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the relationship between social support and blind and low-vision students'

self-confidence and life satisfaction.   We will help us to approach our goal and actualize it in our society. The hypothesis of the present study are as following:

Research Hypothesis
1. there exist a relation-ship between social support on one side life satisfaction and self-confidence on the other
2. There is a positive relation-ship between social support and life satisfaction.
3. There is relationship between life satisfaction and self-confidence.
4. There is relationship between social support and low vision students' self-confidence.
5. There is a significant difference between life satisfaction and different level of income.

6.Female students possess a higher level of life satisfaction than male students.

METHOD

The present study is based on correlational analysis which aims at examining the variation of one or more factors on one another. As we mentioned before ,the predictor variable in this researches social support and the criterion variables are life satisfaction and self- confidence. The subjects are 100 blind and low vision high school students(71 boys and 29 girls) selected randomly in Zabol. The sample includes 24% first grade, 41% second grade, and 35% third grade students. Moreover, the subject, were sampled based on all three levels of socio-economic classes(20% higher, 46% middle and 34% lower class) and then the questionnaires were delivered.

Measures
The instruments used in this study are as following:
Social support scale(Fliming, Bawm&Gesiril, 1982) which contains one short form long form was used with five sub categories:1.perceived social support from family, seven items, 2.perceived support from friends,three item, 3.perceived support from teachers, four items, 4.general perceived social support, six item, 5.beliefs about this questionnaire is rated on a seven-point likertscale(1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree) The questionnaire is translated into Persian under the supervision of Hooman, ph.D , Dejkamph.D, and Zamaniph.D and its validity was ensured(Akhoondi,1376).The reliability of each sub-scale for general perceived social support, family and friends are 73% , 87% and 91% respectively.
Furthermore, its reliability using Cronbach Alpha reached 0.98 (0-1).

The other instrument used in this study is Taft life satisfaction scale. This questionnaire contains 11 statements which was revised by Kim and Park(1999) and used in cross-cultural studies(Mortazavi,1382).This questionnaire has a Cronbach Alpha of 0.83 and is rated on a seven-point likert scale(1=strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree).
The last instrument is Aizeng;(1976) self -confidence scale, including thirty items for which the subjects should choose Yes or No. This questionnaire can be administered individually or group. Its internal reliability using split-half method is 0.85 and has a Cronbach Alpha of 0.87.

FINDINGS

Inferential statistics (of statistical assumptions)
Hypothesis 1 – between social support and life satisfaction and self – confidence is a relationship.
To examine the relationship between two variables based on table 1, we calculate the Pearson multivariate correlation.
The results show the significant relationship between the variable are at level a=0/01
Table: 1, Pearson multivariate correlation table for the relationship between two variables.

Social support	Self confidence	Life satisfaction	correlation variable
1	0/34	0/44	Social support
0/44	0/55	1	Life satisfaction
0/34	1	0/55	Self-confidence

According to the results of table 1, witch indicates of high correlation between social support with life satisfaction and self-esteem, from the partial correlation was used to obtain a more accurate correlation of variables.

Table 2: table partial correlation

Value p	Partial correlation coefficient	Variable
0/001	0/42	Social support and Life satisfaction
0/0001	0/33	Social support and Self - confidence
0/0001	0/56	Life satisfaction and Self - confidence

Table 3: table results of regression analysis for social support, life satisfaction and self – confidence

F	R square	Value P	(Beta)	variable
28/16	0/325	0/0001	-0/473	Life satisfaction
		0/0001	0/123	Self-confidence

The significant model was obtained by using ENTERS method.(R square =0/325 , F=28/16 , P<0/0001)
Hypothesis 2 – there is a direct relationship between social support and life satisfaction.
To examine the relationship between social support and life satisfaction were used from of person correlation coefficient, test also table 4 is showing that measure obtained correlation is equal with (0/56) that this correlation is significant in level سa=0/01, otherwise there is significant positive correlation between two variable at level %99 confidence.

Table 4: Pearson correlation table for social support and life satisfaction

Significant level	Life satisfaction	Social support		variable
0/0001	0/56	1	Pearson correlation	Social support

Hypothesis 3- life satisfaction has a relationship with Self confidence the results of Pearson correlation test is showing that exist high correlation between life satisfaction and Self – confidence , the obtained correlation is equal (r=0/55) and this correlation is significant at the level a=0/01

Table: 5 Pearson correlation of table for life satisfaction and self – confidence

Significant level	Life satisfaction	Social support		variable
0/0001	1	0/55	Pearson correlation	Life satisfaction

Hypothesis 4 – there is relationship between social support and self – esteem of low vision and blind students.
The results of Pearson correlation test is showing that exist significant correlation between two variables.
The obtained correlation is equal (0/34), that this correlation is significant at level a= 0/01

Table 6: Pearson correlation of table for social support and self –confidence

Significant level	Self –confidence	Social support		variable
0/0001	0/34	1	Pearson correlation	Social support

Hypothesis 5 – According to levels of life satisfaction among various levels of income, there are significant difference.

Table 7: Table of onside variance analysis for life satisfaction and levels of income

Value P	F	Mean squares	Freedom degree	Sum of squares	Life satisfaction
0/527	0/743	63/999 85/315	3 317 320	190/196 37044/944 27235/140	Between – group Inside-group total

The results of table 7 is showing that(p> 0/05) is being and measure (F) isn't significant , so consequence this is witch according to rate of life satisfaction there is no difference among various levels of income therefore number five of Hypothesis isn't confirmed .
Hypothesis 6- the measure of life satisfaction in girls is more than the boys.

Table 8: Statistical results of table for compare life satisfaction in the girls and boys

Value P	Value t	Freedom degree	Standard deviation	mean	gender	variable
0/0001	3/25	88	8/748	61/22	boy	Life satisfaction
			9/ss801	65/56	girl	

Data of table 8, indicate witch girls of life satisfaction mean significantly is more than the boys (one skirt test, p<0/01, df= 88, t = 3/25). So number six of Hypothesis isn't confirmed.

Results
In the statistical analysis of the hypothesis, based on the frequency and the percentage of the input, we used the independent t-test for comparison. Correlation efficiency for analyzing the between variables, and variance tasty for the comparison of means.

Consistent with the findings of Arshil (1999). Danvan& Halpern (2002).Olistin , Salkofsky and vaigen (004) Balmo Donald son and stook (2003) Estis& Brown(2004), Fornhem (2003), Lory john (2003), peris (2000), and Frank , Fojitavay, Dee, Deniz (1999) The positive role of social contact in psychological adjustment and mental health has been stressed by several authors.

According to Sarason&Sarason (1992) the degree of received social support plays a major role in person's vulnerability and facing with the stress of life. Social support forms a mutual commitment and leads to feelings of love , value and self-esteem in addition they have a direct relationship with health (Berkmen&simon , 2000) Another result of the present research with the correlation co-efficiency of 0.56 and A=0.01 confirms the fact that socials. Ha a direct relationship with life satisfaction. Our finding is in harmony with the workofEftekhar and et.al (1386) Mortazavi (1383) Behpajooh& et.al (1386) ,koohpayezade& et al (1380) Zamanzade& et.al (1386). Gabedi&Yagoobi (1387), and BakhshiJoor&et .al(1384), Frank Fojita&E.D.Denit (1996) female that supportive sources (family friends, accept to social services) are predictors of life satisfaction for men & women. We may propose that gender could influence the degree of received social support. Therefore, social support , specially family support, is one of important variables in predicting students life satisfaction .

Regarding the relation sip between life satisfaction and self confidence , our analysis resulted in a+0.01 and r=0.55, which is consistent with the findings of sajedi& et . al (1387) , nehpajooh (1386) an Mostaeli& et.al. . One dimension of self- concept is self- confidence , self- confidence the degree of acceptance approval and value on feels about himself/herself.

The result of parson correlation test (a=0.01.0.34) confirms the relationship between social s. & self-confidence. Studies of sajedi& et.al (1387) Behpajooh& et al (1386) &Mosteli&et. al. also verify the positive role of social contacts on psychological adjustment . Self-confidence is a feeling towards one's self which begins from childhood and develops by the influence of education, culture, society, As shown in table 4-10 , p>0.05 and F value is not significant , so we can conclude there is no significant difference in life satisfaction and different socio – economic classes. Therefore, income by itself cannot increase life satisfaction. The most influential of life satisfaction is the support received from family & classmates, but friend , support wa. Not a siynicantpredictor . Regarding the results (P<0.01 , df=88 , t=3.25) the degree of life satisfaction among female students are more than male students . This is consistent with the finding of Anglhart (1900) &Ghahraman (1384) . Therefore we can claim there is correlation between life satisfaction & many variables such as gender. Danvom& Halpern (2002) explain this relationship and believe that firstly women experience & express their positive & negative excitement more than men, secondly , women's social relations are more than men and women are more involved in social issues . Considering the findings of the present study , a number of significant implications can be drawn for practice, To increase the degree of family support specific attention should be given to improve the quality of educational planning at the level of schools, teachers and counseling programs.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Visually impaired children may face some deficiency in their interaction with society and family and as a result make them socially isolated. Still, there and way to improve and help such people, but this is impossible without knowing how the society can be a source of support and help. To achieve this goal, more research should be conducted in order to reach a better understanding about visually impaired people and the role of society in supporting them. Therefore, based on the data obtained from this research, we can mention the hollowing important finding.

According to the multi- variable Pearson correlation coefficient and the significance of $\dot{\alpha}=0.01$. there is a relationship between social support on one side and life satisfaction and self-confidence on the other. The finding of this research is Families need to be informed to understand the nature of their youngsters disability, and the degree of its progress, as well as the kind of help the can provide, in order to reach the highest capabilities.

Unfortunately despite the importance of this issue, little work has been performed and the present study can be a start for further more wide spread studies.
Such studies as different education levels, experiment & semi experimental studies (finding cause- effect relation, among the variable) same study in different place to investigate the validity. In this case change the attitude of the society toward, the visually impaired people and remove the barriers of prosperity for people with special needs.

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